Set up Alpaca paper trading

GridTraderPro

Trade with GridTraderPro without depositing a cent · about 5 minutes

An Alpaca paper-only account needs nothing but an e-mail address — no ID check, no deposit — and starts with 100,000 US dollars of virtual cash.

> **Write the Secret Key down straight away. Alpaca shows it exactly once and never again.**

1 Create the Alpaca account

- Sign up at alpaca.markets, choosing the paper-only option.
- Once signed in, switch to the Paper Trading account in the upper-left corner.

2 Generate your paper API keys

- Open the API keys section of the dashboard and generate a new pair.
- Paper and live use separate key pairs.

3 Enter the keys in GridTraderPro

- Settings › Brokers › Alpaca › Configure…
- Fill in API Key and API Secret.
- Leave “Paper Trading” ticked (on by default).
- Test Connection › “Alpaca Paper OK”. Then OK and Connect.
- The status then reads: Connected · PAPER

4 Point market data at Alpaca

- Settings › Market Data › Provider Priority › Primary: Alpaca
- Without this step no prices arrive — the broker connection alone is not enough.

What to expect in paper mode

- Prices from the free IEX feed, not the consolidated SIP tape.
- Market and limit orders only, always day orders, no extended-hours trading.
- Whole shares only — no fractional shares.
- Short levels need a margin account and a shortable symbol.
- Order status is polled about every three seconds rather than streamed.