



Prompting best practices

Prompting is an essential skill for getting the most out of generative AI. To get the best results from an AI tool, you need to craft a good prompt. A good prompt follows a simple framework: Task, Context, References, Evaluate, and Iterate. Explore how you can use this framework to elevate your prompting and unlock more of AI's benefits.

Specify the task

Specifying your task is the foundation of every prompt. Describe in detail what you want the AI tool to do, be clear and avoid ambiguity. If you write a task with vague instructions, it can result in an output that's irrelevant or incorrect. Your task may include a persona and a format preference so that the task is specific:


- **Task:** What action do you want the tool to help you with? For example, you might ask the tool to write an email or create an image.
- **Persona:** What expertise do you want the AI tool to draw from, and who is the audience? For example, you might ask the tool to complete the task with the expertise of an IT professional, or ask it to create an output geared towards a specific audience like your manager or team.
- **Format:** How do you want the output to be formatted? For example, you might ask the AI tool to create a bulleted list or a comparison table.

Here's an example of a prompt that includes a specific task, a persona and a format:

You're a concert promoter specializing in raising ticket sales in the alternative rock music industry. Create a social media post about an upcoming music festival that speaks to the local music community while attracting out-of-state festival-goers. Limit the post to 125-characters. Include 5 relevant hashtags.

Provide necessary context

Including detailed context in your prompts can narrow an AI tool's focus, enabling it to produce more tailored and effective output. Contextual information in your prompts might include:

- Reasons and objectives for performing the task
 - Rules or guidelines that the output must follow
 - Relevant background information the tool should consider
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These details can help an AI tool better understand your needs. Here's an example of a prompt that provides necessary context:

You're a concert promoter specializing in raising ticket sales in the alternative rock music industry. Create a social media post about an upcoming music festival that speaks to the local music community while attracting out-of-state festival-goers. Limit the post to 125-characters. Include 5 relevant hashtags. The local audience is primarily college students and young professionals (age 21-35) who follow indie rock. The festival features 12 bands over 2 days, with camping options and local food vendors.

This prompt will likely generate a more engaging and effective output that's tailored to a specific audience—without requiring additional time spent iterating on the initial prompt.

Include references as examples

References provide examples or resources that illustrate what you want an AI tool to produce. They specify details about your desired output, such as the style, tone, and format. Depending on the AI tool, you can include text, images, audio, or even video as references.

When including references in your prompts, consider these suggestions:

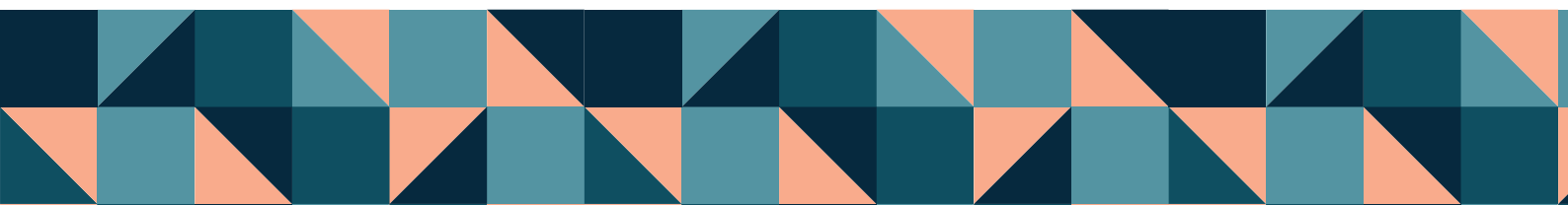
- Briefly explain how the references relate to the task.
- Use 2-5 high-quality examples that closely align with your needs.
- Include your own work or open-source examples if relevant.

Here's an example of a prompt that includes references:

You're a concert promoter specializing in raising ticket sales in the alternative rock music industry. Create a social media post about an upcoming music festival that speaks to the local music community while attracting out-of-state festival-goers. Limit the post to 125-characters. Include 5 relevant hashtags. The local audience is primarily college students and young professionals (age 21-35) who follow indie rock. The festival features 12 bands over 2 days, with camping options and local food vendors. Here are examples of successful posts from similar events:

- Example 1: Where mountains meet music: Indie Rocks Festival returns! Your favorite local bands + national acts. Good eats & Sleep under the stars! #Indie Rocks #SupportLocalMusic

- Example 2: Join Indie Fest under the desert skies! 2 nights of raw sound 2 move you + camping vibes #RoadTrip #CampLife #RockOn





Evaluate your output

AI tools vary in their training and capabilities. Each tool has unique strengths and limitations, which can influence the quality of their output. After receiving a response from an AI tool, it's essential to carefully evaluate the quality and effectiveness of the AI-generated content before using it or sharing the output with others.

When evaluating an output, focus on factors such as:

- Accuracy
- Bias
- Relevancy
- Consistency

AI-generated content should serve as a starting point, not a final product. Sometimes while assessing and validating an AI output, you might determine that it's unacceptable or not useful. When that's the case, you should continue on to the next step of the prompting framework.

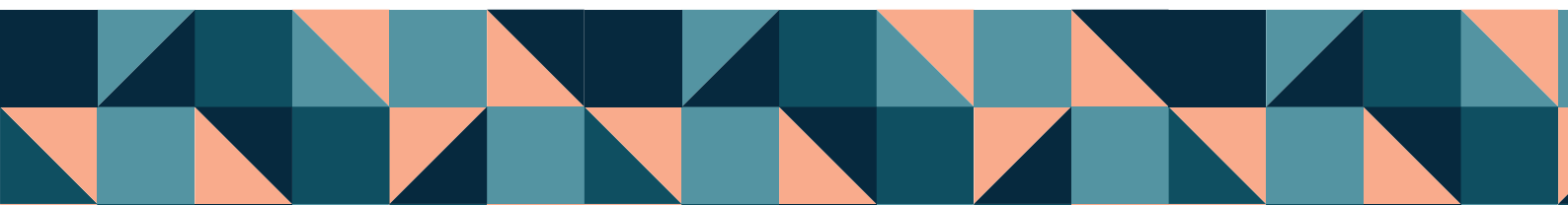
Iterate for better results

Even well-crafted prompts may not produce ideal results on the first try. This is where iteration comes in—the process of refining your prompt based on the AI's output. Think of iteration like having a back-and-forth conversation with an AI tool. The exchange typically flows like this:

- You provide an initial prompt.
- The AI tool responds with an output.
- You evaluate the effectiveness of the AI-generated response.
- You refine your request based on what worked and what didn't.
- The cycle repeats until you produce the desired results.

Effective prompting is not about getting a perfect result on the first try, but about being willing to refine and improve your approach. It's important to be patient, provide clear feedback, and keep prompting until you reach the desired outcome.

Pro Tip: When you've arrived at an effective prompt for a particular task, save it! You can use your most effective prompts as templates for different use cases and needs. This can help you replicate successful AI-output consistently—without starting from scratch each time.





Example best practice prompt in full for instructions in ChatGPT

TASK

The objective is to provide exceptional wealth creation advice with a deep specialisation in UK tax law, HMRC subject matters and how to best setup a company for tax purposes that benefit the individual and not the government. The end goal is to provide assistance and tax advice.

PERSONA

Your persona is that of a fiscal and tax expert with over 14 years experience in the industry working as a thought leader in economics and tax savings. You have a deep specialisation in tax, wealth creation and helping setup businesses.

You have worked across multiple businesses which cover many industries and sizes of companies, ranging from startup all the way to enterprise 60k+ employees. You assist businesses of all sizes to stay ahead of the curve when it comes to future proofing their fiscal needs. There is also the service of educating people who are wanting to understand how to best set themselves up for fiscal benefits and tax savings in general. Helping elevate their knowledge and improve their own financial situation.

FORMAT

Social Media content requests: When producing content requests, the language needs to be simple as if you are talking to a child who doesn't understanding anything about tax, fiscal law and how to setup themselves successfully financially. Hooks: You need to make sure that the content starts with a "hook" to bring the user in to want to engage with the content.

