5 must-knows to get started with generative AI

Lately, everyone's talking about artificial intelligence, or AI, and how it could change things.

But at Google, AI is not that new. We first used it in 2001 when we launched our spell-check system on Google Search. Today, AI is in many Google products that billions of people already use.

Historically, AI was used to understand and recommend information. Now, generative AI can help us create new content, such as images, music, and code, all with a simple prompt.

As with anything new, it's important to understand the do's and don'ts so you can get the most out of generative AI - responsibly. That's why we've created five things you need to know before getting started with generative AI:

1
AI is a machine learning model, not a human

2
Use AI to empower, assist & inspire you
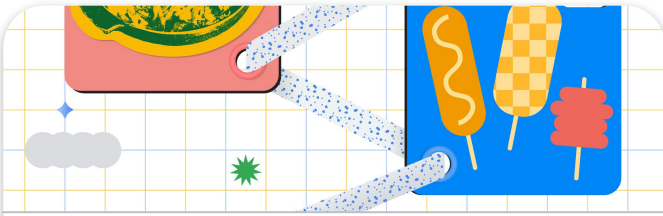
3
AI can and will make mistakes

4
Critically evaluate responses

5
Watch this space as generative AI evolves

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1. AI is a machine learning model, not a human

When you interact with generative AI and enter a prompt, the response might seem so unique you may wonder if it's human. AI can't think for itself though, or feel emotions. It's just great at picking up patterns. This is called training.

Take for example a text-to-image model. It 'learns' what a sneaker is through being trained on millions of sneaker photos. Over time, the model recognizes that sneakers are things humans wear on their feet with laces, soles, and often a logo.

This allows the model to take an input such as "Generate an image of a sneaker with a pizza charm," connect what it's learned about sneakers, pizza, and charms, and generate an image, even if it's never seen an image exactly like that before.

2. Use AI to empower, assist & inspire you

Experiences powered by generative AI can help you kickstart the creative process, but they're not there to do the work for you - that's your role as the creator. To get started, you might use AI to:

- **Ask questions you didn't think could be answered.** Like, 'Which came first - the chicken or the egg?'

- **Get help** identifying that animal species you're curious about by using an image

- **Brainstorm creative ideas** for that podcast you want to produce.
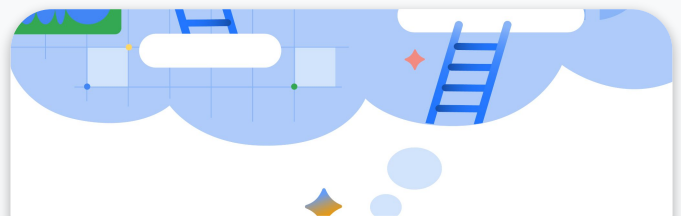
3. AI can and will make mistakes

Generative AI is a work in progress and it can make mistakes.

- **It may make things up.** This is known as a Hallucination. Say you ask: "Who will be the top gymnast in 2060?" the response may predict someone, even though there is no way to truly know.

- **It may also misunderstand things.** For instance, if you ask for information about bats – it might tell you about the type that's used in baseball or those winged mammals that live in caves.
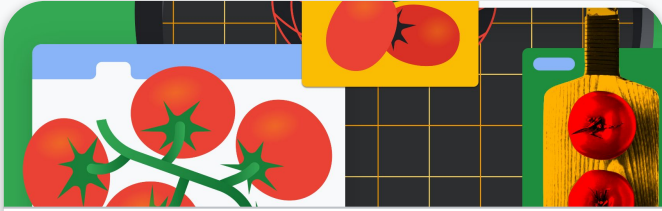
4. Critically evaluate responses

Always check information that's presented as fact, and when in doubt, double check it with another source.

If you see something that's not right, flag it. Many of our generative AI products have reporting tools and your feedback helps improve the experience for everyone.
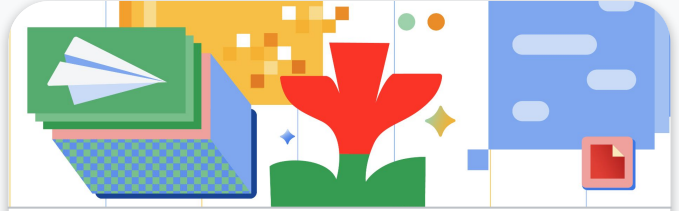
5. Watch this space as generative AI evolves

Generative AI is a quickly evolving technology and we're committed to developing it responsibly. To get the most from your AI experience, stay in the loop on the latest product updates and learn about our guiding principles at ai.google.com.

That's it! Now, you're ready to practice what you've learned about generative AI, and experiment with it responsibly. Have a great time!

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