AIFreeForever

The Prompt Writing Guide for 2026

A prompt is the words you give someone, or an AI chatbot, to start them off. A vague prompt gets a vague result. A clear one says what you want, who it is for and what shape it should take. This guide covers the five parts of a good prompt, a template to fill in, what each purpose, tone and format is for, and ten ready prompts to try.

The five parts of a good prompt

1. **Topic.** The idea itself, said as clearly as you can: "a library that exists between dimensions".
2. **Purpose.** What the prompt is for: writing, a conversation, brainstorming, a task, a story hook or a world.
3. **Tone.** How it should sound: serious, funny, philosophical, whimsical, direct or mysterious.
4. **Format.** The shape it takes: a question, a paragraph, a dialogue, a list, a scenario or a metaphor.
5. **Audience.** Who will use it: anyone, an AI chatbot, a writer, a student, a developer or a business team.

A prompt template to fill in

Topic: _____.
I want: a _____ prompt (writing, brainstorming, a task...).
Tone: _____.
Shape: as a _____ (question, list, scenario...).
For: _____.
A good answer includes: _____.

Before: "Write about plants." After: "Imagine plants could talk to the people who water them. In a whimsical tone, write three short scenes where a houseplant gives its owner advice. Each scene ends with the owner changing one habit."

What each purpose is for

Purpose	Use it to	Add to your prompt
Writing	Start a story, an article, a poem or a post	The length and who will read it
Conversation Starter	Open a good talk in a class, a team or a podcast	Who is talking and how long you have
Brainstorming	Draw out many ideas quickly	How many ideas, and "no idea is too small"
Productivity Task	Get a piece of work done	The result you need and any deadline
Story Hook	Open with a moment readers cannot leave	The genre and the main character
Worldbuilding	Build a setting, its people and its rules	One rule that makes the world different

Formats and when to use each

Format	Best for
Question	Discussions, journals and essays
Paragraph	Rich detail and a clear scene
Dialogue	Characters, scripts and role-play
List	Tasks, steps and instructions for an AI
Scenario	"Imagine..." situations and decisions
Metaphor	Poetry and fresh ways of seeing an idea

Prompts for an AI chatbot and for people

- **For an AI chatbot** (ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini): speak to it as "you", give it a role, and say what the answer must include.
- **For people** (writers, students, a team): leave room for their own ideas, and keep it short enough to read aloud.
- Never ask an AI to make up facts. Give it your own facts, or ask it to mark what needs checking.

Fix a weak result

1. **Too general?** Add a name, a place or a detail of your own.
2. **Too long?** Ask for a word count or a number of points.
3. **Wrong feel?** Change the tone: serious, funny or mysterious.
4. **Wrong shape?** Change the format: a list, a dialogue or a scenario.
5. **Still stuck?** Ask the AI to ask you 3 questions first.

Ten ready prompts to try

1. Imagine a restaurant where emotions are served as dishes. Describe the menu, then write the moment a guest orders "courage" for the first time.
2. What would change in your town if music were the only money? Answer in three short paragraphs.
3. Ana: "You paid for the house with a song?" Ben: "It was the only one I had left." Continue this dialogue for ten more lines.
4. List ten ideas for a school fundraiser that costs less than $50 to run, each in one sentence.
5. You are a meeting planner. Write a 45-minute agenda for a weekly remote team meeting of 6 people, as a list with times.
6. A detective solves crimes inside virtual reality. Write the opening scene, ending on the clue that does not belong.
7. Describe a library that exists between dimensions: its rules, its librarian and the one book no one may borrow.
8. If an AI became a therapist for other AIs, what three questions would it ask first? Explain each one.
9. Write a metaphor that explains how habits work, and use it in a short paragraph for students.
10. You are a social media manager. Write five questions that start a friendly conversation with followers of a local bakery.

Check your prompt before you use it

☐ The topic is clear in one line.

☐ It says what the result is for.

☐ It names a tone and a shape (a list, a dialogue, a question).

☐ It says who will use it, or speaks to the AI as "you".

☐ It adds one detail of your own: a name, a place, a number.

☐ It says what a good result must include, or how long it should be.

Plan your prompt

Fill this in, then turn it into three prompts with the free Prompt Generator.

Your topic or idea, and the details that matter

The purpose, the tone, the format and who will use it

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