

Prompt the AI to Show Its Work

Add one of these phrases to your prompt to make the AI show its thinking step by step (chain-of-thought prompting).

WHEN WORKING WITH...	ADD THIS TO YOUR PROMPT...
Numbers and data	"Show your calculations step by step before giving the final answer."
Comparing options	"List the pros and cons of each option before recommending one."
Tasks with multiple parts	"Work through each part separately, then combine them at the end."
Planning and processes	"Break this into steps and show me each one before the final plan."

Be Specific About What to Check

For even better results, combine any phrase from the table with specific details about what to check. This keeps the AI focused on what matters to your situation.

EXAMPLES

- "Before answering, check the holiday schedule and the overtime policy."
- "Compare the cost, the timeline, and the team impact for each option."
- "Verify the exchange rate and the shipping fee before quoting the price."

When to Use This Approach

- ✓ The task has multiple steps
- ✓ You need to verify the logic
- ✓ A missed step would cause problems

When to Skip This Approach

- ✗ The task is a simple draft or brainstorm
- ✗ You need a quick edit or summary
- ✗ Your AI tool has a built-in reasoning mode

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

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