

# **Introduction to CAT Tools for Translators**

A beginner's guide to theory & best practices

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Presented by: Sherif Abuzid

<https://translatorsacademy.com/>

# About Me

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- Graduated from Faculty of Arts, Helwan University, English Department.
- Presenter at Local and International Translation Conferences.
- Co-founder of TranslationPartner, covering +40 languages.
- Owner of Translators Academy.
- AUC Certificated Trainer.
- Master in Business Administration from the Arab Academy.
- DBA-Student at Cairo University, expected to finish by 2027.





# Course Objectives

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By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- Set up Trados Studio 2024 Freelance for their language pairs and configure a new project.
- Create and maintain a Translation Memory (TM) and connect it to projects.
- Translate a document using matches, QA checks, and generate a final file .
- Handle client packages and perform batch tasks.
- Demonstrate at least 3 productivity features (shortcuts, auto-propagation, QA)



# Course Curriculum

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- **Session 1:** Introduction to CAT Tools.
- **Session 2:** Setting up Trados Studio 2024 Freelance & Translation Memories.
- **Session 4:** Translating Single Documents and Translating in the Editor
- **Session 3:** Creating & Managing Projects + Main batch tasks (like Analysis)
- **Session 5:** QA Checks & Deliverables

# What are CAT Tools?

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- Computer-Assisted Translation (CAT) tools are specialised software applications designed to support human translators by making the translation process faster, more consistent, and more efficient.
- CAT tools include features like quality assurance (QA) checks for consistency, numbers, and formatting, as well as concordance searches that help find how similar phrases were translated before. By leveraging these functions, translators can maintain accuracy and style across projects, handle repetitive content effortlessly, and ensure client-specific requirements are consistently applied.



CAT (Computer-Assisted Translation) tools  
VS MT (Machine Translation):



# CAT (Computer-Assisted Translation) tools VS MT (Machine Translation):

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## 1. Control

**CAT:** Human translator is always in control. The tool assists by suggesting matches from previous translations.

**MT:** Machine automatically generates a full translation without human intervention at the start.

## 2. Source of Translation

**CAT:** Uses your own Translation Memory (TM) and termbases built from past work.

**MT:** Uses huge datasets and neural models trained on generic or industry data.



# AT (Computer-Assisted Translation) tools VS MT (Machine Translation):

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## 3. Quality

**CAT:** Ensures consistency and leverages previous human-approved translations.

**MT:** Quality can vary greatly depending on the language pair, subject matter, and training data.

## 4. Consistency

**CAT:** Enforces strict consistency with your past work through TM and terminology checks.

**MT:** May vary sentence by sentence, especially in stylistic content.

# CAT (Computer-Assisted Translation) tools VS MT (Machine Translation):

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- CAT tools assist human translators by leveraging past translations (TMs & glossaries).
- MT generates full translations automatically, without initial human input.
- CAT ensures consistency & quality control, with the translator deciding on each segment.
- MT quality varies and often needs extensive post-editing.
- CAT builds on your work; MT relies on generic data and is less customized.



Microsoft Word ribbon: Home, Review, Advanced, View, Add-Ins, Help. Quickstart, Concordance Search, Translation Memory, Terminology, Segment Actions, Navigation, Editing.

Messages (0) | 0 Errors | 0 Warnings | 0 Notes | Show Messages for Active Document Only | Show Ignored Messages

Translation Results - General TM | Fragment Matches - General TM | Concordance Search | Comments (0) | TQAs | Messages (0)

Complaint Form template4-temp.doc\_en-US\_ar-SAadiff [Translation]

Severity	Message	Origin	Document	Segment
1	CONFIDENTIAL			
2	Your Details			
3	First Name			
4	Surname			
5	Service Number			
6	Date			
7	Facility			
8	Was this made as a Verbal complaint in the first instance?			
9	Yes <b>Symbol</b> No <b>Symbol</b>			
10	Have you spoken to anyone about your complaint?			
11	Yes <b>Symbol</b> No <b>Symbol</b>			
12	If yes, who did you speak to?			
13	Is your complaint about a racial incident?			
14	Yes <b>Symbol</b> No <b>Symbol</b>			
15	Is your complaint about bullying?			
16	Yes <b>Symbol</b> No <b>Symbol</b>			
17	1.			
18	If you are using the confidential access procedure, why are you doing this?			
19	.....			
20	2.			
21	What is your complaint?			
22	(Continue on the back or on separate pages if necessary)			
23	.....			
24	3.			
25	What would you like to see done about your complaint?			
26	.....			
27	4.			
28	May we contact you to provide feedback?			
29	Yes <b>Symbol</b> No <b>Symbol</b>			
30	Mixed source language translation			

Term Recognition: No results available.

PHF

سري

التفاصيل الخاصة بك

الاسم الأول

اسم العائلة

رقم الخدمة

التاريخ

المشافي

هل هذه كانت شكوى شفوية في الحالة الأولى؟

نعم **Symbol** لا **Symbol**

هل تحدث مع أحد بخصوص هذه الشكوى.

نعم **Symbol** لا **Symbol**

إذا كانت الإجابة نعم، بين الذي تحدثت معه؟

هل الشكوى تخص حالة عنصرية؟

نعم **Symbol** لا **Symbol**

هل الشكوى بخصوص التمييز؟

نعم **Symbol** لا **Symbol**

1.

إذا كنت تستخدم إجراء الوصول السري، فليماذا تقوم بذلك؟

.....

2.

ما هي شكواك؟

(تابع في الخلف أو في صفحة متصلة إذا كان الأمر ضرورياً)

.....

3.

ماذا تريد القيام به؟

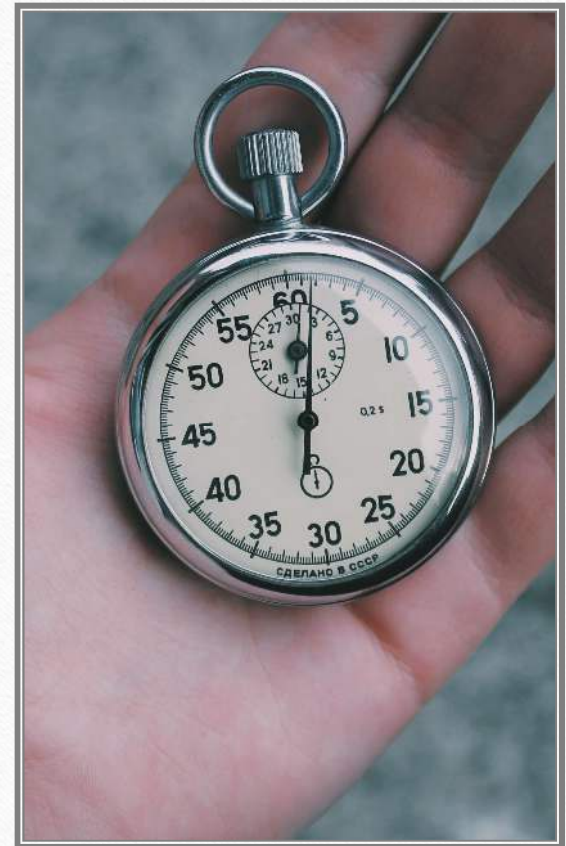
.....

4.

هل يمكننا الاتصال بك لتقديم تقييمك؟

نعم **Symbol** لا **Symbol**

## Brief History & Examples





# Brief History & Examples

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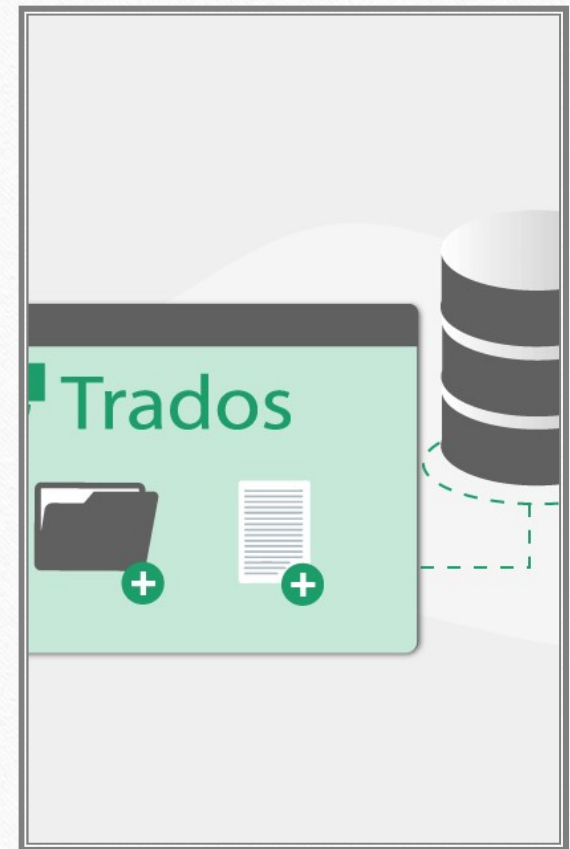
- During 50s and 60s, MT tools were invented to provide quick translations.
- CAT emerged in the 1980s with globalisation, when growing international trade and technology created demand for faster, more consistent translations.
- In the 1990s and 2000s, they evolved into full-featured platforms with Translation Memories (TMs), glossaries, and project management functions.
- Today, tools like Trados, MemoQ, and Memsource are industry standards, supporting complex multilingual projects across many sectors.

# Brief History & Examples





## Key Components of CAT Tools



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# Key Components of CAT Tools

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## **1. Translation Memory (TM):**

A translation memory is a database that stores translated segments (sentences, paragraphs, headings, titles, or list elements), in order to aid or assist human translators while using it in the future. It also stores the source text.

## **2. Translation Editor:**

The translation editor is where the translator performs the translation. It works as a table that contains units or segments.



# Key Components of CAT Tools

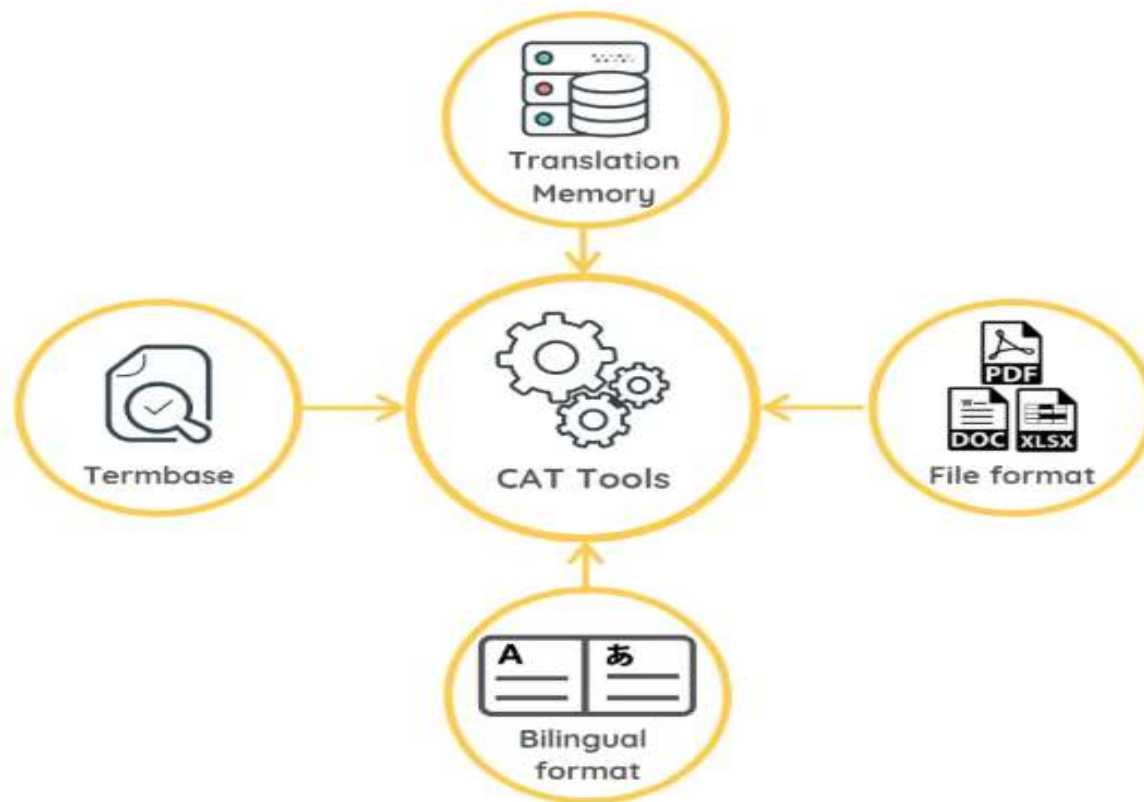
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## **3. Terminology databases (termbases / glossaries):**

A Terminology base or "termbase" is a database that stores single words, expressions, or terminology. A termbase is similar to a dictionary, but it's not. You can use a termbase for dedicating specific words for a specific customer or project, in other words, organizing the stored terminology you have according to different projects.

## **4. QA features (consistency, tags, numbers):**

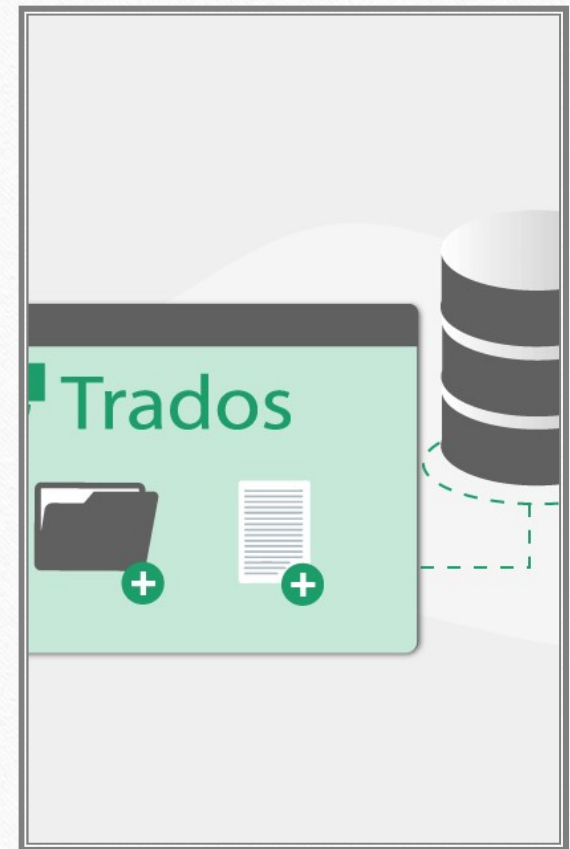
They ensure that repeated segments are translated the same way throughout a project, verify that formatting tags such as bold or italics are correctly used, and check that numbers, dates, and measurements are correct. By automatically flagging inconsistencies or potential errors, QA features help translators deliver precise, reliable translations.



Source: <https://www.bureauworks.com/blog/the-top-5-cat-tools-for-translation-professionals>



## How CAT Tools Work



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# How CAT Tools Work

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- Split text into segments/translation units
- Suggest matches from TM
- Offer approved terminology
- Build your assets as you translate



# How CAT Tools Work

## Your Details

First Name

Surname

Service Number

Date

Facility

Was this made as a Verbal complaint in the first instance?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Have you spoken to anyone about your complaint?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, who did you speak to?

Is your complaint about a racial incident?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Is your complaint about bullying?

Yes ☐ No ☐

1.

If you are using the confidential access procedure, why are you doing this?

.....

2.

What is your complaint?

(Continue on the back or on separate pages if necessary)

.....

3.

What would you like to see done about your complaint?

.....

4.

May we contact you to provide feedback?

Yes ☐ No ☐

## التفاصيل الخاصة بك

الاسم الأول

اسم العائلة

رقم الخدمة

التاريخ

المنشأة

هل هذه كانت شكوى شفوية في الحالة الأولى؟

نعم ☐ لا ☐

هل تحدثت مع أحد بخصوص هذه الشكوى.

نعم ☐ لا ☐

إذا كانت الإجابة نعم، فمن الذي تحدثت معه؟

هل الشكوى تخص حالة عنصرية؟

نعم ☐ لا ☐

هل الشكوى بخصوص التمييز؟

نعم ☐ لا ☐

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إذا كنت تستخدم إجراء الوصول السري، فلماذا تقوم بذلك؟

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ما هي شكواك؟

(تابع في الخلف أو في صفحة متصلة إذا كان الأمر ضرورياً)

.....

3.

ماذا تريد القيام به؟

.....

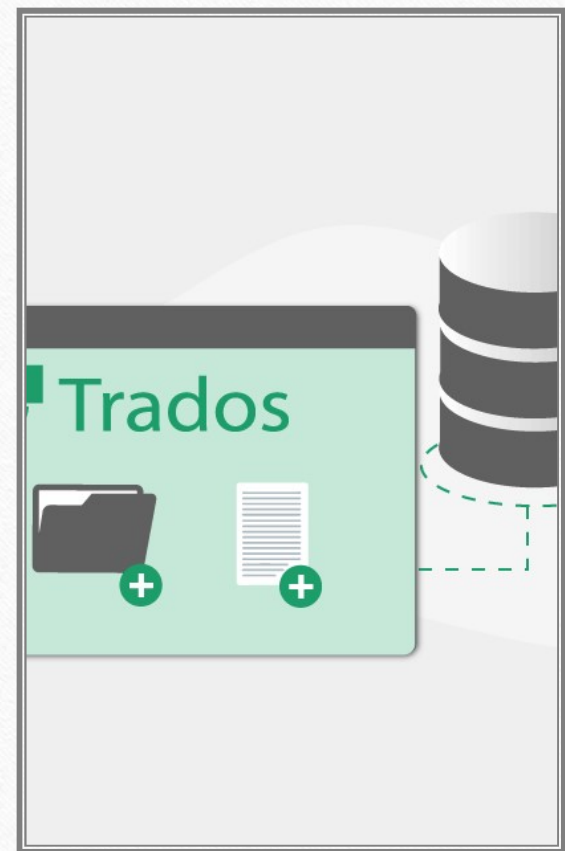
4.

هل نتمكن من الاتصال بك لتقديم تقييمك؟

نعم ☐ لا ☐

# Types of CAT Tools

Desktop & Offline CAT Tools.



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# Types of CAT Tools

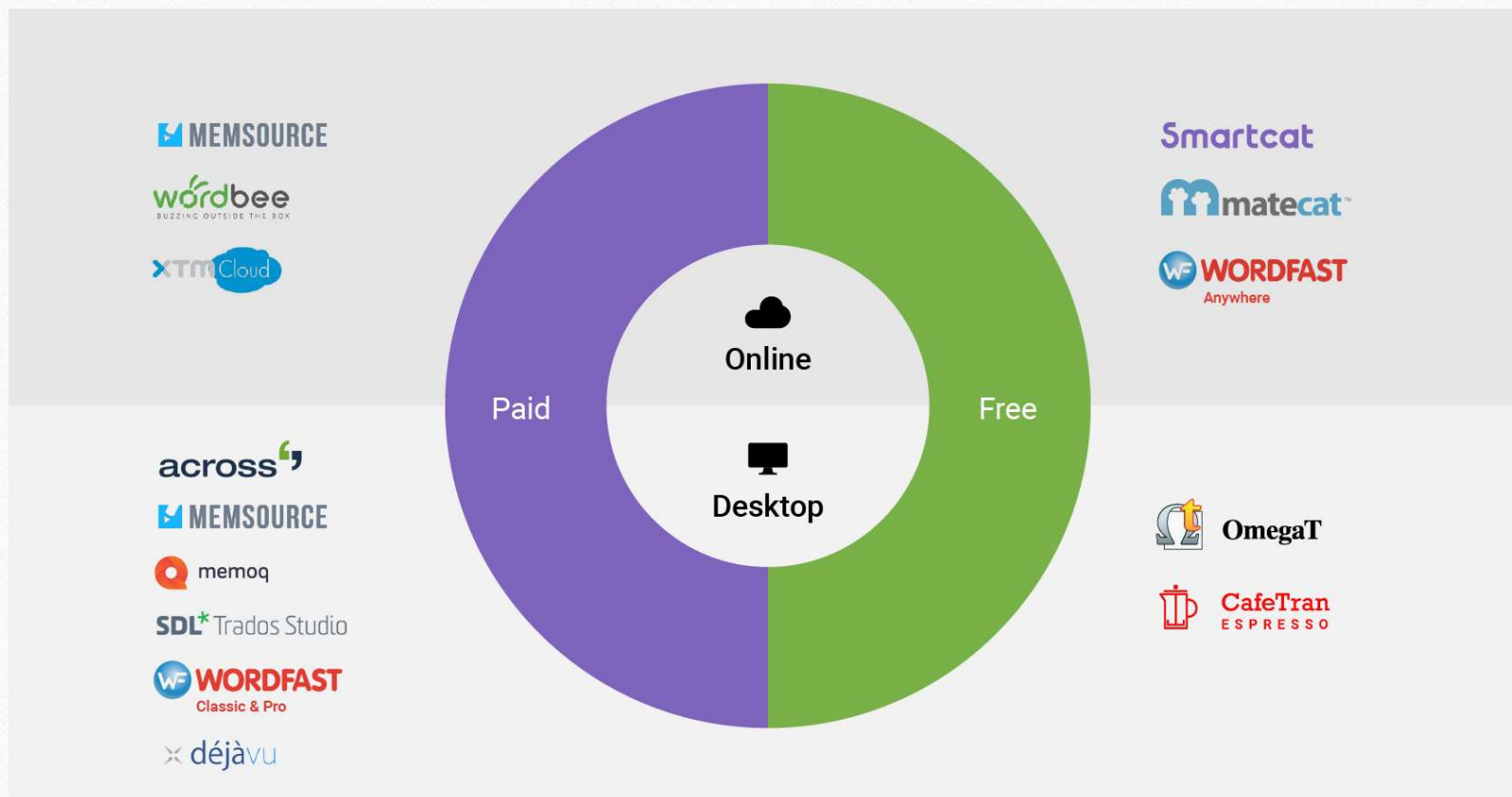
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## Desktop-based/offline:

- **Pros:**
  - No need for an internet connection; good on plane.
  - More secure
- **Cons:**
  - No collaborative translation
  - Consuming your machine storage and memory space

## Cloud-based/online):

- **Pros:**
  - Great accessibility
  - Collaborative translation
- **Cons:**
  - Less security
  - Unstable internet connection



Source: <https://www.grwtranslation.com/cat-tools-which-one-to-choose/>



# Advantages of CAT

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- Speed up translation = more leisure time.
- Ensure consistency in large projects
- Make QA easier.
- Support teamwork on large projects
- Many clients expect CAT tools use
- Standard for agencies & tenders
- Repetitions & fuzzy matches

# Limitations & Challenges

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- High learning curve for new users
- Licensing & costs
- Not ideal for very creative texts



# CAT Best Practices for New Translators

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- Master one CAT tool first
- Build your own TM & glossaries
- Back up your assets regularly
- Stay updated with new features

# Q&As

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- What does CAT refer to?
- What does MT refer to?
- Are CAT tools machine translation (MT) tools?
- What is the difference between CAT and MT?
- Are CAT tools just one type of software?
- What are the widely known CAT tools?
- Where does a CAT tool store sentences you translate?