

Prompt Engineering Cheat Sheet

Frameworks, patterns and best practices for clearer, more consistent AI results.
Keep it nearby while you work.

THE CORE FRAMEWORK

Role → Task → Format

Example: Act as a travel editor (**role**). Summarize the notes below for first-time visitors (**task**). Present the result as five bullet points (**format**).

01 Role, Task & Format Structure

The base of almost every good prompt

ROLE

Who the AI should act as, such as an editor, tutor or analyst.

TASK

What it must do, with the context it needs to do it well.

FORMAT

How the answer should look: a list, table, email or summary.

TEMPLATE

Act as [role]. [Task with context]. Present the result as [format].

EXAMPLE

Act as a career coach. Review my resume summary below and suggest three improvements for a marketing role. Present the result as a numbered list with one sentence of reasoning for each.

EXAMPLE

Act as a customer support lead. Rewrite this reply to an upset customer so it is calm and clear. Present the result as an email under 120 words.

02 Chain-of-Thought Prompting

For logic, math and planning tasks

Ask for the reasoning in steps before the final answer. Skip it for simple questions, where it only adds length.

STEP BY STEP

Solve this problem step by step, showing your reasoning before the final answer.

CRITERIA

Break this decision into criteria, score each option against them, then recommend one.

ASSUMPTIONS

List your assumptions first, then work through the plan in order and flag any weak points.

SELF-CHECK

Re-read the steps above and point out anything that does not hold up.

03 Few-Shot Example Methods

Show the pattern, then give the new input

TEMPLATE

[Task]. Example 1: Input [A] → Output [B]. Example 2: Input [C] → Output [D]. Now do this: Input [new input] → Output:

EXAMPLE

Classify each comment as Positive, Neutral or Negative. Comment: "Delivery was quick and the packaging was great." → Positive. Comment: "The product works, but setup took too long." → Neutral. Comment: "It stopped working after two days." → Negative. Now classify: "The app is easy to use, though the price feels high." →

04 Tips for Constraints & Output Control

Add these to the end of a prompt

CONTROL	EXAMPLE PHRASE	USE IT WHEN
Length	Keep it under 120 words.	You need a short answer
Structure	Use three headings and short paragraphs.	The result will be read by others
Tone	Write in a calm, professional tone.	Voice matters
Audience	Explain it for a first-time user.	The reader is new to the topic
Scope	Use only the information provided below.	You want answers tied to your text
Exclusions	Do not use jargon or filler phrases.	Output feels padded
Data format	Return a table with columns: Task, Owner, Deadline.	You will paste it into a sheet
Uncertainty	If you are unsure, say so instead of guessing.	Accuracy matters

05 Common Mistakes to Avoid

And the quick fix for each

MISTAKE A vague request

FIX Name the audience, goal and length.

MISTAKE No background context

FIX Paste the details the answer depends on.

MISTAKE Too many tasks in one prompt

FIX Split it into steps and run them in order.

MISTAKE No output format stated

FIX Say if you want a list, table or email.

MISTAKE Accepting the first answer

FIX Ask for a revision with specific feedback.

MISTAKE Skipping verification

FIX Check facts, numbers and names before use.

06 How to Apply It

A simple routine for every new task

1

Start with the base

Write the role, task and format first.

2

Add limits

Include context, length, tone and exclusions.

3

Add support

Use examples or step-by-step reasoning when the task needs it.

4

Review and refine

Check the result, then give specific feedback.

Who should keep this nearby: students, writers, marketers, analysts and teams that want a shared baseline for better prompts.

Results vary by tool version and settings. Always review the output before using it.