

Find the Problem, Fix Your Prompt

When the output isn't quite right, identify what's wrong and update your prompt to get AI back on track.

Generic output?

Add context. What information or references does the AI need?

EXAMPLES

- "This is for new hires on their first day."
- "The goal is to reassure the client."
- "Use the attached report as your source."

Wrong length or shape?

Add a constraint. How many words? What format? How much detail?

EXAMPLES

- "Keep it under 150 words."
- "Format it as a numbered list."
- "Cover only the timeline and next steps."

Wrong tone or voice?

Set the style. What tone fits? Is there an example to match?

EXAMPLES

- "Warm and direct, like a note to a colleague."
- "Use plain language, no jargon."
- "Match the tone of the attached email."

Unnecessary content?

Say what to leave out. What should the AI skip or avoid?

EXAMPLES

- "Skip the intro. Start with the recommendation."
- "Avoid phrases like 'it's important to note.'"
- "Don't define terms the reader already knows."

Missed the mark?

Remove ambiguity. Could a word mean two things? Do any instructions conflict?

EXAMPLES

- "By 'soon,' I mean by end of day Friday."
- "'Review' means proofread, not rewrite."
- "Focus on cost, not features."

Remember that AI can make mistakes. Be sure to verify its output, especially when the stakes are high.

From the free [AI Prompting Essentials course](#).

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