

THE BEGINNER PROMPT GUIDE

Start here.

Make AI useful in your everyday life.

12 ready-to-use prompts. Simple ways to refine an answer.
A starting point for discovering what works for you.

YOUR FIRST FIVE MINUTES

- 01 Open a tool you can access.**
Free access is enough to begin experimenting.
- 02 Choose something small and familiar.**
An email, a messy list, or a task you keep avoiding.
- 03 Ask, review, and respond.**
Tell it what helped, what is missing, and what to change.

You do not need the perfect prompt.
You need something to try and a way to judge whether it helped.

Translating technical capabilities to expand human possibilities

Start with a small frustration.

Copy a prompt, replace the [brackets], and keep the conversation going.

01 Turn a messy list into a plan

Here is everything on my mind: [list]. I have [time] and [energy level] today. Help me choose three priorities and a realistic order. Ask about deadlines before you decide.

Try next: Give me only the first action, small enough to do in five minutes.

02 Write the message you keep avoiding

Help me write a message to [person] about [situation]. I want it to sound [warm/direct/casual]. My main point is [point]. Keep it under [length] and do not invent details.

Try next: Make it sound more like me. Here is a sentence I would actually say.

03 Understand something unfamiliar

Explain [concept] in plain language. I already understand [related idea]. Use one concrete example, define unfamiliar terms, and ask me one question to check my understanding.

Try next: Explain the part about [detail] another way, with a simpler example.

04 Make a routine easier

I keep putting off [ordinary task]. The hardest part is [reason]. Help me make a manageable plan using [time/resources]. Give me a version for a day when I have very little energy.

Try next: Which steps are optional? Help me make this easier to start.

Find support in familiar work.

Use approved tools and information you are allowed to share.

05 Turn notes into clear next steps

Organize these notes into decisions, tasks, owners, and open questions: [notes]. Use only what is stated. If an owner or due date is missing, mark it as unspecified.

Try next: Separate confirmed commitments from ideas that were only discussed.

06 Get a first draft onto the page

Help me draft [email/update/outline] for [audience]. They need to understand [main point]. Use these facts: [facts]. Keep the tone [tone]. Flag missing information instead of making it up.

Try next: Cut repetition and make the action I need from the reader clearer.

07 Prepare for a conversation

I am meeting with [role] to discuss [topic]. My goal is [goal]. Based on this context: [context], suggest five useful questions and a short agenda. Label assumptions.

Try next: Which two questions matter most if we only have 15 minutes?

08 Make a recurring process clearer

Here is how I currently do [task]: [steps]. Help me identify repetition, missing inputs, and unclear handoffs. Suggest one small improvement to test, and explain what it might change.

Try next: What needs to be clarified before I try to automate any part of this?

Use it to help you think.

You can ask for questions, alternatives, structure, and feedback.

09 Start when you do not know what to ask

I am trying to [goal], but I feel stuck at [difficulty]. Ask me one question at a time to understand the situation. Then suggest three ways you could help, and let me choose.

Try next: Which option is simplest to try with what I already have?

10 Compare options against your priorities

Help me compare [options] using [my priorities]. Here is what I know: [details]. Make a short comparison table. Mark missing information and explain what I should verify.

Try next: How would the comparison change if [priority] mattered most?

11 Pressure-test an idea

Here is my idea: [idea]. My goal is [goal], and my constraints are [constraints]. Identify its strongest point, three weaknesses, and one small test. Do not assume it is a good idea.

Try next: What evidence would suggest I should change my approach?

12 Discover where AI might help you

These tasks take up my time or energy: [tasks]. Ask me about the most frustrating parts. Then suggest three small AI experiments, what each would need, and how I could judge the result.

Try next: Choose one I can test with non-sensitive information in ten minutes.

The first answer is a draft.

Your feedback helps shape the next version. You remain the reviewer.

A SMALL CHANGE. A MORE USEFUL REQUEST.

FIRST ASK

"Plan my afternoon."

ADD THE CONTEXT THAT MATTERS

"I have 90 minutes, low energy, and four errands. Two close at 5. Ask me for the locations and closing times before planning the order."

When the answer misses, try this.

Too much information

"Give me the three most important points."

Too generic

"Use my situation and constraints more specifically."

Wrong tone

"Make it warmer and simpler. Keep my meaning."

Missing context

"You assumed [X]. The actual situation is [Y]."

Hard to follow

"Show me one concrete example, step by step."

Sounds too certain

"Separate stated facts, assumptions, and unknowns."

Check what matters. Asking AI to check itself is not independent verification. Compare important claims with original material or reliable sources.

Try. Notice. Adjust.

A small experiment teaches you more when you review what happened.

1 TRY

One familiar task

2 NOTICE

What helped or failed?

3 ADJUST

Change one thing

A simple three-session experiment

01 Try a task you know how to judge.

Choose a prompt from this guide. Save the answer and note what you had to correct.

02 Repeat it with one useful change.

Add context, provide an example, or ask for a different format. Compare the results.

03 Decide whether to keep using it.

Did it reduce effort? Was checking it manageable? Would you use it again?

KEEP A QUICK NOTE

Task tried: _____ What helped: _____

What needed checking: _____ Next change: _____

Begin with curiosity. Keep your judgment.

Use non-sensitive material while learning. For work, follow your organization's tool and data rules. Verify consequential claims. You can discard an answer or stop an experiment that is not helping.

Want help making AI useful for your team?

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