Bitwarden CLI

Vault from the shell

START HERE

`bw login`
Sign in (asks for password)

`bw sync`
Pull the latest vault

`bw unlock --raw`
Print a session key

`bw lock`
End the session

`export BW_SESSION="<key>"`
Use the key in this shell

`bw list items --search <text>`
Find entries

`bw get password <name>`
Print one password

`bw generate -uln --length 20`
Make a password

Logged out no account → `bw login` → **Locked** data encrypted → `bw unlock` → **Unlocked** BW_SESSION set → `bw lock` → **Locked** key destroyed

CONCEPTS

Logging in is not unlocking: the vault stays encrypted until you have a session key in BW_SESSION or --session.

Session keys and master passwords on the command line end up in shell history and process lists; prefer prompts, --passwordenv or --passwordfile.

Commands that need no unlock: config, encode, generate, status, update.

SIGN IN

`bw login`
Sign in with email and password

`bw login --apikey`
Sign in with an API key
Prompts for client_id and client_secret; BW_CLIENTID and BW_CLIENTSECRET skip the prompt. Run bw unlock afterwards.

`bw login --sso`
Sign in through your SSO provider

`bw unlock`
Unlock the vault

`bw unlock --raw`
Print only the session key

SIGN IN (cont.)

`bw unlock --passwordenv <VAR>`
Read master password from an env var

`bw unlock --passwordfile <file>`
Read master password from a file
Takes the first line; keep the file readable only by you.

`bw lock`
Lock the vault, destroy the key

`bw logout`
Sign out of the account

`bw status`
Show login, lock and sync state

`bw config server <url>`
Point at a self-hosted server

`bw --session <key> <command>`
Pass the session key per command

FIND AND READ

`bw list items`
List all vault items as JSON

`bw list items --search <text>`
Search items

`bw list items --folderid <id>`
Items in one folder

FIND AND READ (cont.)

`bw list items --url <url>`
Items matching a URL

`bw list folders`
List folders

`bw get item <name|id>`
Show one full item
A search string works instead of an id, but several matches give an error; use the id.

`bw get password <name|id>`
Print the password

`bw get username <name|id>`
Print the username

`bw get totp <name|id>`
Print the current 2FA code

`bw get notes <name|id>`
Print the notes

`bw get attachment <file> --itemid <id>`
Download an attachment
With --output, a directory path must end in a slash.

CREATE AND CHANGE

`bw get template item`
Print an item JSON template

`bw encode`
Base64-encode JSON from stdin

`bw create item <encodedJson>`
Create an item

CREATE AND CHANGE (cont.)

`bw create folder <encodedJson>`
Create a folder

`bw edit item <id> <encodedJson>`
Replace an item
Replaces the whole object, so edit the output of bw get item.

`bw edit folder <id> <encodedJson>`
Rename a folder

`bw delete item <id>`
Move an item to the trash

`bw delete item <id> --permanent`
Delete an item for good

`bw restore item <id>`
Restore from the trash

`bw create attachment --file <path> --itemid <id>`
Attach a file to an item

`bw get template folder`
Print the folder template

GENERATE AND SYNC

`bw generate`
Make a password (14 chars default)

`bw generate -uln --length 24`
Letters and digits, 24 long

GENERATE AND SYNC (cont.)

`bw generate -ulns --length 24`
Add special characters

`bw generate --passphrase --words 5`
Make a passphrase

`bw sync`
Pull the latest vault data

`bw sync --force`
Force a full sync

SEND

`bw send -n "<name>" -d <days> --hidden "<text>"`
Send text, hidden by default

`bw send -n "<name>" -d <days> -f <path>`
Send a file

`bw send list`
List your Sends

`bw send delete <id>`
Delete a Send

`bw send receive <url>`
Open a Send by URL

BACKUP AND OPTIONS

`bw export`
Export the vault as CSV

`bw export --format json --output <dir>/`
Export as JSON to a folder

BACKUP AND OPTIONS (cont.)

`bw export --format encrypted_json --password`
Password-encrypted export
Without --password, the export is tied to your account key.

`bw import --formats`
List supported import formats

`bw import <format> <path>`
Import a file into the vault

`bw --pretty`
Indent JSON output

`bw --raw`
Return plain values, not messages

`bw --nointeraction`
Never prompt

`bw --help`
Show all commands

`bw <command> --help`
Help for one command

RECIPES

Unlock in the current shell

```
export BW_SESSION="$(bw unlock --raw)"
bw sync
bw get password <name>
```

Change an item's password

```
bw get item <id> \
  | jq '.login.password="<new>"' \
  | bw encode | bw edit item <id>
```