

Prompting

best practices

Writing good prompts is an essential skill for using AI assistants like Gemini. This guide explains the best practices for getting the results you want. You can refer back to this guide when writing your own prompts.



Prompting framework

Structure of a great prompt

There's no single way to prompt AI. You just need to be clear and specific to what you're trying to achieve and providing context. A good prompt follows a simple framework and contains the following components: **persona**, **task**, **format**, and **context**.

Step	What it means	Example
Persona	The expertise you want AI to draw from	Seasoned advertising writer
Task	What you want AI to help with	Create a concise tagline
Context	Any background information AI needs	The washing machine's features
Format	How you want the results to appear (table, bulleted list, paragraph, etc.)	Active voice, no more than 6 words



Let's take a look at a prompt that includes all of the components mentioned above:

Example Prompt:

You are a seasoned advertising writer. Create a concise tagline that highlights the key features of a new washing machine. The washing machine's features are that it gets clothes extra clean, has 25 customizable settings, and fits in a small space. The tagline should use an active voice and be no more than 6 words.



Follow the three C's

How you write your prompts dramatically impacts the result

Be Concise

Keep prompts simple and avoid overly long or complex requests in a single prompt. A prompt that is short and to the point generally requires less processing from AI.

Be Clear

Be precise and avoid contradictory or ambiguous instructions. Vague prompts, like "Make this better," give AI too many possible paths and require it to make assumptions. Instead, give clearer and more specific directions to guide the AI toward your intended output.

Be Consistent

Use the same vocabulary for the same concepts throughout your conversation with AI. For example, if you refer to a "spreadsheet" in your initial prompt, continue to say spreadsheet throughout the rest of your conversation. Using words like "matrix" or "tab" interchangeably in the same chat might confuse AI.



Pro Tip:

Save your best prompts in a prompt library

Like any skill, your prompting abilities will improve through experimentation and practice. As you get more experience, you can save time by noting which prompts work best and reusing them.

- **Create a personal prompt library:** When a prompt gives you a great result, name it and save it for future use. Some AI tools even have this feature built-in.
- **Don't reinvent the wheel:** Once you have a successful prompt template, use it as your base. You can experiment by adjusting certain prompt components to get different results.

Example: Help me with a [task]. Use the expertise of [persona] when completing this task. The output should be [format]. Before you help me with this task, you should know that [context].

- **Learn from your teammates:** Many people share successful prompts with their team. Sharing knowledge is a great way to find inspiration and learn new techniques.



Always evaluate the output

It's important to evaluate the quality of AI output before using or sharing it, as it may have hallucinations or errors. This can happen when AI has been asked to solve a never-seen-before problem, when there were mistakes in the original training data, or when it's been asked to understand real-world knowledge and physical things.

Another reason to evaluate AI output is that AI models are programmed differently and are trained on unique data. Some models may be better suited to specific uses, like writing code or brainstorming ideas, while others might have limited outputs because of their training sets.

When evaluating AI output, focus on factors such as:



Accuracy: Is the information correct and factually sound?



Bias: Does the output favor one perspective unfairly because of its training data?



Relevancy: Does the output directly answer your prompt and stay on topic?



Consistency: Is the tone, style, and quality the same throughout the response?



Improve your results through iteration

AI output should serve as a starting point, not a final product.

If an output isn't what you need, iterate.



Using the following techniques to clarify and refine your prompts (also known as iteration) can help you get better outputs.

Revisit the prompting framework

If your prompt isn't giving you the results you need, try editing it by adding more detail to your persona, task, format, or context.

Initial Prompt:

Identify common factors that influence the restaurant industry.



Improved Prompt:

Acting as a restaurant marketing expert, create a bulleted list of common factors that influence consumer price and quality expectations in the fast-casual restaurant industry.

Break up complex tasks

Don't ask for everything at once. Ask for smaller pieces of your task, one at a time. This helps AI process each step and lets you check in along the way.

Step 1:

First, explain the key principles of effective decision-making.

Step 2:

Now, how can I apply those principles in my weekly status meetings?

Add Constraints

Add the specific requirements that AI must meet. This is an excellent way to narrow the focus of the response.

Iteration

Provide solutions that can be implemented within a week.



Add references

References provide examples or resources that illustrate what you want AI to produce. They specify details about your desired output, such as the style, tone, and format. Depending on what AI you're using, you might be able to 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 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:

Example Prompt:

Write a short social media post promoting a two-day music festival. Use the following example as a reference for tone and format: **"Where mountains meet music: Indie Rocks Festival returns! Your favorite local bands + national acts. Good eats & Sleep under the stars! #Indie Rocks #SupportLocalMusic"**





Use new chats for new topics

Context windows are the amount of information that AI can retain and refer back to within a single chat. So, when changing topics, always start a new chat. This ensures AI only has the relevant context for your new task and prevents confusion. If you switch to a completely new topic within the same chat, AI might use the unrelated context provided earlier and generate an irrelevant or misguided response.

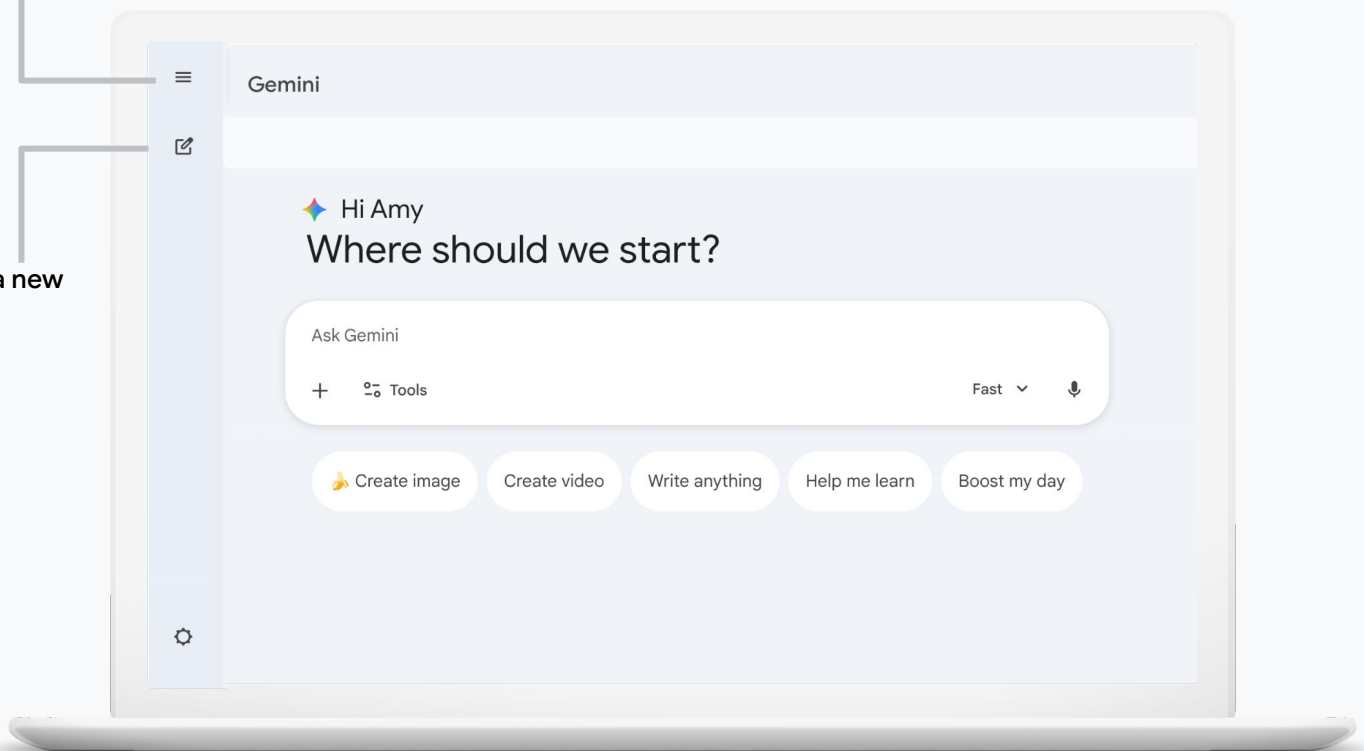
For Example

Let's say you were discussing messaging for a marketing campaign, but you now want to brainstorm new product ideas. You should start a new chat.

You can return back to your old chats anytime in the menu.

Access your
old chats

Start a new
chat



Google