



# GUIDEBOOK

## Using AI Effectively And Responsibly



NDSU

NORTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY



## Introduction

At North Dakota State University (NDSU), we are committed to preparing students to be innovative thinkers and leaders in an increasingly complex world of digital tools and information.

As AI tools become more integrated into education and the workplace, understanding how to use them safely, strategically, and ethically is essential.

This guide provides practical recommendations for using AI in ways that support learning, uphold academic integrity, and develop critical skills for the future.

By approaching AI responsibly, you can enhance your academic work, build technological fluency, and contribute more productively to the region's current and emerging workforce.

**Note:** This document was produced by iterative prompting, selecting, and adapting of outputs from Chat-GPT and Co-Pilot.

## Comply with University Policies

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North Dakota State University (NDSU) has specific policies regarding AI use in academic work.

Before using AI tools, familiarize yourself with university guidelines, including policies on academic integrity and responsible technology use. Misuse of AI-generated content—such as submitting AI-written work as your own—could violate academic honesty rules. Understanding

and following these policies will not only keep you in good standing as a student but also prepare you for ethical AI use in professional settings, where organizations increasingly implement guidelines for acceptable AI use.

[View NDSU Policies >>](#)

## Check with Each Instructor and Course Syllabus

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AI policies can vary by course and instructor. Some professors may encourage AI for brainstorming or revising, while others may prohibit its use. Always review your syllabus and ask for clarification before using AI in assignments. Learning to navigate different instructor expectations mirrors what you will

encounter in the workplace, where AI policies vary by industry and employer. Developing adaptability and responsible AI habits will help you transition into careers where knowing when and how to use AI appropriately is a valuable skill.

**Learner Tip:** Treat AI like a study partner, not a substitute for your own work.

## Be Transparent About AI Use

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Transparency is key when using AI in both academic and professional settings. If you use AI to assist with research, writing, or idea generation, clearly communicate how and to what extent you used it. This might include citing AI-generated content, providing a brief explanation with your assignment, or following the instructor's disclosure

requirements. In the workplace, transparency is just as important—many industries require employees to document AI-assisted work to ensure accountability, accuracy, and ethical compliance. Developing the habit of clear and open communication about AI use will prepare you for employers that expect responsible AI integration.

**Learner Tip:** Use AI as a starting point, not a final product.



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## Use AI as a Tool, Not a Substitute

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AI can enhance your learning, but it should never replace critical thinking, creativity, or personal expertise. Relying too heavily on AI outputs can weaken your ability to develop essential communication and problem-solving skills. In both academic and professional settings, AI is most effective when it expands your thinking

and supports careful decision-making—not when it replaces human choice and judgment. The workforce will require professionals who can collaborate with AI while maintaining strong independent thinking and analytical skills. If you can simply be replaced by AI work, what is your value to employers?

**Learner Tip:** If you do want to be replaced by AI, do not use it simply as a replacement.

## Be Aware of AI Limitations and Biases

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AI is a powerful tool but cannot be relied on without questioning and confirming. It can produce incorrect, outdated, “hallucinated,” or biased information. Whether using AI for coursework or in a future job, always check AI-generated content against credible sources, especially when working with research, data, or citations. At NDSU, uncritical use of AI may result in violation of academic integrity

and failure to meet assignment or course objectives. In industries such as healthcare, business, and journalism, professionals must critically evaluate AI suggestions to ensure accuracy and fairness. Developing AI skepticism now will prepare you to be a responsible, informed user of AI technologies in any future career.

**Learner Tip:** Always fact-check and cross-reference with trusted sources.



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## Protect Privacy, Security, and Intellectual Property

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When using AI tools, be mindful of what information you put in. Avoid sharing your own or other peoples' personal data and work, as some AI platforms may store or use that information. Additionally, most generative AI is based on internet content that includes copyrighted material. In both academic and

professional situations, intellectual property and data security laws govern AI use, and mishandling protected information can have serious consequences. Respecting data privacy and intellectual property at NDSU will help you navigate ethical and legal questions as you enter the workplace.

**Learner Tip:** When choosing which AI tool to use define your task, match features to goals, check ease of use, and test before you commit.



## Develop Skills for AI Fluency

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To use AI strategically, effectively, and responsibly in both academic and workplace settings, focus on developing the following skills:

- » **Choosing the appropriate tool** – Different AI tools serve different purposes. Learn to assess which technology best supports tasks like writing, data analysis, coding, or creative ideation. Knowing the right tool for the job will enhance quality of work and productivity.
- » **Prompting effectively** – The quality of AI output depends on how you frame your requests. Learning to craft clear, precise, and iterative prompts will help you maximize AI's potential, whether in academic projects or professional tasks.
- » **Evaluating outputs** – AI-generated content should always be reviewed for accuracy, bias, and relevance to your specific audience, purpose, and situation. In the workplace,

companies rely on employees who can critically assess and adapt AI content rather than blindly accepting it.

- » **Adding human value** – AI can assist with efficiency, but human creativity, judgment, and ethical reasoning remain essential. Employers value workers who can use AI as a collaborative tool, rather than a replacement for human expertise.

- » **Adapting to evolving technology** – AI is constantly advancing. Staying informed about new tools, best practices, and ethical considerations will make you more adaptable in both academic settings and the professional world. Learning to work alongside AI will be an asset in college and any career path.

**Learner Tip:** Include context, desired tone, and format. Put limits on word count, style, or audience.



## Appendices

### Quick Help Guides

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See the following appendices for these quick guides.

- 12. Choosing The Right AI Tool
- 13. Resources For AI Prompt Generation
- 14. Mini Guide To Writing Effective AI Prompts
- 15. AI Output Evaluation Checklist

**Learner Tip:** Craft better prompts by being specific, using examples, adding constraints, and asking for multiple options.

# Choosing The Right AI Tool

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The following resources can help you find the right AI tool for the task.

## **StartUs Insights: 64 Essential AI Tools for Work**

Categorizes 64 AI tools across 19 distinct use cases like:

- » Brainstorming & Ideation
- » Content Creation
- » Cybersecurity
- » Legal Applications
- » Research & Development

Ideal for students, professionals, and educators looking to match tools to tasks.

## **AI Tool Selection Checklist by PopularAITools.ai**

Offers a step-by-step guide to choosing tools based on:

- » Your goals (e.g., speed, accuracy, creativity)
- » Technical skill level
- » ROI and cost-benefit analysis

Includes tips for testing tools before committing.

## **OfficeChai's 30 Best AI Tools for Work**

A curated list of top AI tools for:

- » Coding
- » Design
- » Marketing

- » Sales
- » Writing

Great for students exploring productivity and creative tools.

## **ProofreadingAI's Guide: 10 Tips for Choosing AI Tools**

Focuses on goal-setting and feature matching.

Helps users avoid distractions from flashy features and stay focused on what matters.

## Resources For AI Prompt Generation

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The following resources can help you maximize the productivity of your AI prompts. The bullets under each will guide you in determining which resource fits best for you.

### PromptPerfect by Jina AI

- » Automatically optimizes prompts for major AI tools like ChatGPT, Claude, and Gemini.
- » Great for turning vague ideas into precise, high-performing prompts.
- » Especially useful for students, writers, and researchers.

### Originality.ai Prompt Generator

- » Offers diverse prompts across academic, creative, and technical domains.
- » Helps overcome writer's block

and spark new ideas.

- » Designed with a user-friendly interface for quick inspiration.

### Microsoft's Prompt Engineering Guide

- » A practical blog post with 15 tips for crafting better prompts.
- » Explains how to structure prompts with instructions, examples, and cues.
- » Ideal for students learning how to interact with generative AI effectively.

### Promptteam's 70 Powerful Prompt Examples

- » A treasure trove of prompt examples across writing, coding, marketing, and more.
- » Includes templates for blog posts, poetry, emails, and quizzes.
- » Great for experimenting with different formats and styles.



# Mini Guide To Writing Effective AI Prompts

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A prompt is the instruction or question you give to an AI to get a specific response. The better your prompt, the better the output.

## Prompt Writing Formula

Use this simple structure to build strong prompts:

### Context + Task + Format + Tone + Constraints

**Element:** Context

**Description:** Background or topic

**Example:** "I'm writing a paper on climate change."

**Element:** Task

**Description:** What you want the AI to do?

**Example:** "Summarize the causes and effects."

**Element:** Format

**Description:** Desired output type

**Example:** "In bullet points."

**Element:** Tone

**Description:** Style or voice

**Example:** "Use formal academic language."

**Element:** Constraints

**Description:** Limits or rules

**Example:** "Keep it under 150 words."

## Prompt Examples

» **Basic:** "Explain photosynthesis."

» **Better:** "Explain photosynthesis to a 10th-grade biology student

using simple language and a step-by-step format."

» **Best:** "I'm preparing a biology presentation for 10th grade. Can you explain photosynthesis in 5 clear steps using simple language and include one real-world example?"

## Use the checklist:

- ☐ Is the response relevant and accurate?
- ☐ Does it match the tone and format?
- ☐ Does it help me move forward with my assignment?

# AI Output Evaluation Checklist

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## Accuracy

- ☐ Does the information match what I've learned from class, textbooks, or credible sources?
- ☐ Are facts, dates, and statistics correct and up-to-date?
- ☐ Are any claims supported by evidence or references?
- ☐ Have I verified unfamiliar terms, concepts, or citations?
- ☐ Is the output free of logical errors or contradictions?

## Bias & Perspective

- ☐ Does the output present multiple viewpoints fairly?
- ☐ Is the language neutral and respectful, avoiding stereotypes or loaded terms?
- ☐ Could the AI be reflecting

bias based on how the prompt was worded?

- ☐ Have I considered whether cultural, political, or social bias might be influencing the response?
- ☐ Is the tone appropriate for academic work (not overly opinionated or promotional)?

## Quality & Relevance

- ☐ Is the response clearly written and well-organized?
- ☐ Does it directly address my assignment prompt or question?
- ☐ Is the vocabulary appropriate for college-level writing?
- ☐ Are examples and explanations relevant to my topic or discipline?

- ☐ Does the output help me think more deeply or critically about the topic?

## Ethical Use

- ☐ Have I cited or acknowledged the use of AI tools where appropriate?
- ☐ Am I using AI to support—not replace—my own thinking and writing?
- ☐ Have I revised and personalized the content instead of submitting it as-is?
- ☐ Am I following my instructor's or institution's guidelines for AI use?



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