Hermes 101 Student Workbook

Build Your Own Personal AI Agent

Kracked Academy / Rakyat Path

Version: Pilot source

Prepared: 2026-06-25

Source mode: local-product

Source Boundary

This workbook is adapted from Hermes-prepared planning captures in Hivemind:

- `2026-06-25-kracked-academy-hermes-vps-beginner-workshop.md`
- `2026-06-25-hermes-101-student-workbook.md`
- `2026-06-25-hermes-101-implementation-handoff.md`

Provider prices, model availability, screenshots, labels, and Hermes commands can change. Before a live public workshop, verify the current official setup flow, commands, provider pricing, and model choice. This workbook is a pilot teaching asset, not a guarantee that setup will succeed for every account or provider.

Goal

By the end of Hermes 101, you should have:

- A VPS/cloud server created.
- Ubuntu LTS running on that server.
- SSH access into your server.
- Hermes Agent installed.
- Hermes connected to an AI model/API key.
- One useful real-life task completed.
- One agent-like proof task completed.
- A rough monthly cost estimate written down.

- A next mission list for using Hermes after class.

Optional bonus:

- Telegram gateway connected.
- Hermes running as an always-on service.

How To Use This Workbook

Use the Academy sidebar pages during the workshop. Use this workbook for notes, printing, and after-class review.

Each station has:

- Goal: what you are trying to achieve.
- Why it matters: the simple reason.
- Do this: exact actions or commands.
- Checkpoint: how you know it worked.
- If stuck: what to try before panicking.
- Notes: space for your own details.

Important rule:

```
Do not paste private passwords, API keys, payment details, or personal
documents into shared chats, screenshots, or public support channels.
```

Station 1 - What You Are Building

Today you are setting up your own personal AI agent on a cloud server.

Hermes is not only a chatbot. When configured, it can use tools, work with files, run commands, remember useful context, load reusable skills, and help you complete real tasks.

Beginner map:

Word	Simple meaning
ChatGPT	A smart person inside a browser tab
Hermes	Your own AI operator with tools, memory, and a home

VPS	The always-on rented computer where Hermes lives
API key	The fuel card Hermes uses to call AI models
Model	The AI brain Hermes talks to
Skills	Reusable playbooks Hermes can load
Gateway	The bridge to channels such as Telegram or Discord

Your first mission:

```
My Hermes should help me with:
```

Station 2 - Why This Stack

Pilot workshop default:

- VPS provider: DigitalOcean.
- Region: Singapore SGP1.
- Plan: Basic Regular Droplet, 1 vCPU, 2GB RAM, 50GB disk, 2TB transfer.
- Slug to confirm: `s-1vcpu-2gb`.
- Operating system: Ubuntu 24.04 LTS, or 22.04 LTS if needed.
- AI model access: OpenRouter as default, DeepSeek as budget fallback, Kilo Code only if facilitator chooses it.
- Hermes interface: CLI first.
- Optional bonus: Telegram gateway.

Why this stack:

- Easier to teach in a live beginner room.
- Easier to troubleshoot than many cloud alternatives.
- Predictable enough for first ownership.
- Lets students understand server, model, cost, and safety.

This is not promised to be the cheapest possible setup. Reliability matters more than saving a small amount during a live workshop.

Example pilot estimate, not a guarantee:

- DigitalOcean 2GB VPS: $12/month, roughly RM50/month before API usage.

- Cheap model/API light use: roughly RM3-RM8/month if using low-cost models carefully.
- Safe beginner planning range: roughly RM55-RM65/month for light use.
- Premium models or heavy use can cost much more.

Your facilitator must re-check live provider pricing before the workshop.

Station 2B - Model Provider Choice

For Hermes 101, the default model provider is OpenRouter.

Option	Use when	Notes
OpenRouter	Default workshop path	One key can access many models. The facilitator will choose the starter model.
DeepSeek	Budget fallback	Good low-cost path if current pricing/account setup is suitable.
Kilo Code	Advanced/optional	Use only if the facilitator specifically chooses it for this cohort.

Write the class model setup:

```
Today's provider: OpenRouter
Today's starter model:
Spending limit checked: Yes / No
Backup provider: DeepSeek
```

Do not choose a random premium model during class.

Station 3 - Cost Reality Check

Costs depend on provider, region, selected plan, selected model, and usage.

Use the exact numbers your facilitator verifies before the workshop. The planning source estimated that light beginner use can be kept low when using a basic VPS and cheap models carefully, while premium models or heavy use can cost much more.

Write your estimate:

```
My VPS provider:
My VPS monthly cost:
My API/model provider:
```

```
My expected API budget:
My estimated total monthly cost:
Spending limit set? Yes / No
```

Checkpoint:

- I know this is not fully free.
- I know API usage depends on how much I use Hermes.
- I know premium models cost much more than cheap models.
- I know I should set spending limits where possible.

Station 4 - Account Checklist

Required:

- Laptop with internet connection.
- Email access.
- Payment method for VPS/API account.
- VPS provider account.
- OpenRouter account, or facilitator-approved fallback provider account.
- Basic terminal access.

Recommended:

- Telegram account if you want the gateway bonus station.
- Password manager.
- Notes app.
- One real task for Hermes.

Station 5 - Create Your VPS

Goal: create the cloud server where Hermes will live.

DigitalOcean path:

1. Open DigitalOcean and click Create Droplet.

2. Choose region: Singapore SGP1.

3. Choose image: Ubuntu 24.04 LTS x64. If 24.04 is unavailable, choose Ubuntu 22.04 LTS x64.

4. Choose plan type: Basic.

5. Choose CPU option: Regular. Premium AMD/Intel is not required for Hermes 101.

6. Choose size: 1 vCPU, 2GB RAM, 50GB disk, 2TB transfer.

7. Confirm the summary shows slug: `s-1vcpu-2gb`.

8. Confirm the price is around $12/month or $0.018/hour.

9. Authentication: choose SSH Key. If you do not have one yet, create one before creating the Droplet.

10. Name the Droplet something simple, for example `hermes101-yourname`.

11. Leave optional paid add-ons off unless the facilitator says otherwise.

12. Click Create Droplet only after the facilitator confirms your summary is correct.

13. Copy the public IPv4 address when the Droplet is ready.

Expected summary:

```
Plan Type: Basic
CPU Option: Regular
vCPU: 1
RAM: 2 GB
Disk: 50 GB
Bandwidth: 2 TB
Slug: s-1vcpu-2gb
Total cost: $12.00/month
```

SSH key note:

The public key is safe to paste into DigitalOcean. The private key stays on your laptop and should never be pasted into websites, chats, screenshots, or GitHub.

Write your server details:

```
VPS provider:
Server name:
Region:
IP address:
Ubuntu version:
Monthly VPS cost:
```

If stuck:

- Check if payment was accepted.
- Check if the selected region has capacity.
- Ask before creating multiple servers.
- Do not leave unused servers running.

Station 6 - Connect With SSH

Goal: enter your VPS terminal.

If you need to create an SSH key, run this from your laptop terminal:

```
ssh-keygen -t ed25519 -C "hermes101"
```

Show your public key.

Windows PowerShell:

```
type $env:USERPROFILE\.ssh\id_ed25519.pub
```

Mac, Linux, or WSL:

```
cat ~/.ssh/id_ed25519.pub
```

Paste the public key into DigitalOcean, then connect with:

```
ssh root@YOUR_SERVER_IP
```

After you log in, run the remaining server commands inside the VPS terminal. If you are not sure where you are, ask before continuing.

If you see a first-connection warning, type:

```
yes
```

Checkpoint:

```
My server prompt looks like:

```

If stuck:

- Check the IP address.
- Check the server is running.
- Check username and password/SSH key.
- Use provider web console.

Station 7 - Optional Safer User

If the class has time, avoid doing all daily work as root. This station is facilitator-led. Skip it during the core path unless the room has time.

If you do it, install required tools first:

```
sudo apt update
sudo apt install -y sudo rsync
adduser hermes
usermod -aG sudo hermes
rsync --archive --chown=hermes:hermes ~/.ssh /home/hermes
su - hermes
```

If class time is tight, your instructor may simplify this and return to safer-user cleanup after the core setup works.

Station 8 - Prepare Ubuntu

Update the server:

```
sudo apt update && sudo apt upgrade -y
```

Install basics:

```
sudo apt install -y curl git tmux
```

Facilitator-only optional rescue for very small or slow servers, add swap:

```
sudo fallocate -l 2G /swapfile
sudo chmod 600 /swapfile
sudo mkswap /swapfile
sudo swapon /swapfile || true
grep -q '^/swapfile ' /etc/fstab || echo '/swapfile none swap sw 0 0' |
sudo tee -a /etc/fstab
free -h
```

If `/swapfile` already exists, ask the facilitator before rerunning the whole block.

Checkpoint:

```
Server updated? Yes / No
Tools installed? Yes / No
Swap added? Yes / No / Not needed
Warnings:
```

Station 9 - Install Hermes

Run the current official Hermes install command:

```
curl -fsSL https://hermes-agent.nousresearch.com/install.sh | bash
```

Refresh shell if needed:

```
source ~/.bashrc
```

Check Hermes:

```
hermes --version
hermes doctor
```

Checkpoint:

- `hermes --version` works.
- `hermes doctor` runs.
- Warnings are written down.

If `hermes doctor` shows warnings, write them down. Some warnings may be optional integrations, not a failed install.

Station 10 - Connect Model/API

For Hermes 101, the default provider is OpenRouter. The facilitator will choose one starter model for the whole room. If OpenRouter is blocked, the planned budget fallback is DeepSeek. Kilo Code is advanced/optional only. Do not choose a premium model unless you understand the cost.

Write this down before setup:

```
Today's provider: OpenRouter
Today's starter model:
Spending limit checked: Yes / No
Backup provider: DeepSeek
```

Use the current setup flow recommended by your facilitator:

```
hermes model
```

or run the full wizard:

```
hermes setup
```

Start Hermes:

```
hermes
```

Ask:

```
Say hello and tell me what model or provider you are using if available.
```

API key safety:

- Do not paste API keys in public chat.
- Do not screenshot API keys.
- Do not commit API keys to GitHub.
- Store keys in a password manager.
- Set spending limits when possible.

Station 10B - OpenRouter Setup

Goal: connect Hermes to the workshop model provider.

Learner steps:

1. Open OpenRouter and sign in or create an account.

2. Create an API key from the OpenRouter keys/settings area.

3. Copy the key only when Hermes asks for it.

4. Run model setup:

```
hermes model
```

Or run the full wizard:

```
hermes setup
```

5. Choose OpenRouter.

6. Choose the exact starter model given by the facilitator.

7. Start Hermes:

```
hermes
```

Test prompt:

```
Say hello. Keep it short. Then tell me if you can see which provider or
model is configured.
```

Checkpoint:

- Hermes replies without an API authentication error.
- You did not share the API key in chat or screenshots.
- You know API usage is separate from VPS cost.

Station 11 - First Useful Task

Copy and edit:

```
I am new to Hermes. Help me complete one useful task today.
My task is: [describe your real task].
Ask me only the minimum questions needed, then produce a clear useful
output.
```

Choose one:

- Turn messy notes into a 7-day action plan.
- Create a study or work checklist.
- Draft a professional message.
- Compare options for a real decision.

Notes:

```
What did Hermes create?


Was it useful?


What would make it better?
```

Station 12 - Tools, Memory, Skills

Tools let Hermes act.

Memory lets Hermes keep durable context.

Skills are reusable procedures or playbooks.

Ask Hermes:

```
Explain the difference between tools, memory, and skills like I am 16. Then give me one example of how each could help me in my daily life.
```

Good memory examples:

- Preferred explanation style.
- Durable project context.
- A repeated workflow preference.

Bad memory examples:

- Passwords.
- API keys.
- Private documents.
- One-time workshop errors.

Station 13 - Agent Proof Task

Choose one.

Create a file:

```
Create a simple markdown file in my home folder called my-first-hermes-plan.md. Put my 7-day action plan inside it. Then read it back to verify it was saved.
```

Explain your VPS:

```
Check basic system information for this VPS: OS version, disk space,
memory, and current user. Explain the result in beginner language.
```

Turn one task into a reusable checklist:

```
Take the useful task we just did and turn it into a reusable checklist I
can use again next week.
```

Checkpoint:

- Hermes did something beyond normal chat.
- I can explain what happened.

Station 14 - Optional Telegram Gateway

This is optional for Hermes 101.

Run only if the core CLI path works and the facilitator says the room has time:

```
hermes gateway setup
hermes gateway install
hermes gateway status
```

Do not paste bot tokens publicly.

If this gets stuck, skip it. CLI Hermes setup is already a valid Hermes 101 success.

Troubleshooting Map

Problem	First thing to try
Cannot SSH	Check IP, username, server status, internet, and provider console
`hermes` command not found	Run `source ~/.bashrc`, then `hermes --version`
API key error	Check key copy, credits, model availability, and provider status
Server slow	Run `free -h`, add swap, or ask before upgrading
Terminal fear	Copy one command at a time and read before pressing Enter

Extra server created	Ask which server to destroy before leaving it running

Danger rule:

```
Do not run destructive commands such as rm -rf unless a facilitator
explains exactly what they do and why they are safe.
```

Graduation Checklist

You graduate Hermes 101 when you can honestly tick:

- I can explain what Hermes is.
- I can explain what a VPS is.
- I can explain what an API key is.
- I know why this workshop uses a reliable beginner stack.
- I created or accessed a VPS.
- I installed Hermes.
- I connected Hermes to a model.
- I completed one useful real-life task.
- I completed one agent proof task.
- I know my estimated monthly cost.
- I know how to avoid sharing secrets.

Next 7 Missions

Day	Mission
1	Ask Hermes to create a personal weekly plan.
2	Turn one messy note into a clean document.
3	Research a real purchase, work, or study decision.
4	Create a reusable checklist for something you repeat.
5	Ask Hermes to explain your VPS health and cost.
6	Improve your resume, portfolio, website, or business idea.
7	Ask what workflow should become a reusable skill.

Quick Command Sheet

See the live command sheet:

- Academy route: `/academy/hermes-101/command-sheet`
- PDF: `/downloads/hermes-101/hermes-101-command-sheet.pdf`

End Note

You did not only sign up for another AI app.

You built the beginning of your own AI operator.