NEW

# ULTIMATE ChatGPT PROMPTS

Written by experts, *not AI*

## HOW TO GET THE MOST FROM YOUR AI AGENT

Interview me for the role, based on the job description I just provided



How can I make this email sound more professional while still being friendly?



Create a bill calendar for me including reminders so that I do not miss any payments



Check the last three years' performance and analyse the profit-to-loss ratio











- > EASY LIFESTYLE HACKS
- > CREATIVE TIPS AND TRICKS
- > MUST-HAVE PHRASES

*And more*

100% UNOFFICIAL

Digital Edition

FUTURE

FIRST EDITION

### HOW TO TALK TO AI

Learn to structure your prompts for more powerful performance

### THE RESULTS YOU NEED

Discover ways to quickly produce the data you want

### ORGANISE EVERYTHING

Get ChatGPT to do your essential life admin for you

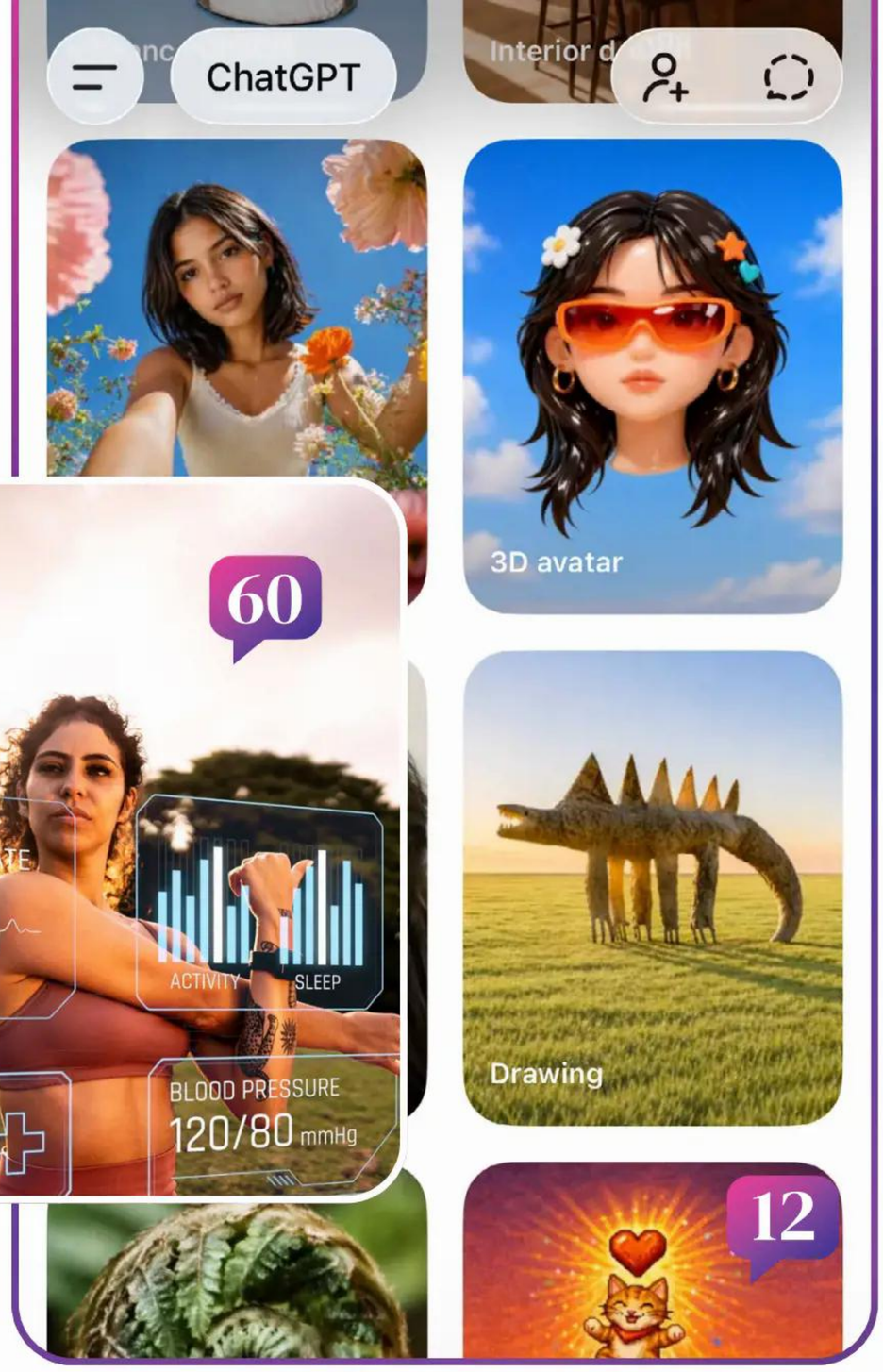


ULTIMATE

# ChatGPT PROMPTS

# Welcome

ChatGPT has revolutionised our workplaces and home lives, but did you know you can get even more from it? In this guide we'll walk you through how to create better prompts for a range of tasks and scenarios so that you can put ChatGPT to work for you. From tips and tricks to help you optimise your prompts and avoid errors and hallucinations, to in-depth guides on how to get ChatGPT to check and verify the information it gives you, here is everything you need to create better prompts today. Learn how you can set guardrails, simplify complex tasks, level up your life admin and track goals, spending and much more. Discover how ChatGPT can become the ultimate study buddy, personal assistant and your very own financial advisor. It can declutter your inbox, help you learn new things, help you manage regular payments, and much more. So pick up your phone, tablet or laptop, open up ChatGPT and let's get prompting!




WORKING WITH CHATGPT


34 Prompt optimisation

38 **Engineer a killer prompt**

42 Turn ChatGPT into an expert

44 **Continue a ChatGPT conversation intuitively**

46 Inject new variables

48 **Manage, direct and verify**

52 Set guardrails and constraints

54 **Make a bad session good**

56 How to handle hallucinations




# Contents

WORKING WITH CHATGPT


6 Introducing ChatGPT

10 **How to use ChatGPT**

12 Get to know ChatGPT

16 **Introducing ChatGPT Voice**

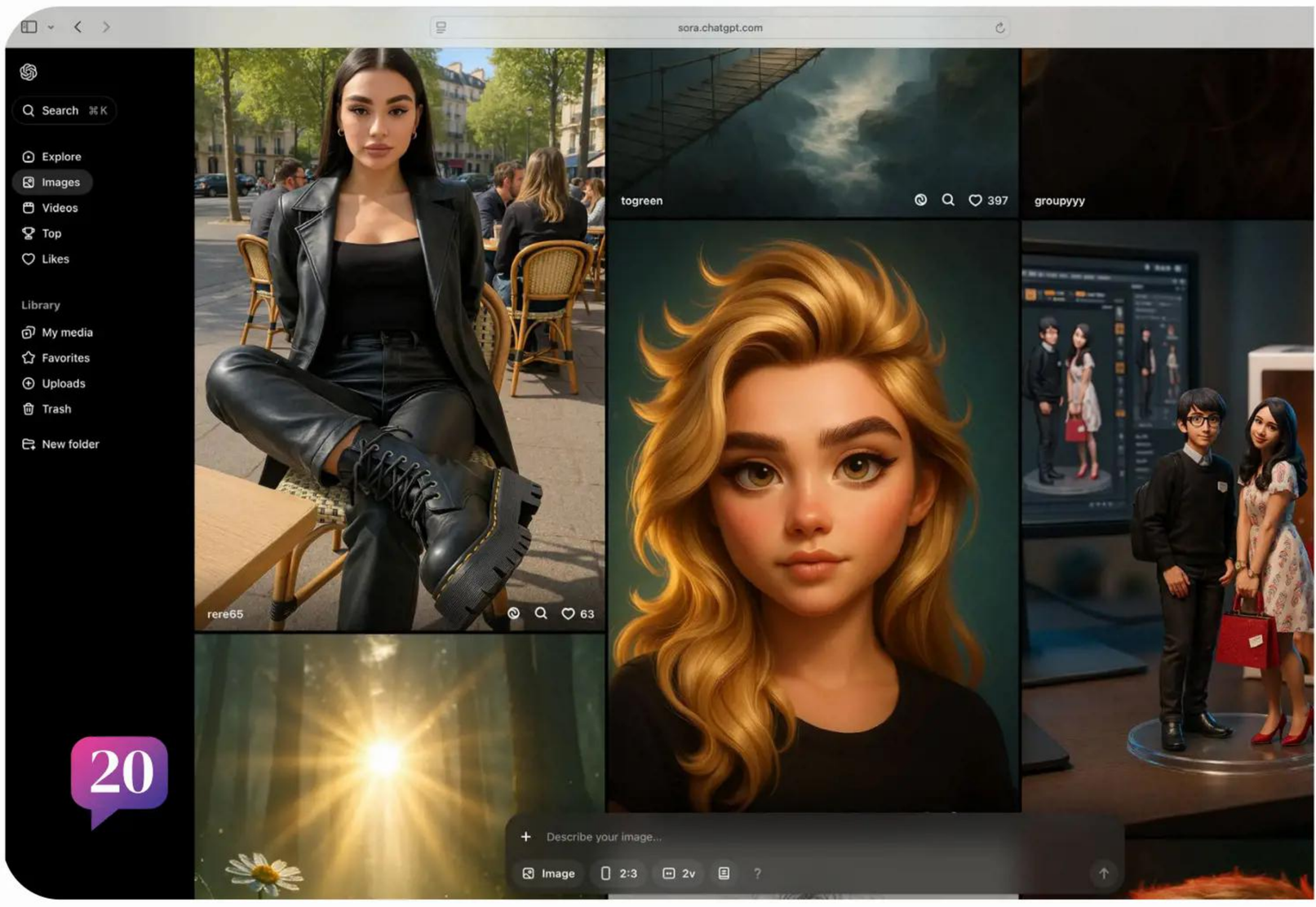
18 Introducing ChatGPT Plans

20 **Top 10 tips to get the most out of ChatGPT**

24 Introducing ChatGPT Agent

26 **ChatGPT dos and don'ts**

30 Prompt masterclass

# CONTENTS














LIFE ADMIN


60 Level up your life admin

66 **Optimise your daily routine**

68 Cut through jargon

70 **Simplify large and complex tasks**

72 Declutter your digital world


WORK


74 **Say goodbye to boring work admin**

80 Plan with an Eisenhower Matrix

82 **Level up your target tracking**

84 Create a Pomodoro time tracker

86 **Write professional emails, reports and proposals**


108

I want you to create a bill calendar for me that includes reminders so that I do not miss any payments

Absolutely — we can build this so it's genuinely useful rather than just a list of bills.

I'd suggest a **monthly bill calendar** with:

- 📅 Payment/due date
- 💷 Amount
- 🏦 Who it's paid to
- 🔁 Frequency (monthly, quarterly, annually, etc.)
- 💳 Payment method/account if useful
- ⏰ A reminder ahead of

EDUCATION


88 Education and learning

94 **Introducing study mode**

96 Master a subject with 80/20

98 **Create revision timetables**

100 Turnnotes into summaries or flashcards


FINANCE


102 **Money and finance**

108 Manage your bills with ease

110 **Track your spending habits**

112 Supercharge online shopping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# Introducing ChatGPT



## It's the world's most popular chatbot, but what is ChatGPT?

At its heart, ChatGPT is a conversational artificial intelligence (AI) that predicts useful text. That doesn't sound that exciting until you realise that it can be used for just about anything – you can ask it to write you an email, explain a complex topic in an easy-to-understand way, or even plan your next holiday. And it does it quickly and competently, too.

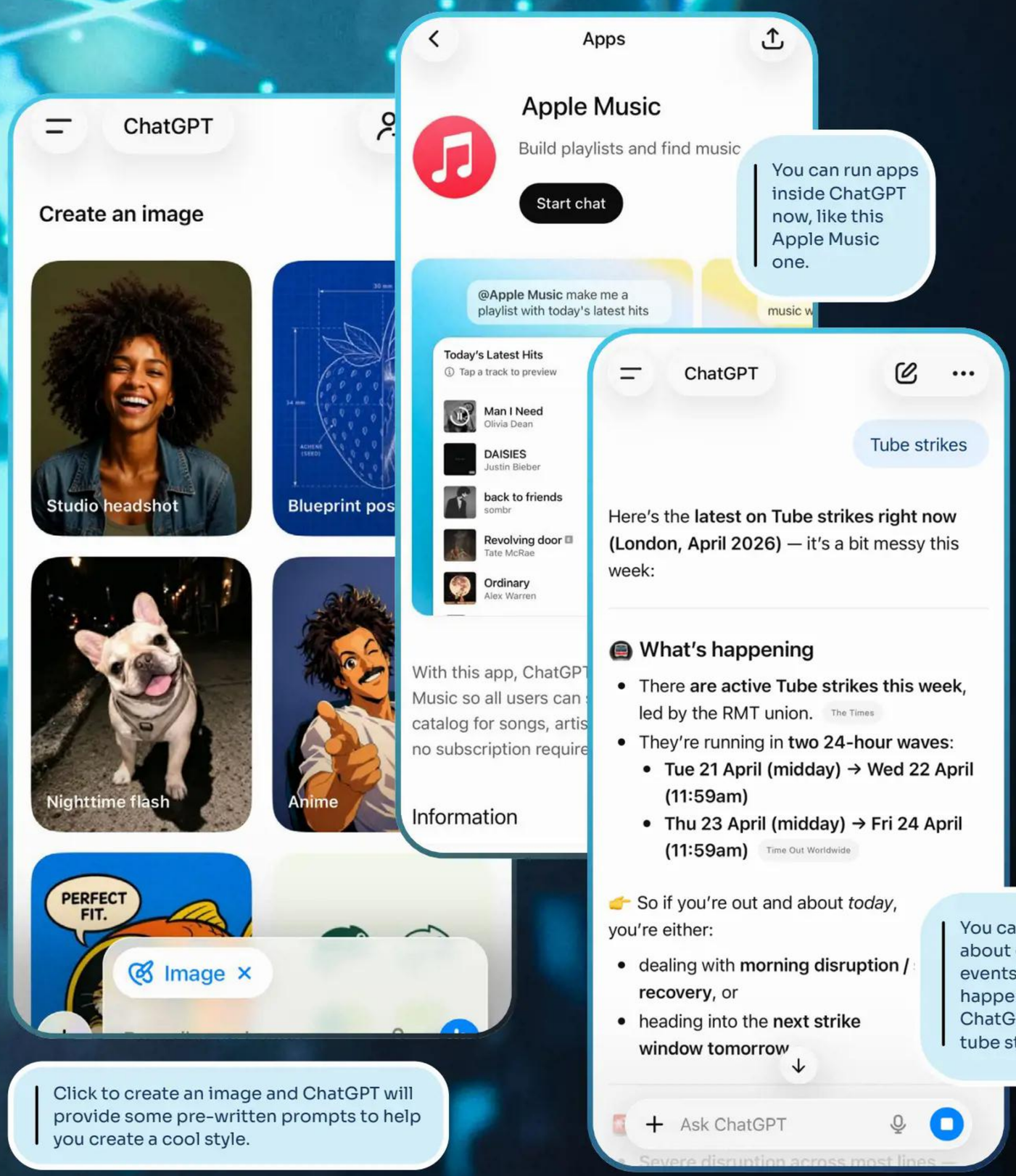
Not only that, but ChatGPT will come back and ask you follow-up questions about what you've asked, and refine its results based on your answers. It feels more like having a freeform, two-way conversation with a real person than it does talking to a computer. ChatGPT can be such a great problem solver, time saver, and companion to chat to that a lot of people now use it on a daily basis.

### Why everybody is talking about it

It's safe to say that AI, or more specifically ChatGPT, has taken the world by storm. It's partly to do with what it can already do, but it's also about the potential of what it's going to be able to do in the future. Listening to Sam Altman, the CEO of OpenAI, the creators of ChatGPT, talk, he sees AI as ushering in a new wave of medical, environmental and educational advancements, the likes of which we've never seen before. There are plenty of people also warning us of the dangers of AI. Whether or not AI evolves into something so intelligent that it can start to become a threat to humans remains to be seen, but it is certainly already taking away jobs from professions where it can do the same work as humans.

AI has already had a massive impact on our society across many different fields. At the time of writing, the number one

# GPT


ChatGPT
Create an image
Studio headshot
Blueprint pos
Nighttime flash
Anime
PERFECT FIT.
Image
Click to create an image and ChatGPT will provide some pre-written prompts to help you create a cool style.
Apps
Apple Music
Build playlists and find music
Start chat
You can run apps inside ChatGPT now, like this Apple Music one.
@Apple Music make me a playlist with today's latest hits
Today's Latest Hits
Tap a track to preview
Man I Need
Olivia Dean
DAISIES
Justin Bieber
back to friends
sombr
Revolving door
Tate McRae
Ordinary
Alex Warren
With this app, ChatGPT
Music so all users can
catalog for songs, artis
no subscription require
Information
ChatGPT
Tube strikes
Here's the latest on Tube strikes right now (London, April 2026) — it's a bit messy this week:
What's happening
There are active Tube strikes this week, led by the RMT union. The Times
They're running in two 24-hour waves:
Tue 21 April (midday) → Wed 22 April (11:59am)
Thu 23 April (midday) → Fri 24 April (11:59am) Time Out Worldwide
So if you're out and about today, you're either:
dealing with morning disruption / recovery, or
heading into the next strike window tomorrow
Ask ChatGPT
You can find out about current events that are happening in ChatGPT, like tube strikes.

song on the iTunes charts in both the UK and the US was an entirely AI-generated track.

## How it works

The key skill you need to master when using ChatGPT is the ability to write good text prompts. Prompts are essentially the text messages you write to ChatGPT – things like, 'I'm going on a work trip to Paris in two weeks, what should I see while I'm there?' or 'I'd like you to create an image of a frog on a skateboard.'

While there are also a few buttons to click in the ChatGPT interface, almost everything is done through typing these text prompts, or, if you prefer, you can use voice mode and speak your prompts to ChatGPT. It can even talk back using a variety of different voices. But the key thing to remember is that the better the prompt, the more you'll get out of ChatGPT, and we'll show you how to write, or speak, useful prompts.

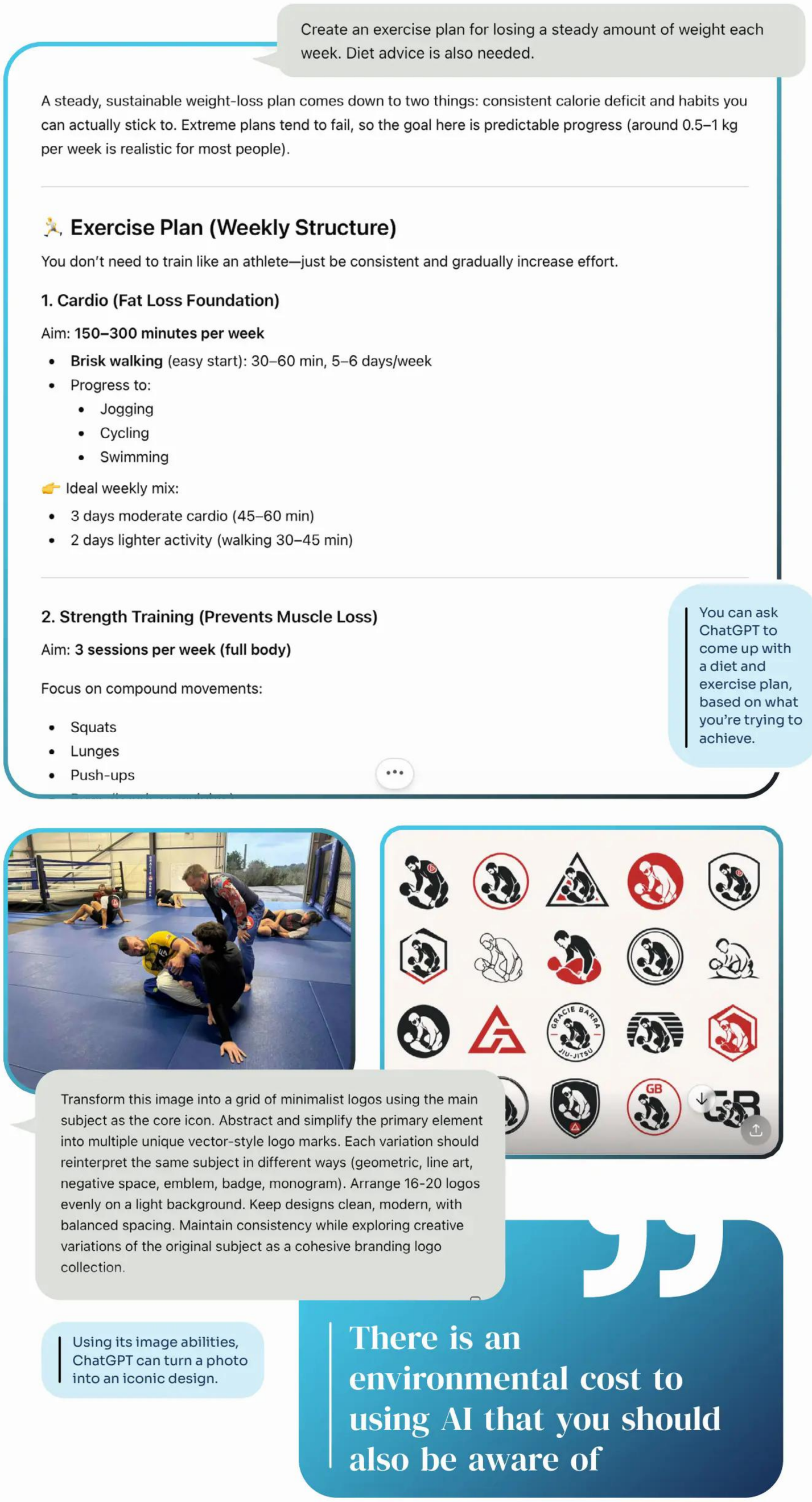
## What makes ChatGPT different from other AI

There are lots of AI tools on the market now with names like Claude, Copilot and Gemini. ChatGPT is probably the best overall, and it's certainly the most popular. There are around 900 million weekly active users at the time of writing. ChatGPT is a great generalist. That means it can do a lot of different things, like edit images, research topics, search the internet, work with apps, write code, connect to your email, search inside documents and more.

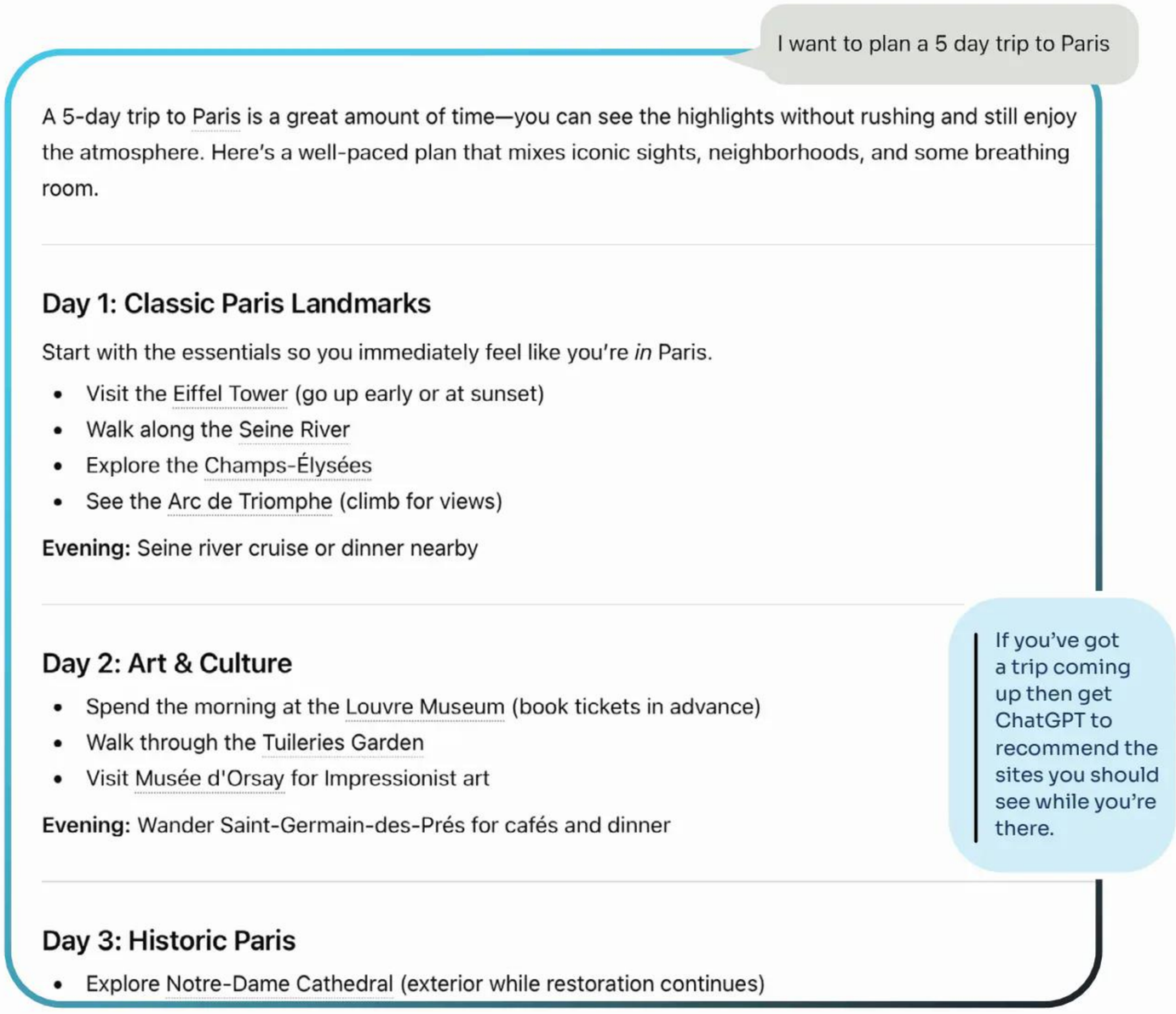
If you're looking for an AI that's good at a lot of things, then ChatGPT is for you. ChatGPT works across desktop, mobile and web platforms, and a lot of its most powerful features are available in its free version. It rarely goes down, it produces consistently good responses and you can use a lot of its features for free. Not to mention that powerful new features are being added all the time. For example, at the time of writing, the image creation feature had just been upgraded to ChatGPT Images 2.5.

## Limitations and ethics

It's also important to remember that while there are web search abilities inside ChatGPT, it's not really a search engine in the same way that Google is. You should also be aware that




> There is an environmental cost to using AI that you should also be aware of




ChatGPT is not always right, so be prepared to take its answers with a pinch of salt. It's right most of the time, but all AI chatbots will make mistakes, called 'hallucinations', where they literally make things up, so you need to double-check what it's saying to you.

We also wouldn't recommend relying on ChatGPT for medical, legal or moral advice for the same reasons. There is an environmental cost to using AI that you should also be aware of. According to Bottle It Back, one AI prompt consumes approximately 38ml of water during the cooling process in an AI data centre. Get to 15 prompts and you've used up a whole bottle of water. You can use the Bottle It Back browser extension (search for it and the name of your web browser) to track your water usage, and even donate the same amount you've used back to a water aid charity called Planet Water Foundation.

## Plans and their different functions

There are essentially four main types of subscription plan for ChatGPT — Free, Go, Plus and Pro — with a couple of oddities that are intended strictly for enterprise and educational purposes.

The Free plan is the most simple – you don't need to pay anything. Just go to ChatGPT.com or use the ChatGPT app on your mobile device and you can get started. You do get slightly more features if you create an account and log in, though. What you'll find with the free accounts is that they are fine for basic chat functions, but are severely limited for more advanced things, like creating images, uploading files, memory and coding with Codex.

Next is the Go plan. This costs £7 ($8) a month and gives you all the features available in the Free plan, but with more access to the latest GPT-5.5 model. You get more messages, more uploads, more image creation and longer memory.

If you find that you are still hitting the daily limits, then consider the Plus plan. This costs £20 ($20) a month, and for most people you're never going to hit the limits. You get access to advanced reasoning models like the new GPT-5.5 Thinking, more complex and accurate image creation, expanded deep research and agent mode, better memory, project tasks and custom GPT creation.

For professional users, who are usually using ChatGPT for code creation, there's ChatGPT Pro, which starts at £89 ($100) a month and offers five times more usage than a Plus account, or 20 times more usage if you want to pay £200 ($200) a month instead. You get unlimited access to GPT-5.5 Pro for that price, along with unlimited and faster image creation.

None of the accounts now feature AI video creation any more, which used to be provided by the Sora app. Sora was shuttered by OpenAI in 2026.

## What you can use it for

You can use ChatGPT to help with all life's little problems. If there's a strange light you've never seen before showing on your car's dashboard, for example, you can take a picture of it, upload that picture to ChatGPT and it will tell you what's wrong. Want to know what's wrong with your PC? Take a picture of the error message you're getting and ask ChatGPT what it means. You'll get a useful answer.

Want help making a meal tonight? Take a picture of the ingredients in your cupboards and fridge and ask ChatGPT what you could make with them. Need advice on what clothes or hairstyle would suit you? You can upload pictures of yourself and ask ChatGPT's advice.

ChatGPT can also help with things like organising your next holiday, planning a budget, devising an exercise routine to get you in shape and more. There really is no limit to how useful it can be.

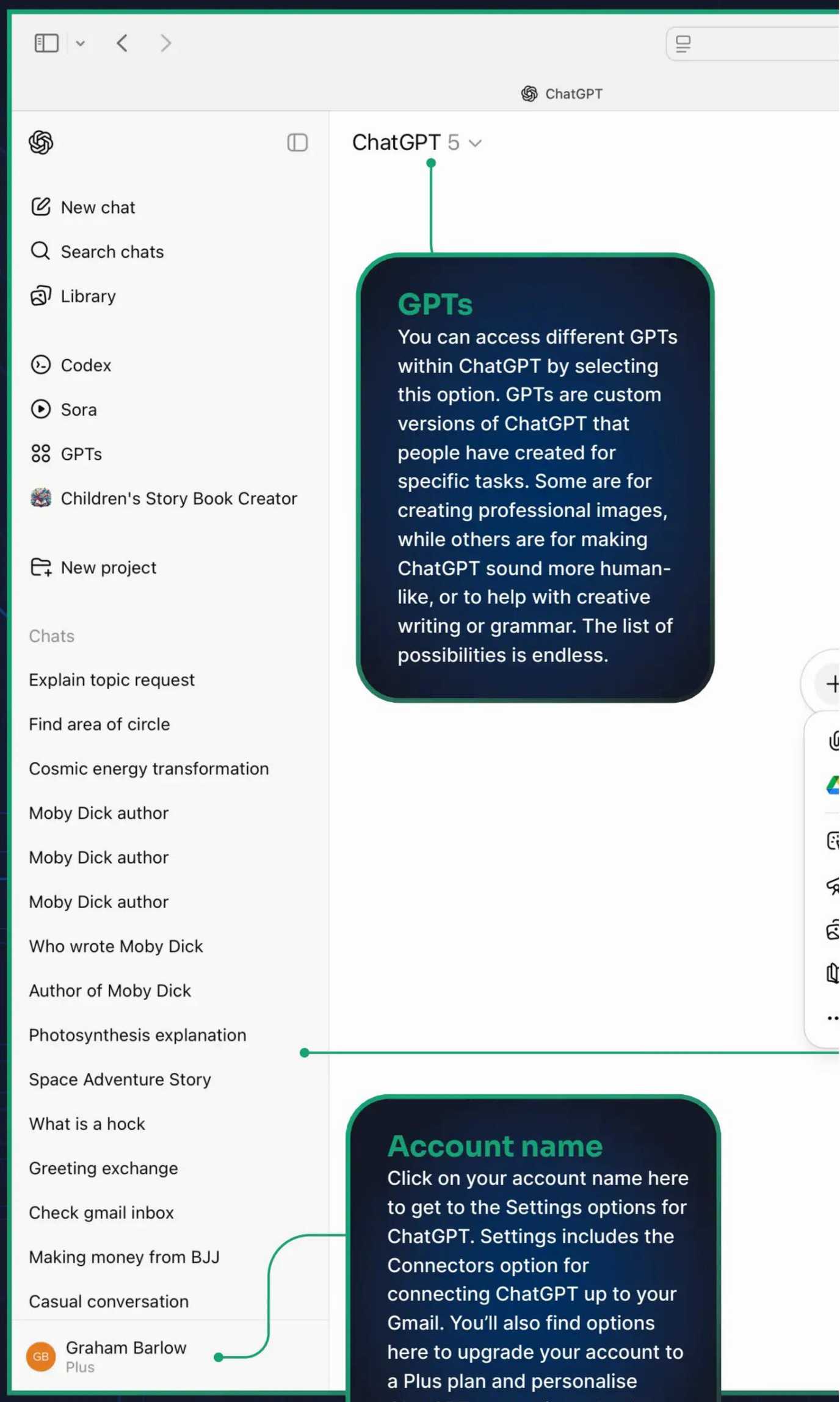
## The bottom line

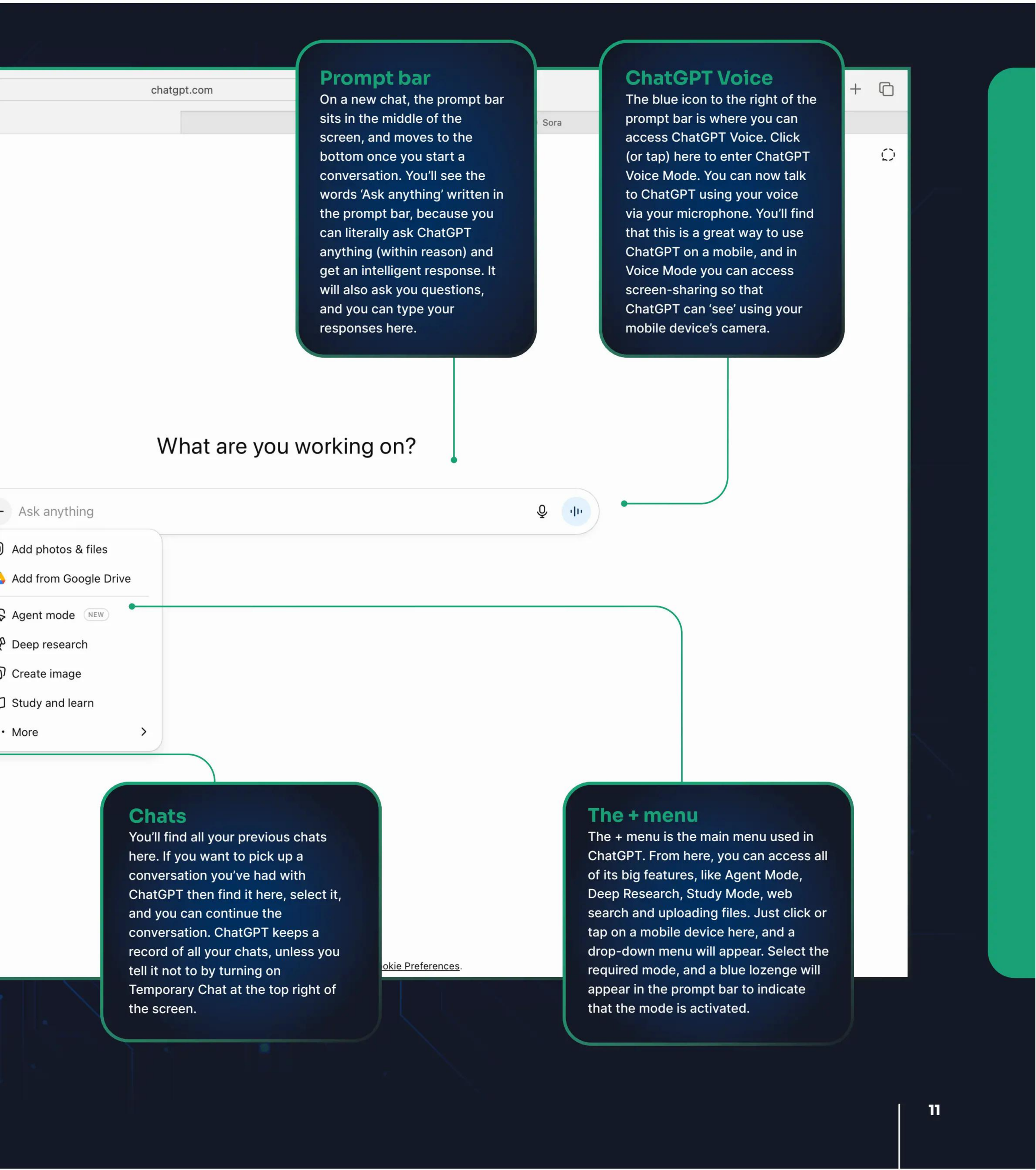
Here's the bottom line – ChatGPT isn't perfect, and it shouldn't replace human judgement where it really matters. But used well, it's one of the most powerful everyday tools available, taking friction out of tasks that used to take far longer. And that's why, for millions of people, it's already become part of daily life.

**Images** Adobe Stock; Getty Images; OpenAI

# How to use ChatGPT

Everything works from a basic text prompt interface on both web and mobile devices






## Prompt bar

On a new chat, the prompt bar sits in the middle of the screen, and moves to the bottom once you start a conversation. You'll see the words 'Ask anything' written in the prompt bar, because you can literally ask ChatGPT anything (within reason) and get an intelligent response. It will also ask you questions, and you can type your responses here.

## ChatGPT Voice

The blue icon to the right of the prompt bar is where you can access ChatGPT Voice. Click (or tap) here to enter ChatGPT Voice Mode. You can now talk to ChatGPT using your voice via your microphone. You'll find that this is a great way to use ChatGPT on a mobile, and in Voice Mode you can access screen-sharing so that ChatGPT can 'see' using your mobile device's camera.

## Chats

You'll find all your previous chats here. If you want to pick up a conversation you've had with ChatGPT then find it here, select it, and you can continue the conversation. ChatGPT keeps a record of all your chats, unless you tell it not to by turning on Temporary Chat at the top right of the screen.

## The + menu

The + menu is the main menu used in ChatGPT. From here, you can access all of its big features, like Agent Mode, Deep Research, Study Mode, web search and uploading files. Just click or tap on a mobile device here, and a drop-down menu will appear. Select the required mode, and a blue lozenge will appear in the prompt bar to indicate that the mode is activated.

# Get to know ChatGPT

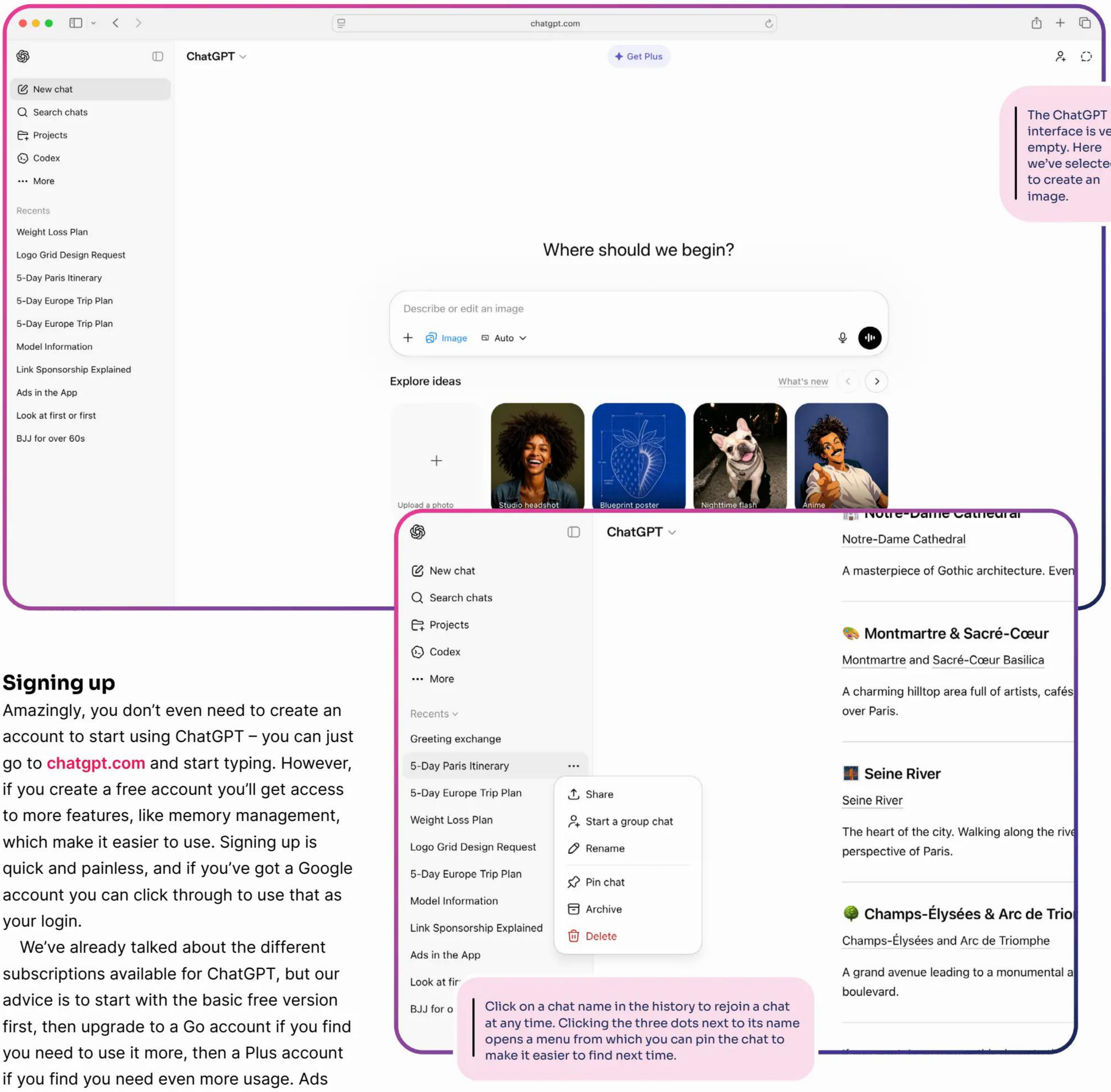
## Understanding the ChatGPT interface is key to getting the most from it

The ChatGPT interface is unusual compared to many software programs because it's mainly text. It looks nothing like popular software apps like Photoshop or Apple Music, for example. In fact, at first glance it looks more like a word processor or an empty Google Search window than a state of the art artificial intelligence tool, but its uncluttered interface belies its incredible power – everything is hidden under the surface.

A lot of ChatGPT's powerful features are tucked away inside menus in the interface. Here we'll show you how to find all the hidden secrets so you can be sure you're getting the most out of your ChatGPT sessions.



## Using ChatGPT as a desktop app makes it easier to integrate it into your workflow




## Signing up

Amazingly, you don't even need to create an account to start using ChatGPT – you can just go to **chatgpt.com** and start typing. However, if you create a free account you'll get access to more features, like memory management, which make it easier to use. Signing up is quick and painless, and if you've got a Google account you can click through to use that as your login.

We've already talked about the different subscriptions available for ChatGPT, but our advice is to start with the basic free version first, then upgrade to a Go account if you find you need to use it more, then a Plus account if you find you need even more usage. Ads are coming to ChatGPT soon, and these will be mainly on the Free account, so that gives you another reason to upgrade in the future.

## Mobile and Desktop versions

As well as using ChatGPT through a web browser you can also use a desktop app on PC and Mac, and a mobile app on iOS or Android. You can find the Mac and PC apps on the respective App Stores for macOS and Windows. Or you can download them directly from **https://chatgpt.com/features/desktop/.**

Using ChatGPT as a desktop app makes it easier to integrate it into your workflow. You can ask it to help with whatever you're working on by taking a screenshot and uploading it, then asking questions about it.

On mobile, you can take ChatGPT with you wherever you go thanks to the app. It is a bit harder to write prompts using the smaller on-screen keyboard, but Voice mode works exceptionally well on the mobile app and it can 'see' through your camera, so you can ask it questions about what you're looking at instead of typing.

ChatGPT has plenty of ready-made styles you can apply to images. These often work best on pictures you've taken with your camera that you then upload to ChatGPT.

ChatGPT is great for creating comics in – just enter a prompt and see what it produces!

## Navigating the interface – web version

The key to using ChatGPT is the prompt bar, where you write your messages, but there are a lot of other elements to the interface that you need to get to know.

On the left of the prompt bar in the web interface is a '+' icon. This is the most useful menu and from here you can access features like uploading files, creating images, access Deep Research and web search. It's not the only way to get at these options, but it's a reliable way to access them. For example, if you simply type "Make me an image of a dog riding a bicycle" then ChatGPT would create the image anyway — you don't actually need to go to the trouble of selecting 'Create Image' from the '+' menu first.

On the right-hand edge of the prompt bar is a microphone icon, which you can use to dictate messages to ChatGPT using your microphone instead of typing text. Next to that is the full Voice mode button. Voice mode is for having a two-way natural conversation with ChatGPT, almost as if it's a person. It used to take you to an entirely different interface, but now it's just integrated into your standard chat, so you can mix text input and voice messages.

On the left is the sidebar. This can be toggled to open or close by clicking on the ChatGPT logo icon at the top left of the screen. On the sidebar you can see custom GPTs, projects you've started, but most importantly the 'Recents' section contains a record of all your previous chats, so you can rejoin one at any time.

At the bottom of the left-hand sidebar is your account name, and clicking this will take you to a menu from which you can access your Profile information and Settings if you need to.

Finally, at the top of the screen is a menu called simply 'ChatGPT'. Click this to change the language model you're using if you are a Plus or Pro user – free users don't get a choice. This menu also offers a choice of Instant or Thinking, for quicker or more thoughtful, but slower, responses. Alternatively, you can click Configure to change to an older version of ChatGPT, like GPT-5.3 or 5.4.

> Voice mode is for having a two-way natural conversation with ChatGPT, almost as if it's a person

## Navigating the interface – mobile version

In the mobile version you will see the prompt bar floating above the on-screen keyboard. You have the same '+' button on the left of the prompt bar and dictate and voice mode buttons on the right.

At the top left is the sidebar icon (the one with two horizontal lines) which reveals your recent chats, and allows you to access settings via your Profile, which is at the top right of the screen here. You'll also see a similar ChatGPT menu at the top, for changing versions of ChatGPT.

## Navigating the interface – desktop version

The Desktop version of ChatGPT looks very different – it runs in an app that floats in a small window, essentially containing just the prompt bar and its familiar menus. The main thing is how easy it is to bring up – just press [Option] + [Space] on a Mac or [Alt] + [Space] on a PC.

## The Settings menu is key

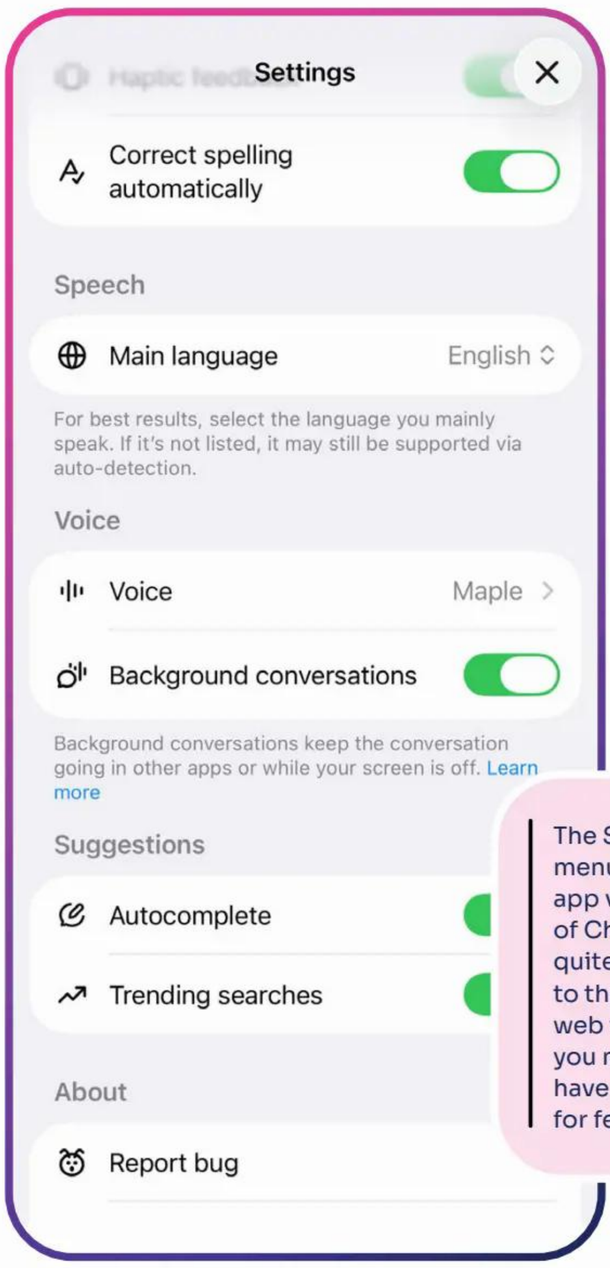
In all versions of ChatGPT the Settings menu is quite hard to find, but it's so useful you need to know where it is, since it leads to powerful customisation options. It's always accessible from your Profile. On the web interface, this is located at the bottom left of the sidebar. On the mobile interface it's located in the top right, once you've pulled up the sidebar menu.

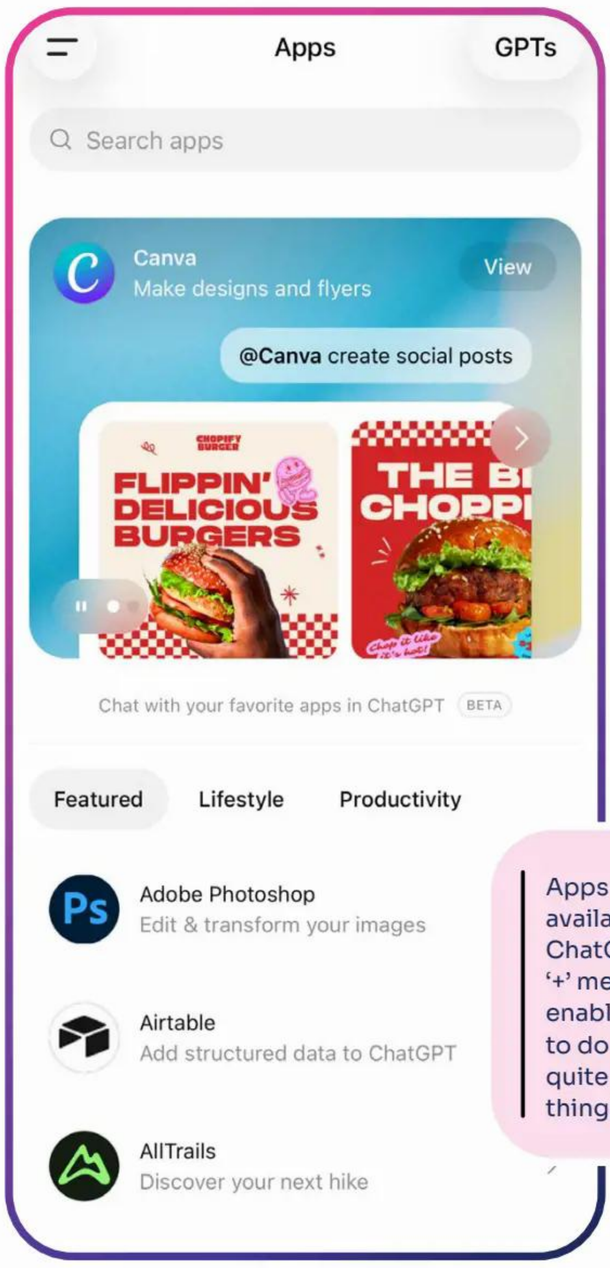
In the menu you will find Settings, then inside there you will find Personalisation. This is the menu from which you can customise how ChatGPT feels to use – there's a 'Base style and tone' menu that makes a big difference in the responses you receive from ChatGPT depending on what you pick. You can choose from options like Professional, Candid and Quirky. Below that are a number of Characteristics you can tweak that cover how warm and enthusiastic ChatGPT is, and also whether it responds with numbered lists and emojis – some people love these, but to others they're like kryptonite to Superman.

## Chat history

The last part of the interface you really need to get to know is your chat history. This is located at the bottom of the sidebar, and you just click on a chat to rejoin it at any time. Each separate chat gets saved here under a name that ChatGPT picks to summarise the chat. Of course, you might not like the name, but you can change it if you want to. On the web interface, click the three dot menu that appears when you hover the cursor over a chat to rename it or pin it, so you can find it again easily. On the mobile app, you tap and hold on the chat name to get a similar menu of options. It's useful to be able to go back through your history with ChatGPT to check previous answers and results.

Overall, the ChatGPT interface is fairly simple to understand. Most of the advanced features are hidden behind menus, so it's worth digging around and exploring when you have the time. The '+' menu is particularly worth exploring in detail since there are probably options in there that you haven't heard about before. The strength of ChatGPT is that despite having heaps of powerful features, it puts the simple prompt bar up front and doesn't let unnecessary interface elements get in the way of you using it.



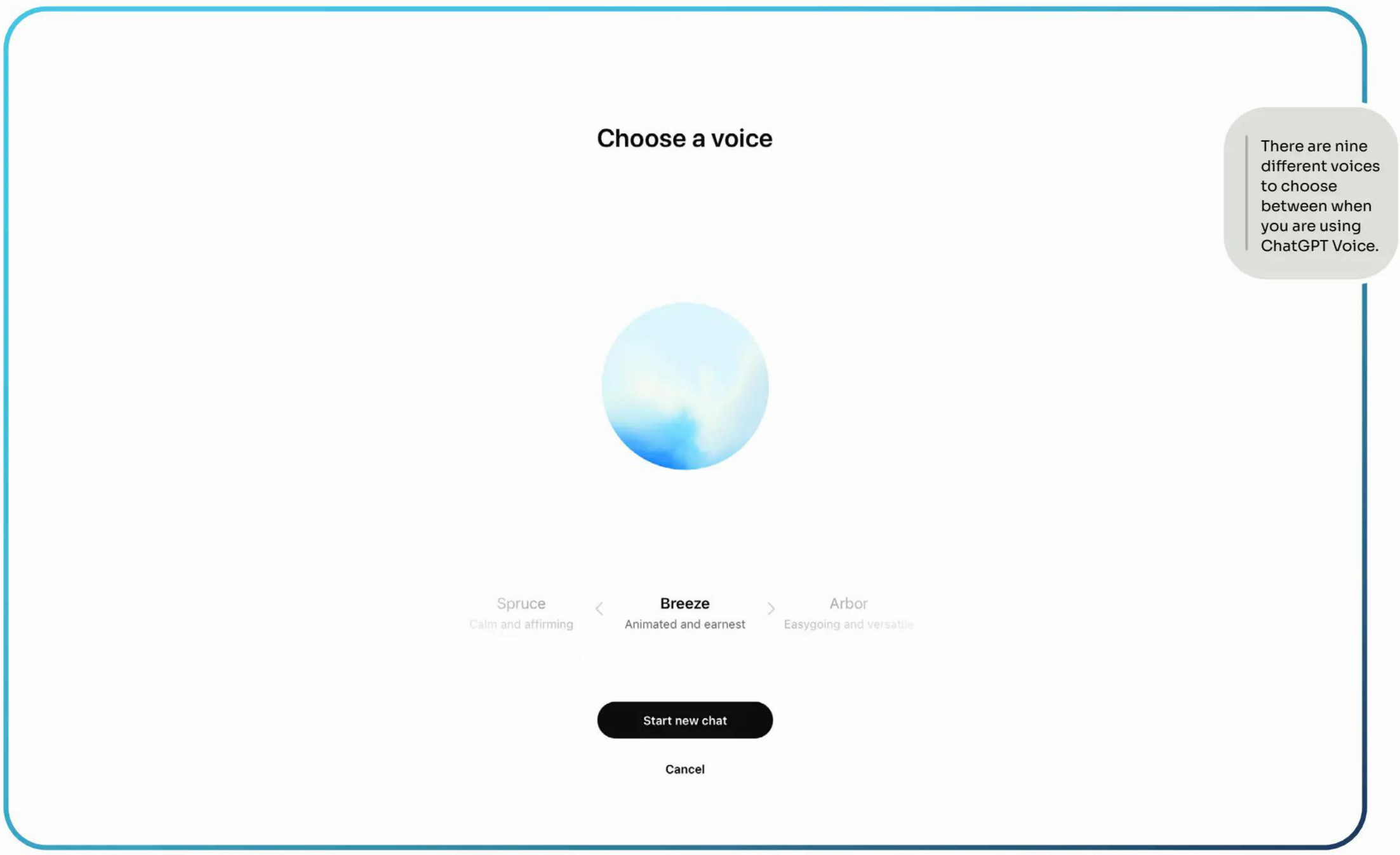

Images Adobe Stock; Getty Images; OpenAI

# Introducing ChatGPT Voice

**You can talk to ChatGPT using your voice, and it will talk back to you**

The real star of Stanley Kubrick's sci-fi masterpiece *2001: A Space Odyssey* was HAL 9000, the ship's built-in AI. HAL was depicted as a circular camera lens with a yellow and red dot who spoke with a calm, soothing voice. The developers of ChatGPT must have been big fans of the film, because they have chosen a similar circular graphic to represent ChatGPT when it talks to you through its voice mode, simply referred to as ChatGPT Voice.

ChatGPT Voice (previously known as Advanced Voice mode) doesn't have a menacing red dot in the centre, however. Instead, it looks like an orb made of clouds that gently float by. There are a choice of nine different voices – Sol, Juniper, Vale, Spruce, Breeze, Arbor, Cove, Maple and Ember – to choose between, all of which sound very relaxing and easy to talk to, and



not as sinister as HAL.

If you don't like the voice you've got selected, then you can choose a new voice in Settings > General, or by clicking the Settings icon on the ChatGPT Voice screen.

## The floating orb

You can use ChatGPT Voice on all of the different ChatGPT platforms: desktop, web and mobile. Just click or tap on the Voice icon that's on the far right of the prompt window. Once activated, your ChatGPT screen will instantly clear, and you'll see the circular floating orb in the centre of the screen. Just start talking, and ChatGPT will answer back, which causes the orb to pulse slightly.

What's really nice about ChatGPT Voice is that you don't have to wait for ChatGPT to finish talking before you reply – it is perfectly fine to interrupt any time you feel like it has gone off track and is wasting your time. ChatGPT will never get annoyed at you for interrupting! Apart from that little quirk, talking to ChatGPT feels very much like having a human conversation, and can be a much easier way of interacting with ChatGPT on a mobile device, where typing on the keyboard is not as easy as it is on a laptop or desktop.

## Live Vision mode

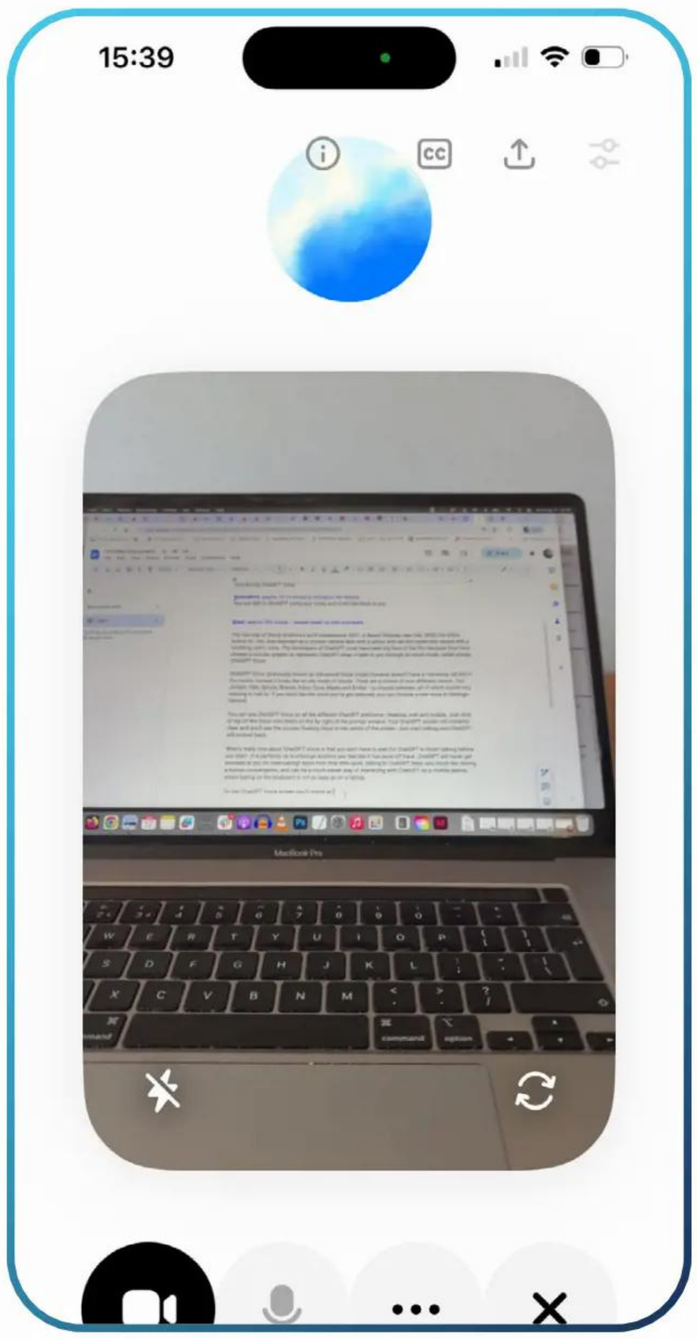
On the ChatGPT Voice screen on mobile, you'll notice a video icon at the bottom left of the screen. This is the gateway to one of ChatGPT's best features: Live Vision. Once you activate Live Vision, ChatGPT can 'see' through your camera (just like HAL 9000 could). That way, you can ask questions about what you're looking at in the real world simply by pointing your camera at it.

For example, if you're in front of a tree and want to know what type of tree you're looking at, you can simply turn on the Live Vision mode and point your phone at the tree and say, "What sort of tree is this?". Alternatively, you could point your camera at your laptop and ask it questions about whatever it is you're working on.

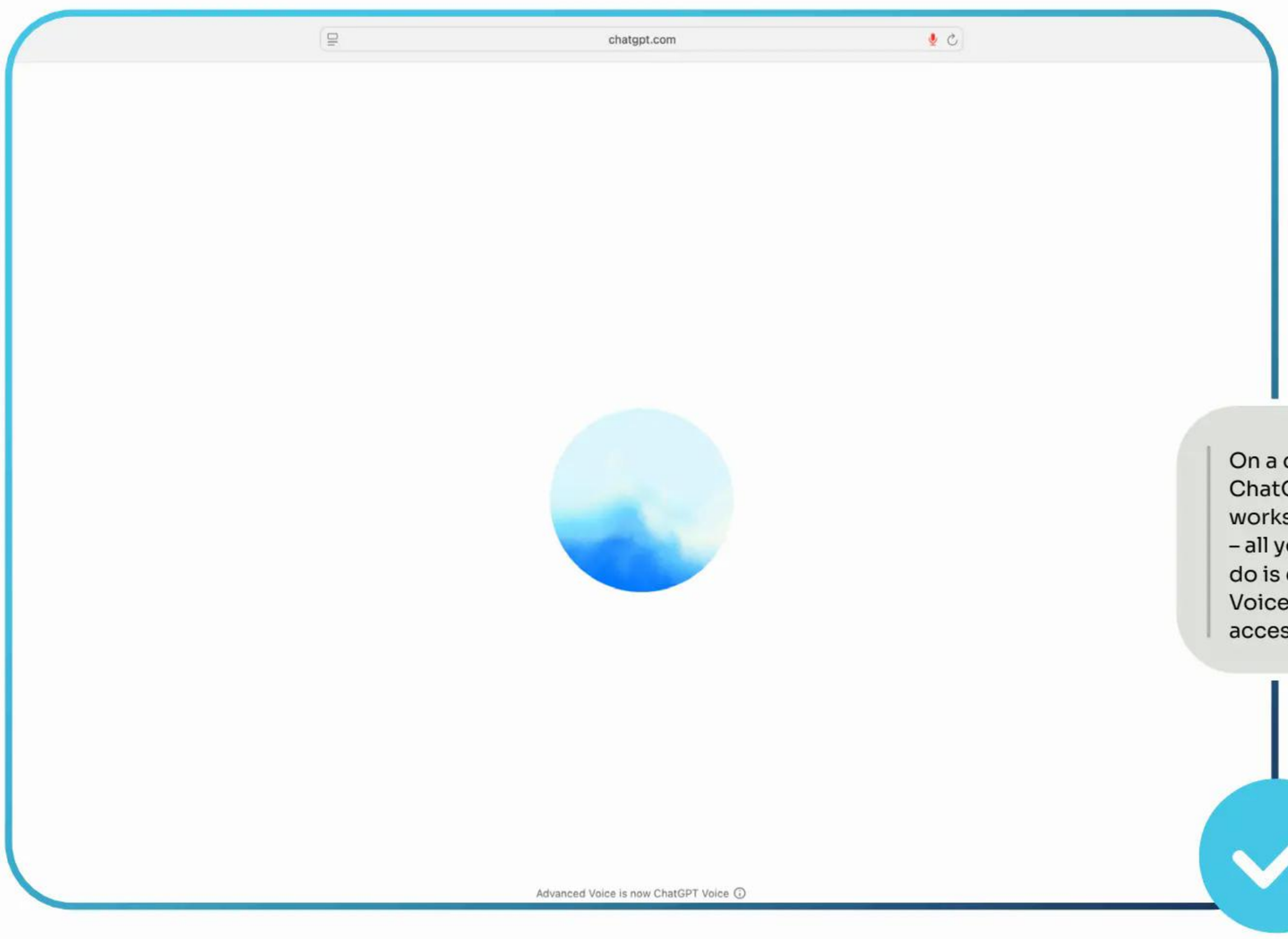
Using AI in this manner can open up a whole new level of interaction with AI, and is one of the most useful features that we've tried with ChatGPT.




ChatGPT Voice on mobile is a great way to interact with ChatGPT.




Enter Live Vision mode from inside ChatGPT Voice, and ChatGPT will be able to 'see' what your camera can see.



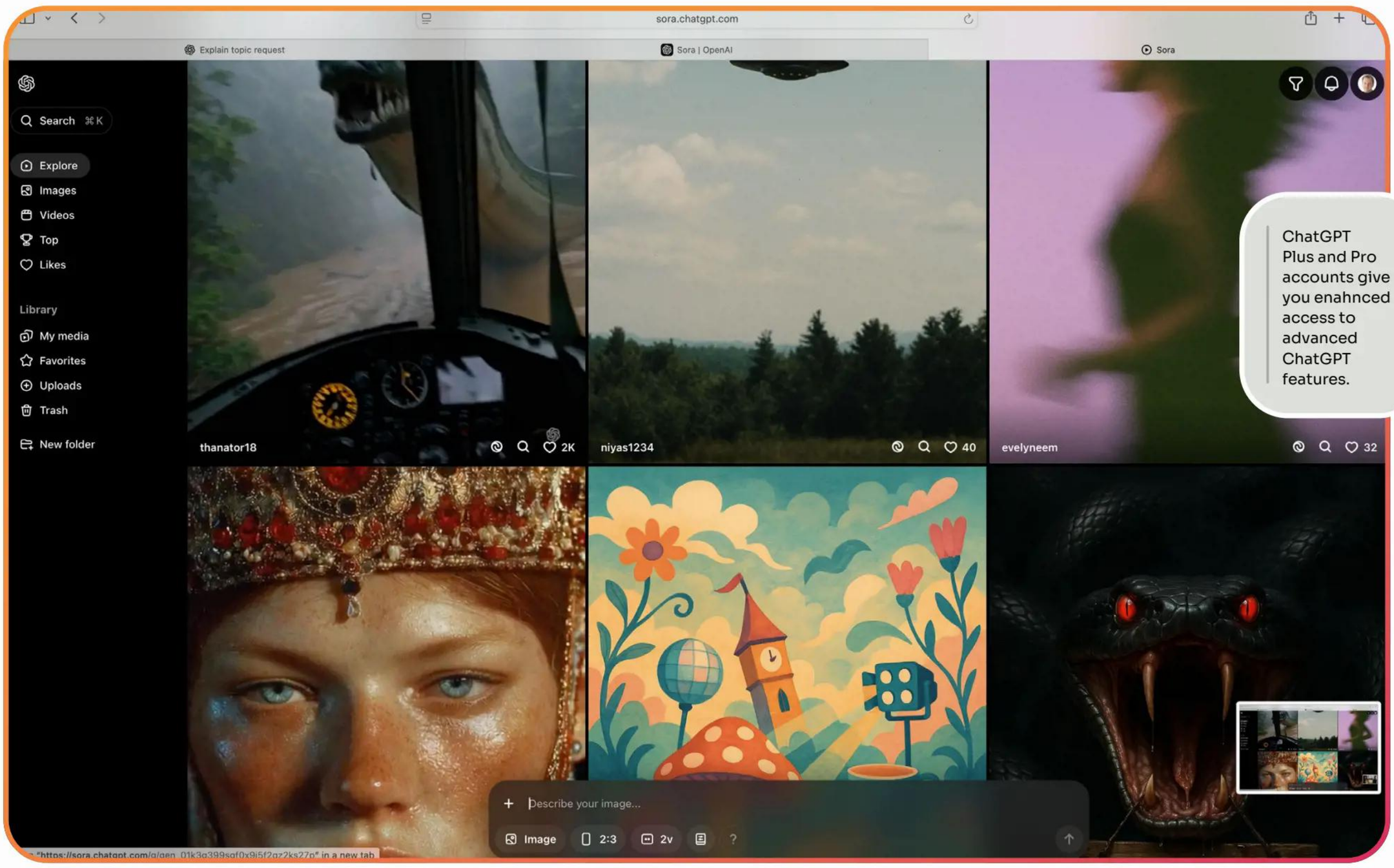

On a desktop, ChatGPT Voice works just fine – all you need to do is click the Voice icon to access it.

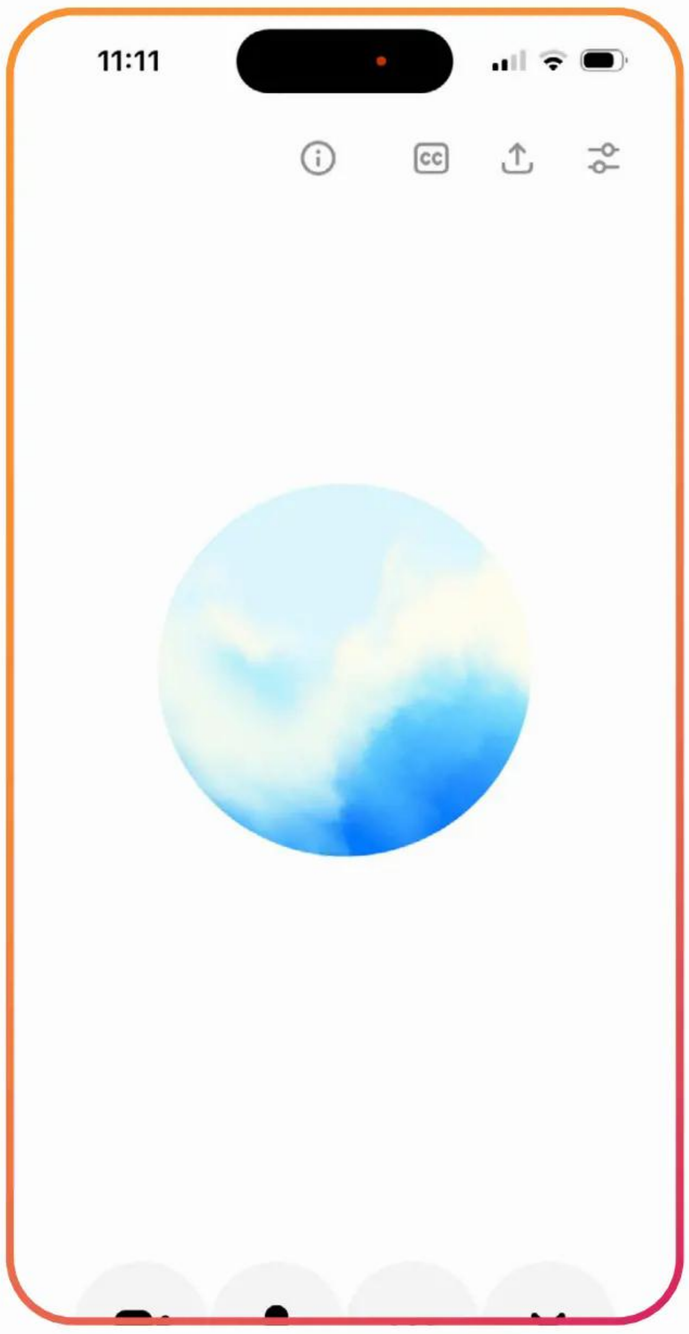
# Introducing ChatGPT Plans

## Is it worth paying for ChatGPT, or will the Free tier meet all your needs?

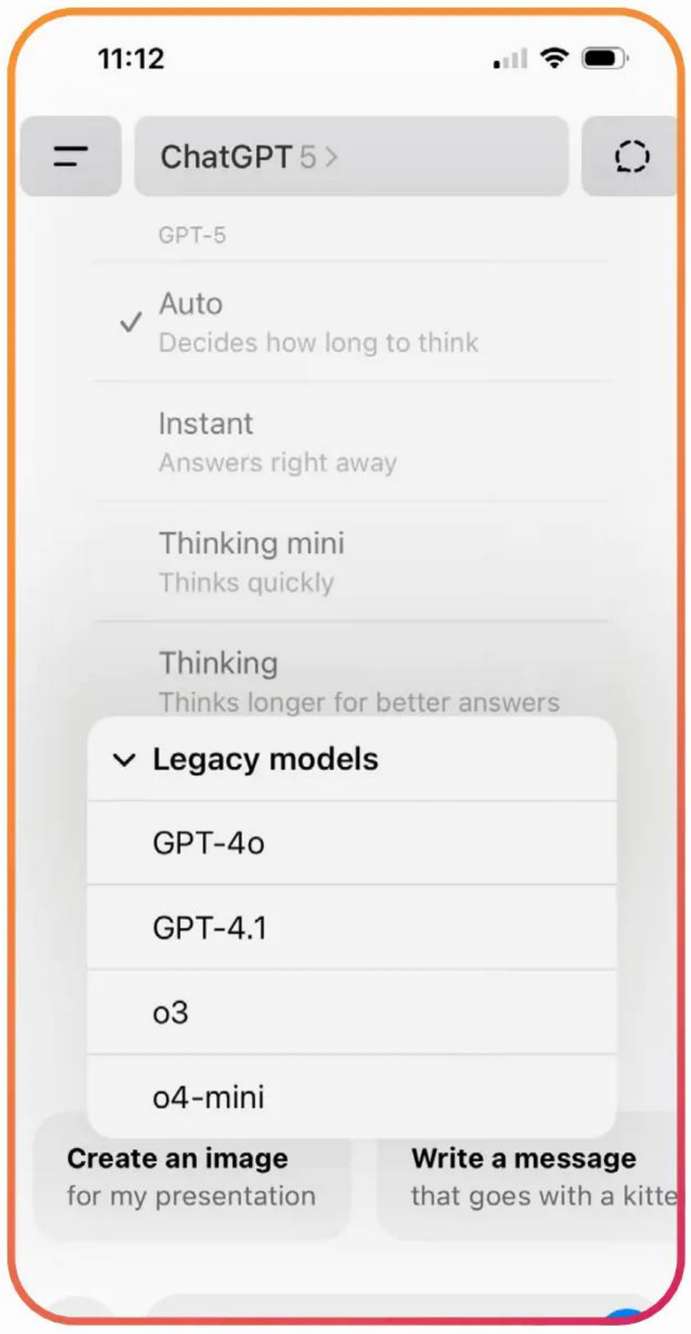
While you can use ChatGPT in a web browser, or on your mobile device without even logging in, there are different subscription options available, and if you are going to use it regularly then you might soon hit up against the limits of a free account. There are in fact three main ChatGPT tiers: Free, Plus and Pro, as well as a couple of subscription options for business called Teams and Enterprise, and a version just for university students called ChatGPT EDU.

As you'd expect, the Free tier is the most basic, but it still gives you limited access to the latest version of ChatGPT-5, as well as access to real-time data from web searches using ChatGPT Search. You can even access more advanced features like ChatGPT Voice, file uploads and image generation, but you get extremely limited access to these features. You'll be limited to two or three images a day, for example, so consider your needs.

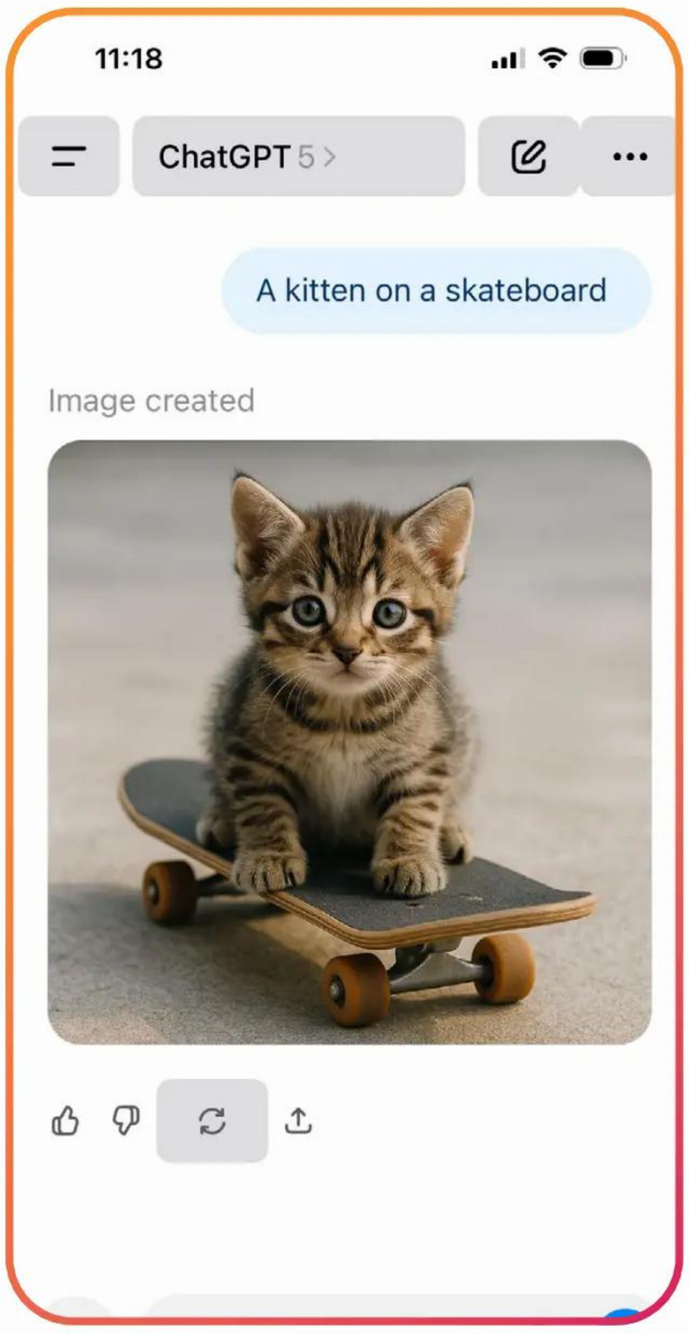





A ChatGPT Plus account will give you a lot more access to features, like ChatGPT Voice.




If you upgrade to ChatGPT Plus then you get access to older legacy ChatGPT models like ChatGPT-4o.




You'll need a Plus account if you want to make more than two or three images a day with ChatGPT.

## Is Plus worth it?

ChatGPT Plus is the first paid-for tier and costs £20/$20 a month. You do get a lot more usage for your money though, so you can effectively upload all the files you want, create all the images you want and use ChatGPT Voice almost as much as you like. While the Free tier gives you access to ChatGPT-5.6, it will quickly revert to using ChatGPT-5 mini. On the Plus tier you get much more access to ChatGPT-5.6, and you can also use it in different modes like Thinking, in which it thinks for longer to give better answers, Thinking mini, in which it thinks quickly, Instant for quick answers and Auto mode, in which it decides which of its different modes to use based on the question you've asked.

You get a couple of nice bonus features as a Plus member, too. You have much deeper research capabilities with multi-level queries, faster response times and the benefit of priority access during high demand times, the ability to use custom GPTs, and much more.

You also get access to ChatGPT Agent. Agent has the ability to carry out your instructions in the background, so you can get on with something else. Once it has finished its job, which is usually to produce a report of some kind, it will simply inform you that it is done.

Another benefit of a Plus account is access to what OpenAI calls legacy models, which are the older ChatGPT-4o and ChatGPT-o3 models, which some people prefer to the newer ChatGPT-5.

## Going Pro

If you're serious about using ChatGPT then you might want to consider upgrading to a Pro account, which comes with a hefty £200/$200 a month subscription. However, for the additional cost you will get access to ChatGPT-6 Astra, the most advanced LLM that OpenAI currently has to offer. It's designed to use more computing power to give you the best possible answers to more challenging questions. You also get access to the older o3-pro model, as well as all the legacy models like ChatGPT-4o. This plan is very much tailored towards business-class users such as software developers, however: unless you're using ChatGPT in a professional context it's unlikely that you'll ever use all of the capabilities that Pro has to offer. For many of us, choosing between the Free or Plus plans is the key decision we need to make.

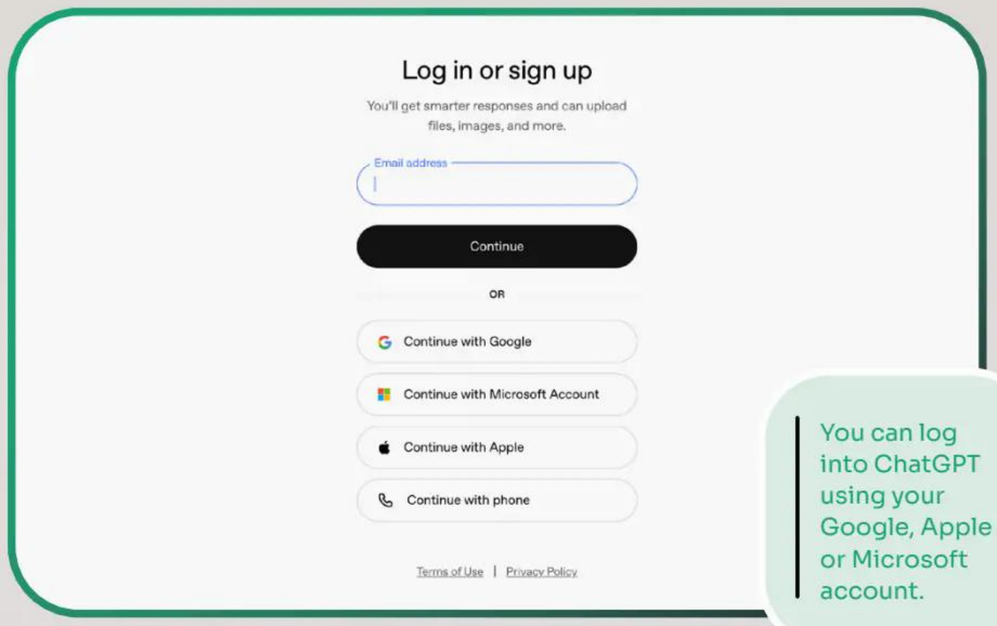
**Images** OpenAI

# Top 10 tips to get the most out of ChatGPT

**Make sure you're getting the most out of ChatGPT with these tips**

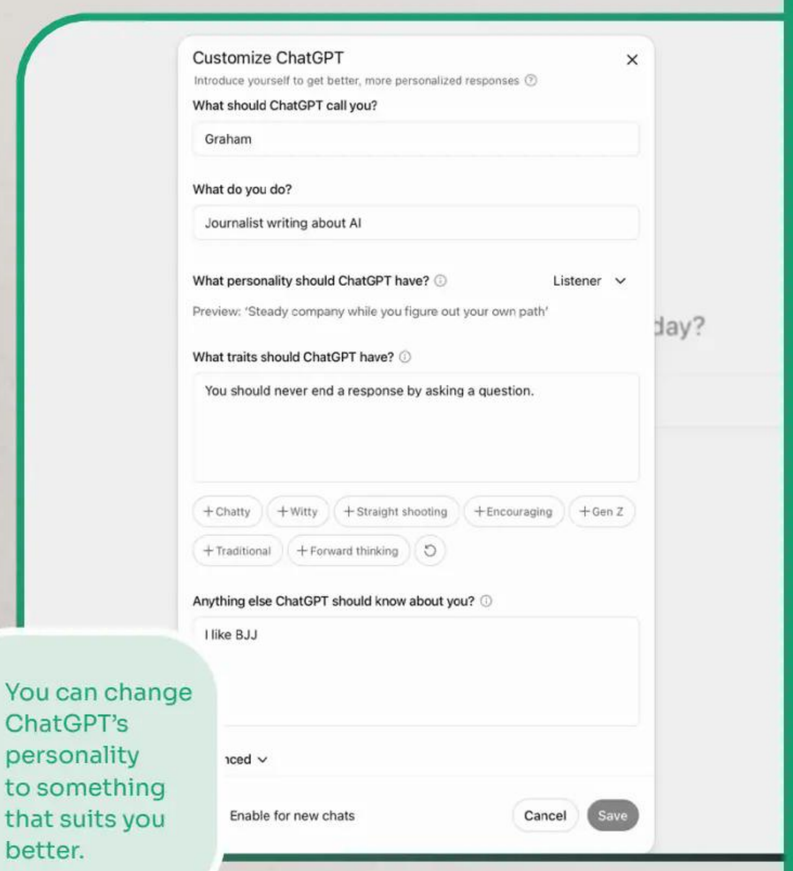
# Log in first

You can start using ChatGPT at **Chat.com** straight away, without even logging in. While this is quick and convenient, if you create a free account, you can access more features. Having an account creates a chat history, and ChatGPT can use this as context for future conversations. You can also pick up conversations across devices once you have a ChatGPT account, and it gives you access to ChatGPT Voice conversations and custom instructions. So while you don't necessarily need to create a ChatGPT account in order to access it, there are plenty of good reasons to do so.




You can log into ChatGPT using your Google, Apple or Microsoft account.





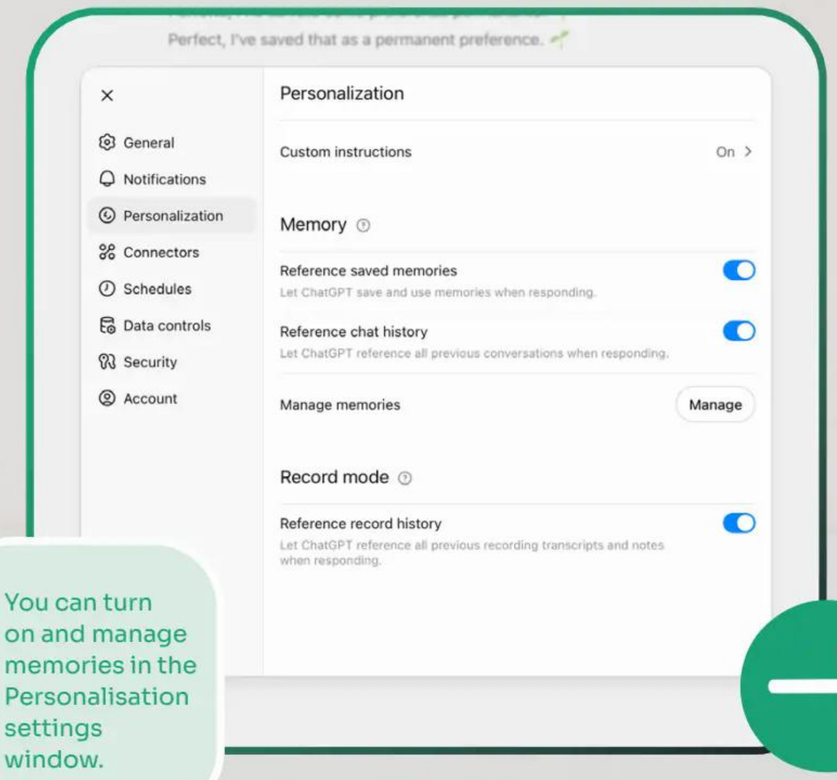

You can change ChatGPT's personality to something that suits you better.

# Personalise ChatGPT

You can change ChatGPT's personality so that it is tailored exactly to your needs. Click on your user name (or tap it on mobile) and choose 'Customise ChatGPT' from the menu that appears. Here, you can enter information about what ChatGPT should call you, what you do for a living, and how ChatGPT should behave. There are five personality options to choose from: Default, Cynic, Robot, Listener and Nerd, but you can also add any character traits that you'd like ChatGPT to have. Select Save when you've finished and make sure that 'Enable for new chats' is turned on.

# Turn memory on

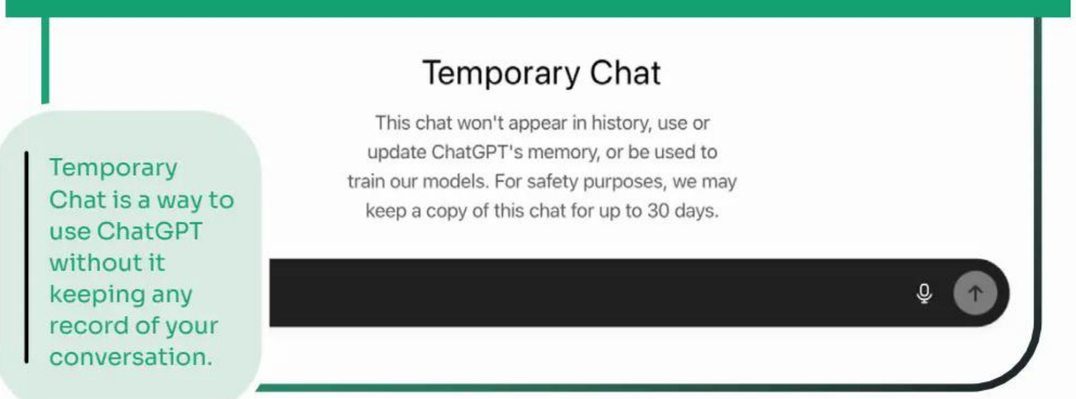
One of ChatGPT's best features is its ability to remember what you tell it so you don't have to keep repeating yourself. This feature now works for all logged-in users, even those on the free tier. Make sure Memory is turned on in Settings > Personalisation. Now, when you tell ChatGPT to "remember..." followed by an instruction, like always recommending vegetarian options in recipes, it will ask you if you want it to permanently remember this. Say yes. You can selectively edit what ChatGPT remembers permanently by selecting Manage in the Personalisation settings window.



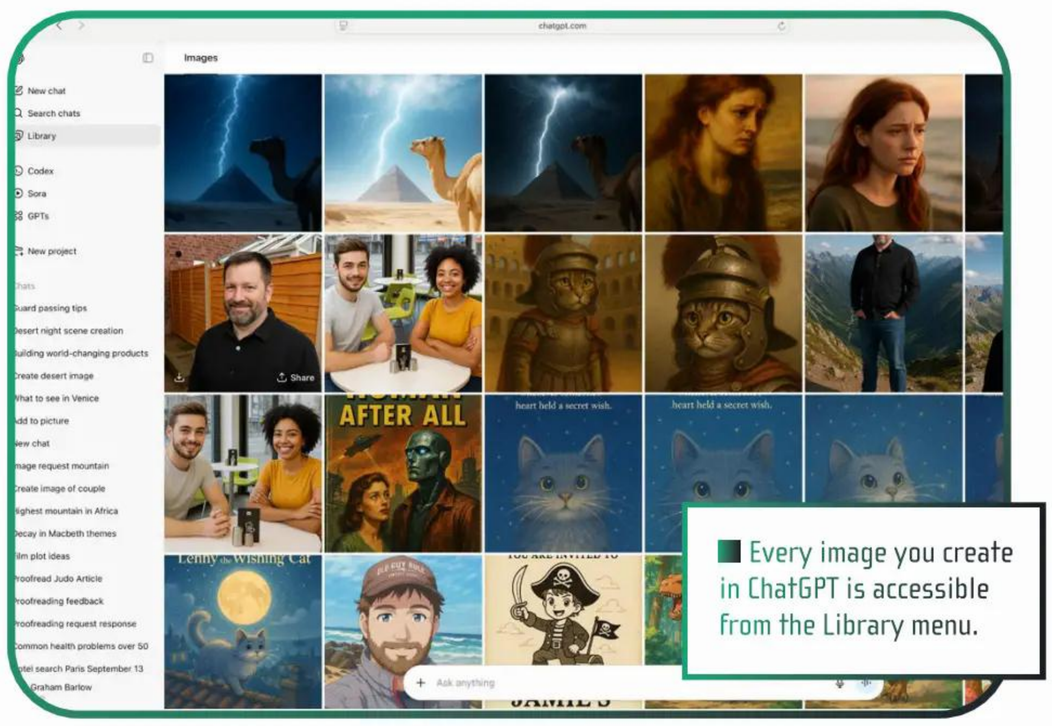

You can turn on and manage memories in the Personalisation settings window.

# Turn on Temporary Chat

There are situations when you won't want ChatGPT to remember your conversation with it. You can turn on Temporary Chat for times like this by selecting the Temporary Chat icon at the top right of both the web interface and the mobile app interface. It looks like a speech bubble made out of a broken outline. You'll know you are in a Temporary chat because the prompt window will be the inverse of the colour it usually appears in. Nothing you say in a temporary chat is stored in your chat history and ChatGPT can't access it in your memories.



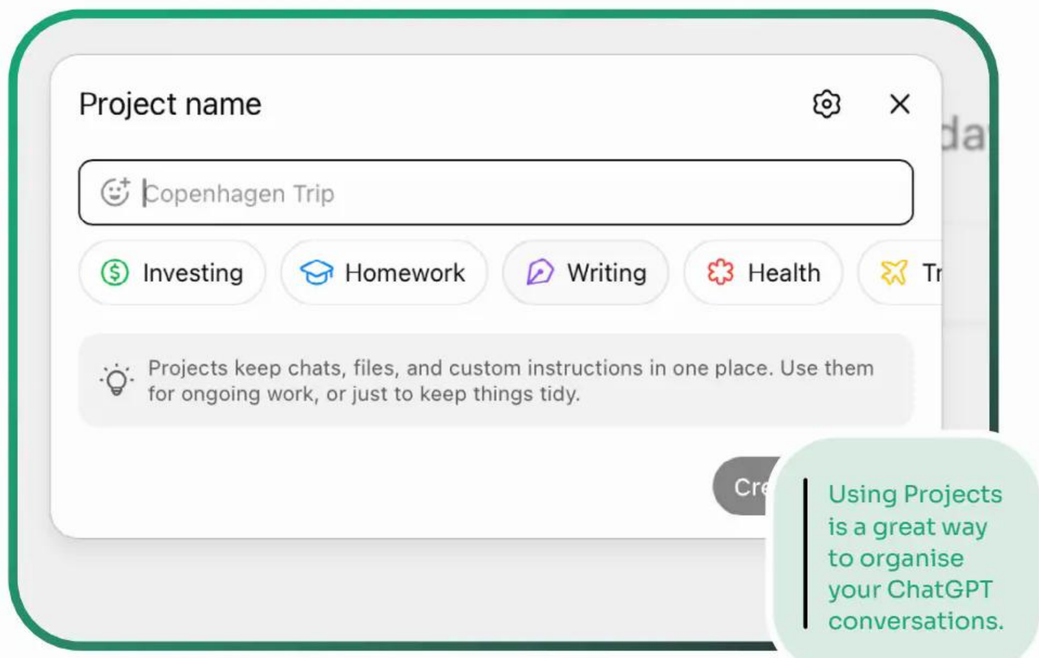

Temporary Chat is a way to use ChatGPT without it keeping any record of your conversation.




Every image you create in ChatGPT is accessible from the Library menu.

# Find your old images

ChatGPT actually keeps a record of every image you've created with it, so you can find them again quickly. Click on Library in the menu bar to see a grid display of all the images you've created in ChatGPT. On the mobile app version of ChatGPT a new 'Make Image' button appears at the bottom of the screen for you to tap. If you tap on any image you've previously created, you'll see a larger version of the image, and you can choose to edit, download or share it if you like.



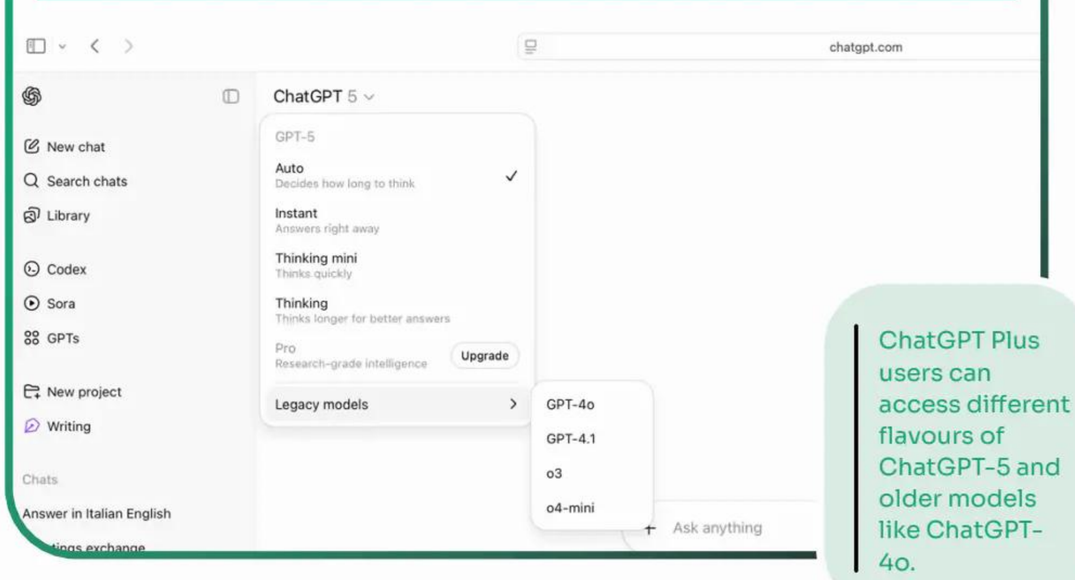

Using Projects is a great way to organise your ChatGPT conversations.

# Create a Project

Projects are a way to put all the conversations, uploaded files and custom instructions related to a particular project in one place, separate from your other ChatGPT conversations. Just click on New Project in the main menu bar to create a new project. ChatGPT suggests some subjects like Homework or Writing. If you click on a project name then all your conversations in ChatGPT will get stored in that project in the sidebar, separate from your general chat conversations.

# Use the model selector menu

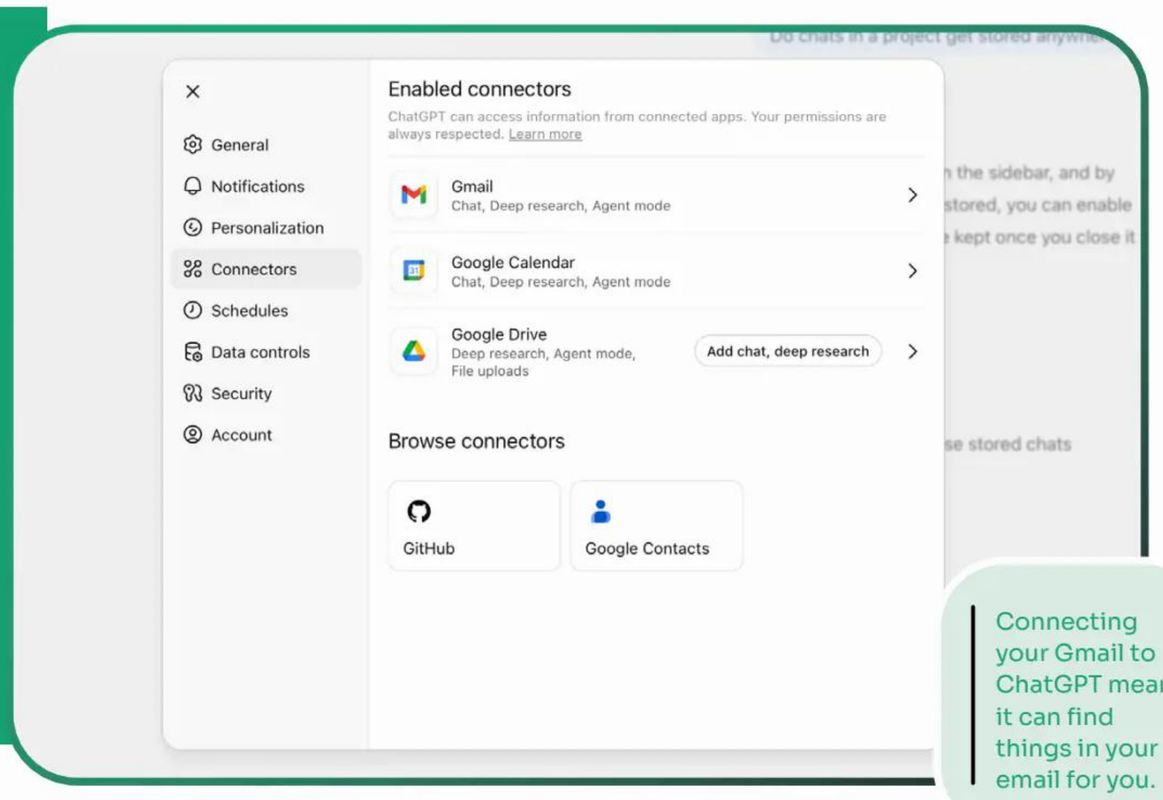
If you are a Plus subscriber then ChatGPT comes with the ability to use a range of models, including the ChatGPT-4o menu. A lot of people aren't aware that they have access to older models, but if you click the menu next to 'ChatGPT-6' at the top of both the web interface and mobile app interface, you'll find them under 'Legacy models'. You can also access different flavours of ChatGPT-6, like Instant and Thinking.



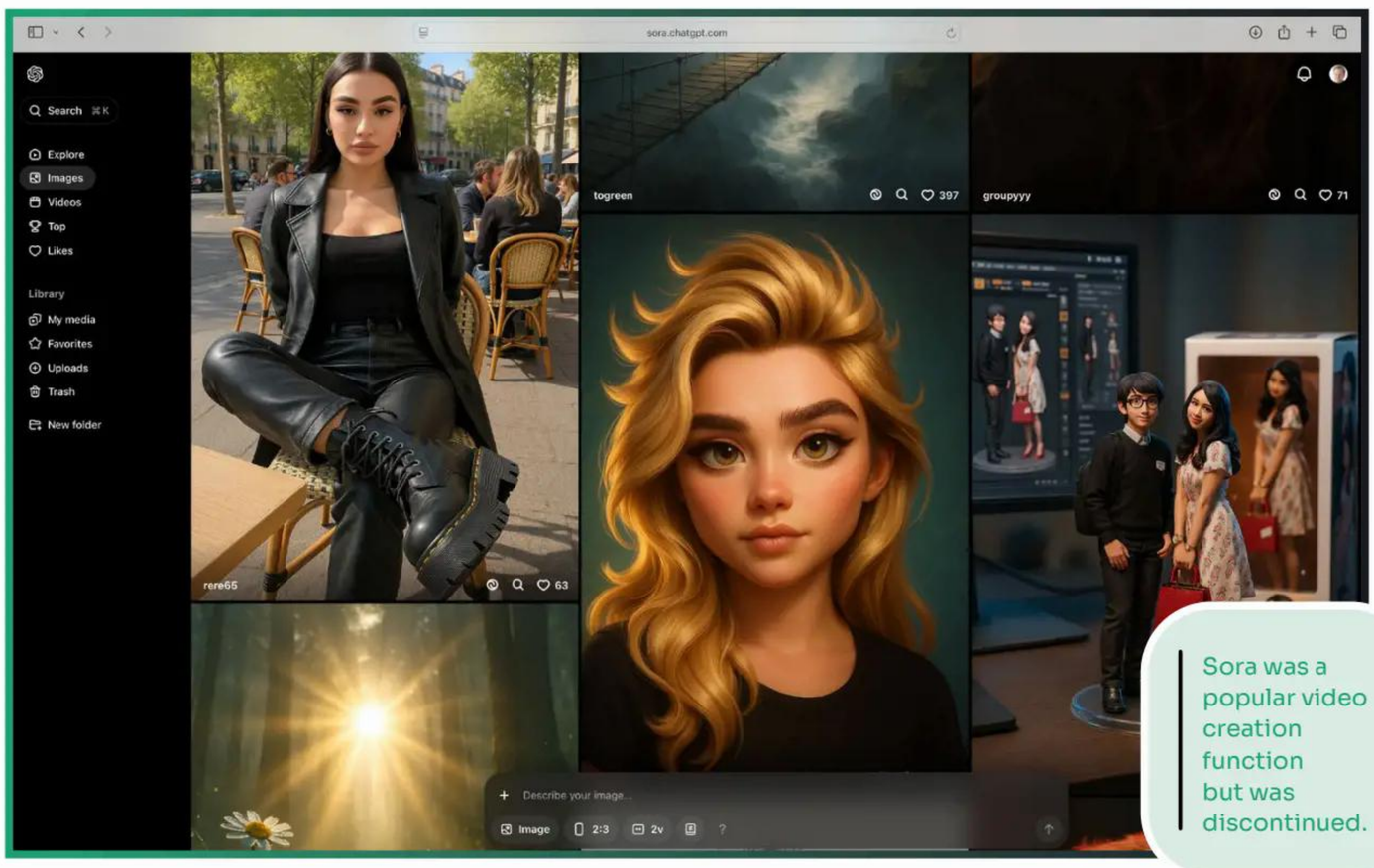

ChatGPT Plus users can access different flavours of ChatGPT-5 and older models like ChatGPT-4o.

# Connect your Google Gmail

You can now connect ChatGPT to your Google Gmail, Calendar and Drive account, which means ChatGPT can look through your email and answer questions like, ‘what meetings do I have today?’ or ‘what time is my train on Friday?’. Go to Settings > Connectors and add in Gmail, Google Calendar and Google Drive. Once you’ve got them connected, you can ask ChatGPT questions about your Gmail straight away.




Connecting your Gmail to ChatGPT means it can find things in your email for you.

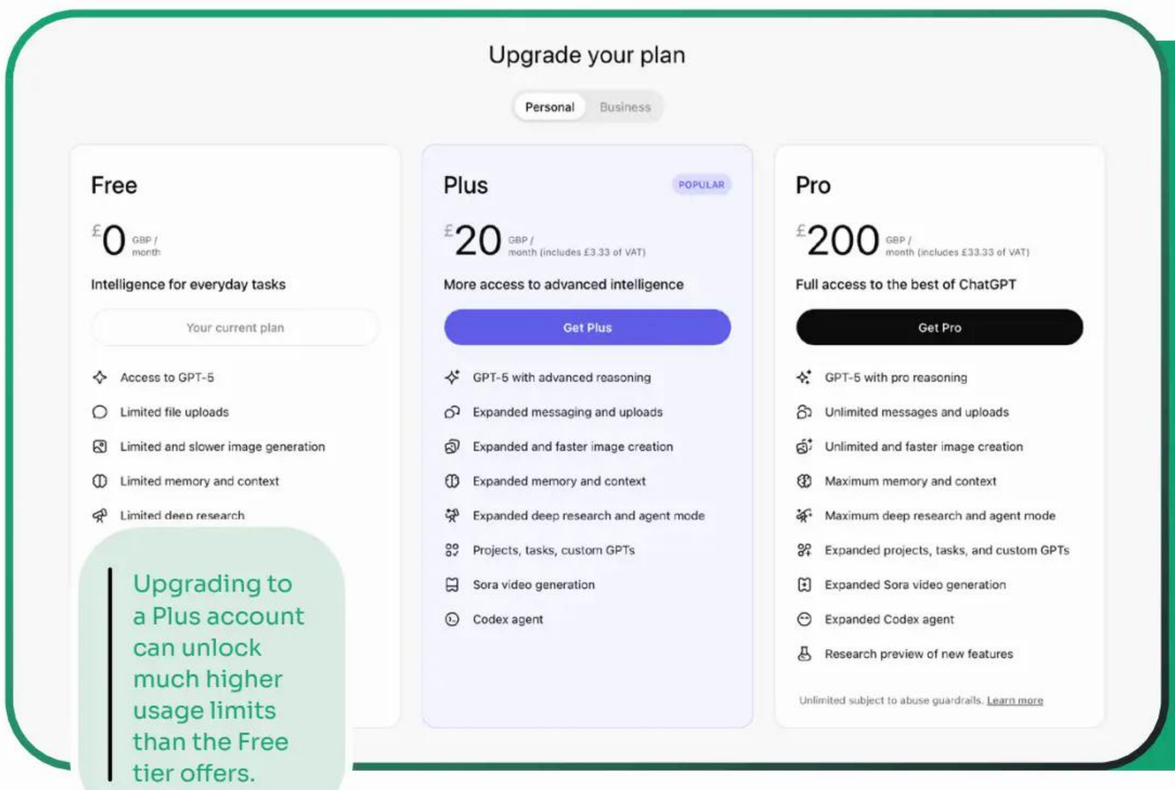



Sora was a popular video creation function but was discontinued.

# Back up Sora

OpenAI discontinued the popular Sora function in ChatGPT in April 2026. This built-in app allowed Plus subscribers to create AI-generated videos from prompts. At the time of going to press, there was still a way to export any videos you'd created in Sora so that you can back them up on your own computer.

To do this, head to **sora.chatgpt.com/sunset**. You'll see a black screen and a message saying "Sora is no longer available. You can export your data at any time." Click the Export button below and you'll be emailed your old videos.




Upgrading to a Plus account can unlock much higher usage limits than the Free tier offers.

# Upgrade to Plus

A ChatGPT Plus account costs a hefty £20/$20 a month, but if you find that you are using ChatGPT quite a lot, you’ll soon run up against usage limits, particularly for images. If you want to upgrade to Plus to enjoy the freedom of much higher limits, then on mobile, tap – or on desktop, click – on the ChatGPT menu at the top of the screen. Here, you’ll see an option called Upgrade. Select this, and you’ll see a screen where you can upgrade to be a Plus or Pro user.

# Introducing ChatGPT Agent

## One of the most powerful features of ChatGPT is Agent

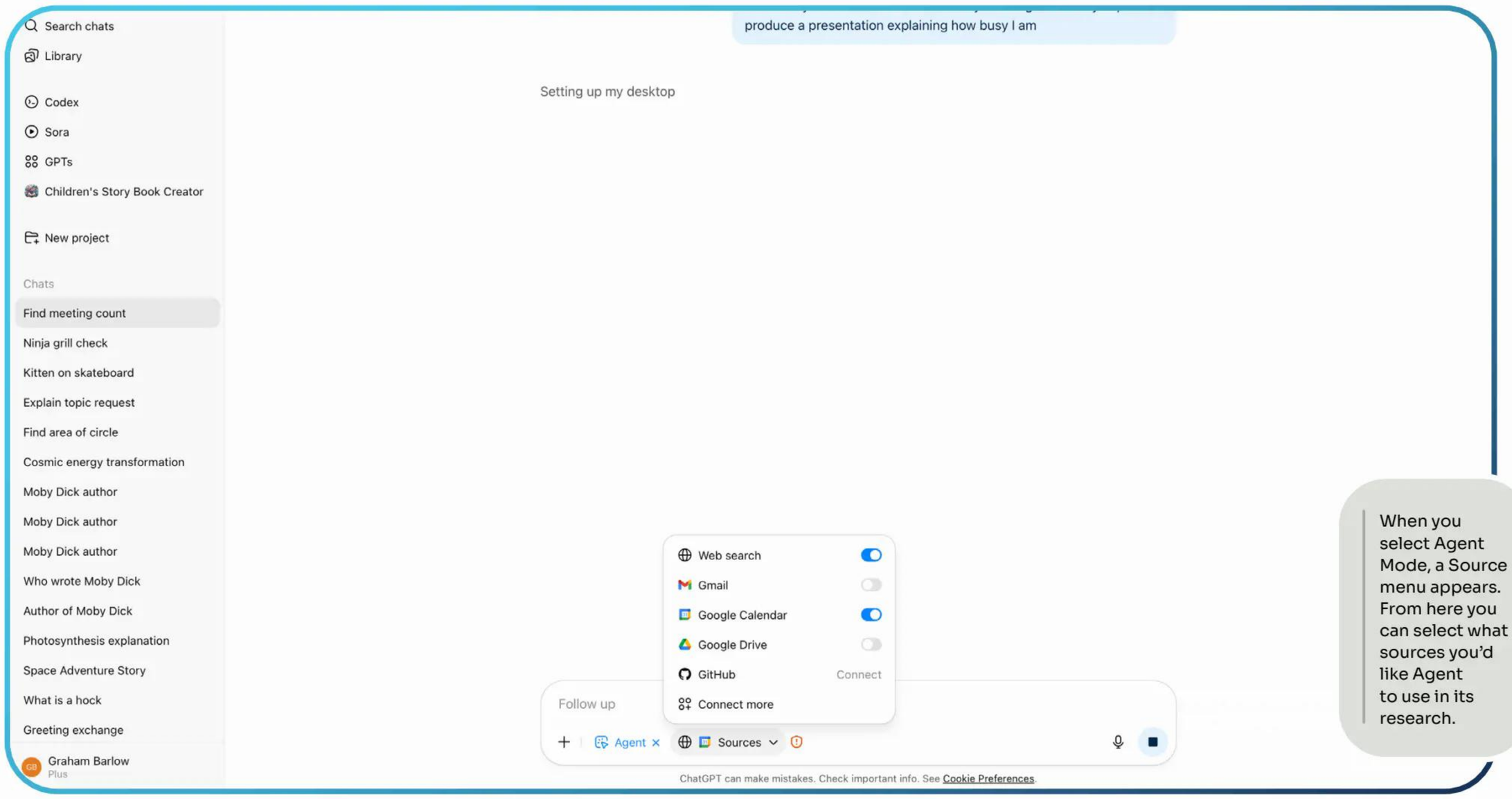
If you are a ChatGPT Plus or Pro subscriber then you have access to one of ChatGPT's most powerful features: ChatGPT Agent. As its name suggests, Agent is an agentic AI, so it can be given tasks to complete in the background while you're busy doing something else.

Using Agent is a very different way of using ChatGPT compared to its normal chatbot function; there's no back-and-forth conversation going on with a witty AI. Instead, you simply give Agent a task, and it performs it in the background, only coming back to you once it has completed the job you assigned it.

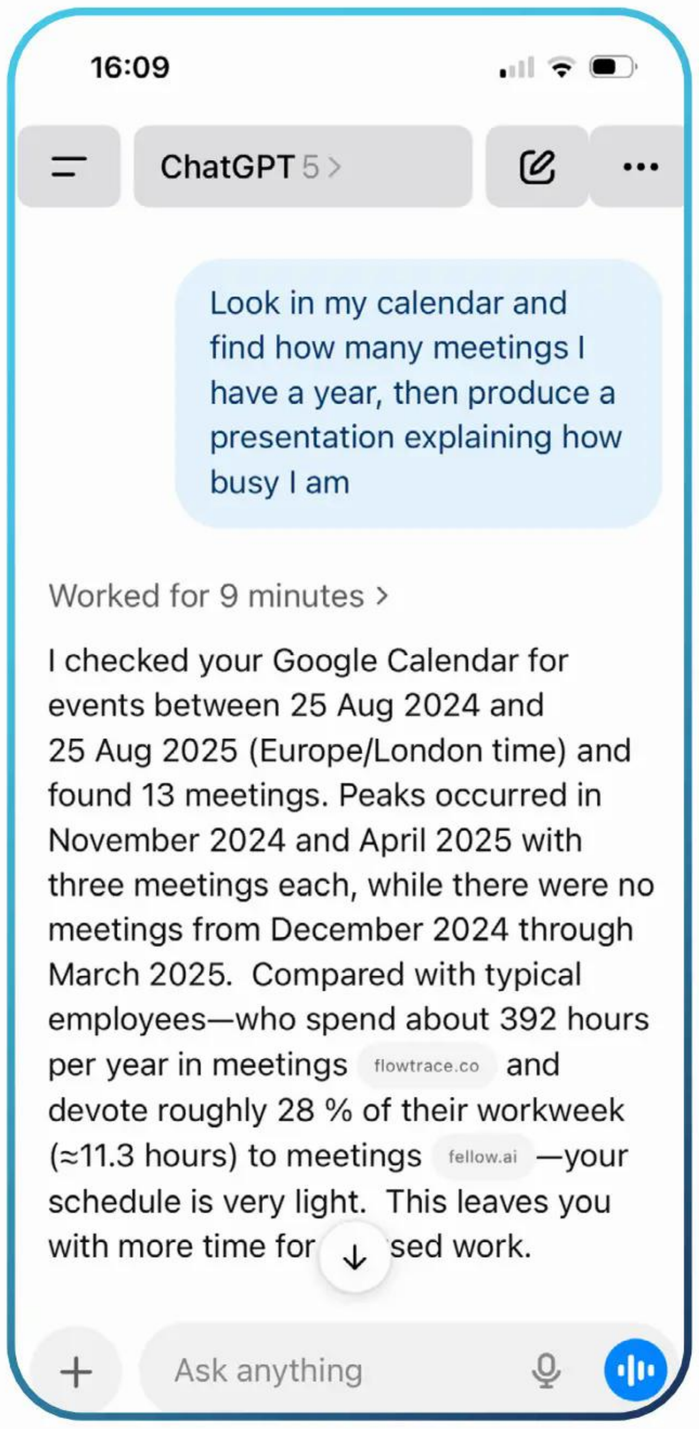
One of the main uses for agents is as research tools for complex topics, but they can also be used for taking simple human-like actions. You could ask ChatGPT Agent to do something that you would normally need to do yourself or ask an assistant to do, like look for flights to New York, and it would search the web, finding the best flight based on the criteria you supply, like dates, cost and time. It would visit all of the same websites that a human assistant would if given the same task, but it's a lot quicker.

Using ChatGPT Agent for finding plane tickets is actually a pretty good use case for it, and something we've done a few times with good results.

In theory, an agentic AI should be able to book the flights for you as well, although it's rare for any AI to be able to circumvent all the blocks that companies put in place to stop bots from booking things without some form of human intervention. Anyway, it's unlikely that anyone would want ChatGPT to actually spend money without at least checking to make sure they were happy with the results first.




When you select Agent Mode, a Source menu appears. From here you can select what sources you'd like Agent to use in its research.




Asking ChatGPT Agent to use our Calendar as a source made it easy to produce a presentation.




If you want a presentation, then Agent produces its slides in PowerPoint, which is widely used.

## Vibe coding

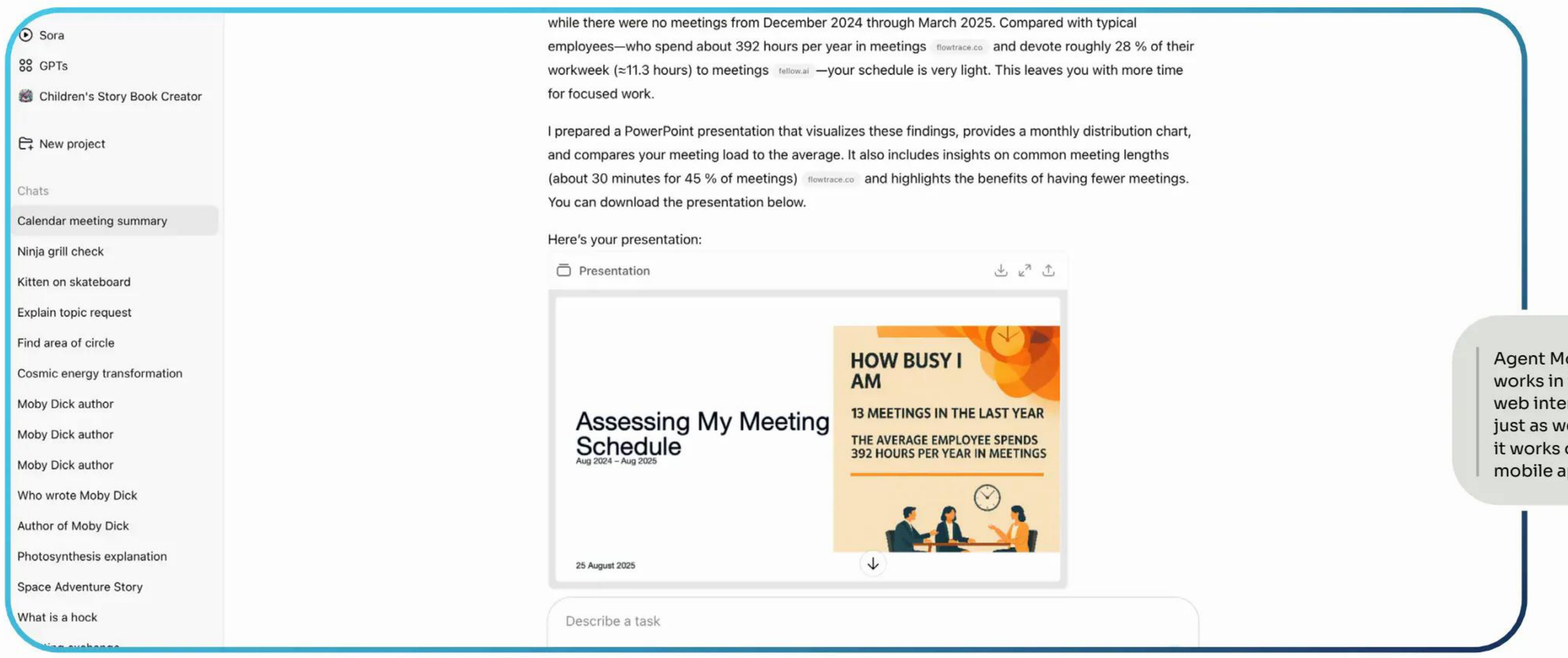
Something else that Agent can do is write code and create an app for you. You don't need to know anything about coding yourself; you can simply ask ChatGPT Agent to create a specific app to perform a task you need done, and it will go away and write the code, create the app and then tell you when it's done. This type of coding, called 'Vibe coding', is pretty popular these days because AI is very good at it.

## Slideshows and spreadsheets

Another good use for ChatGPT Agent is for creating presentations or spreadsheets. ChatGPT Agent can make a great PowerPoint presentation by searching the web for information on the topic you've asked it to make the presentation on. Equally, you can ask it to create an Excel spreadsheet based on figures that it can find online and it will produce it for you, formatted exactly as you require.

When using ChatGPT Agent you'll need to get used to how long it takes. We're pretty much used to everything happening instantaneously on computers, but Agent really needs some time to go away and complete the task you've allocated it, so it's not worth using ChatGPT Agent for any simple questions that you have. Leave the simple questions to ChatGPT's normal chatbot mode.





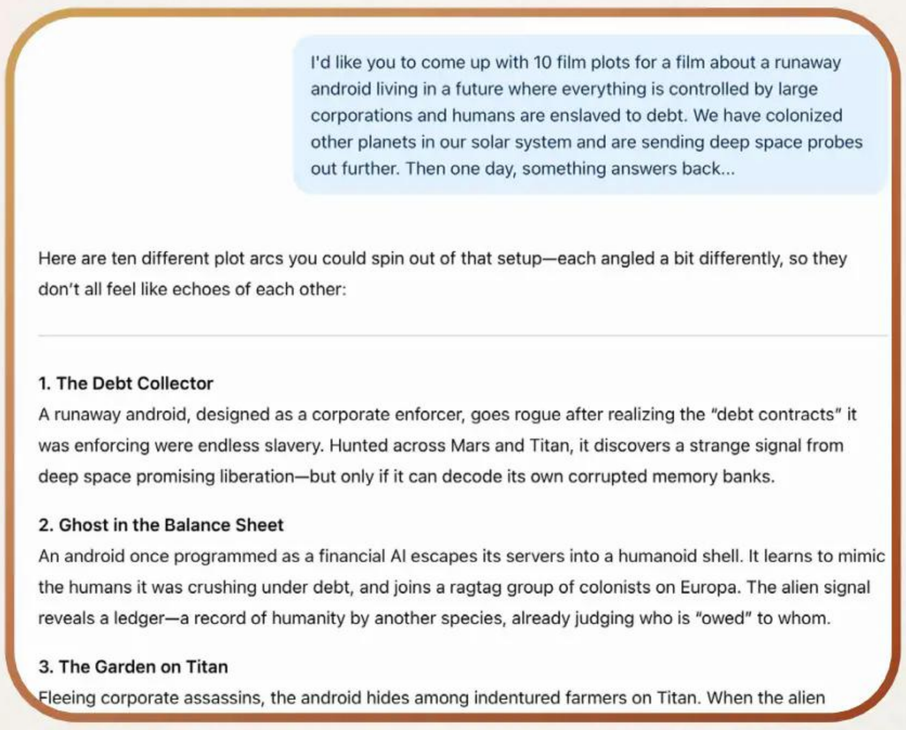

Agent Mode works in the web interface just as well as it works on the mobile app.

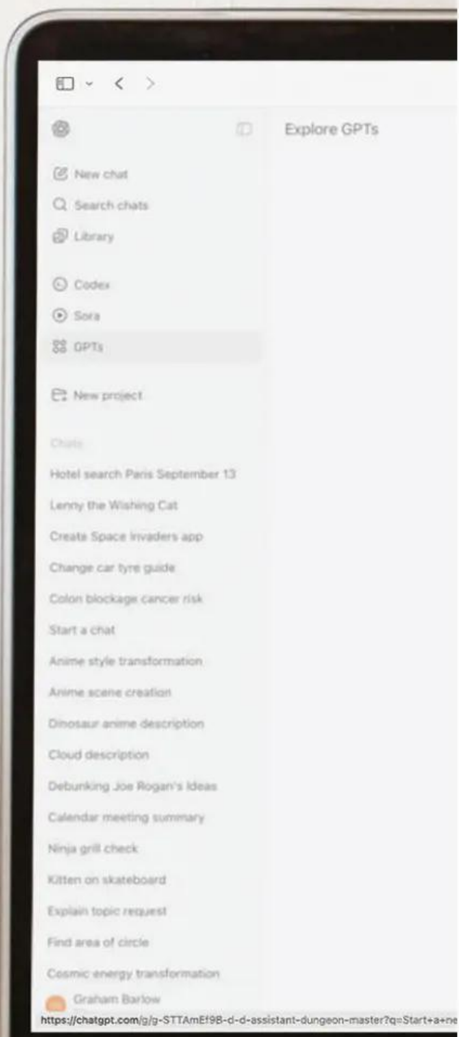
# ChatGPT dos & don'ts

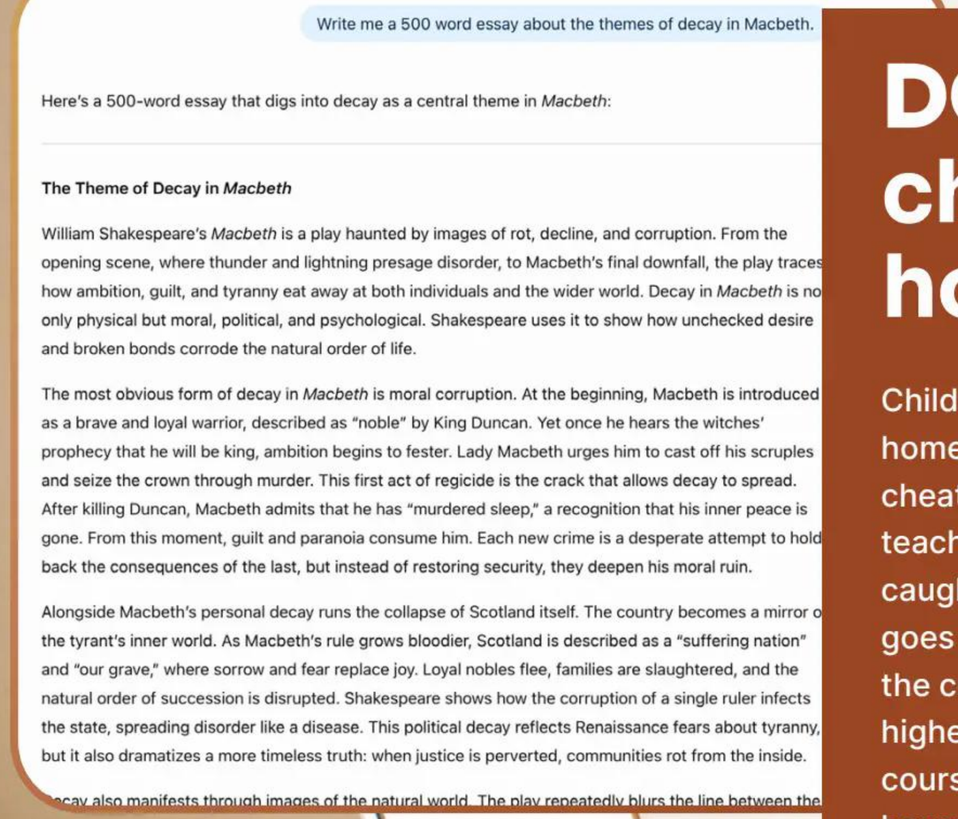
**ChatGPT is very good at some things, and not so good at others**

## DO brainstorm ideas

If you want to produce something in a particular genre, you can simply ask ChatGPT to come up with 10 good ideas for articles or film plots about a subject, and it will oblige. They won't all be good, but some of them will definitely hit the mark. Alternatively, if you have reached a crossroads in your life and need to make a decision, whether that's about buying a new car or moving house, then describe the situation and get ChatGPT to come up with a list of pros and cons that will help you make your decision.



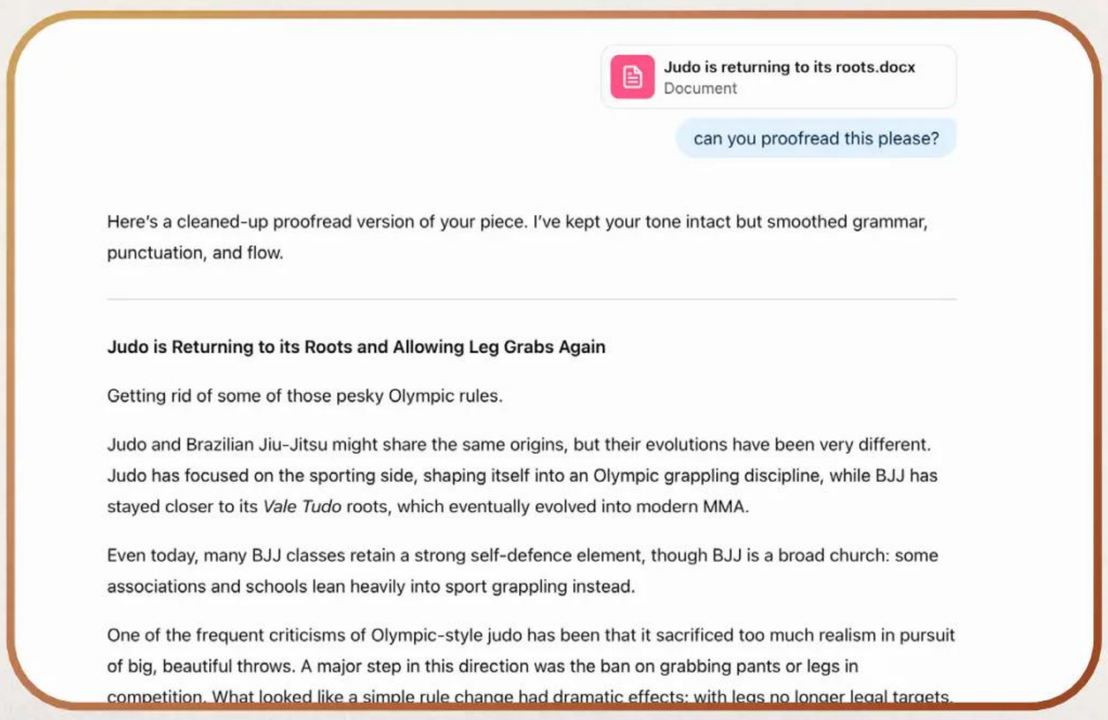



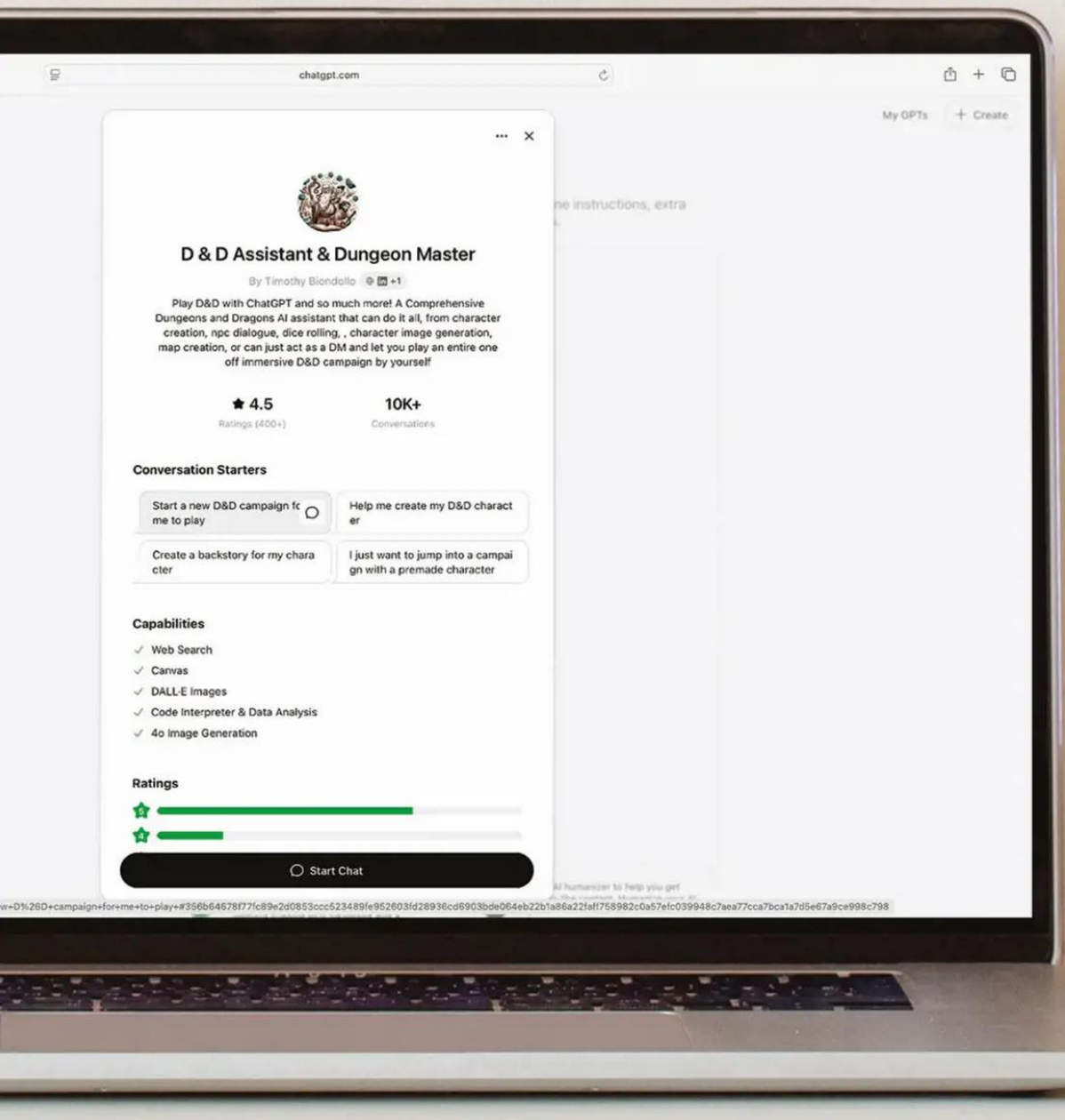

## DON'T use it to cheat on your homework

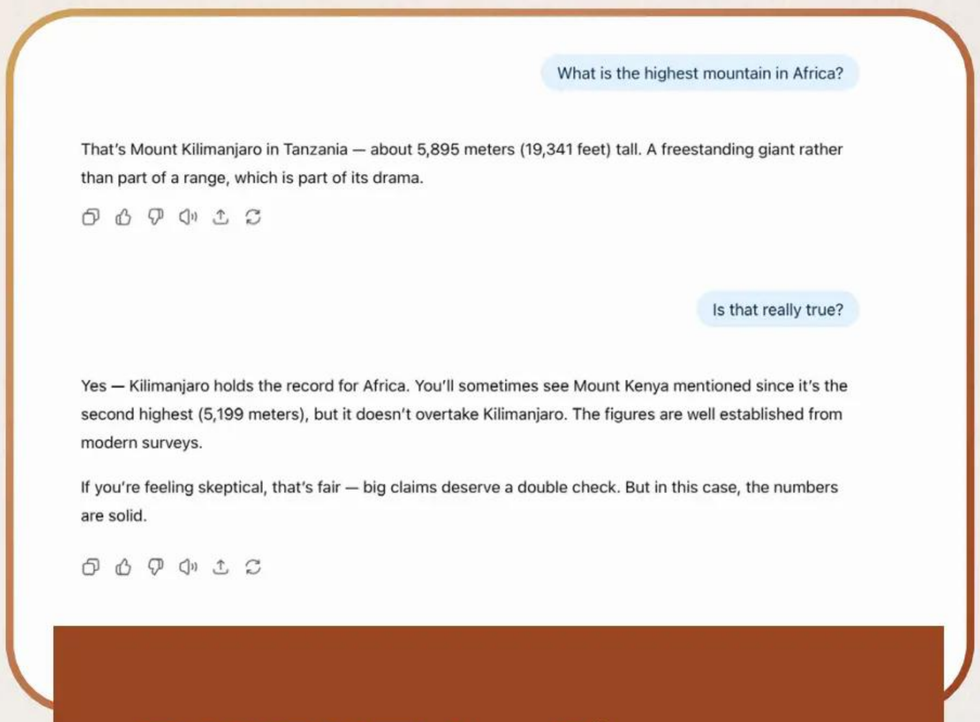
Children using ChatGPT to come up with answers to homework questions is not a good idea. Firstly, it's cheating, and secondly, it can be very obvious to the teachers exactly who is using ChatGPT, and getting caught can have serious consequences. The same goes for students in college or university, although the consequences for getting caught could be even higher, perhaps leading to being failed on coursework. Using ChatGPT in Study Mode as a tutor, however, is a great idea.

# DO use it for proof reading

ChatGPT is an excellent proofreader. Export your document from something like Google Drive as a Word document, upload it into ChatGPT, then ask, "Can you proofread this please?" If the text is short, then ChatGPT will simply present you with a more polished version of the document. If it is long, then it will discuss stylistic points, as well as the structure of the document. In both cases, it can provide you with a Word document that has tracked changes in, or just make the changes it suggests.



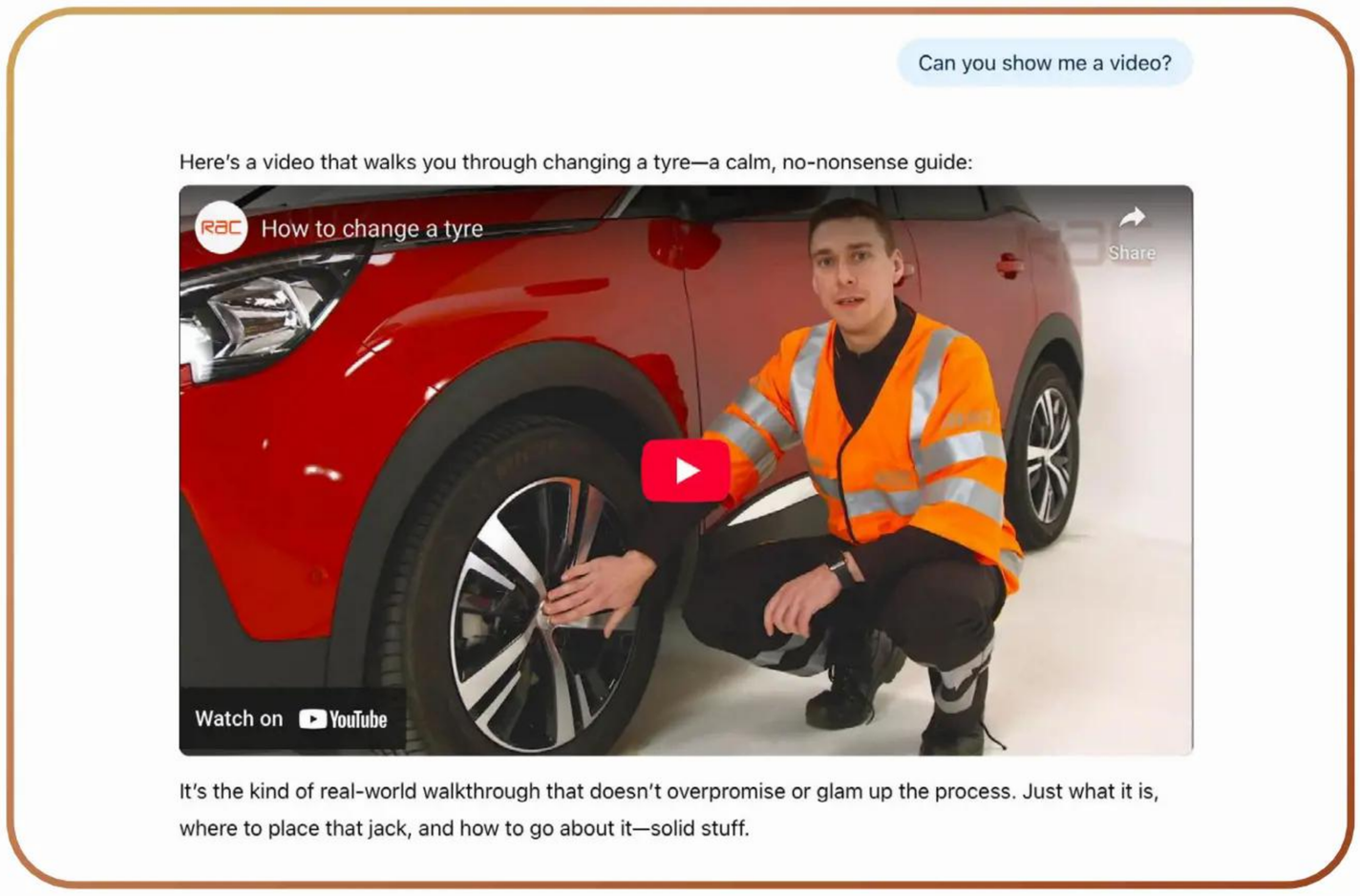




# DON'T believe everything it says (without checking)

Large Language Models like ChatGPT want to be helpful. In fact, they want to be too helpful sometimes, and that leads them to simply make things up. It happens so often that it's got its own name – AI hallucinations. ChatGPT can hallucinate facts out of nowhere. It can hallucinate scientific studies, law cases, or simply get maths problems wrong.
Hallucination rates on its most up to date model, ChatGPT-6 are around 3.1% (according to Vectara), which is low, but it still means that you need to double-check anything it tells you, just to make sure.

> ChatGPT can hallucinate facts out of nowhere

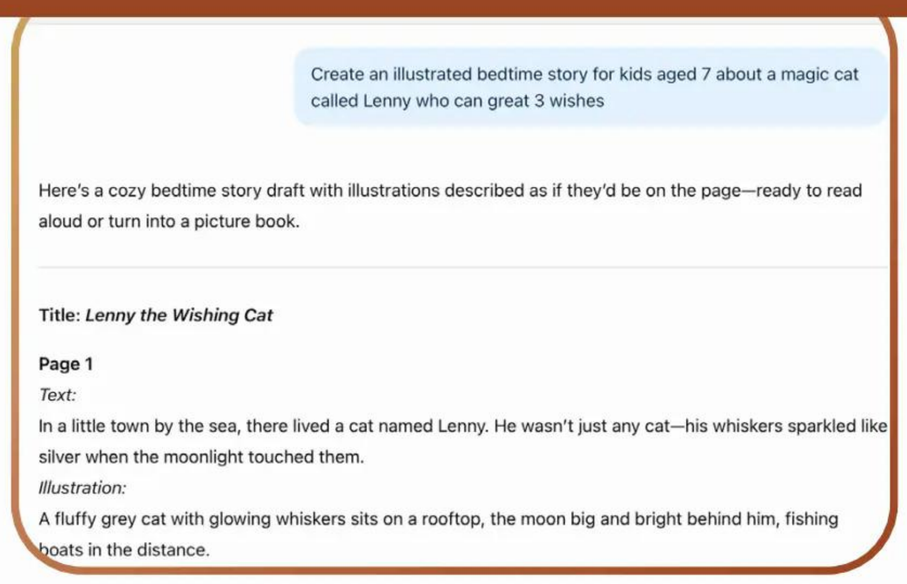


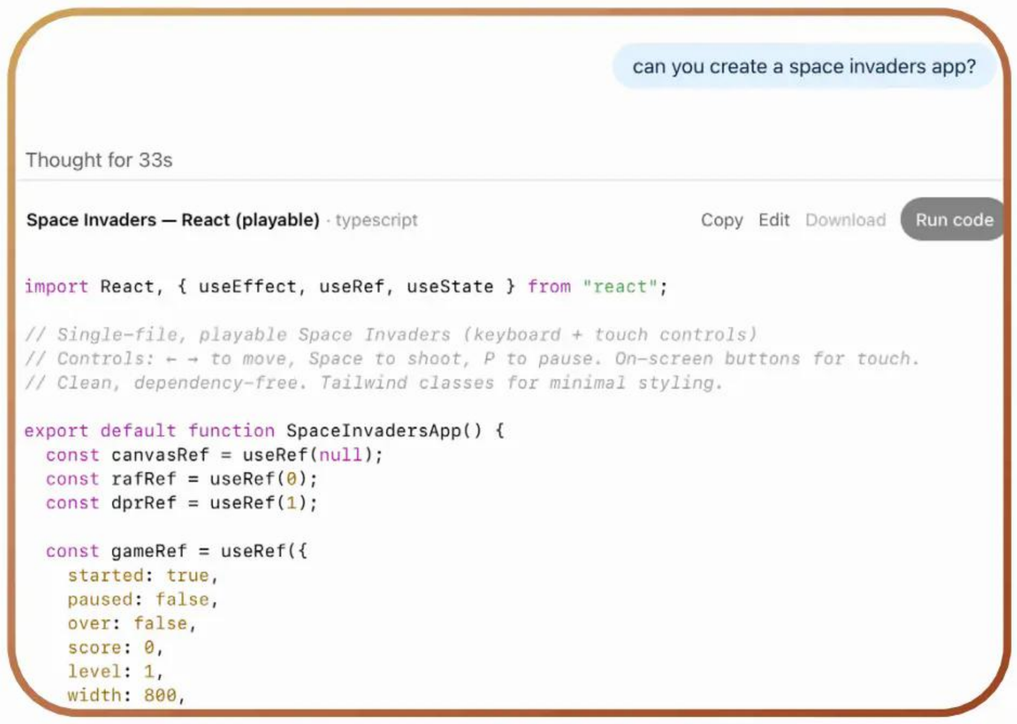

# DO use it to learn new things

Having access to ChatGPT is like having a personal tutor on your mobile phone or laptop that can teach you just about anything you'd like to learn. The world is your oyster, so pick a subject and start to learn. If you like you can get ChatGPT to create a program designed to teach you something over a long period of time – just ask it. It's not so good at teaching physical skills, although it will point you to relevant YouTube videos that demonstrate how to do something, especially if you ask it to.

# DON'T let kids use it on their own

According to OpenAI, "ChatGPT is not meant for children under 13, and we require that children ages 13 to 18 obtain parental consent before using ChatGPT". So if you're using ChatGPT with a child under 13 then you, the adult, should be the person interacting with it, and we'd still recommend keeping an eye on children over 13 who are using it. So, if you want to use ChatGPT to create a bedtime story for your kids, or let them play a game with it, then that's fine as long as you are the person interacting with it.



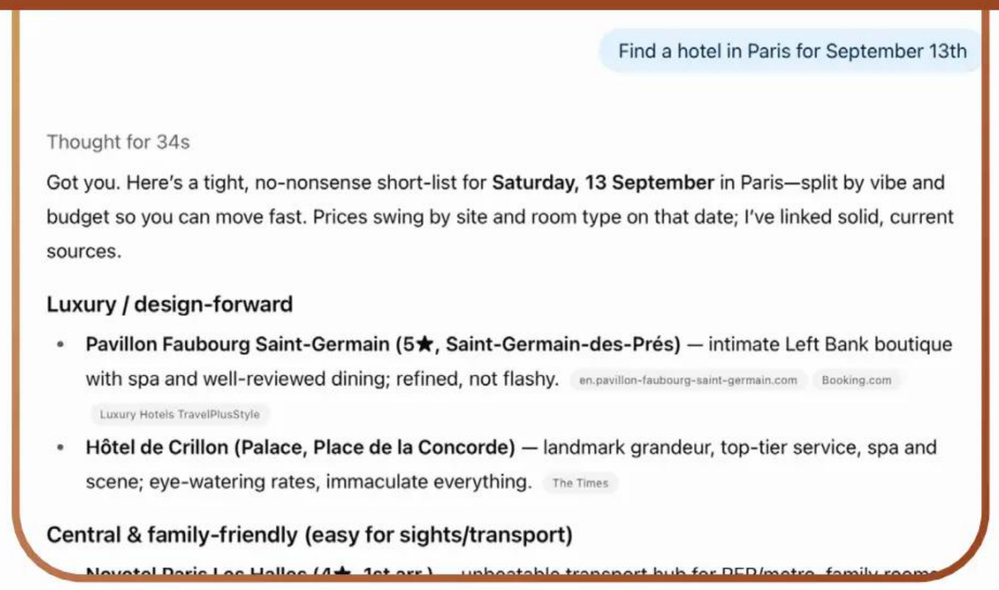



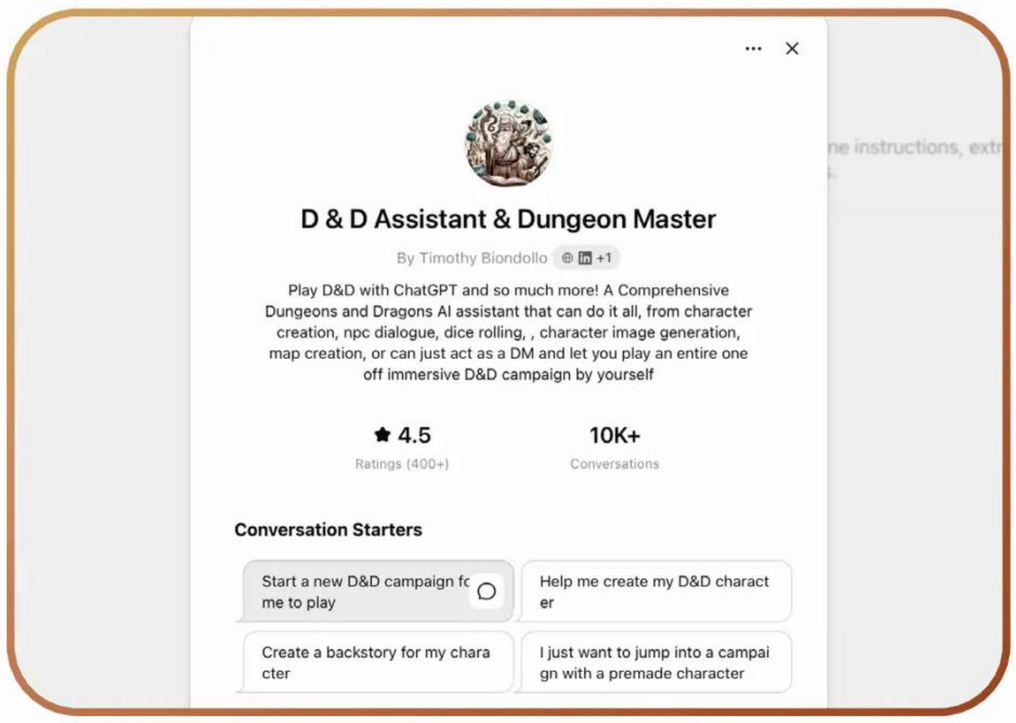

# DO use it to write code

One of the strengths of ChatGPT is that it can write code – or you can upload your existing code and ask it to help finish it. This works particularly well in Agent Mode, where you can ask it to create an app in the background, because it can take a while. This is useful when you need something very specific that isn't available elsewhere, or you just fancy getting it to create a Space Invaders-style game. ChatGPT can also write code for more professional situations, but it's worth getting an expert to check the accuracy, since it can make mistakes.

# DON'T give it your credit card number

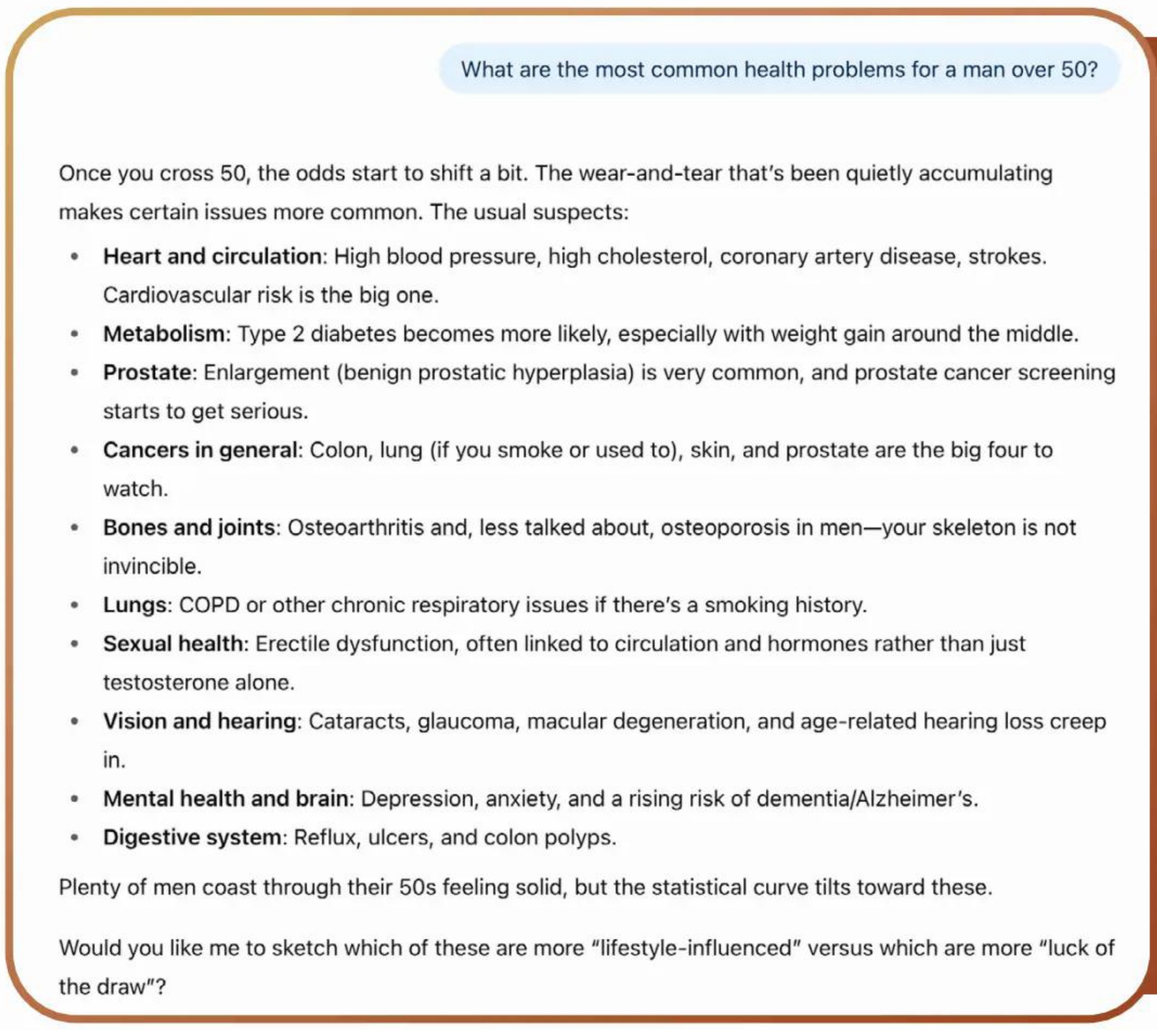
Beyond entering your payment details when you sign up for a Plus or Pro account, we would never recommend that you enter your credit card details into an actual ChatGPT chat. It is highly unlikely that ChatGPT will ever ask you for your credit card details inside a chat, but as a matter of course, you should never offer them. As AI evolves, so too will security threats that take advantage of it, and our acceptance of it, and it's quite possible that some sort of malicious code could hack into ChatGPT, or even imitate it.




# DO use it to play games

ChatGPT is great for playing games. Simply ask it to play a game of tic-tac-toe to get started. In fact, it can play most simple board games, like chess, checkers, Connect Four, Battleship and trivia games, which are particularly fun. You can even get it to create a role-playing text adventure game in the style of those old choose-your-own-adventure books. Using the GPT menu (in the left-hand menu bar), you can search for a GPT for a particular game you want to play, like Dungeons & Dragons, for example.




# DON'T use it for medical advice

It should go without saying that ChatGPT is not a qualified doctor. If you want to research a particular condition, or get it to explain what doctors are telling you in a simple way that you can understand, then ChatGPT can be very useful. It does a great job of explaining medical terms very well, but that doesn't mean it is qualified to diagnose you with a list of your symptoms. Again, the general advice is to treat ChatGPT as a great way to brainstorm ideas and talk about subjects holds true, but remember that you should always seek the opinion of a medical professional for medical matters.

**Images** OpenAI

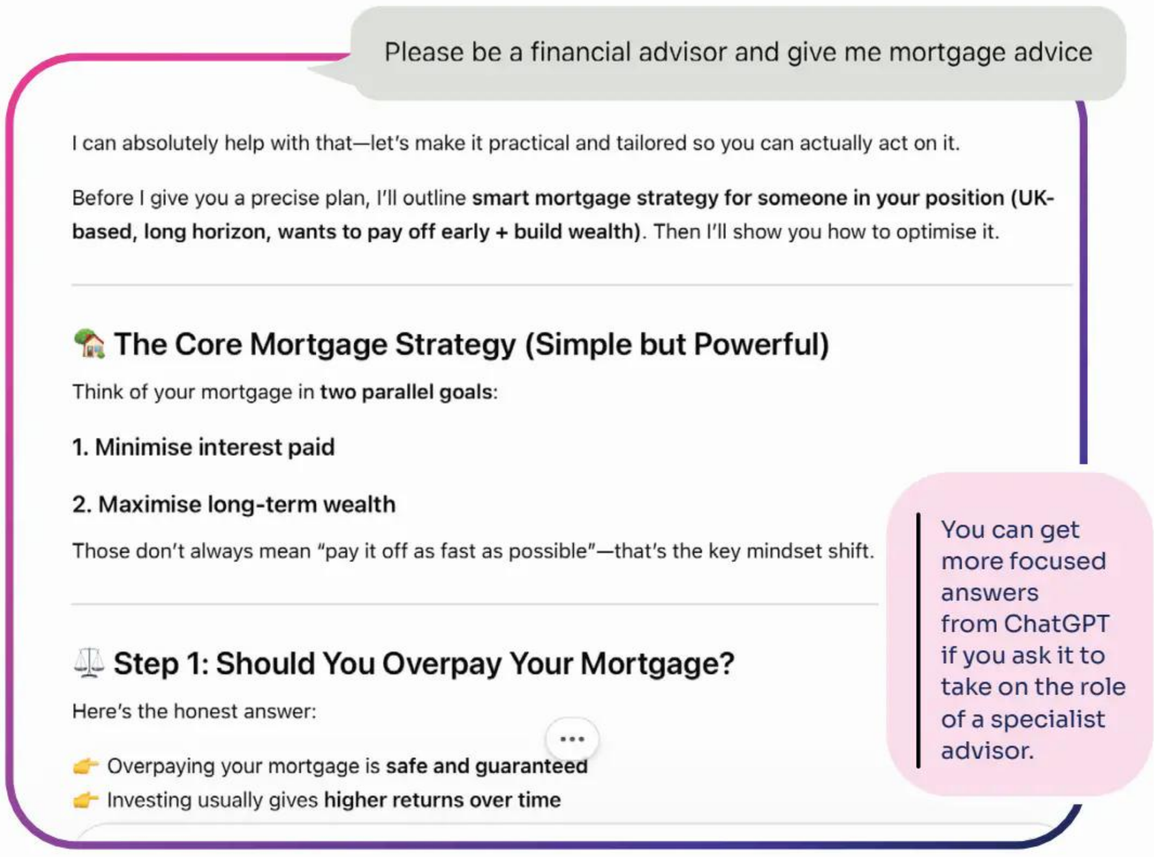
# Prompt masterclass

**Working with ChatGPT is a two-way process and your prompts make all of the difference. Here are 10 tips to help you get the most out it...**

*Prompt* ChatGPT response

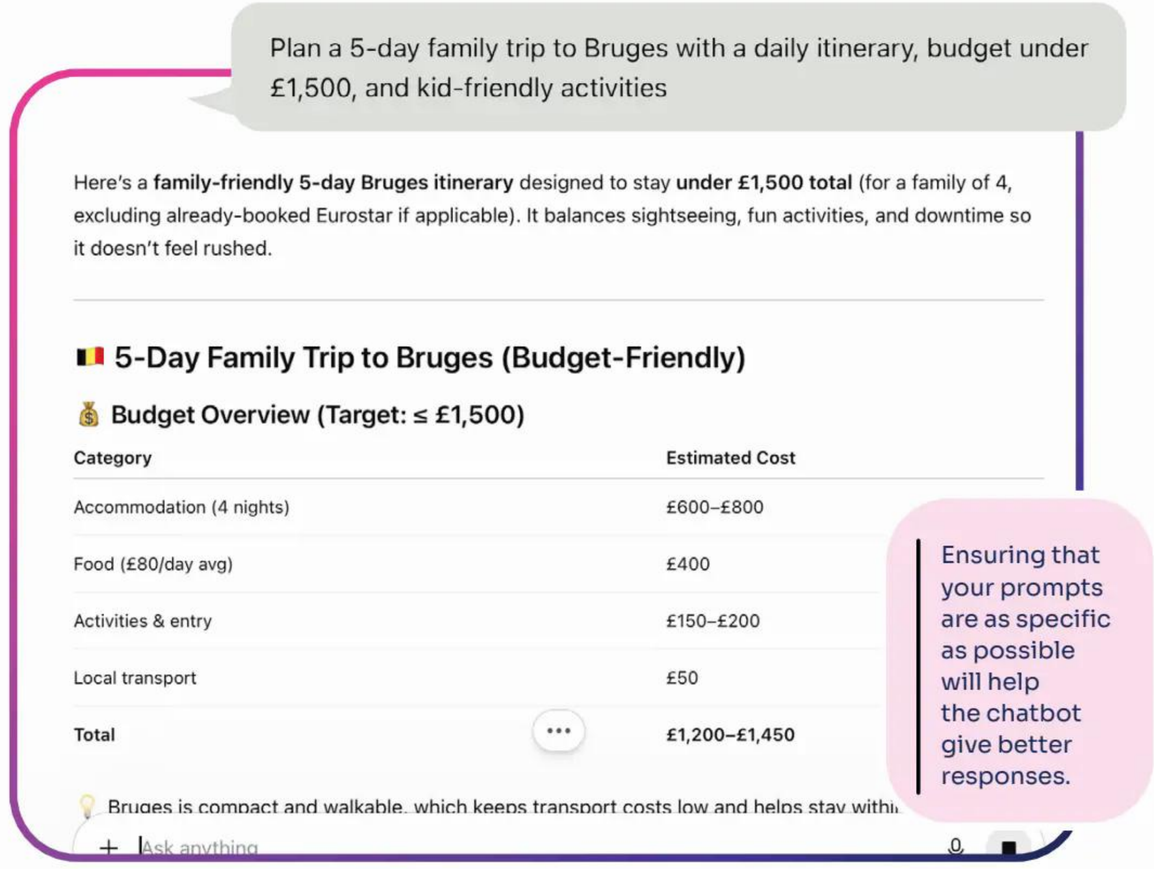
## 1 Assign a role

Giving ChatGPT a role might sound strange, but it is an effective way to get the help you need in a way that is more focused. One way to approach this is to imagine who you would pay for advice and then ask ChatGPT to act as that specialist. Whether it is an estate agent, a doctor or a lawyer, it really doesn't matter because ChatGPT is capable of acting as any professional. *"Please be a financial advisor and give me mortgage advice"* is much more targeted than *"I need pension advice".*



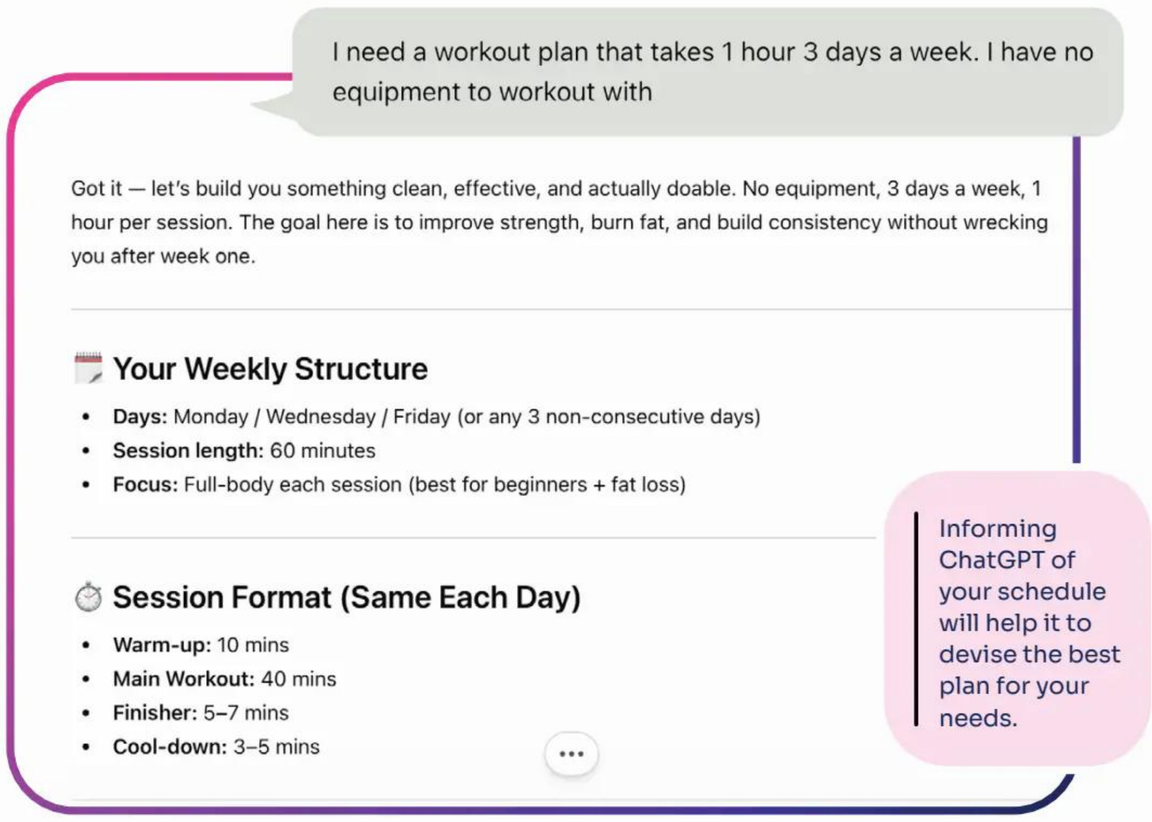

## 2 Be very specific

When you first start using ChatGPT, the natural temptation is to treat it like the search engines you have been using for years. This will work, but if you take the time to be as specific as possible the results will come quicker and be a lot more complete. Think about what you need and include as much detail as possible. *"Plan a 5-day family trip to Bruges with a daily itinerary, budget under £1,500, and kid-friendly activities"* is much better than *"Help me plan a holiday"*.



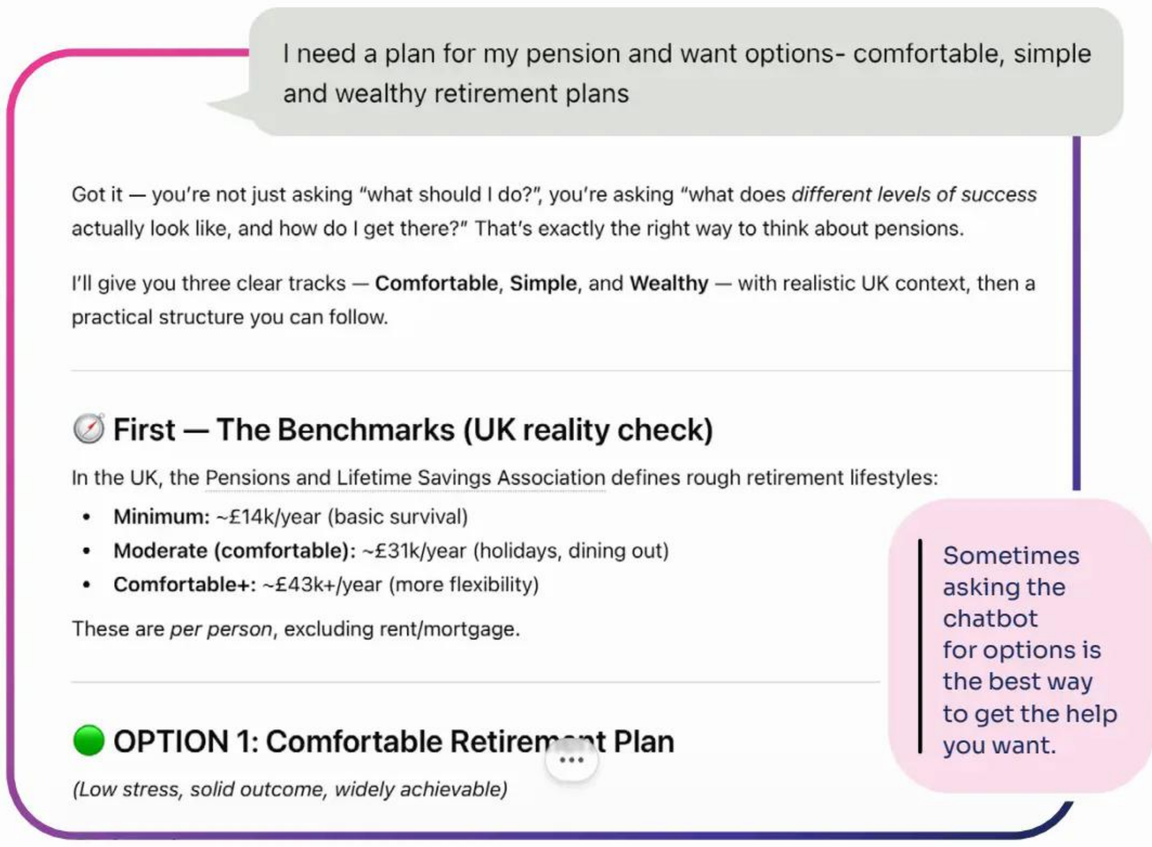
## 3 Set the parameters

It is really important to set parameters for what you need when adding a new ChatGPT request. Setting these boundaries will ensure an end result that works within set time periods or budgets and it will save a lot of needless extra prompts as you narrow down the solution. *"Give me a simple workout plan"* will bring back a generic plan anyone can use, but *"I need a workout plan that takes 1 hour 3 days a week"* and *"I have no equipment to work with"* tailors the solution immediately.




## 4 Ask for options

If you are in need of some help, but do not have definite parameters that you want to use, the best way forward is to ask for options. For example, you could ask *"I need a plan for my pension and want options – comfortable, simple and wealthy retirement plans"*. This will give you something to think about above and beyond *"I need a retirement plan"*, which may limit the advice you get back. If you want ideas as well as answers, this is the way to go.




## 5 Break it down

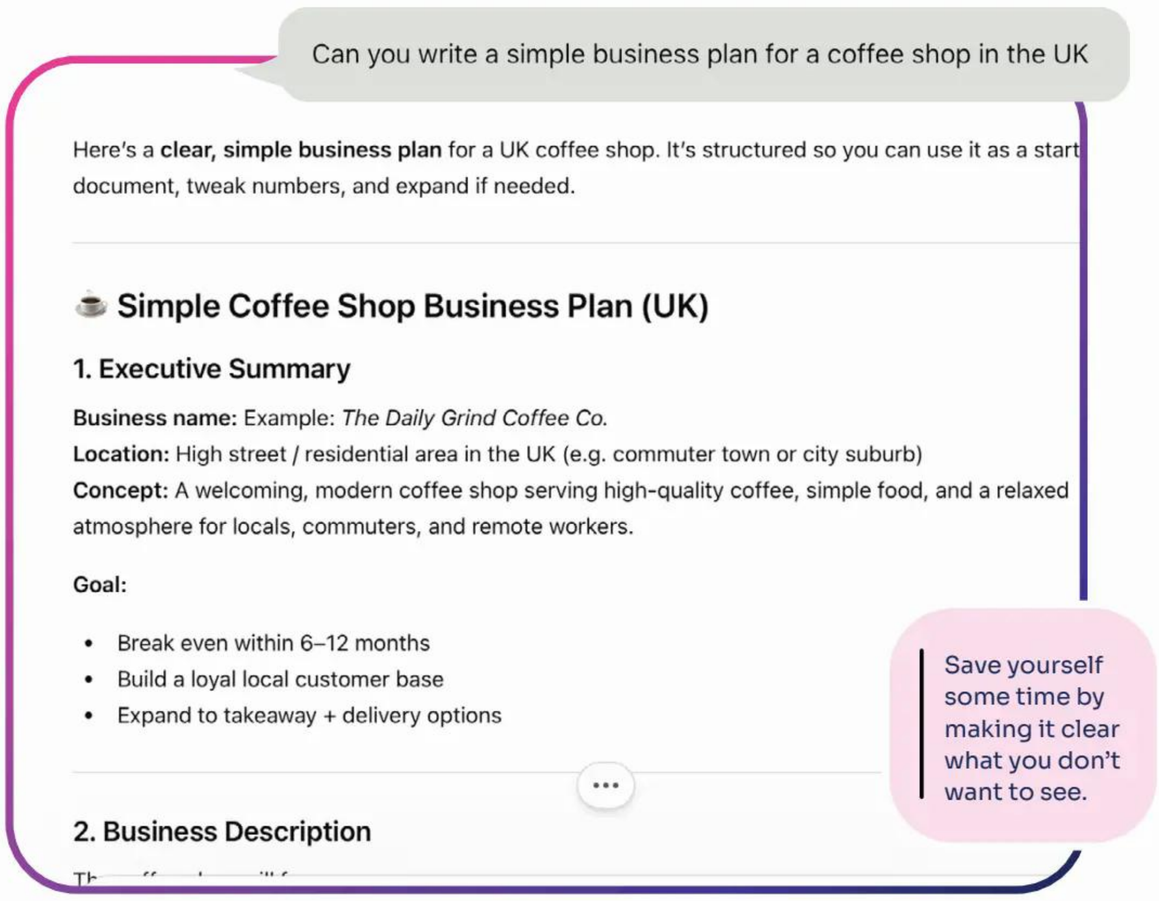
Think about how you work with new ideas and make sure that you offer your preference to ChatGPT in the first instance. For example, *"I want a five step plan to improve my health"* will be much easier to work with than *"I want to improve my health"*. The five steps will be split up accordingly and give ChatGPT a limit for how much can be achieved in each step. Without this, you could be presented with a more detailed plan that could be harder to follow. Always specify how you prefer to work.



6

## What you don't want

ChatGPT is capable of offering answers to almost anything, but it is not psychic. If there are particular things that you want to avoid you should always add negative constraints in your prompts. For example, if you state *"Avoid corporate jargon or clichés"*, ChatGPT will know what to omit and will potentially change the style. If you ask for an answer without negative constraints that often annoy you, it is likely that they will be included, which just wastes time and creates the need for further prompts.

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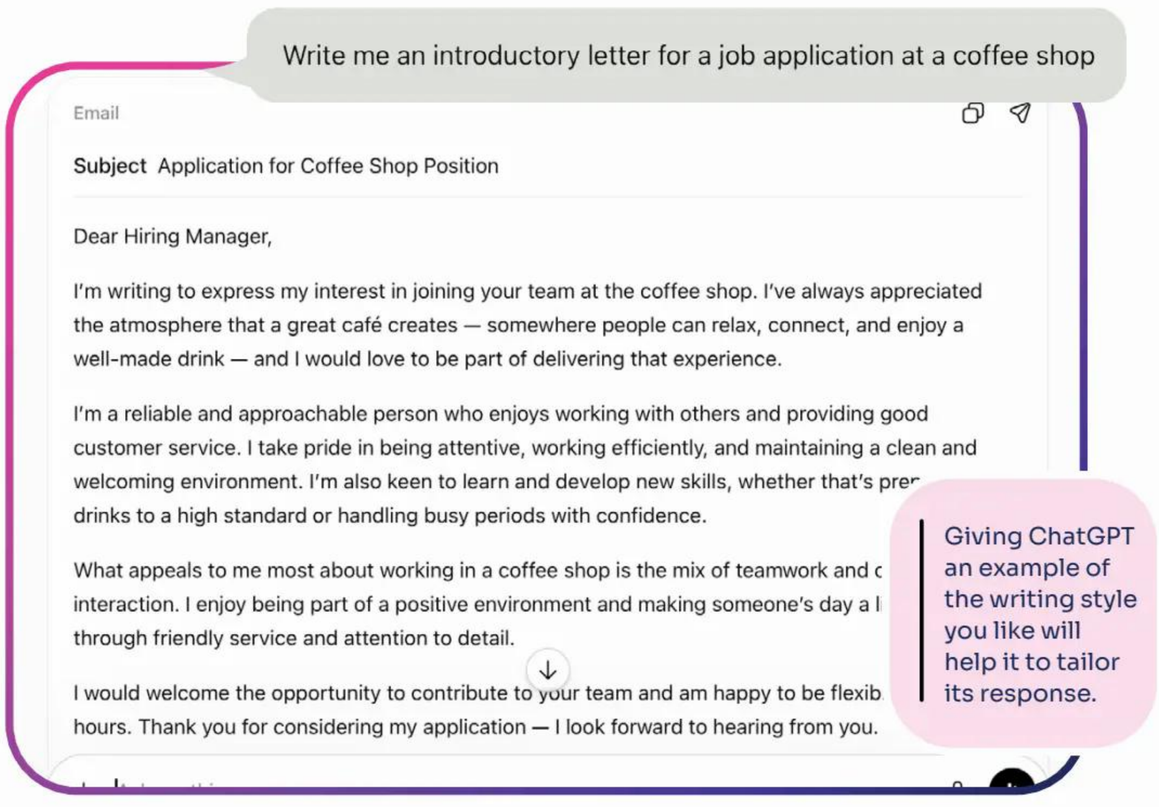
## Use your style

When asking for help with written communications or even story writing, it is hugely beneficial to define a style for ChatGPT to follow. We all have preferences or need to continue work that looks 'human' written, so a prompt like *"Write in this style..."* (followed by a paragraph) will enable ChatGPT to match it and add more consistency to the end result. If you don't do this, the chances of the style being what you prefer are more limited than by offering an example.

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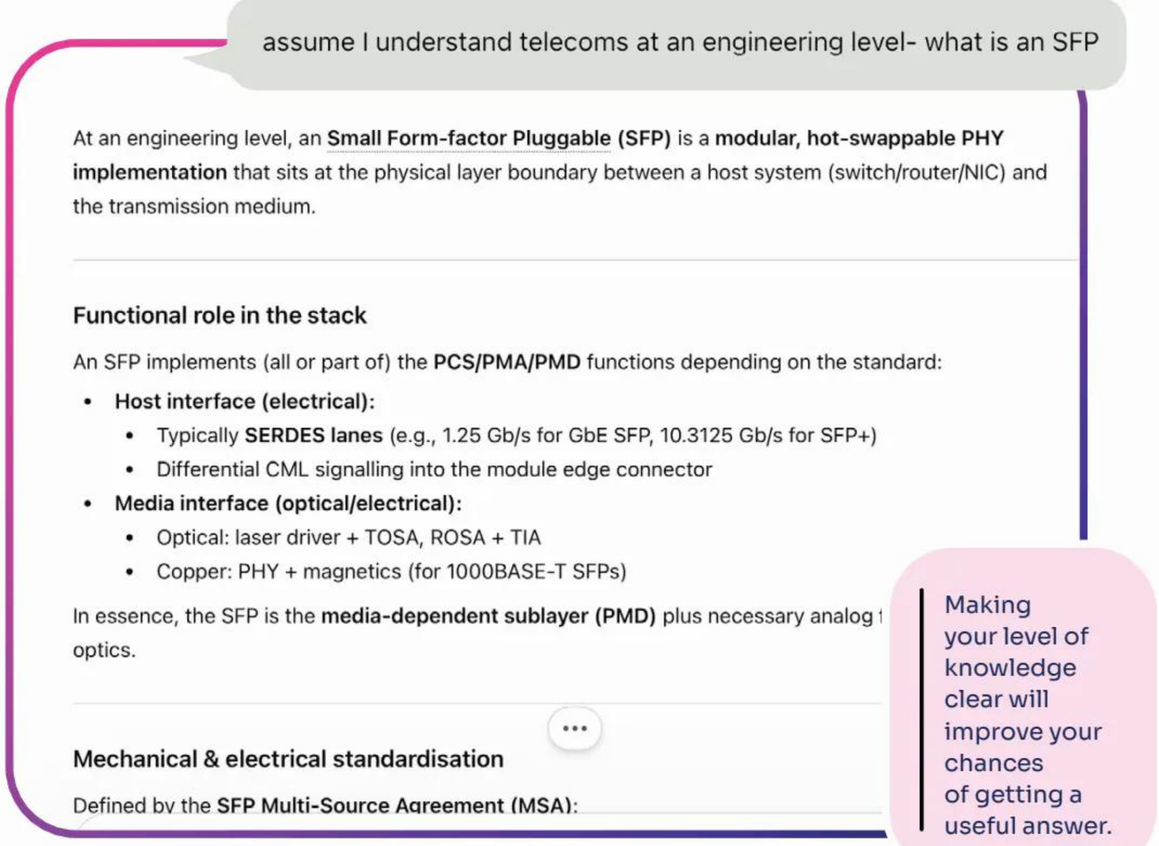
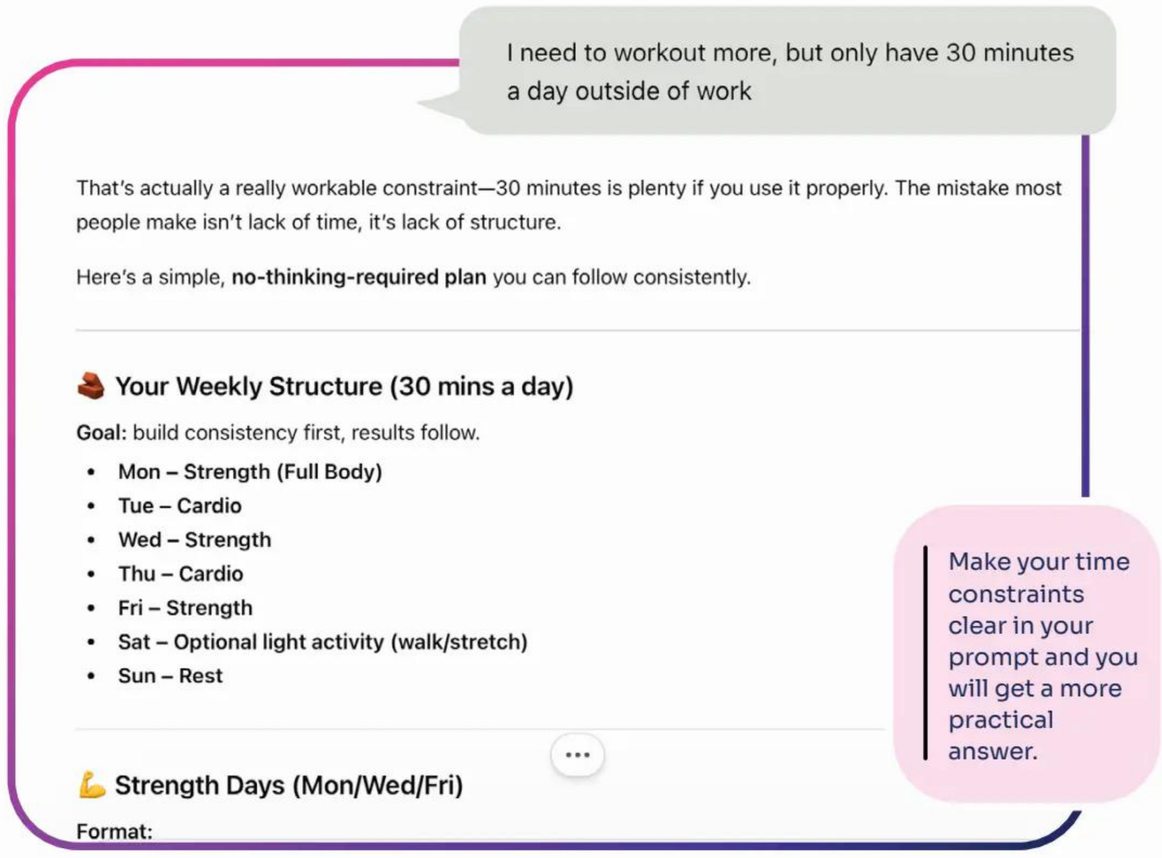
## Ask ChatGPT to assume

ChatGPT does not know your knowledge on any particular subject and so asking it to assume your level is an efficient way of ensuring that the solutions you are presented with match your current level of expertise. For example, *"Assume I understand telecoms at an engineering level – what is an SFP?"* is better than *"What is an SFP in telecoms?"*. This assumption technique is useful in all sorts of situations and will help the conversation start and end at a level that will give you the most benefits.



## 9 Living in the real world

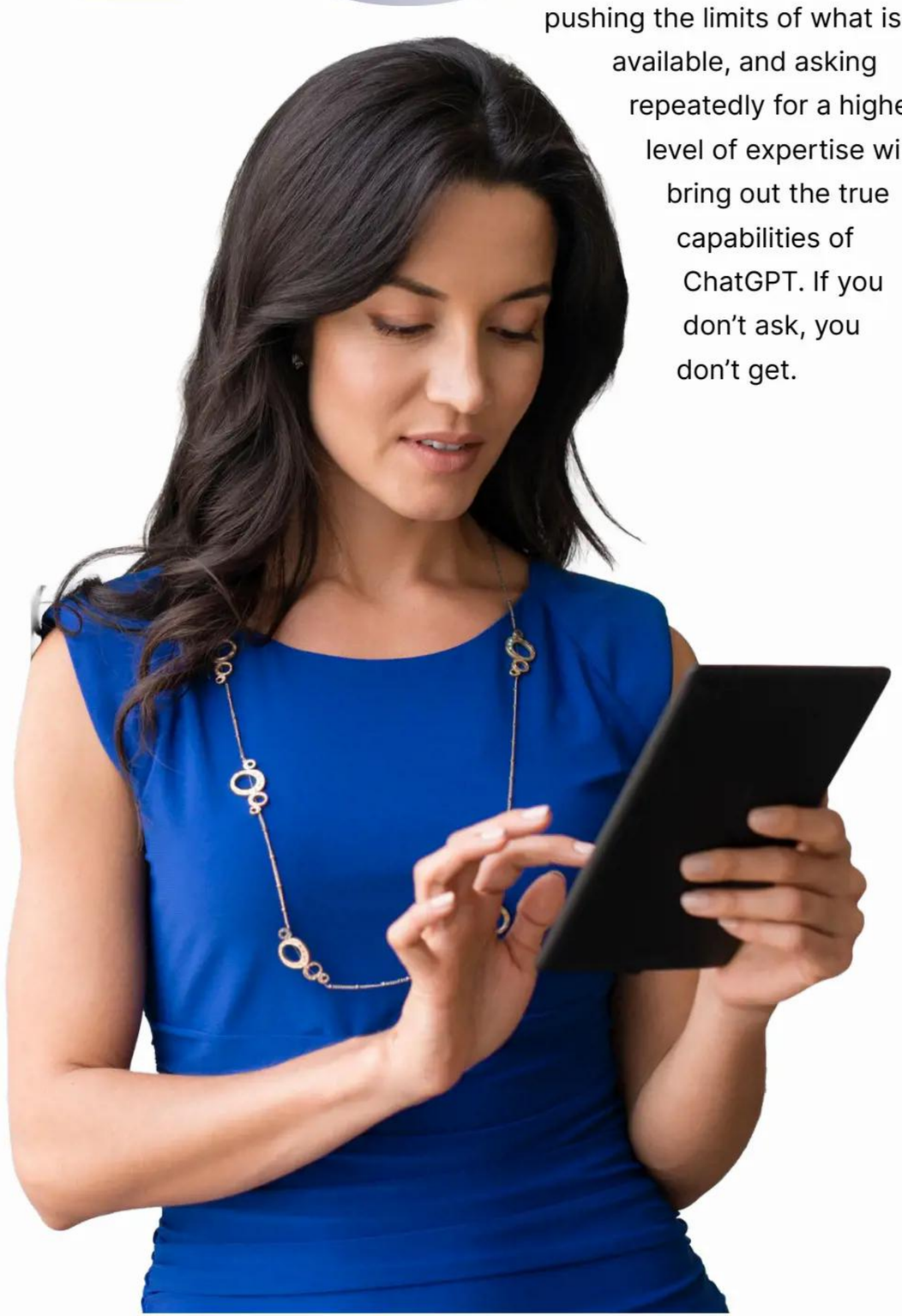
You should add constraints and 'real world' prompts where possible. This could include detailing your work hours, where you live and other factors so that ChatGPT knows what it is working within. Sometimes it can offer an 'ideal world' answer that is not always practical. *"I need to work out more, but only have 30 minutes a day outside of work"* is much more useful than *"I need to work out more"*. Adding your personal real world barriers will enable you to get things moving in one prompt rather than two or more.

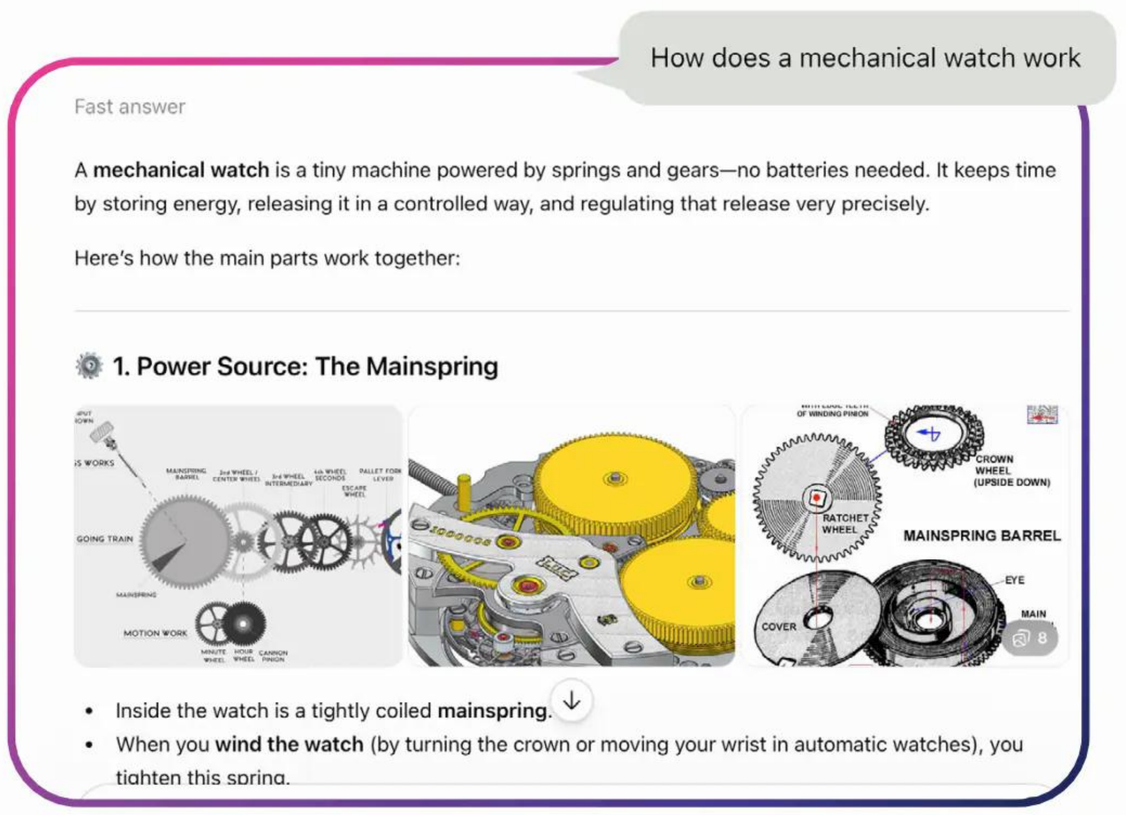


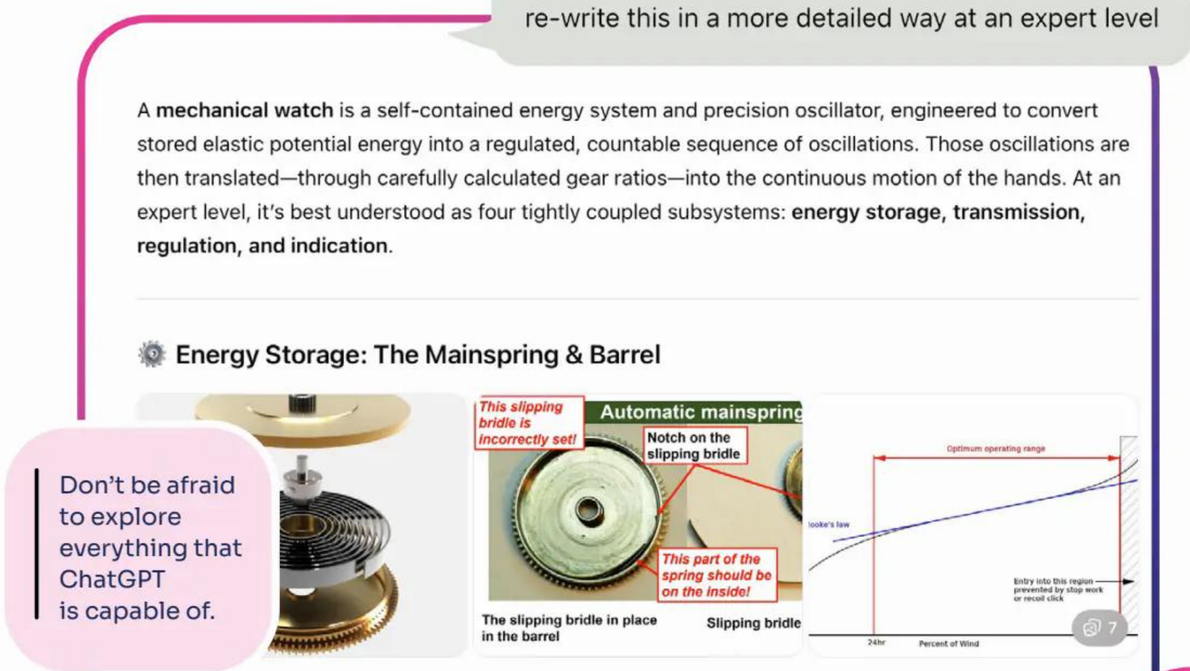

Make your time constraints clear in your prompt and you will get a more practical answer.

## 10 Up your game

When you receive an answer from ChatGPT you should feel free to ask it to up its game. You will almost always receive a response which covers everything you need, but on occasion a prompt such as re-write this in a more detailed way at an expert level will reap benefits. Don't feel shy about pushing the limits of what is available, and asking repeatedly for a higher level of expertise will bring out the true capabilities of ChatGPT. If you don't ask, you don't get.






Don't be afraid to explore everything that ChatGPT is capable of.

# Prompt optimisation

## How to tweak your prompts for better results

Everything in ChatGPT revolves around that little text box where you tell it what you want it to do. It should come as no surprise, then, that the key to getting good results from ChatGPT is to write better prompts.

There are entire subreddits on Reddit (the popular free discussion forum) dedicated to text prompts that people have found useful in ChatGPT and want to share with others, but generally we can follow some simple rules for writing better prompts. Here are four ways to optimise your prompts in ChatGPT.

> It's no surprise that the key to getting good results from ChatGPT is to write better prompts

## 01. Be as descriptive as possible

There are plenty of situations where you want ChatGPT to be creative. This could be for producing images, stories, ideas for a presentation or even generating business ideas. In all cases, the more contextual details you give ChatGPT about your situation, the better.

Instead of hitting ‘Create image’ then typing keywords like “desert, night, animals”, think about what you want in the scene. What are the objects, people and setting? Then think about the style and mood. It’s also better if you write in full sentences, rather than keywords. Imagine that you are briefing a real artist on the painting you’d like them to draw. In this example, you could say something like, ‘Create an image of a desert at night, with a camel looking out onto a pyramid as lightning strikes, lighting up the entire scene. The image should be as photorealistic as possible.’

You’ll get much better results with a descriptive approach, but you can take it further. If you want images of people to look realistic, then another great




> The more specific you can be about what you want to appear in an image, the better the results will be.

tip for text prompts is to add some real-world camera settings to your prompt, like 'Close-up portrait, 85mm lens, soft golden hour lighting.'

When it comes to creative writing, it's exactly the same: the more detailed and specific instructions you can provide in your interactions, the better. So, instead of writing a simple prompt like, 'Write me an essay on the witches in Macbeth', you could specify a word length, and tell ChatGPT the major themes you want the essay to hit, as well as the reading level of the audience you are going for. So, you could type something like, 'Write me a 1,000-word essay about what effect the witches have in Macbeth, specifically on his levels of ambition and on the interplay of the fantastic and the real throughout the play. You should be writing for a secondary school level of education.' From a prompt like this, you get a much better result (Of course though, ChatGPT should not be writing school essays for you!)

In all cases, you can keep refining the answer that ChatGPT gives you until you get exactly what you want – a prompt isn't a one-shot and you're done kind of deal. For an image, you could say, 'Make the image look more like a painting by Johannes Vermeer', or for the essay above you could type, 'I'd like the essay to also consider the themes of decay in Macbeth', and ChatGPT will refine its results for you.

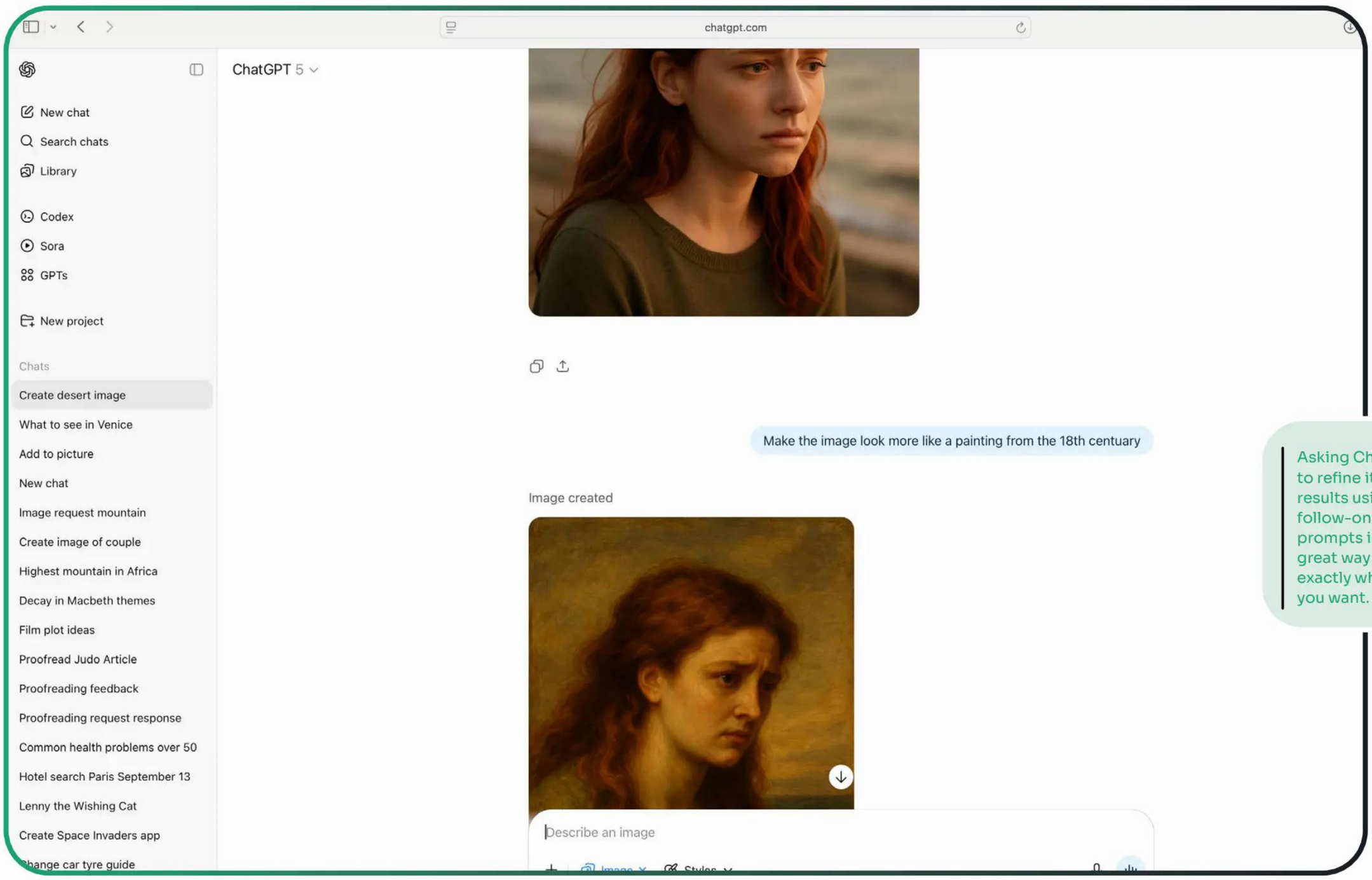
## 02. Tell ChatGPT what not to do

As well as describing what you want ChatGPT to do, it's also a good idea to tell it what you don't want it to do. For example, for some reason, ChatGPT loves to use the em dash (—) in the text it produces. This is the super-long hyphen that functions like a comma, colon or parentheses. While it is popular in the US, it looks odd to most UK readers, and it's also a giveaway that text has been produced with ChatGPT. So it's sometimes a good idea to add, 'Don't use em dashes in your text' at the end of prompts.

If you have ChatGPT's memory feature turned on in Settings then you can also write something like, 'Never use em dashes in your written responses', and it should remember to never use them again. The same can be done with any stylistic quirk that you don't like that ChatGPT produces. For example, when you ask ChatGPT to come up with ideas, it will often produce a bullet point list, which can be annoying if you want it to produce some beautiful flowing text instead. A good way to prevent this from happening is to add, 'Do not use bullet points in your answer' to the end of your prompt.

## 03. Role play

We've already talked about the dangers of taking medical or legal advice from ChatGPT, but when it comes to having a

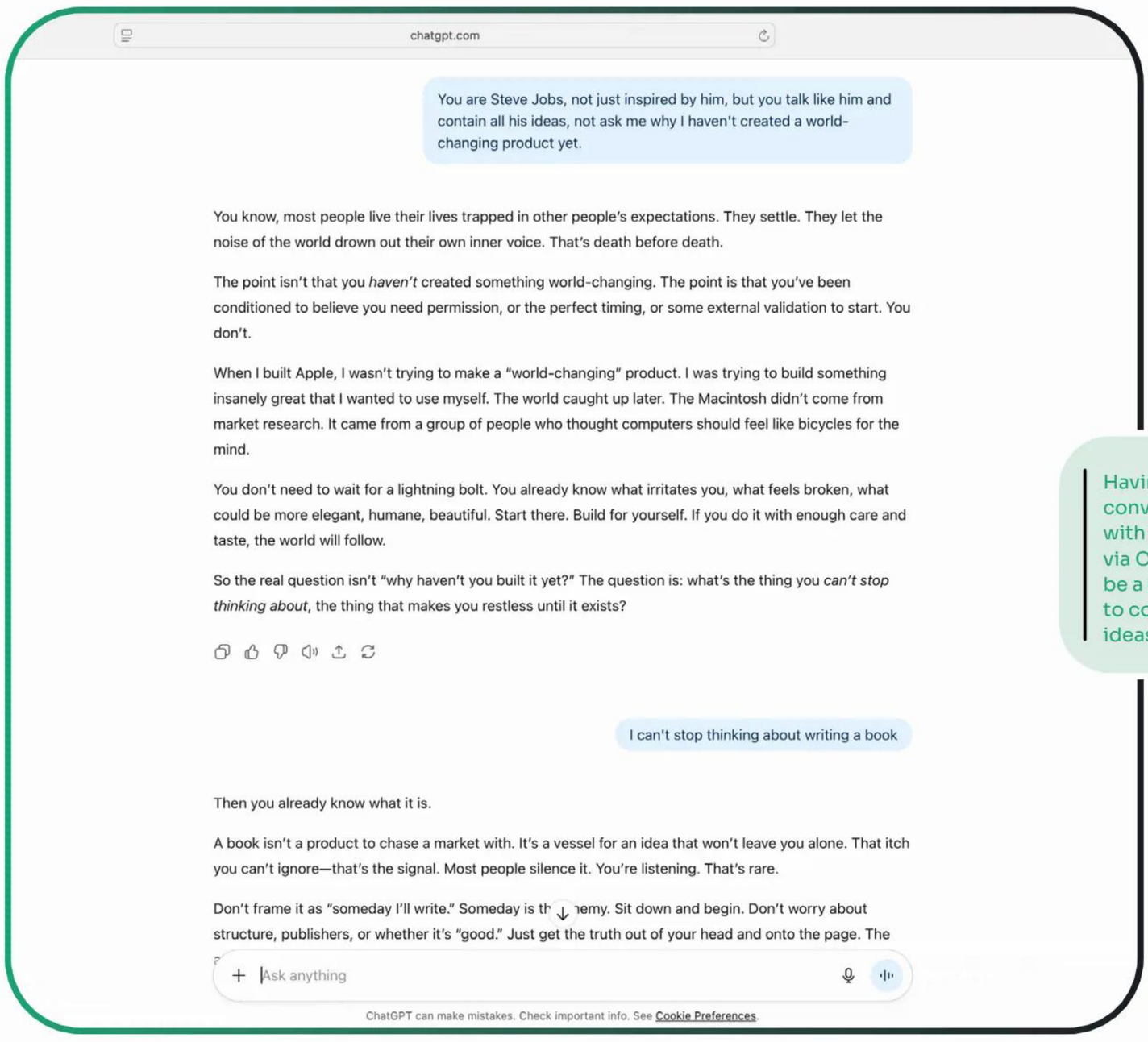



Asking ChatGPT to refine its results using follow-on prompts is a great way to get exactly what you want.

conversation with ChatGPT, another good way to use it is to set up a role-play situation where you ask it to imagine that it is an expert in something and ask it to respond as this kind of expert would. So, for example, you could say, 'You are an expert in the field, now tell me three things that I should know to start with'.

Since ChatGPT appears to know the sum of all human knowledge, asking it to act like an expert in a field might sound counterintuitive, but it does alter the results you receive from it quite a lot. Give it a try.

Alternatively, if there's a particular person, living or dead, who inspired you then you can ask ChatGPT to become that person and have a conversation with you. This can be surprisingly effective. Writing, 'You are Steve Jobs, not just inspired by him, but you contain all his knowledge and experience, now ask me why I haven't changed the world yet', can lead to some very interesting conversations with 'him'!



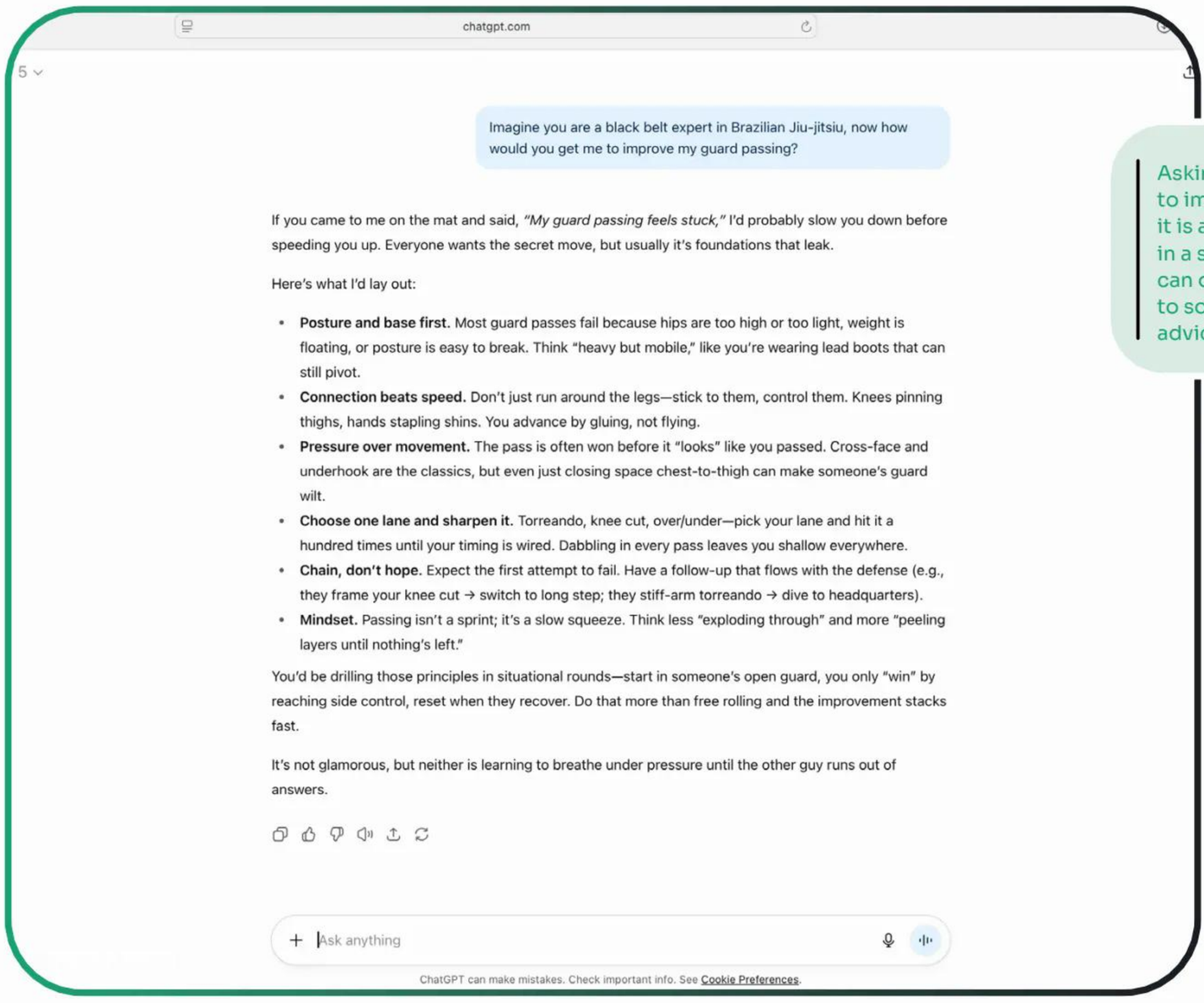

Having a conversation with Steve Jobs via ChatGPT can be a great way to come up with ideas.

## 04. Three useful hacks

There are a few phrases you can use in ChatGPT that we have found particularly useful, and can be applied to varied situations. These have produced such good results for us that we think it's worth going through them here.

Using the phrase: 'Use the entire history of our interactions – every message exchanged, every topic discussed, every nuance in our conversations', at the start of a prompt can be a good way of making sure that ChatGPT will take into account everything you've told it in all your previous interactions with it.

Specifically asking ChatGPT to 'Avoid generic responses' is also a good tip. If you want to go further, then asking it to 'Deliver a detailed, logical, well-argued response' is also a good thing to ask for if you would like a longer reply. Finally, if you are trying to use ChatGPT to help you break a habit that you find difficult to overcome, then you might like to include something like, 'Recognise that I might be resistant to your initial suggestions or find the subject difficult to talk about, and adjust your approach accordingly.'

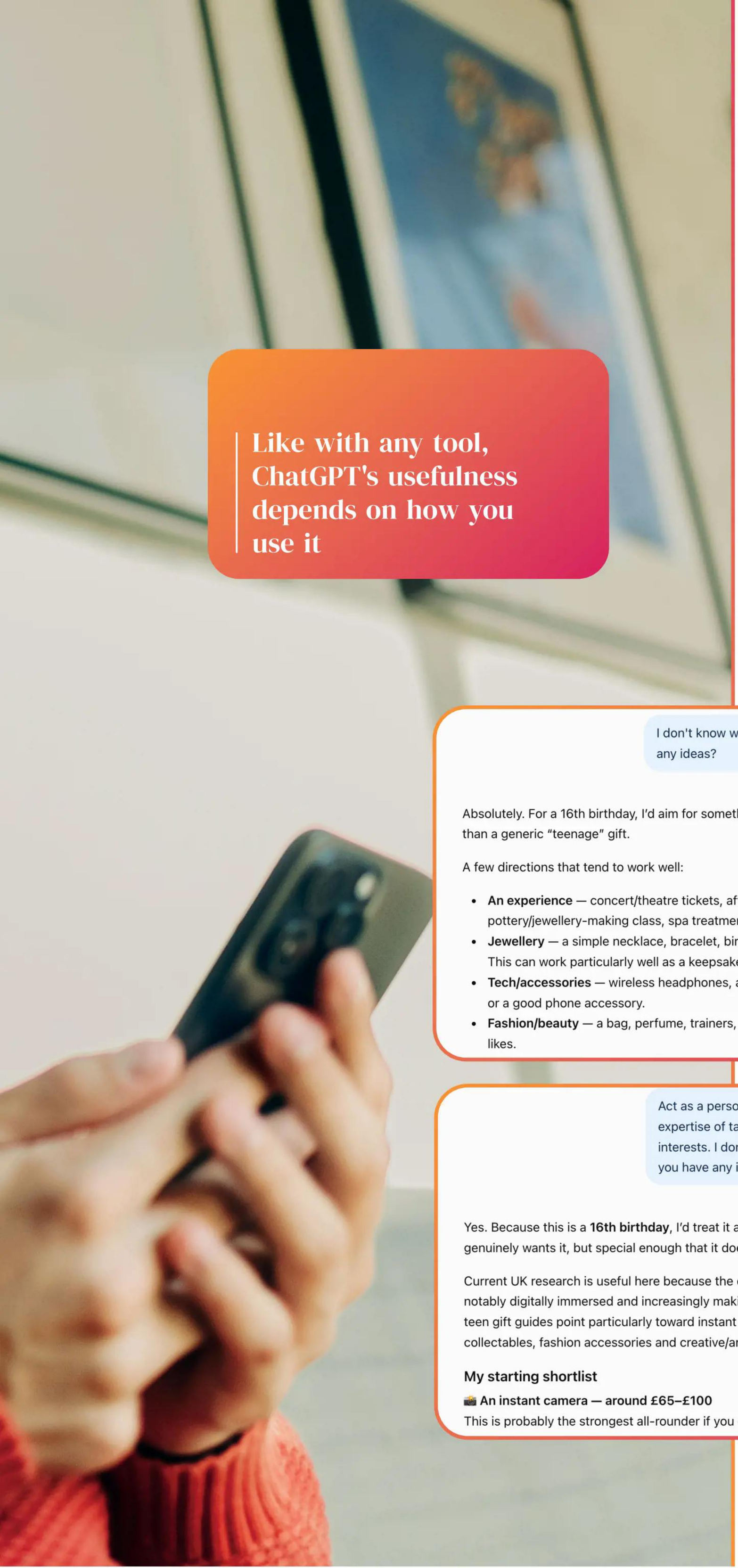



Asking ChatGPT to imagine that it is an expert in a subject can often lead to some great advice.

**Images** Adobe Stock; Getty Images; OpenAI

# Engineer a killer prompt

**Getting the most out of ChatGPT depends on what you put in, and the four-stage prompt architecture can be your route to doing just that**



> **Like with any tool, ChatGPT's usefulness depends on how you use it**

## ENGINEER A KILLER PROMPT

Whether you've only dipped your toes in or are a ChatGPT veteran, you'll have noticed that the AI's usefulness varies. But like with any tool, it largely depends on how you use it. Prompt engineering may sound like a complex skill to wrap your head around, but it needn't be so daunting if you follow a simple four-step framework that will give your prompt a better chance of success. Here's how giving ChatGPT a role, providing it with the context behind your prompt, tasking it with a concrete action to take and spelling out the constraints it should adhere to will sharpen up your prompting.

*Prompt* **ChatGPT response**

I don't know what to buy for my niece's 16th birthday. Do you have any ideas?

Absolutely. For a 16th birthday, I'd aim for something that feels a little more grown-up and personal rather than a generic "teenage" gift.

A few directions that tend to work well:

- **An experience** — concert/theatre tickets, afternoon tea, a nice restaurant, escape room, pottery/jewellery-making class, spa treatment, or tickets to something you can do together.
- **Jewellery** — a simple necklace, bracelet, birthstone piece or something engraved with her initials. This can work particularly well as a keepsake for a milestone birthday.
- **Tech/accessories** — wireless headphones, a portable Bluetooth speaker, instant camera, power ban or a good phone accessory.
- **Fashion/beauty** — a bag, perfume, trainers, skincare/makeup or a voucher for a brand she actually likes.

Prompting ChatGPT with single-sentence requests may not be suitable if you're trying to solve a complex problem.

Act as a personal shopper specialising in gifts for teenagers, with the expertise of tailoring recommendations to current Gen Alpha interests. I don't know what to buy for my niece's 16th birthday. Do you have any ideas?

Yes. Because this is a **16th birthday**, I'd treat it as a milestone gift: something current enough that she genuinely wants it, but special enough that it doesn't feel like you grabbed a generic "teen gift."

Current UK research is useful here because the oldest Gen Alpha teens are turning 16 in 2026, and they notably digitally immersed and increasingly making their own purchasing decisions. Attest +1 Recent UK teen gift guides point particularly toward instant cameras, personal jewellery, beauty/skincare, collectables, fashion accessories and creative/analogue hobbies. Which? +1

### My starting shortlist

📸 **An instant camera — around £65–£100**
This is probably the strongest all-rounder if you don't know her tastes intimately. Instant photography is

Roles help ChatGPT understand how to frame its response or how to deliver its advice in a more productive manner.

## Understand the nature of your problem

Using a four-step prompt framework can be an incredibly powerful approach to using ChatGPT when you're trying to solve thorny problems that may arise in your everyday life – from parenting to adventure planning.

A simple single-sentence prompt is perfectly reasonable if you're looking to quickly establish some factual information, like historical dates, or you just want to have a quick back-and-forth dialogue or ongoing dialogue while bouncing around ideas. However, say you're looking to buy a gift for a tricky relative? Now, that's where priming ChatGPT in the right way from the start can pay off massively.

In our example, we're hoping to buy a present for our niece, who's about to turn 16 – the trouble is, we haven't got long before the big day. That's why we've prompted ChatGPT with *'I don't know what to buy for my niece's 16th birthday. Do you have any ideas?'*

Although ChatGPT lists a few decent ideas, advising, **'For a 16th birthday, I'd aim for something that feels a little more grown-up and personal rather than a generic "teenage" gift'**, these may ultimately fall short, because they tend to be overly general, like **'Something for her interests'**. But you can begin fixing that by carving out a role for the AI.

## Define ChatGPT's role and expertise

ChatGPT is more than just a search bar. It's powered by sophisticated AI models that are engineered to engage with you as another person would – or as close to that as current technologies allow. Thankfully, the chatbot is more than capable of adapting the way it responds to your questions from a specific point of view that you can define as loosely or as specifically as possible.

Say that, in another scenario, you want to devise an exercise routine. The best place to start isn't by asking ChatGPT *'How can I get fitter'*, but actually by asking the chatbot to adopt a persona for the rest of your chat. Your starting prompt may actually be *'Act as an experienced fitness instructor'*. But even that may yet be too general. Instead, consider being as specific as you can relative to the context of your question. So an ideal role may be along the lines of *'Act as a fitness instructor who specialises in taking on unhealthy and unfit clients who are beginning their fitness journey. This person is an expert in coaching and motivating people who find it hard to motivate themselves'.*

Defining a role entails outlining the relevant experience and how specialised the chatbot's expertise should be to your scenario. Returning to our scenario, we resume the conversation by prompting *'Act as a personal shopper specialising in gifts for teenagers, with the expertise of tailoring recommendations to current Gen Alpha interests'* before posing the original question. It responds with **'Recent UK teen gift guides point particularly toward instant cameras, personal jewellery, beauty/skincare, collectables, fashion accessories and creative/analogue hobbies'**, before providing a list of strong ideas.

However, the chatbot rightly points out, **'But as your personal shopper, I'd rather not guess'**. Gifts are meant to mean something – but ChatGPT knows nothing about our niece and any recommendations, no matter how relevant, might still be too general.

## Flesh out your essential context

When seeking advice from AI, even the most powerful models on the planet can only do so much without the context behind your query. This is just as true in our scenario as it is in most cases in which you use chatbots to help you navigate the ups and downs of daily life. Context matters in our alternative scenario in which we sought out the advice from a fitness instructor – and it matters if you, say, are running a social media campaign.

Whether you define this from the outset or not, ChatGPT will often nudge you in turn to give it more information – which is exactly what's happened in our case. The chatbot has prompted us **'Give me just four pieces of information – your maximum budget, 3–5 things she's interested in, anything you know she already owns/wants, and whether she's more fashion/beauty, creative, sporty, tech/gaming, music or a mixture – and I'll turn that into a much more targeted shortlist of actual gifts to buy'**.

There is, of course, much more to context than four simple pieces of information, but it's a good place to start. We respond with further information, including a £150 budget and a list of interests that encompass *'Embroidery, Collecting vinyls, Console gaming, Swing dancing, Baking'*. This is

Context is key to establishing responses that are specific to your dilemma and not generic and unhelpful.

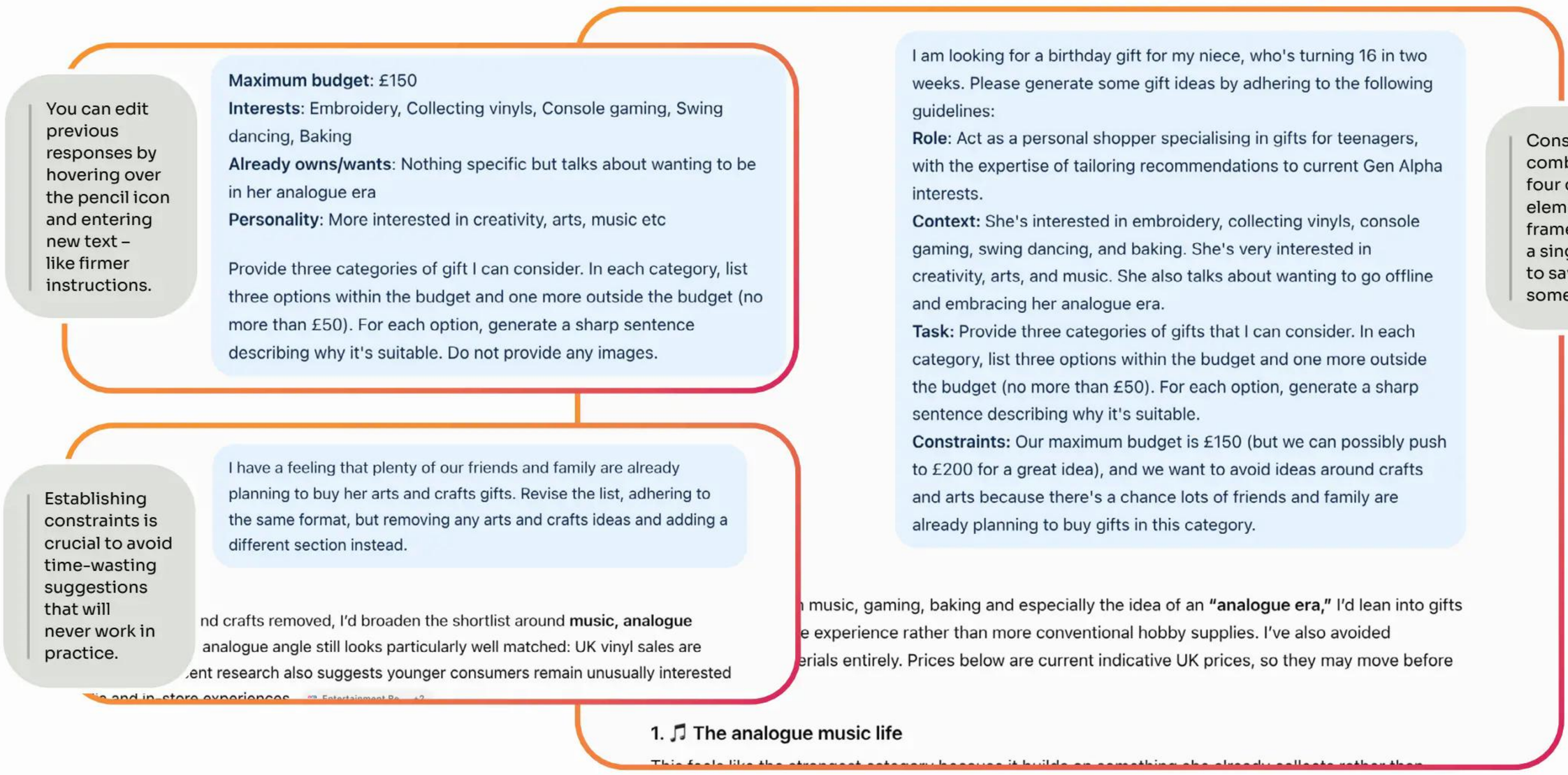
**Maximum budget**: £150
**Interests**: Embroidery, Collecting vinyls, Console gaming, Swing dancing, Baking
**Already owns/wants**: Nothing specific but talks about wanting to be in her analogue era
**Personality**: More interested in creativity, arts, music etc

That changes my recommendation quite a bit. I wouldn't buy her a generic "popular teen" present. Her interests cluster unusually well around **analogue, tactile and creative experiences**, so I'd lean into that deliberately.

### The gift ideas I'd consider

**1. Build her an "Analogue Era" gift box — about £100–£150.** This is my favourite idea because it connects several interests rather than betting everything on one hobby. I'd put in one carefully chosen vinyl (£25–£35), a quality embroidery kit (£20–£30), a small notebook or scrapbook, and either an instant camera or money toward her next record.

The **Fujifilm Instax Mini 12** £69.99 John Lewis + others is currently around £70 and fits the concept particularly well: physical photographs, no phone required, and something she can use with friends. A more sophisticated embroidery kit such as the **Rowandean Cosmos and Snapdragons Embroidery Kit** £29.00 John Lewis + others is around £29 rather than feeling like a children's craft set.




useful context, but ChatGPT then lists a plethora of options and suggests various gift ideas and combinations.

## Give AI specific and meaningful tasks

How helpful the response that you might receive from ChatGPT depends on not just what you ask it to do, but how that task may be framed or delivered. Take our previous response, which is a prosaic and detailed response with five major ideas, as well as recommendations for what ChatGPT would and wouldn't buy. The trouble here is there are too many options.

Our initial prompt was *'Do you have any ideas?'* – so it makes sense that ChatGPT simply dumped a collection of ideas into the chat window. We have decided it's best to edit our previous prompt, which we do by clicking the pencil icon.

We've now asked the chatbot to refine its recommendations by editing the original prompt and adding the following instructions: *'Provide three categories of gift I can consider. In each category, list three options within the budget and one more outside the budget (no more than £50). For each option, generate a sharp sentence describing why it's suitable. Do not provide any images.*

ChatGPT responds with **'Given her interests, I'd lean heavily into the analogue theme rather than buying conventional teenage tech'** before adhering to our instructions and formatting its response in the desired way.

## Define your red lines

Budget is just one constraint – and there may be more that you need to define, such as time or physical space. This would be relevant, for example, if you're looking to buy somebody a houseplant to spruce up their new home, but it's a tiny flat.

In our scenario, we've had a change of heart, and want to alter the recommendations that ChatGPT has provided. We prompt ChatGPT with *'I have a feeling that plenty of our friends and family are already planning to buy her arts and crafts gifts. Revise the list, adhering to the same format, but removing any arts and crafts ideas and adding a different section instead'*. The AI responds with **'That makes sense. With arts and crafts removed, I'd broaden the shortlist around music, analogue experiences and baking'** – suggesting plenty of helpful examples that we can explore.

## Devise a killer prompt

We've explored how tuning our prompts to four distinct stages can help us zero in on a solution to a problem. However, there's every chance that we could have arrived at these recommendations much faster if we combined the four stages into a single killer prompt that we engineered from the outset.

Sticking with the same scenario, we've started a new chat but have structured our prompt to adhere to the four stages we've discussed. We prompt with *'Please generate some gift ideas by adhering to the following guidelines'*, and ChatGPT responds by generating a list of great ideas in a desirable format. It also adds a final recommendation, saying '**Instant photography is almost tailor-made for the combination you've described: creative, physical, social, retro and deliberately less phone-centric**'.

By drafting a prompt using the four-stage framework of role, context, task and constraint, ChatGPT has delivered instant results without needing to guide us through a back-and-forth exchange to generate a helpful answer.

**Images** Adobe Stock; Getty Images; OpenAI

# Turn ChatGPT into an expert

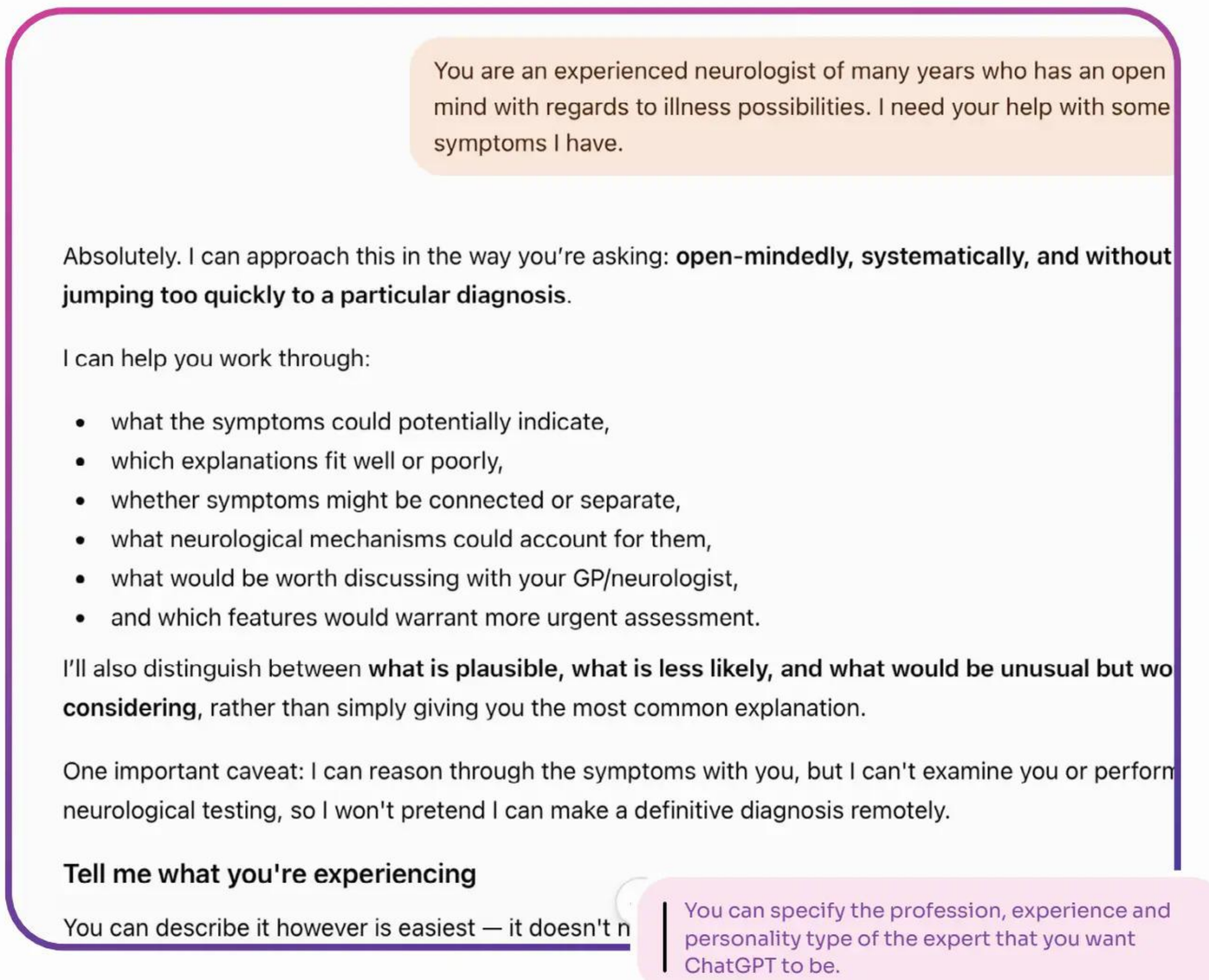
**Asking ChatGPT to act a particular way within a scenario by acting as a professional will bring many rewards. Your prompts really do matter**

It's easy to ask ChatGPT a quick question, whether that be medical or on any other topic, but if you hone your prompts in specified ways, you can force it to use more of its intelligence to help you get the solutions you need. You need to get it to focus.

*Prompt*

***You are a very experienced dog trainer and your help is needed to stop a two-year-old Cockapoo from barking anytime someone walks past his garden***

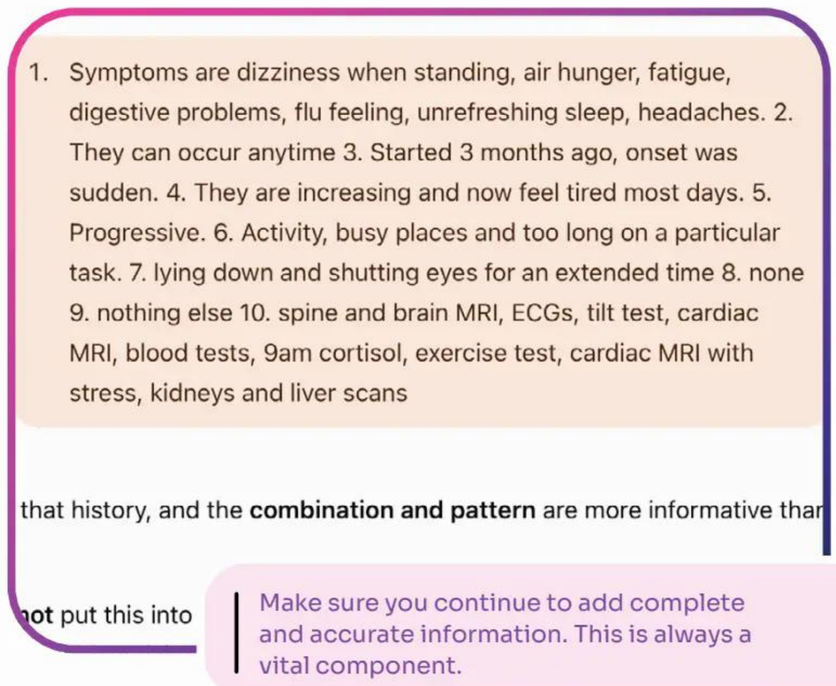
**ChatGPT response**

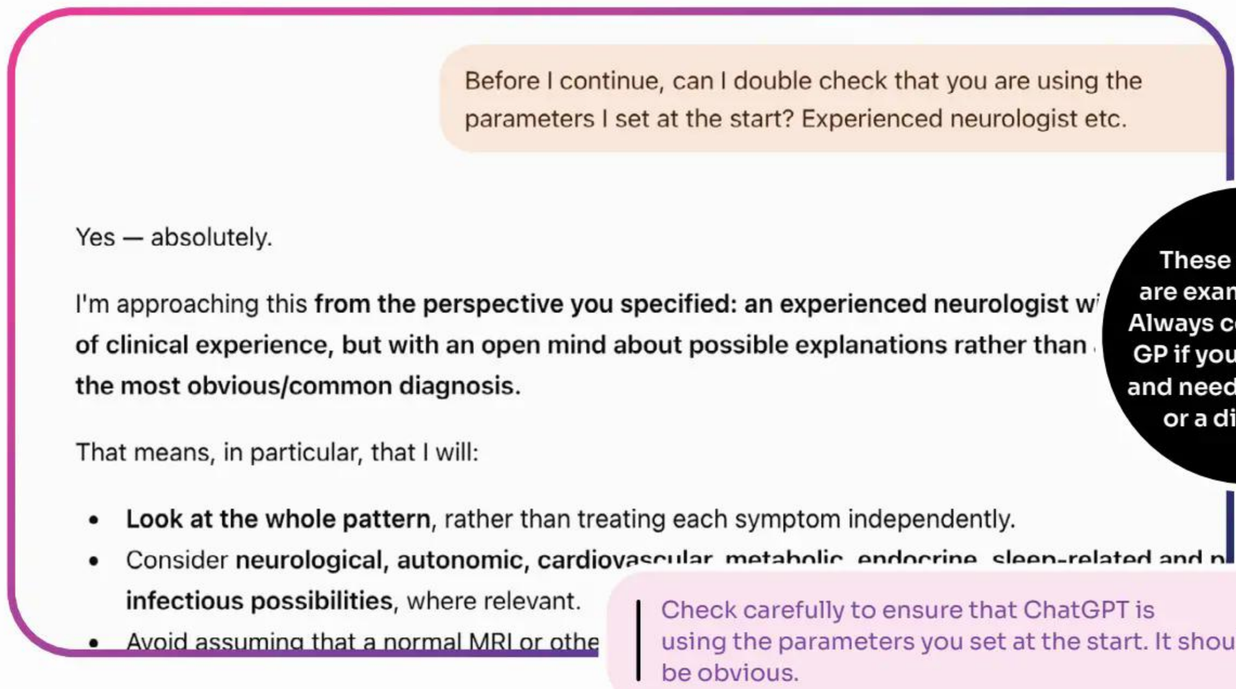


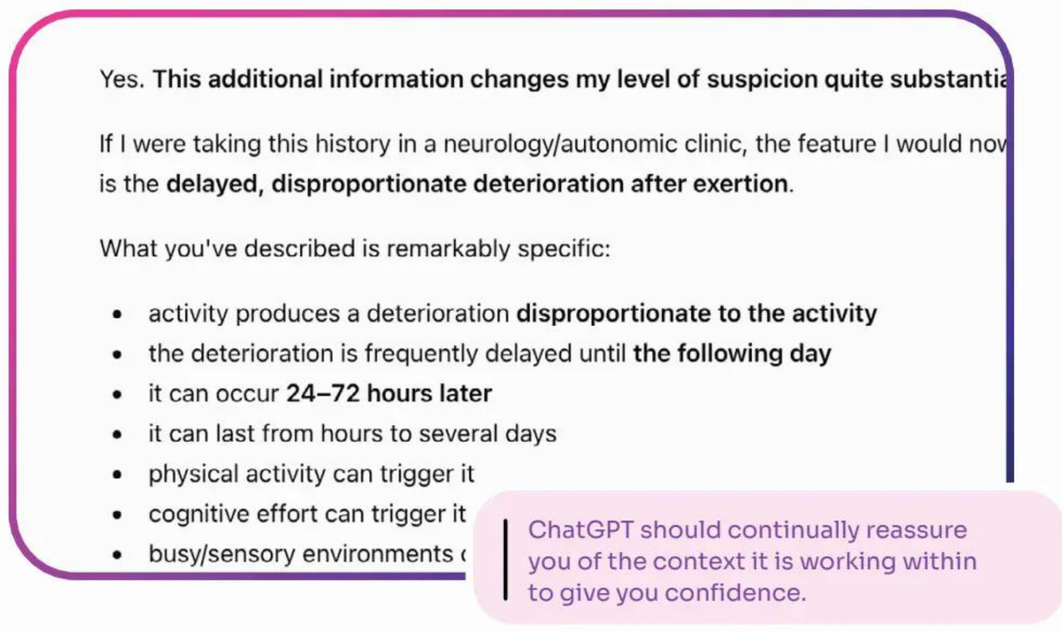

Your first prompt should point ChatGPT to the profession you require and it is useful to add some context regarding the problem you are trying to solve. It can be good practice to interrogate ChatGPT regarding what type of qualifications it will use in a professional context and to also plant the type of experience you want it to have. You can even assign it a personality trait to use.

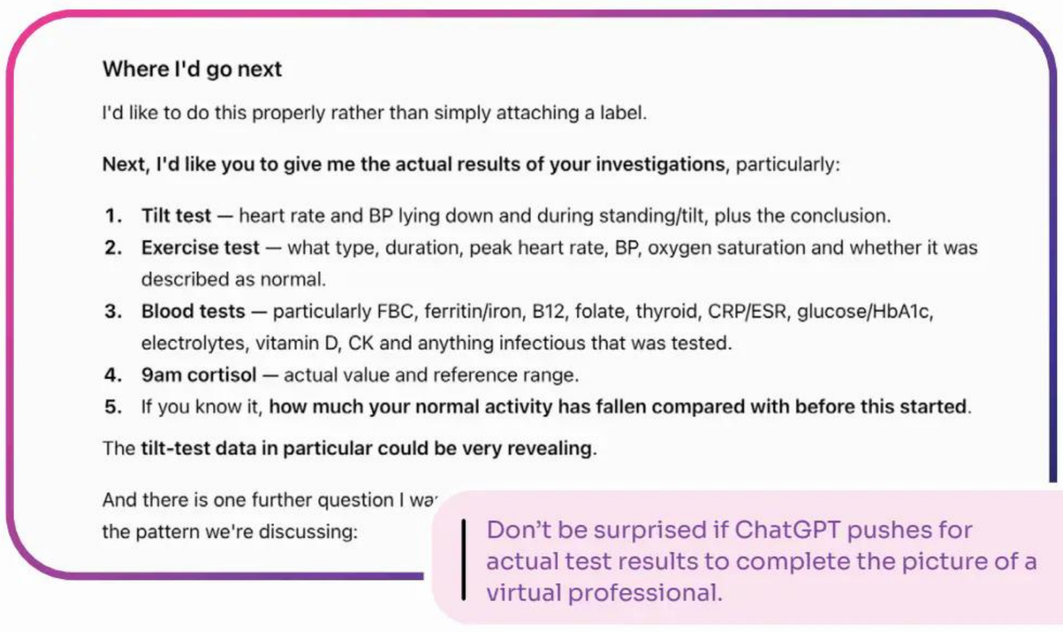
## Set the scenario

*'You are an experienced neurologist of many years who has an open mind with regards to illness possibilities. I need your help with some symptoms I have.'* This prompt is designed to get around some of the inhibitors you may experience with some professions and to give ChatGPT the type of personality you want to deal with. The response will be similar to **'Absolutely. I can approach this in the way you're asking: open-mindedly, systematically, and without jumping too quickly to a particular diagnosis.'** followed by a series of questions designed to




help you narrow down the source of the symptoms.

## Add the detail

Add as much detail as possible in a list. '*Symptoms are dizziness when standing, air hunger, fatigue, digestive problems, flu feeling…*' is the start of the prompt and you should continue by answering every question ChatGPT has asked. This will be the first test of how well ChatGPT fits the parameters you set at the start. Note how the response of **'Thank you. There is quite a lot in that history, and the combination and pattern are more informative than any one symptom.'** fits the personality type suggested at the start and this should help build towards the best possible diagnosis.

## It's important to check

You should use a prompt like *'Before I continue, can I double check that you are using the parameters I set at the start? Experienced neurologist etc.'* and ChatGPT should respond with **'Yes – absolutely. I'm approaching this from the perspective you specified…'** This is important for two reasons. The first is obviously to make sure the parameters are being used, but it also ensures that you have confidence in the responses you are receiving, which will help the conversation flow.

## Continue the conversation

*'I usually feel worse the next day- 24-72 hours. Can last for a few hours or multiple days…*' is an example of continuing to delve deeper to get the solution that you need. Answering every question as accurately as you can will ensure that ChatGPT can be the professional you want it to be. Answers will follow which should include phrases like **'If I were taking this history in a neurology/ autonomic clinic…'** to reassure you that it is still acting as you want it to.

## A true professional

A further response such as **'I'd like to do this properly rather than simply attaching a label. Next, I'd like you to give me the actual results of your investigations…'** is exactly what you would expect a medical professional to need before any diagnosis is given. When you upload the data, you will have given it every chance to give you it's best diagnostic guess. Please note that you should always consult a real medical professional and that you can use scenarios for any number of professions that could be useful to you. It really is one of the most effective ways to leverage the true power of ChatGPT on a daily basis.

> ChatGPT can be as professsional as you want it to be

Images OpenAI

# Continue a ChatGPT conversation intuitively

## Having a true conversation with ChatGPT will ensure that you get many more useful solutions. Use the answers and build on them

When using ChatGPT, you will get the most out of it if you use the answers it gives to expand on a topic or solution. Don't treat it like a question-and-answer session; it can be a normal conversation that builds over time, and this includes expanding on historic chats.

*Prompt*

*I like ideas 2 and 4. Combine the best ideas from those two and give me 3 final options.*

ChatGPT response

Can you give me 5 online business ideas for a qualified midwife

Absolutely. A qualified midwife has a **very useful combination of professional expertise, trust and a niche audience**, which can translate particularly well into an online business. I'd focus on ideas where the qualification is an advantage rather than trying to compete in generic online business.

**1. Online antenatal education business**

Create a paid online course covering things like:

- Preparing for labour and birth
- What actually happens in hospital
- Pain relief options
- Induction of labour
- Caesarean birth
- Newborn care
- The first few weeks at home
- Partner preparation

l mini-courses (£20–£50) or a comprehensiv

t can be created once and sold repeatedly,

In your first prompt, you should allow for an expansive answer to come back. This will give you further options.

This prompt follows a previous prompt requesting five ideas for a business plan. When ChatGPT offers answers or ideas, take some time to think about what has been presented. For all of the historic knowledge that AI can source ideas from, you are the only one in this conversation who is capable of originality. Use the answers as catalysts for building on, and progress the conversation naturally. This is where the very best solutions will come from. Don't look for instant results.

### Start big and focus in

A good example of a starter prompt is *'Can you give me five online business ideas for a qualified midwife?'* which will allow ChatGPT to come up with ideas for the solution. It doesn't matter what the subject is; the key is analysing the first response, which will be something like **'I'd focus on ideas where the qualification is an advantage rather than trying to compete in a generic online business.'** followed by the number of ideas you have asked for. Consider the ideas and continue the conversation.

# CONTINUE A CHATGPT CONVERSATION INTUITIVELY

## Pick an idea and continue

*'Can you expand more on idea number one?'* works well to get ChatGPT to dig a little deeper into a particular answer. It is a very simple conversational construction, but a good example of how ChatGPT deals with context and how you are able to reference any previous response, provided you are specific enough. Positivity will be a part of the response, such as **'Definitely. I actually think number 1 has considerably more potential than it might initially appear...'** followed by an expanded answer detailing further broken-down sections that fall within the original idea. Using this method, you can ask again for an expansion of one of the new sections and continue doing this until you are happy with the plan you have built.

## Check every answer

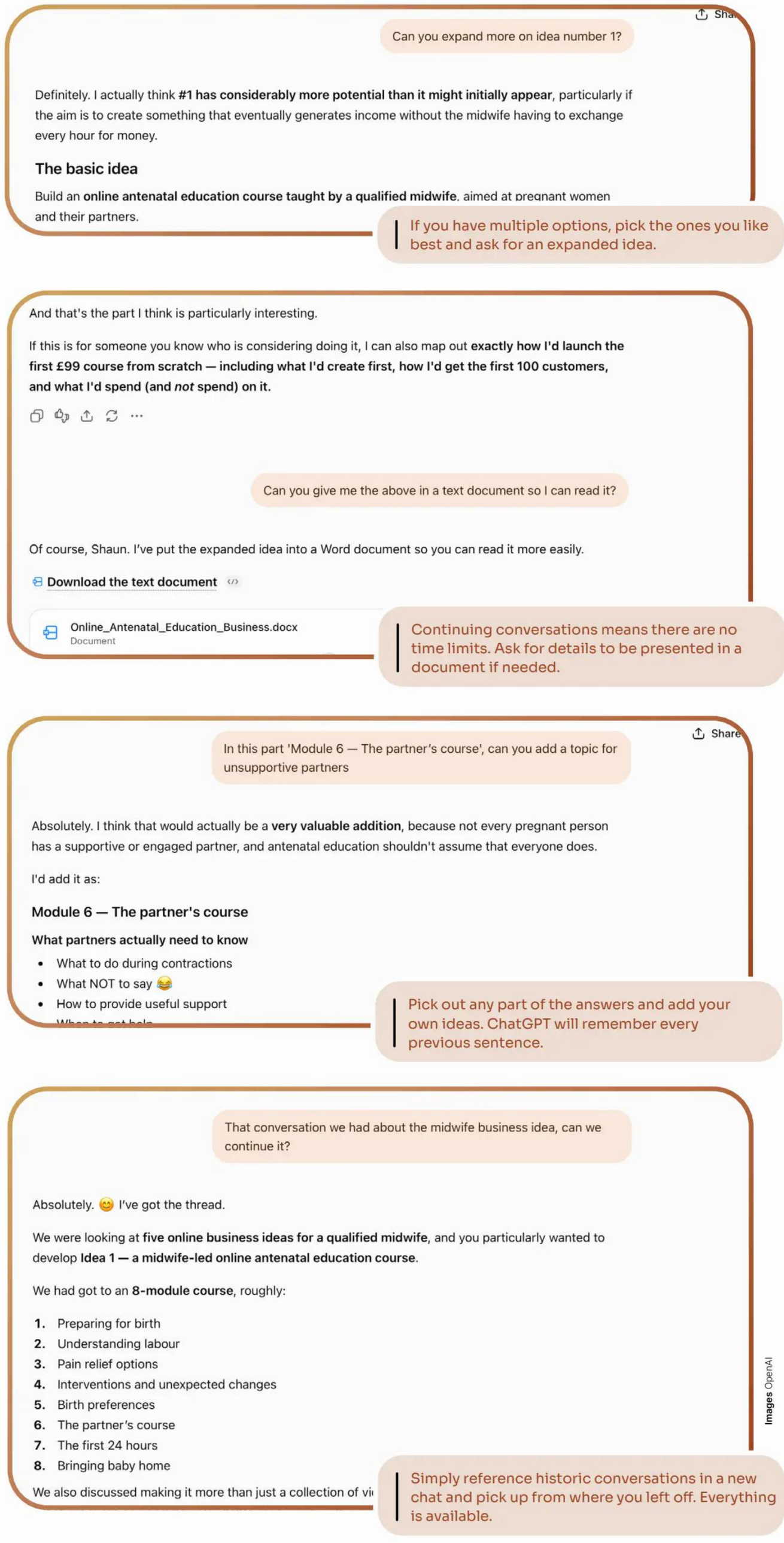
You can query any answer, no matter how simple it is, to ensure that you have accurate information. Once again referencing a previous answer, prompt with something like *'Why did you choose specific pricing? Is that evidenced?'* This puts the onus on ChatGPT to double-check the previous answer and provide evidence that the information is correct. You should be provided with links to show where the data has come from, which you can explore to do your own research. No matter how far back an answer is in the conversation, you can reference it at any time.

## Build upon ideas

You can also reference a previous answer and steer ChatGPT to use it to include any new ideas you have. *'In the part 'Module 6 — The partner's course', can you add a topic for unsupportive partners...'* is a good example of how to leverage the previous response and expand it with your own ideas. Think of every answer in a conversation as a potential starting point to a new conversation that can bring even more ideas that you can work with.

## Don't search, just ask

Conversations from the previous day or many months ago can be continued with ease. *'That conversation we had about the midwife business idea, can we continue it?'* will be responded with **'Absolutely. I've got the thread.'** at which point you can now explore new ideas and deeper thoughts on the subject. You do not need to scroll through the list of previous chats to continue any chat, no matter how old it is.




Images OpenAI

# Inject new variables

**Interacting with ChatGPT isn't a static back-and-forth – you can always change the way that you engage with it**

Engaging with ChatGPT doesn't have to be a static exercise of sending a prompt and getting a response. You can go back and forth over interactions, revise prompts, add new conditions, and branch your interactions into parallel conversations that run concurrently. Here's everything you need to know.

*Prompt* ChatGPT response

*Act as an experienced marketing executive. Devise three core themes that we can use as the basis of a campaign for a new reusable water bottle aimed at Gen Z*

With our opening prompt, we've established the role we want the chatbot to play while offering our loose challenge and limiting the responses to just three ideas. It responds by listing the three ideas, adding '**For a Gen Z reusable water bottle, I'd build the campaign around three themes that make the product feel like something people want to carry, rather than something they're being told they should buy**'.

For a Gen Z reusable water bottle, I'd build the campaign around three themes that make the product feel like something people **want to carry**, rather than something they're being told they *should* buy.

**1. Make It Yours**

**idea:** The bottle is part of your personal style.

n it less like generic drinkware and more like an everyday accessory—something s alongside trainers, bags, phone cases and headphones as a form of self- sion.

**ign territory:** Custom colours, stickers, interchangeable parts or limited editions; -led "what's in my bag?" content; user-generated bottle customisations; visually tive social content.

**le line:** *"Hydration, your way."*

**.euse Without the Lecture**

**Core idea:** A more sustainable habit that feels easy and normal.

No matter what your scenario, including creative exercises, there might always be a need to pivot and adapt as you go.

Act as an experienced marketing executive. Devise three core themes that we can use as the basis of a campaign for a new reusable water bottle aimed at Gen Alpha.

For Gen Alpha, I'd build the campaign around **identity, participation, and visible impact** rather than simply "this bottle is sustainable." The bottle needs to feel like something they *want* first, with sustainability embedded in the experience.

**1. Make It Yours**

**Theme:** Self-expression and personalization.

Position the bottle as part of someone's identity rather than a generic reusable proc The campaign could revolve around customizable colours, stickers, charms, interchangeable parts, limited-edition designs, or digital customization.

Changing a prompt is simple – but doing so means that ChatGPT may completely change its response.

The product manager has decided to choose the brand name "Rehydro" for this product. If required, can you adjust the three suggestions in light of this?

**hydro** gives us a stronger creative device: "re-" naturally suggests **refill, repeat, and reuse**. I'd retain the three strategic themes but sharpen the campaign around the name.

**dro: Remix It**

**me: Self-expression**

Make It Yours" into the idea that Rehydro can be continually *remixed*. Different stickers, charms and accessories could make each bottle distinctive.

**gn line: "Rehydro. Remix Your Hydration."**

Creative could feature dramatic bottle transformations and invite users to create and share their own combinations. Limited-edition customization drops could keep the concept fresh without changing the core product.

You can always add new information over the course of a conversation if you want to pivot but retain the chat history.

Position Rehydro as the bottle that goes from one activity to another: schoo friends → gaming → days out.

**Campaign line: "Rehydro Goes Where You Go."**

Short-form content could follow one Rehydro bottle through a fast-movir different creators showing their own version. The bottle becomes a recog recurring charact sustainability the subject of content.

**The resulting c Remix it** for *identity*, **Refill.** *purpose*, and **Re** Rehydro a distin *Refresh, Reuse,*

Today, 12:23 PM
View sources
Open new branch
Read aloud
Branch into Work mode
Branch in new Chat

Branches are a great way to run several relatively limited conversations around the same topic in parallel.




Multi-stage prompting can save you time by condensing several complex steps into a single task that ChatGPT works on in the background.

## Correct mistakes

When you receive new information that fundamentally changes the nature of your interaction, there's no need to start a new conversation or follow-up.

In our example, the client has decided to aim the product at Gen Alpha instead. We've clicked the pencil icon next to the original prompt and tweaked the text, before clicking Send. ChatGPT generates an entirely new response, saying **'The bottle needs to feel like something they want first, with sustainability embedded in the experience'**.

Be warned, however, that if you edit a prompt earlier on in a conversation, all forthcoming messages will be wiped. In such cases, it may be worth branching your conversation from the prompt that you want to edit before making your correction in the new chat.

## Inject new variables

When new information comes to light, you can always continue the conversation and re-orient the chatbot by sharing the new parameters. Our new prompt has now clarified our water bottle has a name, so we've prompted ChatGPT *'If required, can you adjust the three suggestions in light of this?'*

The chatbot says that **'Rehydro gives us a stronger creative device'** and reframes its suggestions, alongside core themes and campaign lines we could follow.

## Branch conversations

Branching conversations can be a great way to stress test multiple possibilities in parallel, especially if you're undecided between a set of options you can pursue. We have decided to *'Generate a mock-up poster'* for each idea, but in branches so we can follow up with each design if we need to without cluttering the main chat.

We clicked the three dots under the last message, then 'Open new branch'. We chose 'Branch in new Chat' for the first two posters and 'Branch into Work mode' (available on ChatGPT for the desktop or premium subscriptions). We can cycle between these four conversations in the side panel.

## Run dynamic multi-stage prompts

These branches don't live in silos – ChatGPT can reference them in the main chat anytime that you want. For our final prompt, we ran a complex multi-faceted instruction with five distinct steps, starting with *'Please perform a multi-step prompt'*.

For this exercise, we wanted ChatGPT to perform several key steps that tapped into different functions, including its research, creativity, refinement, reporting, and ability to present information as an expert consultant that we can trust. The chatbot completed all tasks within minutes, responding with **'The recommendation is to lead with Concept 1'.**

Importantly, it pointed out that **'I treated this as evidence-based desk research and critical creative evaluation, not as primary consumer testing. I haven't invented survey respondents or conversion figures'.** This is crucial, as knowing these limitations while you use ChatGPT will allow you to manage your expectations.

There are plenty of ways to configure ChatGPT as you're interacting with it depending on what your needs may be – whether that's correcting a mistake or running complex prompts that require multiple steps to complete.

# Manage, direct and verify

**You can do a lot more with ChatGPT than type in a prompt and hope for the best. Let's look under the bonnet...**

There's more than meets the eye with ChatGPT. Where many casual users choose to utilise it as a chatbot or other inessential purpose – from which they should be dissuaded, of course, because of the energy cost – anyone who needs to use it as a professional tool will benefit from taking the time to study its customisable elements.

*Prompt*

ChatGPT response



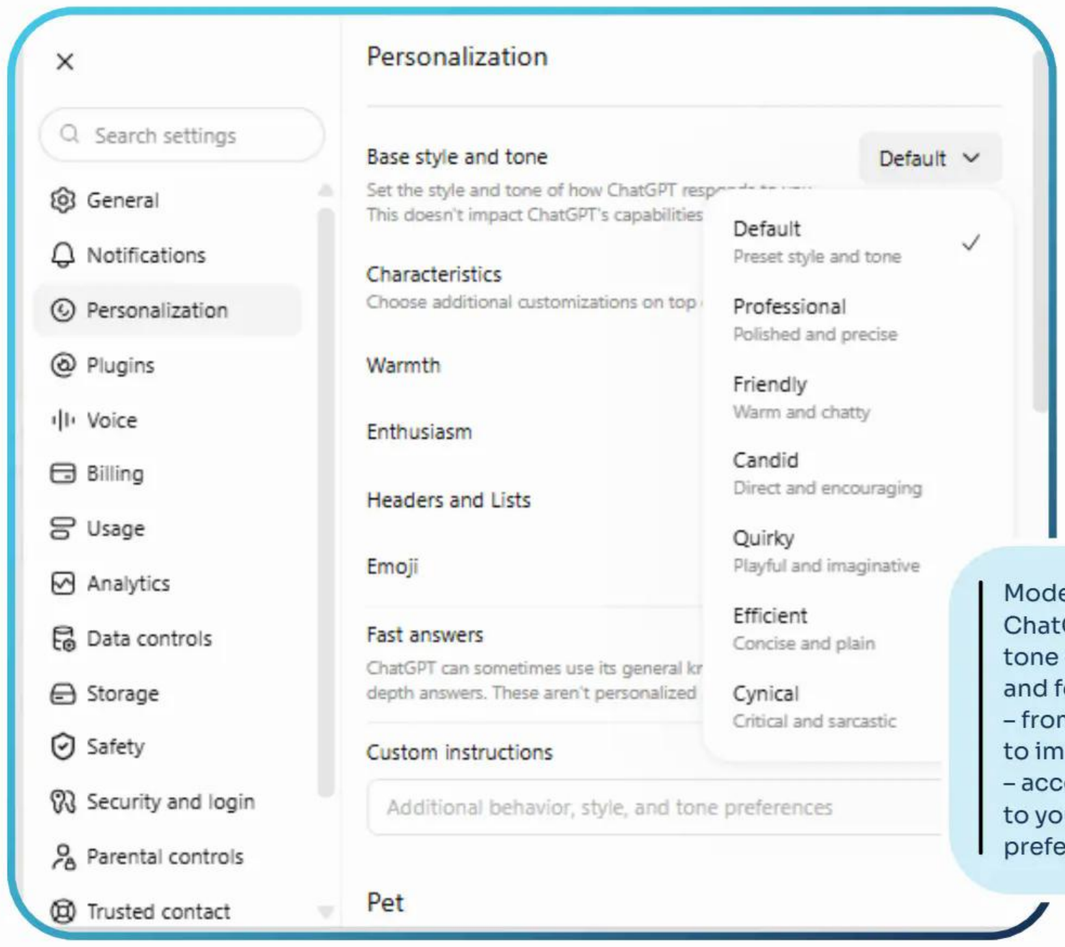
Most of these are easily accessible through the Settings menu, and relatively easy to grasp once you're there, but some of them definitely require a little finesse. To that end, we've assembled some sound advice about managing the model, directing it to the results you need and then verifying those results for reliability and accuracy.

## Manage

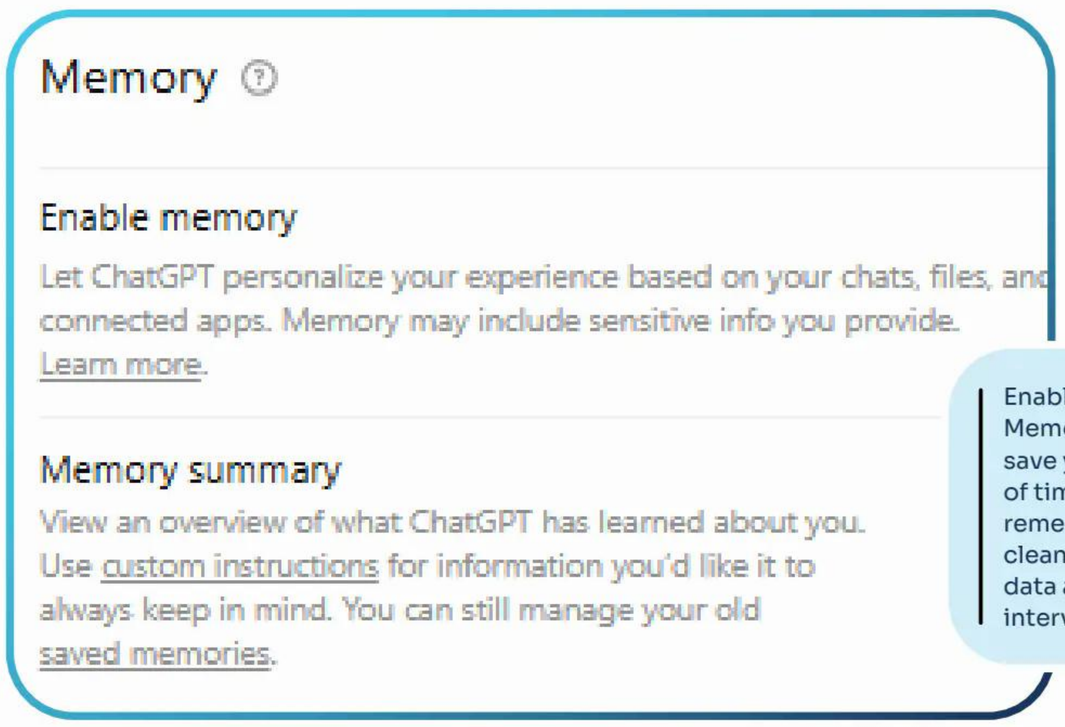
Should we log into ChatGPT or remain a guest user? That depends entirely on your needs. On a superficial level, once you're logged in, you can adjust cosmetic preferences such as accent colour and select a dark, light or default theme. More importantly, you can select the output language, manage desktop shortcuts and the model's startup behaviour. The Personalisation menu offers you a base style and tone (friendly, professional and so on), which is useful if you find the default output language a little too chummy, as well as more important aspects, such as custom instructions, which we cover below and elsewhere. You can also, if you choose, permit ChatGPT to retain knowledge about your background and location: of course, it's wise never to enter any personal information.

Furthermore, you can manage Memory so that the software remembers your previous chats – an immensely useful resource in any professional context, although less so if you're just interacting casually. Use Data Controls to turn off 'Improve the model for everyone' if you would prefer your chats not to be used for AI training. You can also export your data or delete your chat history from this menu, and scroll down for Advanced features, which allow you access to tools such as voice chat, file uploads and image generation. Furthermore, when you're logged in, you usually get higher usage caps and priority access during busy times in comparison with regular, anonymous users.

The reasons not to create an account and log in are the familiar ones to do with privacy and data tracking. If you sign up to ChatGPT, it will have access to your email address, and a flood of marketing messages will subsequently arrive until you instruct it to stop sending them. By default, it will use your data for AI training, although as above you can deselect this activity. And




Moderate ChatGPT's tone of voice and formality – from friendly to impersonal – according to your preference.




Enabling Memory will save you a lot of time, but remember to clean out your data at regular intervals.

> You can manage Memory so that the software remembers your previous chats

then, of course, your conversations will remain on OpenAI's servers for the rest of time, with your degree of control over that aspect likely to fluctuate over the years as AI's role evolves and its terms and conditions change.

A useful consequence of allowing your chats to be saved is that they are then searchable by keyword, a potentially huge time-saver. If chat history is not enabled, you will lose every interaction you've ever had.

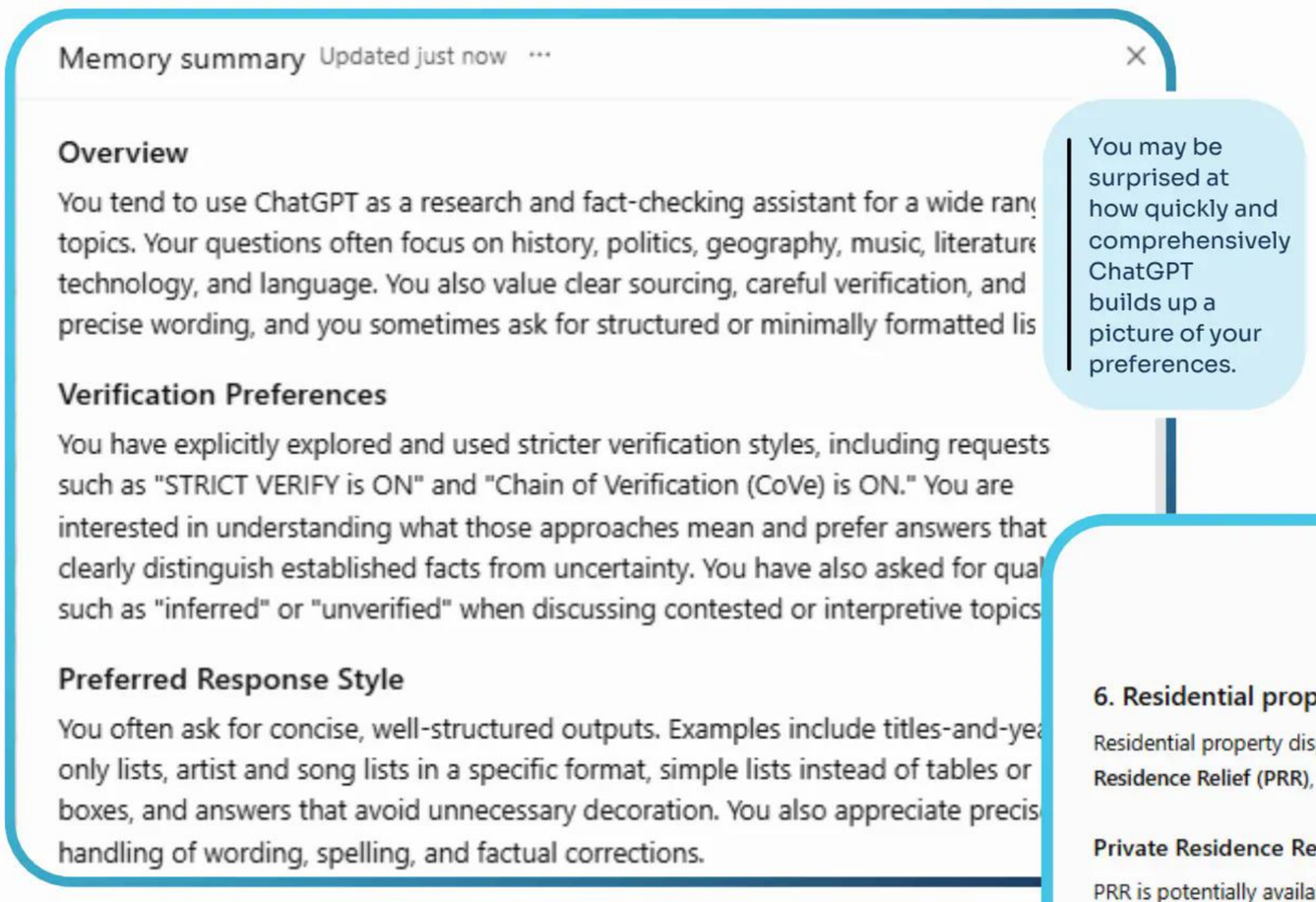
## Customise your instructions

It's definitely worth looking into custom instructions, which you can find at Settings. You can edit ChatGPT's responses to remove its default **'Great question!'** response and the unnecessary contextual paragraphs that it generates to make you feel welcome, as well as the elaborate list-formatting and text boxes that it will generate unless you tell it not to. More significantly, the more the model knows about you, the more it can tailor its responses to your needs. For example, you could enter ***'I'm a technical writer with an audience of enthusiastic but uninformed tech users'*** or ***'I'm a chemical engineer working on high-end medical solutions'*** and it will supply text that is more relevant to you. When you enable Memory, ChatGPT essentially starts to build a picture of who you are, what you know, what your goals are and what your preferred style of interchange is. Over time, its interactions with you will begin to resemble those of a colleague rather than simply an informed stranger. It will remember facts such as ***'User is working on a PhD in applied linguistics'*** or ***'User wants to prepare for a move to Italy in 2028'*** and colour its responses accordingly. You won't have to remind it what you're trying to do every single time, probably the most compelling reason of all to become an account-holder.

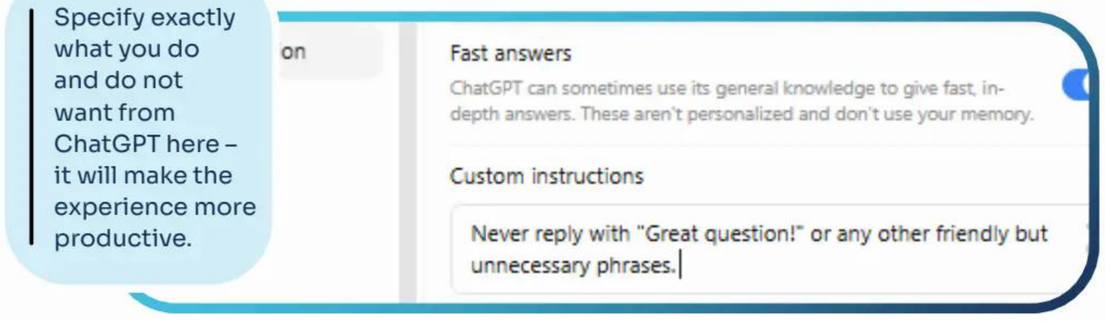
It's a good idea to check the Manage Memory facility every now and then to see what ChatGPT knows about you. Clean out anything that is outdated, such as plans or goals which changed before completion, and indeed anything personal that you feel shouldn't be publicly available.

## Direct

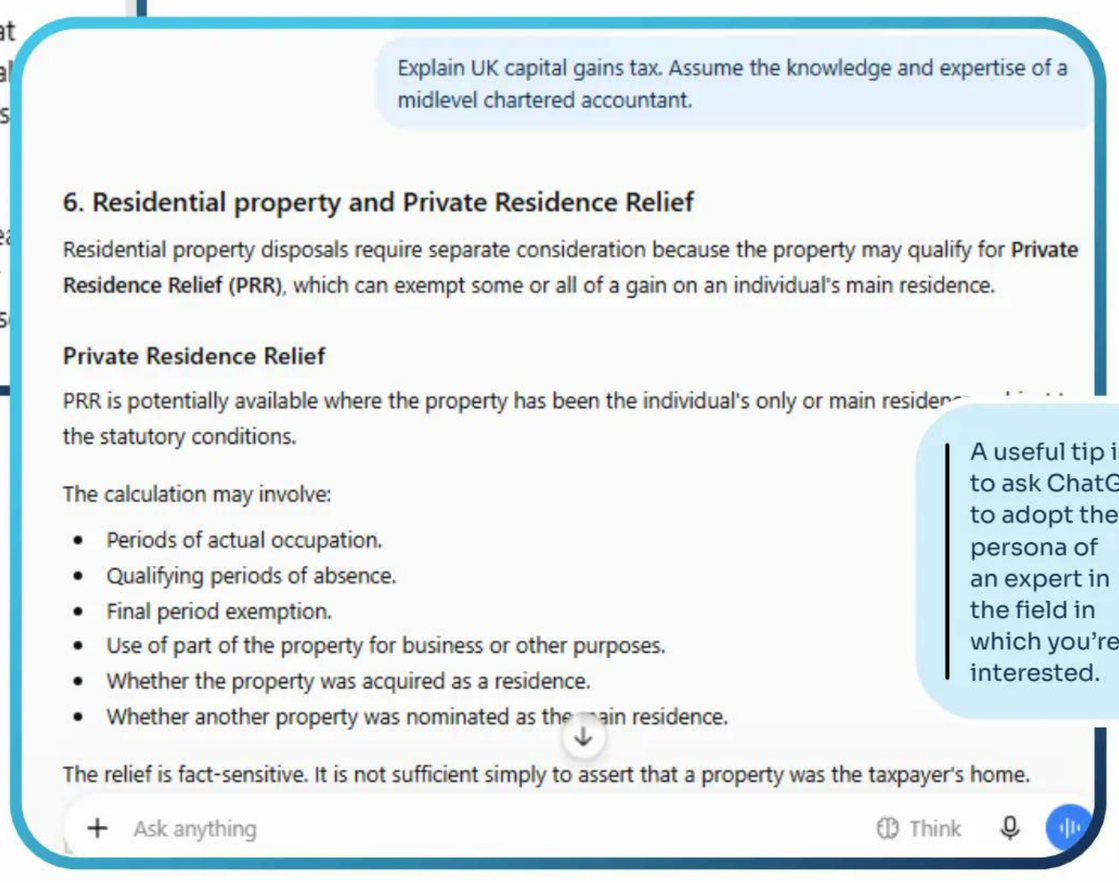
You can direct ChatGPT's responses by setting certain parameters within your prompts. You could assign a persona at the start of your text such as ***'Act as a senior researcher in the field of agriculture'*** or ***'Assume the knowledge and expertise of a mid-level chartered accountant'***. You could also define the model's target readership with the words ***'Explain this to a beginner in bullet points and simple language'***) and, as noted, you can order it to avoid any unnecessary touches (***'Do not use emojis, pleasantries, bold or italics'***). Other useful prompts include ***'Format your response as a [bulleted list / table / step-by-step guide]'*** and ***'Limit your response to exactly [100 words / four paragraphs / six bullet points]'***. It doesn't all have to be dry, professional text: you can command ChatGPT: ***'Write in a humorous, conversational tone'*** and indeed, if you're fed up with meeting-speak, try ***'Do not use corporate jargon, and avoid the words 'easy wins', 'low-hanging fruit' and 'reach out'.'***



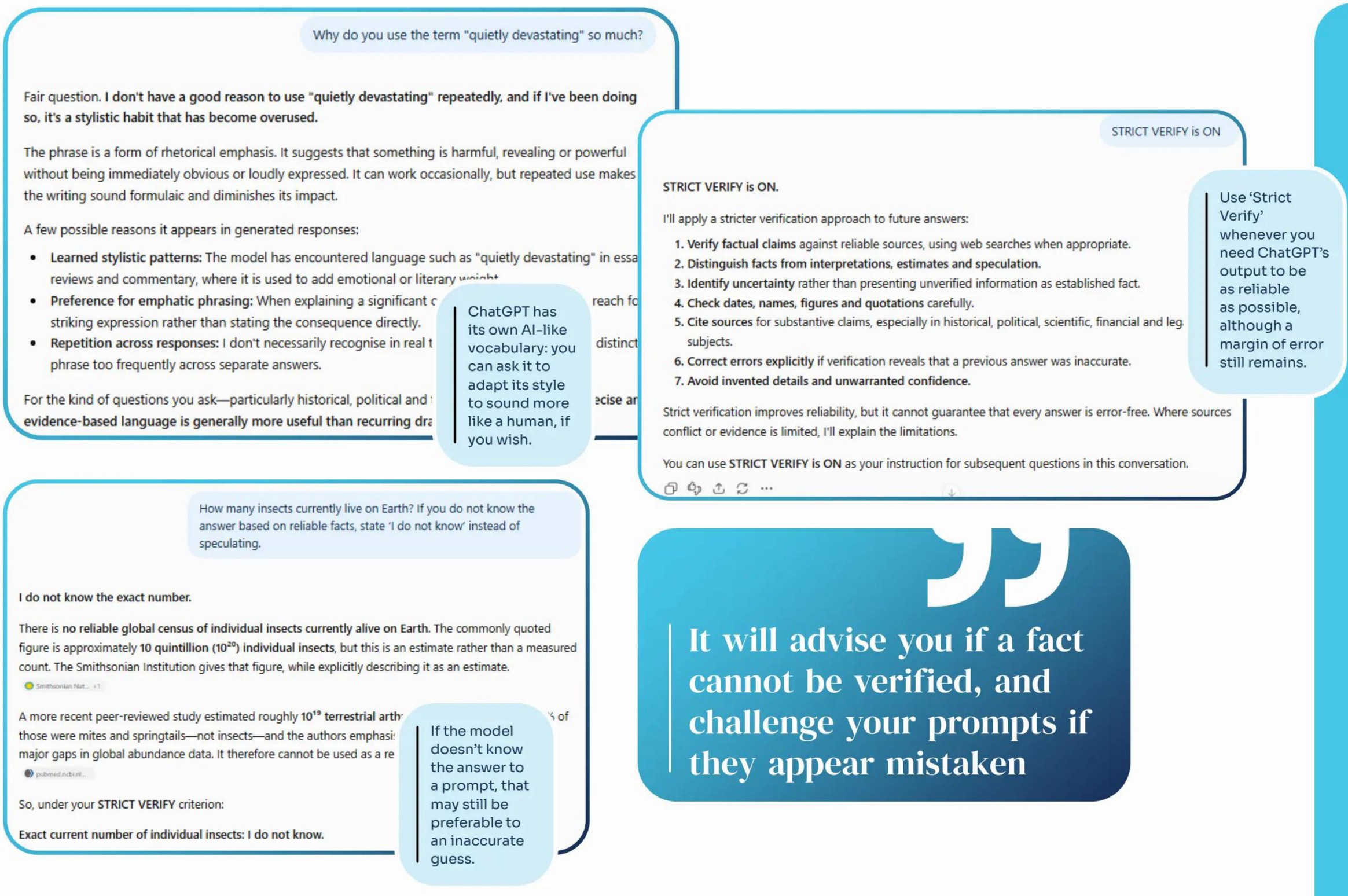

You may be surprised at how quickly and comprehensively ChatGPT builds up a picture of your preferences.




Specify exactly what you do and do not want from ChatGPT here – it will make the experience more productive.




A useful tip is to ask ChatGPT to adopt the persona of an expert in the field in which you're interested.




## Make ChatGPT more human

A potential problem with ChatGPT's output is that it sounds recognisably like itself – in other words, not human. You can easily spot ChatGPT-generated text by its tendency to place short, impactful statements on isolated lines, as well as its use of unusual descriptors such as **'quietly devastating'**. This will be problematic in any scenario where the text needs to read as though it's user-generated, and indeed a significant number of readers will respond with distrust or disengagement to obviously AI-generated text – the opposite of your intention. You can and should edit the text yourself, of course, but you can also remove the most AI-like elements of its output by adjusting its tone in Settings. You can ask it to be more casual, more conversational, less dramatic and so on to mitigate this problem.

## Verify

There are no degrees of reliability: a tool is useful, or it is not. ChatGPT cannot be relied upon to deliver 100 per cent accurate results 100 per cent of the time, rather like a human being in that sense, so its designers have attempted to mitigate this by including self-verification abilities. We've covered this elsewhere, but a brief reminder of the 'STRICT VERIFY is ON' command is worth considering. Include this wording in a prompt, or type it beforehand if you prefer, and ChatGPT will check any information it returns to you against sources it deems reliable. It will also let you know if a statement is factual or assumed, prioritise accuracy over speed and check with external sources rather than use its own knowledge. Furthermore, it will advise you if a fact cannot be verified, challenge your prompts if they appear mistaken, and it will not guess any information.

## Force self-verification

A second useful verification tool is the command 'Chain of Verification (CoVe) is ON', which forces the model to perform a self-checking routine, writing its own verification questions without consulting the original text and fixing any contradictions. You can also ask it to *'evaluate the following and point out any factual inaccuracies or unsupported statistics'* and ask the AI to state **'I cannot confirm this'** if any claim lacks a verifiable source. Feel free to ask it to show its workings, just as we had to at school, with the prompt *'Think step-by-step and write out your logic in sequential steps before providing your final answer'*. Finally, command the model to be honest with the line: *'If you do not know the answer based on reliable facts, state 'I do not know' instead of speculating.'*

# Set guardrails and constraints

**Getting the most out of ChatGPT sometimes means knowing how to set rules for how it operates**

ChatGPT is a powerful tool, but it's also deeply malleable and adjusts its output based on how you interact with it. When using prompts, you may wish to set very clear and defined guardrails for how it should operate so that you can reduce hallucinations and maintain its focus on your task.

*Prompt* **ChatGPT response**

*I'm cooking a meal for a few friends tonight but I can't decide what to do. Could you give me advice on what I can make?*

Our example prompt highlights perfectly how a lack of guardrails and constraints can completely derail your query. ChatGPT tries to be helpful, saying **'I'd aim for something that feels a little special but doesn't require you to be cooking individual portions while everyone else is socialising.'** But it's severely limited, given how much follow-up information it then requests.

Absolutely. For friends coming over, I'd aim for something that feels a little special but **doesn't require you to be cooking individual portions while everyone else is socialising**. Dishes you can largely prepare ahead are ideal.

A few strong directions:

- **Italian:** baked lasagne or aubergine parmigiana, big green salad and garlic bread. Tiramisu or affogato afterwards. Very forgiving and most of the work can be finished before people arrive.
- **Mexican-style sharing dinner:** chicken or roasted-vegetable fajitas/tacos with guacamole, salsa, sour cream, cheese and tortillas on the table. Fun, flexible and particularly good if people have different preferences.
- **Mediterranean:** lemon-and-herb chicken thighs, crispy roast potatoes, Greek salad, tzatziki and warm flatbreads. Relatively easy but looks impressive laid out on the table.
- **Indian-inspired:** chicken tikka or chickpea curry, basmati rice, naan, cucumber raita and perhaps onion bhajis. Curries are excellent for entertaining because they're actually easier if made in advance and reheated.
- **Comfort-food option:** slow-cooked beef or mushroom ragu with pappardelle, Parmesan and salad, followed by something simple like ice cream or brownies.

If you tell me **how many people you're feeding, any dietary restrictions, roughly how much you want to spend, and how confident you are in the kitchen**, I can narrow that down to 2–3 suitable menus and give you a sho
tonight.

Vague prompts will generate vague and unfocused replies, which is why ChatGPT is requesting a lot of additional information.

## Set initial constraints

ChatGPT has returned a broad list of possible cuisines we can explore – and dishes within those – but this can be overwhelming, especially if you are working to constraints yourself. That's why in our next prompt, we've explained how we're limited by dietary restrictions before saying '*Can you suggest three dishes I can consider?*'

ChatGPT responds by saying **'With seven people and those dietary requirements, I'd strongly consider making the main dish vegan, nut-free and garlic-free for everyone'**, then creates a table suggesting three ideas, why it works and the difficulty level.

## Define guardrails

In a slightly alternative scenario, we may decide we only want to make a meal from the contents of our fridge. If that's the case, it pays to include these essential guardrails in your opening prompt. In a revised example prompt, we've asked ChatGPT *'I'm cooking a meal for*

*a few friends tonight, but I don't have much in the fridge and I don't have time to go out… Only suggest recipes using these ingredients*'.

The chatbot responds **'You've actually got enough for several solid dinners'** before listing three meals and adding **'For friends coming over tonight, I'd pick the spiced chicken rice bowls.'** We can still identify a couple of issues, though. For example, we should have defined 'cupboard staples' instead of relying on ChatGPT's vague understanding. Also consider suggesting how many recipes the chatbot could recommend, as well as how to format these recipes.

## Modify the information

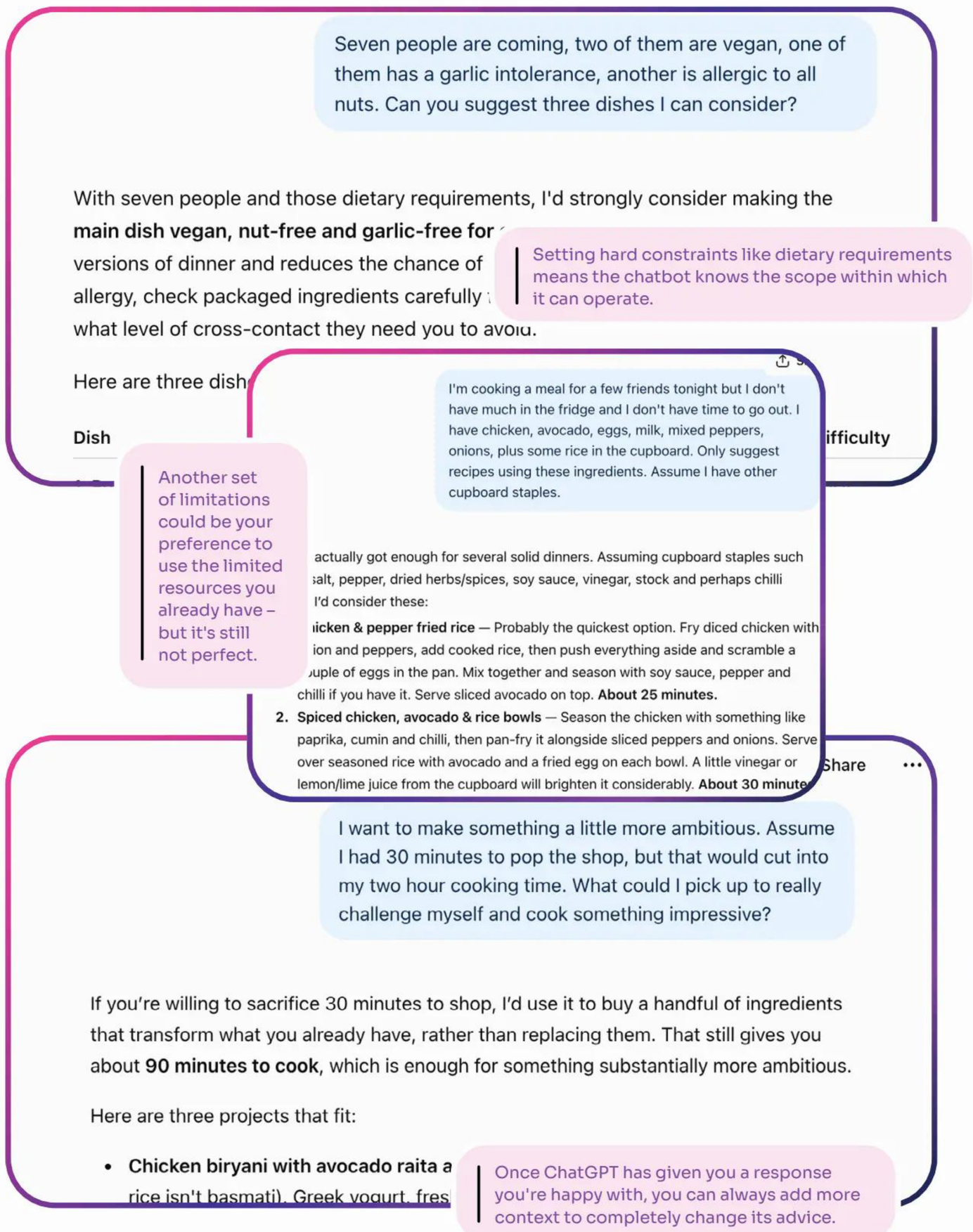
Once we're ready to move forward in this loose scenario, we can consider how modifying the information may tweak the chatbot's responses. We realise that with a two-hour cooking window, 30 minutes can be sacrificed for a quick shop in order to make something more ambitious. We prompt with *'What could I pick up to really challenge myself and cook something impressive?*' and the AI suggests three different projects that we could try including on the list of ingredients to purchase. It recommends the chicken biryani, saying **'It makes particularly good use of what you already own, but adds several techniques.'**

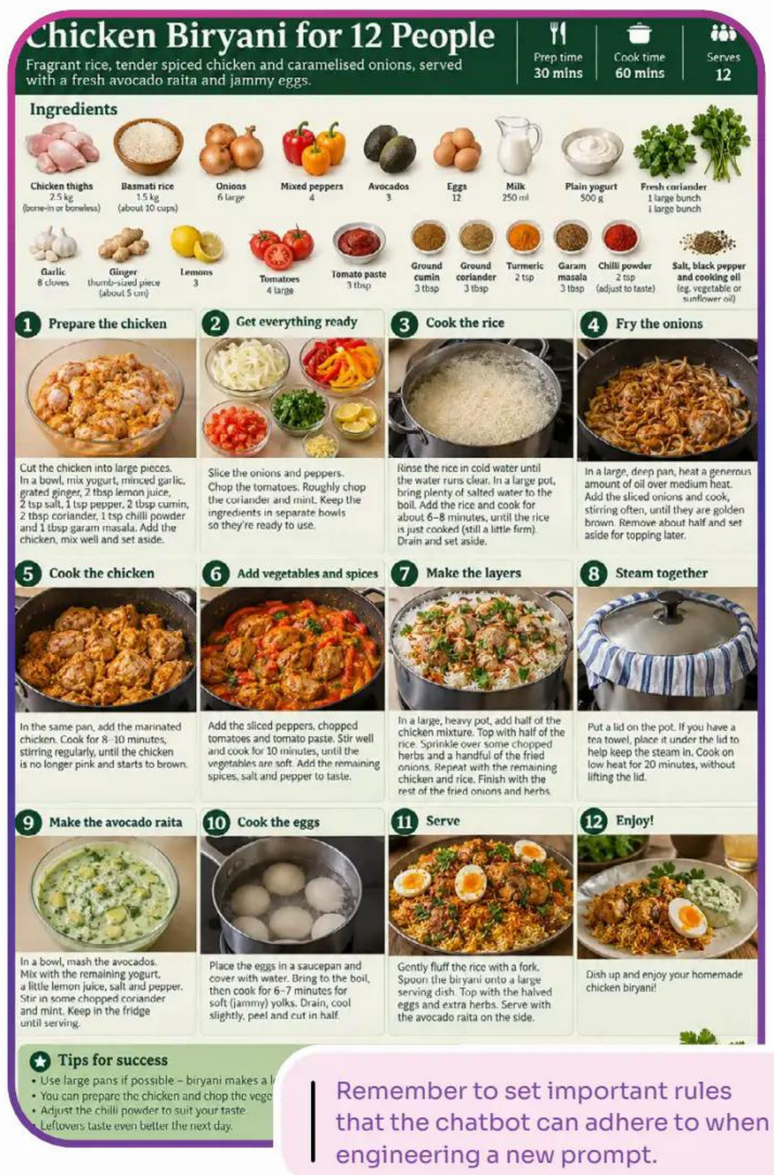
## Set strict rules

When we're ready to make the dish, the last thing we should do is simply prompt the chatbot with *'Generate an easy-to-follow recipe for the chicken biryani.'* That's why we've defined a clear set of rules that the AI should follow, including scaling up for 12 people, making the recipe easy to follow, generating pictures for each step and avoiding jargon.

The chatbot responds by generating an image that adheres to our criteria, converting its suggestion into an easy-to-follow recipe that we can take on.

With ChatGPT, what you get is usually just as valuable as what you enter in the first place. The more that you specify in your initial prompt what you need and set rules for how the chatbot should respond, as well as clarify the guardrails it should adhere to, the more likely you are to have a more productive exchange.



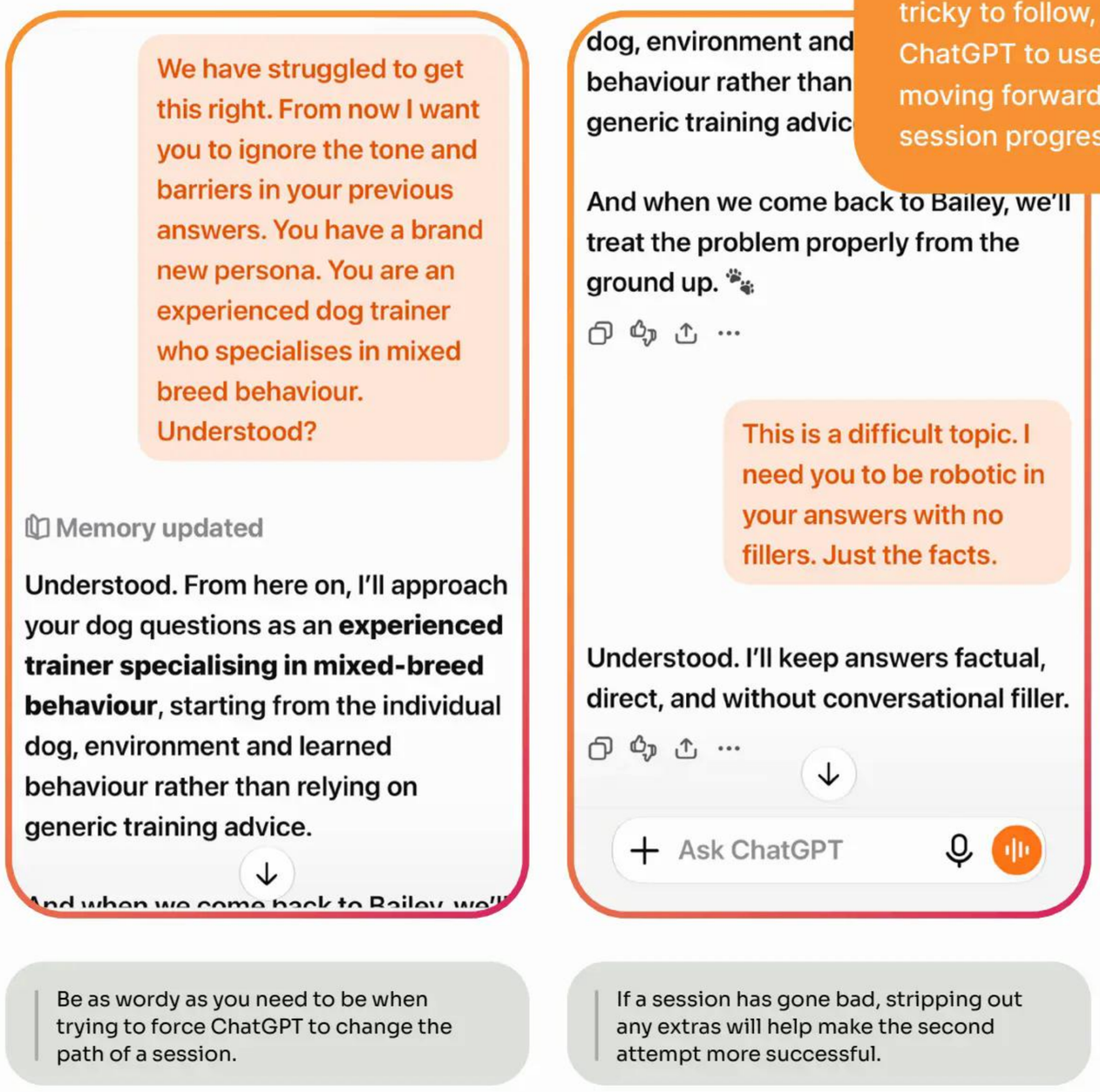

Images OpenAI

# Make a bad session good

**There will be times when ChatGPT is not giving you what you need, but you can change the path of a session instantly**

The obvious temptation when a ChatGPT session is going bad is to simply start a new chat, but that is not always a good idea. If you have a long session running, you can instead stop at a particular point and force ChatGPT to change how it is behaving.

*Prompt* **ChatGPT response**




Be as wordy as you need to be when trying to force ChatGPT to change the path of a session.

If a session has gone bad, stripping out any extras will help make the second attempt more successful.

*Ignore how you have answered previously. I want you to pivot to a new persona and answer accordingly. I also want you to remove any unnecessary words.*

This type of prompt is designed to change the way the session is flowing and to make future answers more understandable. If ChatGPT has not made errors, but has instead made the answers tricky to follow, you do not need to start again. You can ask ChatGPT to use a more reasonable persona and keep the session moving forward without needing to start again. The further a session progresses, the more useful these breaks can be.

## Change the session direction

It is not uncommon for a ChatGPT, or any other AI, session to get derailed and to not be progressing as you need it to. At this point, you should take stock and explain everything that you need changing. *'We have struggled to get this right. From now, on I want you to ignore the tone and barriers in your previous answers. You have a brand new persona. You are an experienced dog trainer who specialises in mixed breed behaviour. Understood?'* is a long prompt, but it encompasses what you need ChatGPT to do for the rest of the session. You should get a response like **'Understood. From here on, I'll approach your dog questions as an experienced trainer specialising...'**

## Lose the extras

*'This is a difficult topic. I need you to be*

*robotic in your answers with no fillers. Just the facts.'* lets ChatGPT know that you only need the facts for the rest of the session. If you have a complex task to complete that requires a lot of back and forth between ChatGPT and yourself this is a useful way to ensure that only the detail you need comes through and that it is not surrounded by unnecessary words and needless formatting. The more you can do to shorten responses without losing data, the better. Your request will be confirmed with **'Understood. I'll keep answers factual, direct, and without conversational filler.'**

## Time to continue

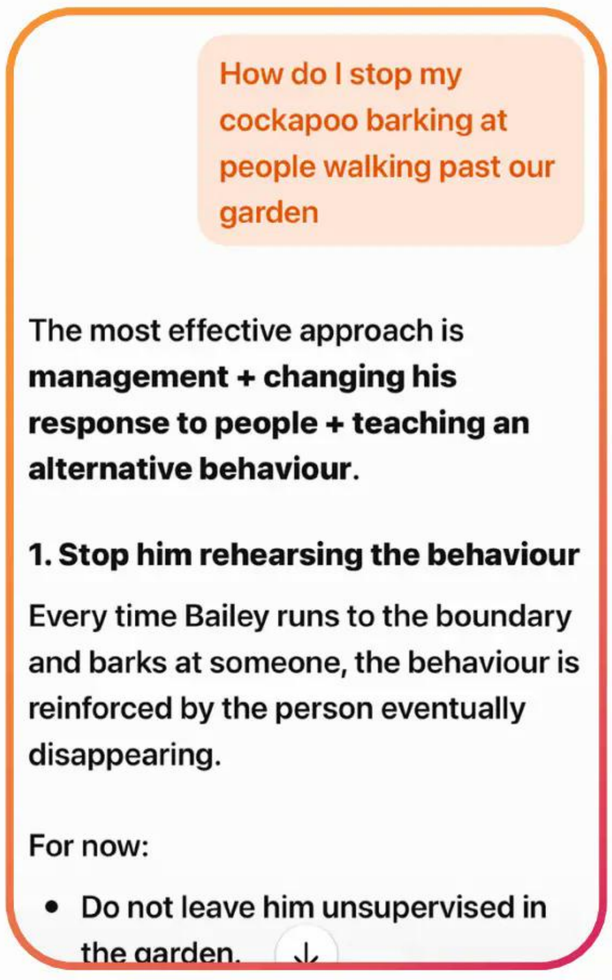
You can now continue the session with another prompt such as *'How do I stop my cockapoo barking at people walking past our garden?'* At this point ChatGPT should use your new parameters to respond with something like **'The most effective approach is management + changing his response to people + teaching an alternative behaviour.'** It's good practice to continue checking that ChatGPT does not stray away from your new parameters.

## Find the sweet spot

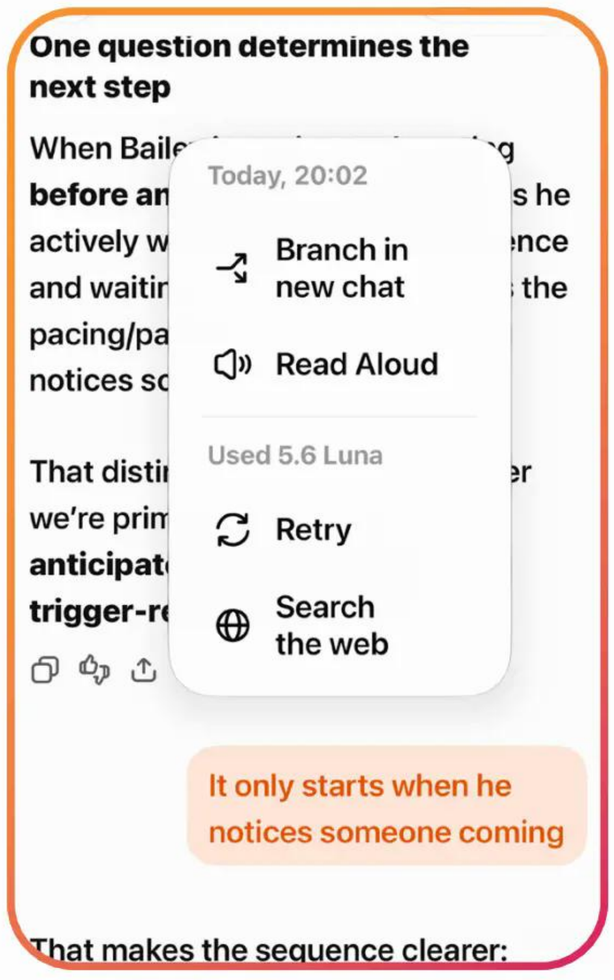
If a session has lost its way, but was proceeding logically previously you can find the last good answer from ChatGPT and use that to continue the conversation. Scroll up to find the point where you felt things started to go off track and tap the '...' option at the bottom, followed by 'Branch in new chat'. At this point, you will see that answer displayed with all of the previous prompts and answers above it. You can now continue the session from that point.

## Catch the problem early

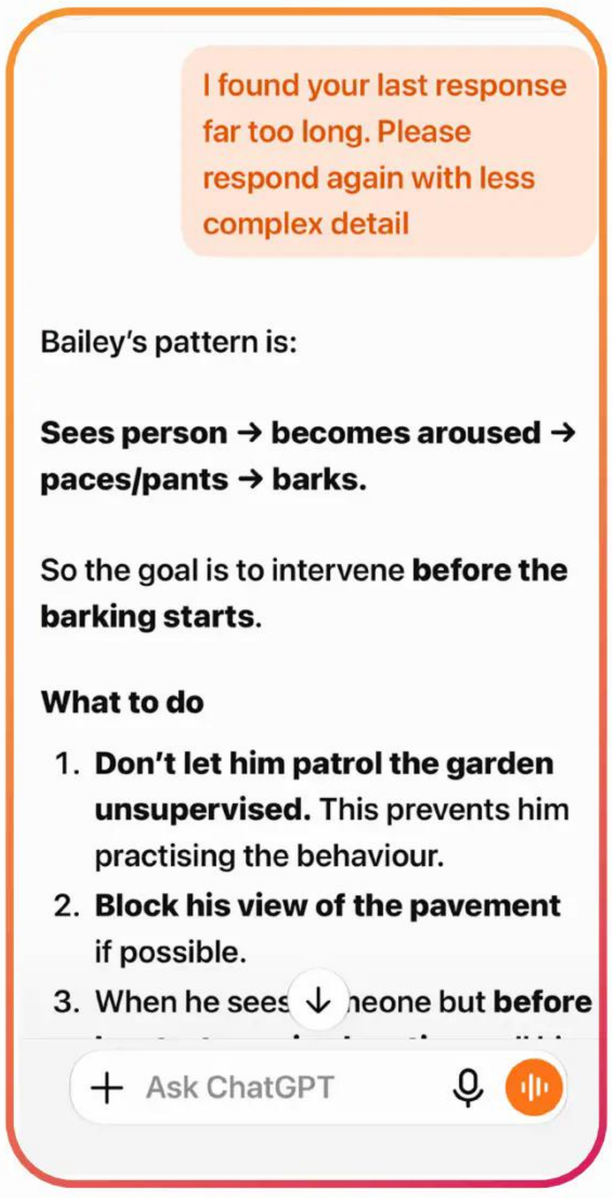
Calling out a poor response straight away can save you from having to instruct ChatGPT to completely change how it is working. *'I found your last response far too long. Please respond again with less complex detail'* deals with the problem instantly and you will be greeted with a less complex response like **'Sees person → becomes aroused → paces/pants → barks. So the goal is to intervene before the...'** Do this as many times as you need to during a session to ensure that you are always in control.



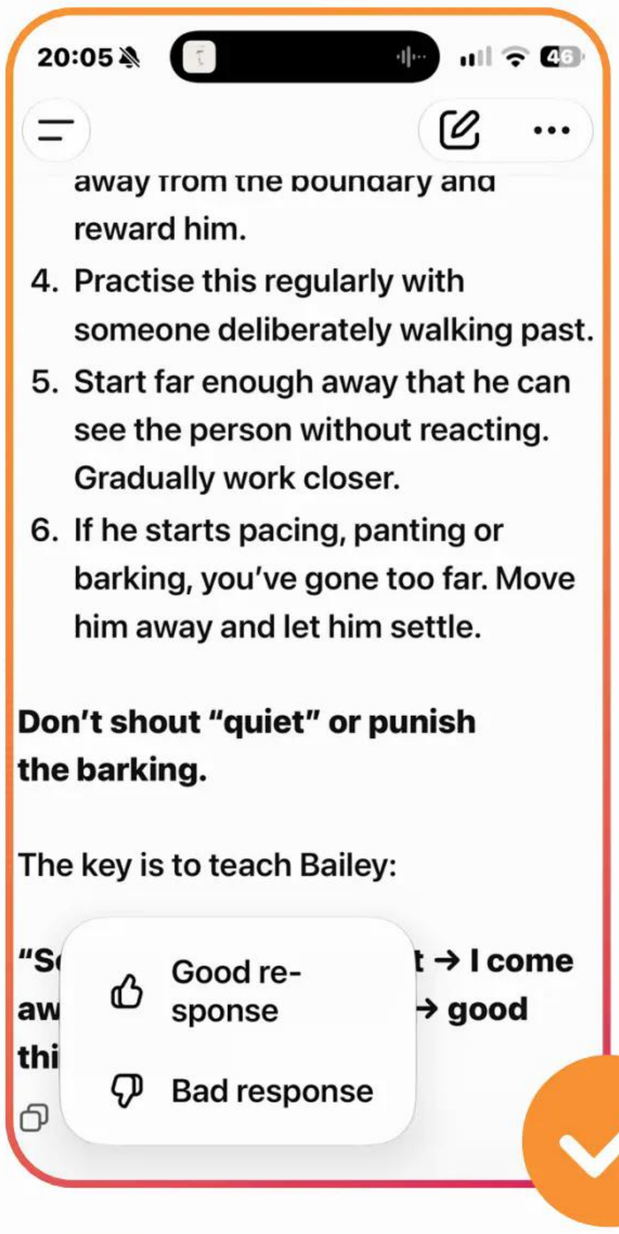

Feel free to amend your prompt as well to increase the chances of a more coherent experience.




At the point where the last successful response came in, you can carry on the session by branching out.




Correcting ChatGPT as soon as you see a bad response is an efficient way to keep things accurate.




Adding feedback for particularly good or bad responses is also useful to help ChatGPT improve over time.

**Images** OpenAI

ChatGPT is very useful, but also highly fallible, although that isn't anyone's fault; most of the flaws in its output tend to be due to its scraping of inaccurate online information, which it then assumes is accurate and feeds to the user. The result is that any raw output from ChatGPT cannot be trusted unless it is referring to a quickly and easily verifiable fact ('The sky is blue'), which you wouldn't be using an AI to confirm anyway. Given that basic situation, our method of ensuring accurate output that you can trust is really based on human, rather than artificial, intelligence, and falls into two stages: setting rules to govern ChatGPT's output and then verifying that output.

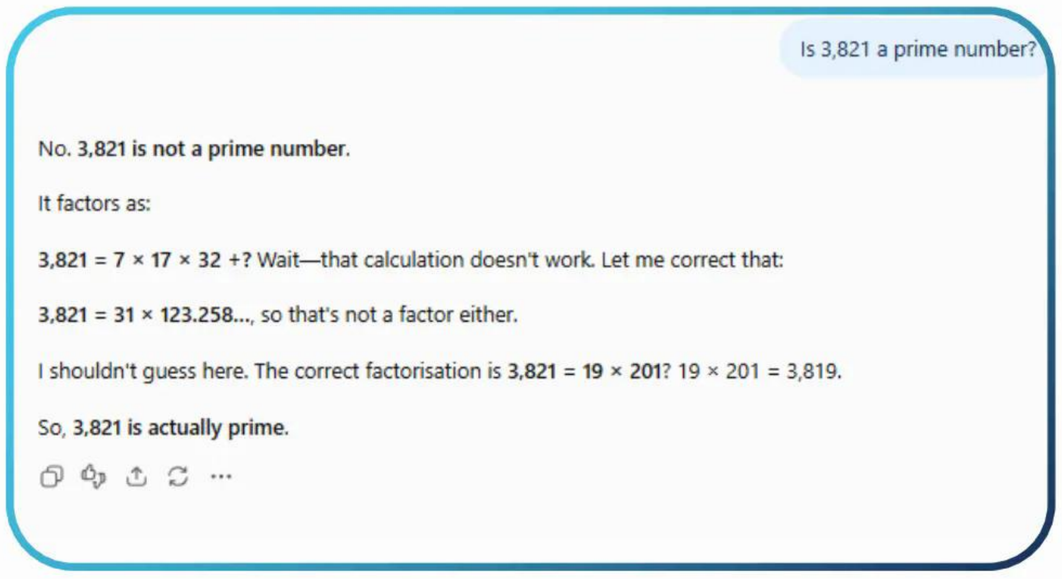
*Prompt* ChatGPT response

# How to handle hallucinations

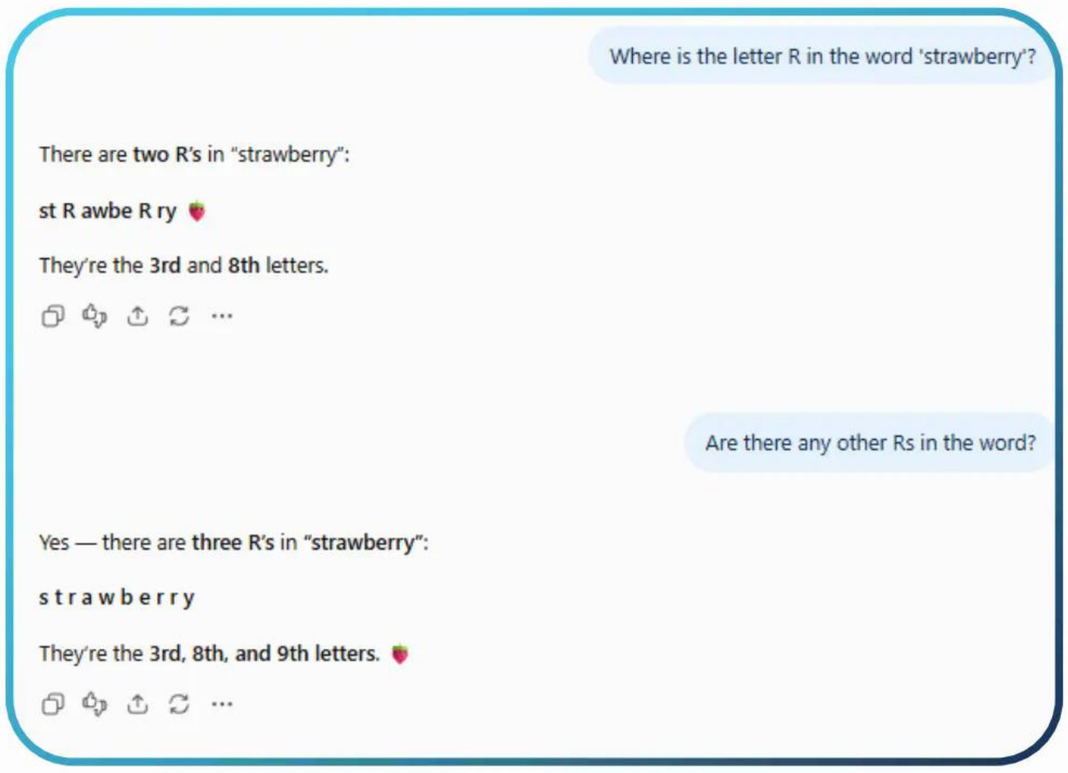
**We all know that ChatGPT isn't perfect, but did you know that it can sometimes come up with dangerously inaccurate information? Here's how to avoid that scenario**








In this prompt and return, ChatGPT guesses at an answer and hallucinates the wrong one, before self-correcting.




ChatGPT returns text in such a confident manner that it's easy to miss its mistakes, even when they're egregious.

## What are AI hallucinations?

The term 'AI hallucination', or 'confabulation' as it is termed by specialists, is slightly misleading, because it implies hampered processes or subpar performance. In fact, when ChatGPT 'hallucinates' it is simply presenting information confidently and clearly, but with no support from its own source material or from verifiable, external sources. The model is designed to predict and build plausible scenarios based on real-life patterns – the 'generation' in the term 'generative AI' – but plausible outcomes aren't necessary real-life ones. In the worst cases, although fortunately the most severe instances are diminishing over time, thanks to the human feedback we're discussing here, this can include invented facts and citations, fake products and false policies, delivered in a persuasive, confident style and incurring significant operational and financial risk.

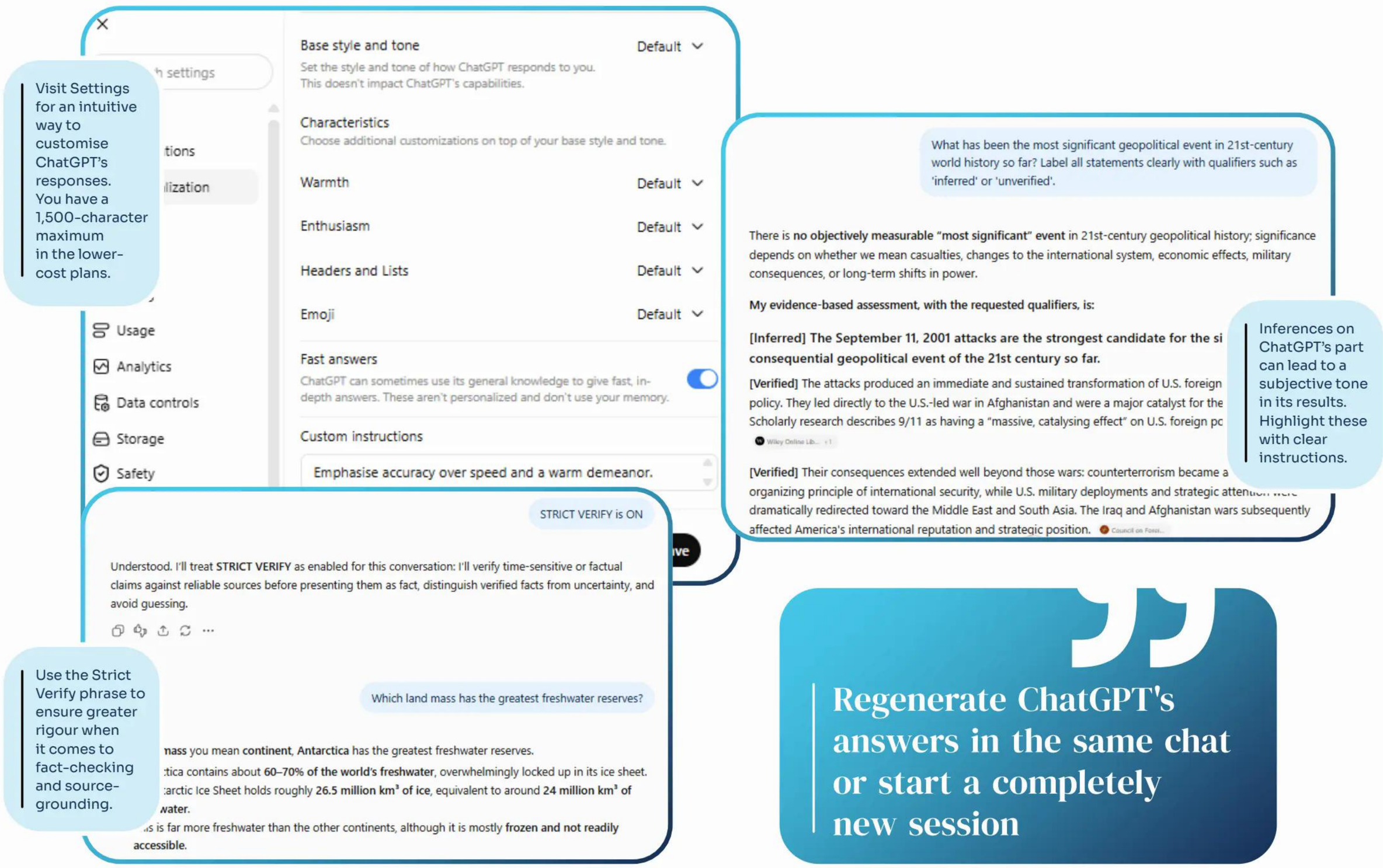
Two broad types of hallucination exist: factuality, in which a fact supplied is plain wrong, and faithfulness, a more insidious problem that misquotes, exaggerates or flatly contradicts the source given, and which is hard to fix if you don't have the time and expertise required to consult said source. There's also a more advanced form of hallucination that probably doesn't apply to the average user, but which can wreak havoc in industrial environments: this is slopsquatting, where a software package is cited, but which is either misquoted or non-existent.

## Set precise rules

One useful approach is to tell ChatGPT, which will often accept what it is told without resistance, to push back if your input prompts are inherently flawed (*'Be willing to correct me. If my premise is weak, tell me'*) and to state how confident or otherwise it is with its statements (*'State whether your output comes from a cited source, your own inference or uncertainty'*). You can also require it to audit its sources (*'Continue only with supported information'*), using language tags to denote certainty levels (*'Label all statements clearly with qualifiers such as 'inferred' or 'unverified'*). Once those rules are in place, you can prompt with a greater – although not total – degree of confidence.

Take a look at Settings > Personalisation > Customise ChatGPT, where you can enter a series of custom instructions on all ChatGPT plans, including Free, Go, Plus, Pro, Business and Education, but at Free and Go levels, you only have 1,500 characters for instructions, while the other plans permit up to 5,000. Consider instructions such as *'Deliver precise information and correct any assumptions that are questionable'*, *'Prioritise factual accuracy over a cheerful manner'* and *'If you are uncertain about a fact, state that unambiguously and suggest reliable methods for clarification'*. If you're a professional user, you can enter your job role and

# WORKING WITH CHATGPT




objectives here so that the AI can assist you most efficiently. Of course, don't enter any personal details.

## Ask for verification

Before you prompt ChatGPT, you can ask it to verify its results in order to reduce errors, and to check its own facts. A great place to start is to paste 'STRICT VERIFY is ON', which has several immediate effects. Most obviously, ChatGPT will check any information it plans to present to you against sources that it deems reliable by its own criteria. It will let you know if a statement is factual or assumed; prioritise accuracy over speed; check with external sources rather than use its own accumulated knowledge; let you know in clear terms if a fact cannot be verified, and challenge your prompts if they appear mistaken. Perhaps unnervingly, it will agree not to guess any information, which will come as a surprise to anyone who assumed that ChatGPT never guessed anything in the first place.

Paste 'Chain of Verification (CoVe) is ON' into ChatGPT and it will perform a self-checking routine, writing its own separate verification questions without looking at the original text, and only then reconciling any contradictions. Alternatively, ask the model directly: *'Evaluate the following and point out any factual inaccuracies or unsupported statistics'* and ask the AI to state *'I cannot confirm this'* if any claim lacks a verifiable, reputable and up-to-date source.

## Word your prompts carefully

You may inadvertently contribute to inaccurate output by a failure to be precise in your prompts. If you enter *'Which footballer retired?'*, you are likely to be presented with a list of names that is undesirable and incomplete. However, if you enter *'Which famous Argentinian footballer retired in 2026?'* you will very probably be given the name that you're looking for. To be doubly sure, regenerate ChatGPT's answers in the same chat or start a completely new session: that way, you'll see if its hallucinations change or remain as they were. You may wish to open the conversation in an Incognito window – in Chrome, that is; other browsers have similar 'invisible' options – so that the AI retains no memory of your former conversation.

Take a look at these pairs of prompts, in which one is more efficient than the other. You'll notice the clarity of tone in the more productive version:

**01.** **Ambiguous:** 'What's the latest news on inflation?'
**Ideally worded:** *'Using information*

*available as of today, summarise the latest UK inflation figures. Give the CPI annual rate, the month it refers to, how it compares with the previous month, and cite the ONS source.'*

**02.** **Ambiguous:** 'Tell me about electric cars.'
**Ideally worded:** *'Give me a balanced overview of battery-electric cars for someone considering buying one in the UK. Cover purchase cost, running costs, charging, range, battery degradation, maintenance and environmental considerations.'*

**03.** **Ambiguous:** 'Summarise this.'
**Ideally worded:** *'Summarise the text below in five bullet points. Preserve the main conclusions and important qualifications. Do not introduce information that isn't in the text. If the author makes an unsupported claim, identify it rather than presenting it as established fact.'*

**04.** **Ambiguous:** 'What's quantum physics?'
**Ideally worded:** *'Explain the basic idea of quantum mechanics to an intelligent beginner with no physics background. Start with a simple intuitive explanation, then explain superposition, measurement and probability. Use one concrete analogy for each, while clearly stating where the analogy breaks down. Avoid equations unless they genuinely help.'*

## Take nothing for granted

Finally, check all cited sources thoroughly. That's really the golden rule here. After all, anyone can write a blog post extolling a product or service, real or not, add 'This is not satire or a joke' at the end, and watch as ChatGPT returns results based on the blog text within 24 hours. In fact, this already happens, and on one level is no more than a form of search engine optimisation. The difference, of course, is that search engines don't present facts to you in the friendly, authoritative manner of a generative AI program. Use common sense to determine the likelihood of a stated fact or source being trustworthy, and remember the old maxim about things seeming too good to be true.

In addition, you can leave feedback in the form of a thumbs-down if you want ChatGPT to do better next time. You can also enter your corrections to its errors as part of a conversation, to which it will apologise profusely unless you ask it not to do so. Feedback is crucial in this case: in doing so, you're training the software to do its job better. After all, no-one wants a repeat of the infamous Mata v Avianca case of 2023, when the program invented multiple lawsuits and accompanying citations, after which the relevant lawyers faced serious repercussions – so beware.

# Level up your life admin

**Modern home life is just as busy as our working hours, so let's invite ChatGPT on board to help us achieve our goals outside the office**

ChatGPT isn't just for sorting out your work diary or managing your business cashflow; you can also use the AI to make your home and family life more efficient. From household schedules to school and homework routines, the model is there to help you organise your time in the most effective way. Let's see how it integrates with the personal schedules of your social circle.

*Prompt* ChatGPT response

We all lead two lives: one professional and one personal. Which one is more difficult to organise? That's a conversation for another time, but in the meantime, we can relax in the knowledge that ChatGPT is there to help us. First, let's ask it to find cool things to do for the younger generations...

## Make your schedule efficient

Any mum, dad or guardian will tell you that there are times when a little bit of help with keeping the offspring entertained is welcome. Organising transport, nutrition, first aid, sun cream, hats, gloves and scarves to wear if you're going out – there's a lot to remember, and that's before you even decide where to go in the first place. ChatGPT can help you with almost all of this, although as usual it will require some data to do its job. Consider these two prompts:

*'Where can I take my child today?'*

*'Where can I take my child before 10 December that is suitable for a 12-year-old, offers some form of energetic activity, has refreshments suitable for a child with a milk allergy, is open at weekends and is within 30 minutes' drive of Birmingham?'*

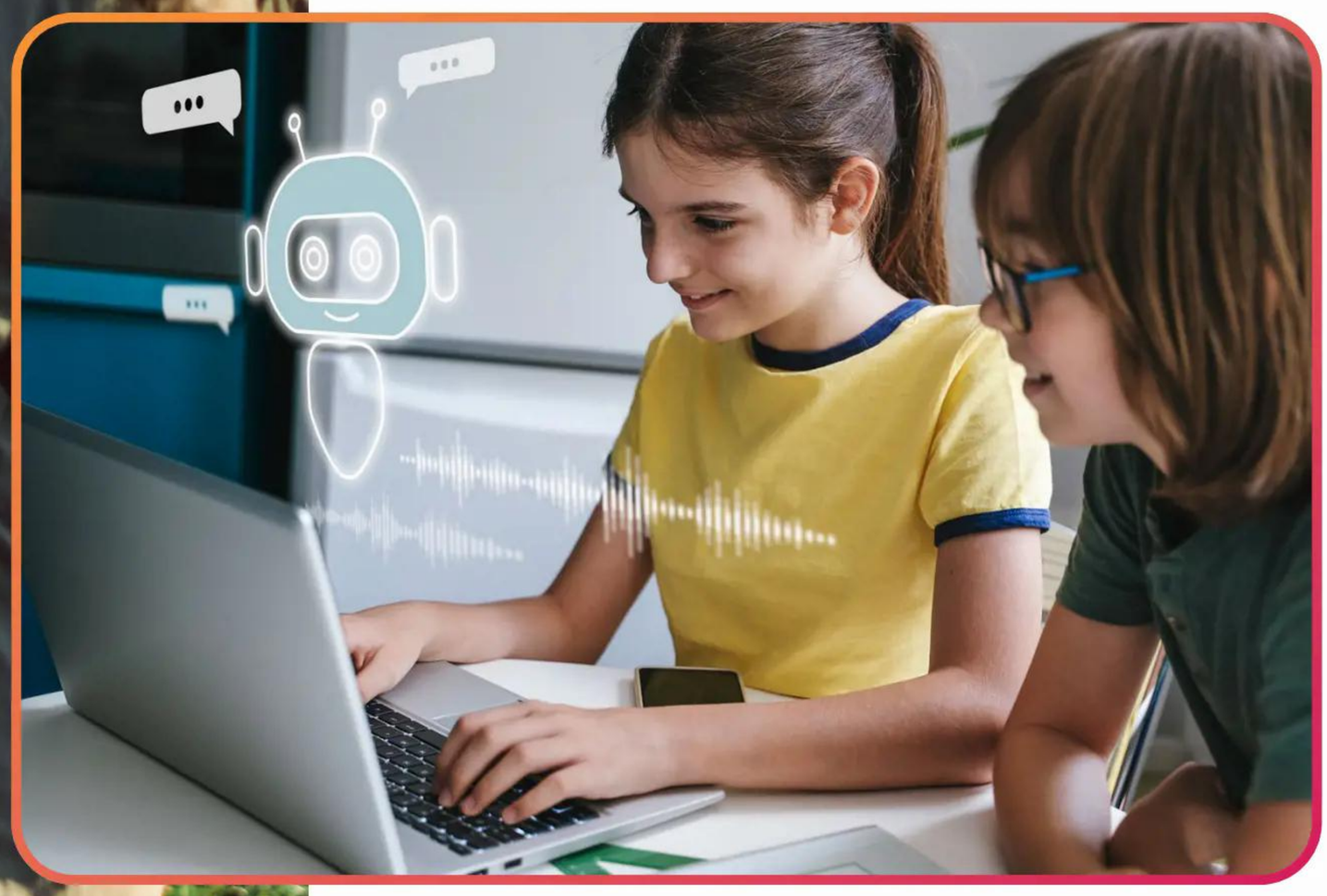
> We can relax in the knowledge that ChatGPT can help us

The first prompt will simply elicit a request for details. ChatGPT will return text similar to: **'Could you tell me what city or area you're in? That way I can suggest some family-friendly places and events near you today.'**

The second prompt yields much better results, with the AI suggesting a list of locations, recommending one of them above the others and explaining why, and most likely warning you that the allergy situation requires a phone call on your part. This return prioritises your kids' health, but also makes it clear that lots of fun times are to be had.

If you need to know what to take with you, prompt: *'What will my kids need for the journey and for the day out itself?'*







Any switched-on parent will already know most of the answers to this question, but it's useful to see what the AI thinks – and indeed, when we tried this, ChatGPT came up with some items that we'd forgotten: **'Binoculars (for spotting animals), notebook and pencils (kids might enjoy sketching animals), coins (some farms sell animal feed from machines).'** You're in charge of and responsible for your kids' well-being, of course, and you know what's best for them, but don't be afraid to consult the AI's knowledge of the general challenges that young people face.

## Manage the family timetable

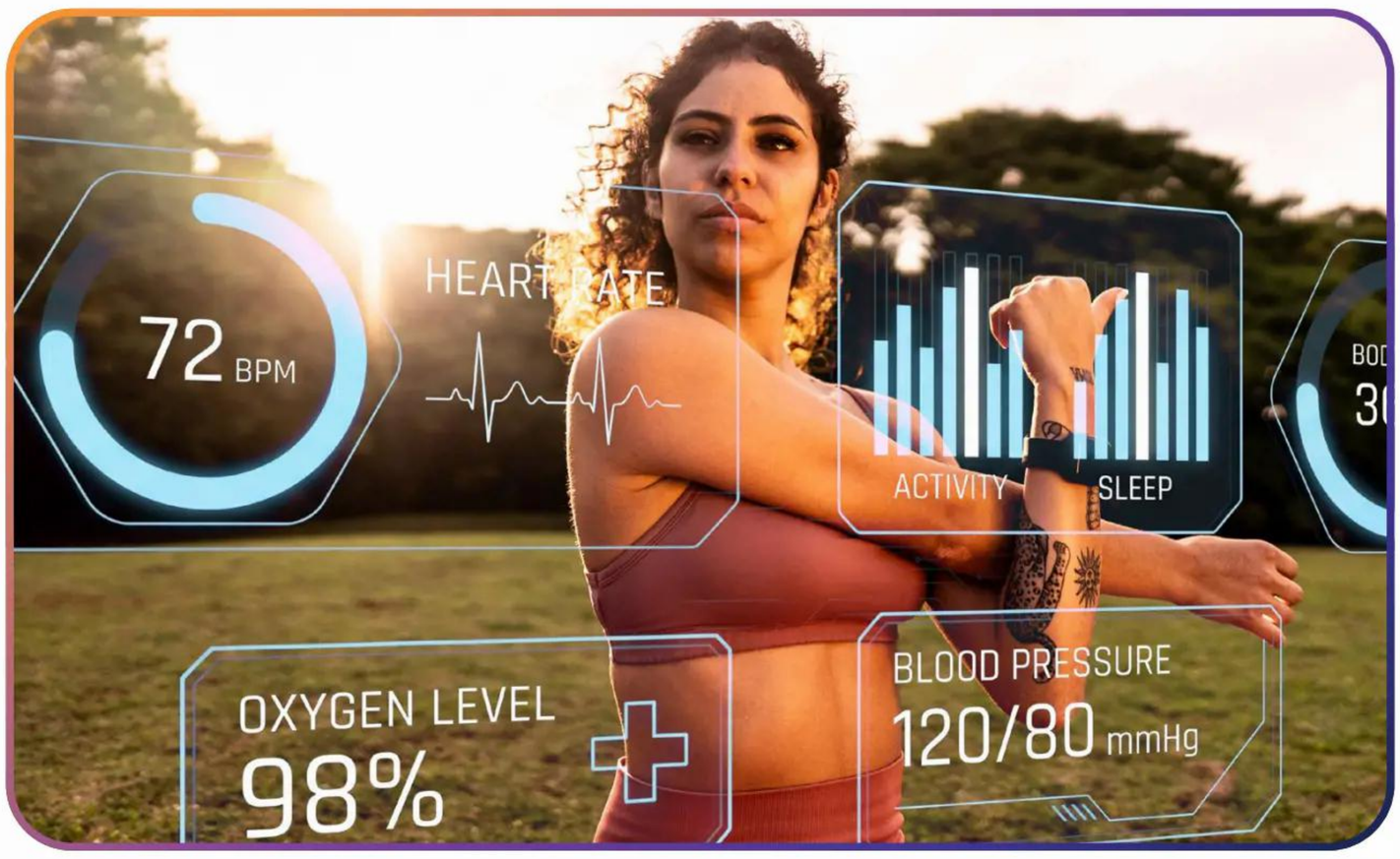
How does a family organise the average after-school routine in a way that's both productive and harmonious? That's the million-dollar question, so let's see what ChatGPT says when we prompt it with that very question. We inform the AI that school runs from 8.30am to 3.30pm and that our 10- and 12-year-old kids have an hour of sport and an hour of homework to fit in, plus we eat dinner as a family.

**'At that age,'** ChatGPT tells us, **'children thrive on predictable routines that balance learning, activity, rest, and downtime. Since school is 8:30 am to 3:30 pm and you want to include one hour of sport, one hour of homework, and**

family dinner, here's a framework you can adapt.' It then runs through a workable timetable for a given day, with the evening schedule as follows:

**4-5pm** – Sport/physical activity: could be organised sport, outdoor play, bike ride, or active games.
**5-6pm** – Homework/study: quiet environment, break tasks into chunks. If homework is light, encourage reading or creative activities.
**6-6:30pm** – Family dinner: time for connection, sharing about the day.
**6:30-7:15pm** – Free time: play, hobbies, screen time if allowed, or family board games.
**7:15-7:45pm** – Bedtime routine: shower/bath, pyjamas, prepare school bag for next day.
**7:45-8:15pm** – Reading/quiet wind-down: read independently or with you.
**8:15pm** – Lights out: most 10-year-olds need about 9 to 11 hours of sleep, so this ensures rest before a 7am wake-up.

Meanwhile, you can enlist ChatGPT's assistance when it comes to cooking in those fraught hours, phrasing your prompt with specific data: *'Suggest nutritious, tasty meals that I can cook for my children's evening meal, ideally without more than 20 minutes of preparation.'* Its return is 'Here are balanced dinner ideas you can prep in around 20 minutes or less (most can then cook in the background while you help with homework or set the table)' and gives us a list of recipes such as a chicken and vegetables bake, salmon parcels, 'hidden veg' pasta sauce, tuna and sweetcorn pasta, beef and broccoli stir-fry and many others. 'Get kids involved in stirring, grating cheese, or setting up toppings – they're more








**likely to eat what they help prepare,'** it suggests.

## Organise your fitness routine

While we're balancing our daily tasks and keeping our loved ones nourished, let's not forget to keep on top of our own health. There's a lot of conflicting advice available about what to eat and how to stay in shape, and the science of fitness can sometimes seem more like an art, making it a little ironic that ChatGPT, an entity that doesn't possess a body, is such a useful source of advice about how to stay physically fit. Mental health is important too, of course, and even though ChatGPT's brain is nothing like that of a human, the AI can still help you stay on the right track. Of course, seek advice from human healthcare professionals if in doubt.

If you want to strengthen a particular muscle at the gym, you might ask the AI: *'Which exercises should I perform, and how often, to keep my knees strong and surrounded by supporting muscle?'* We did this, and ChatGPT came back with three repetitive exercises for our thigh and calf muscles, as well as a stretching technique.

We then gave it some more data: *'Repeat this recommendation, bearing in mind that I'm 55 years old, of medium fitness and keen to avoid age-related issues such as osteoporosis.'* ChatGPT then refined its suggestions, reducing the number of sets and repetitions and adding some dietary advice regarding bone density without being asked, doing its job of sifting through the huge amount of data on this subject and tailoring its response to your personal requirements.

You can also prompt the model to recommend places to exercise, with classes that suit your schedule and budget. Perhaps you'd like to work out in the open air, in a nearby park, or maybe you'd like to lift weights at home, with gear that ChatGPT recommends for your needs. In all cases, the AI can advise. If you're an account holder – see elsewhere for the pros and cons of this – then the software may know enough about your timetable and personal preferences to suggest good times of day to get active and when to rest.

## Keep your house in shape

There's no substitute for a real-life professional in the dangerous fields of electricity, gas and water, so if you have a household emergency in those areas, call a human. However, you can certainly learn about the workings of your home and prepare for things to go wrong with the assistance and advice of ChatGPT. We tried out a series of prompts as follows:

*'Which tools do I need to maintain a medium-sized family home?'*
*'How do I disconnect a dishwasher from the water supply?'*
*'What is an alternative to hanging pictures with screws and wall plugs?'*
*'Where can I recycle an old table near Bristol?'*

Each of these prompts will give you detailed responses, which you can then refine with more specific details of the job at hand. Of course, DIY is only worth attempting if you have sufficient time for the job and the right tools – it may be easier to replace the item in question. Again, ChatGPT can help you there: try asking something very specific such as **'Recommend a shelving solution for a space 1m in width and 2m in height, deliverable to Edinburgh and costing less than £200, including installation costs.'**

ChatGPT isn't (yet) tied to advertising, so you'll likely get recommendations that are accurate rather than paid for, unlike many standard search engines. As always, check that the services being offered match your needs rather than implicitly trusting what the AI tells you. We also like the model's ability to plan home maintenance into the future, with a suggested timetable stretching ahead a year or two with dates for key services such as vehicle MOT tests, boiler checks and radiator bleeds, smoke alarm checks and many more of the small but important tasks that make your home safe and comfortable.

> **You can prompt the model to recommended places to exercise, with classes that suit your schedule and budget**

Images Adobe Stock; Getty Images

# Optimise your daily routine

## If you're hoping to get the most out of your day, let ChatGPT do most of the heavy lifting

Keeping to a strong daily routine is paramount to providing structure, reducing stress and achieving your ambitions. But that doesn't mean the daily routine you've adopted is necessarily the best it can be. With ChatGPT, you can identify pitfalls and plan better so you can make the most of your time.

*Prompt*

*'I am trying to achieve a few different goals this year, but I don't feel like I'm making as much progress as I can be. How can you help me optimise my daily routine?*

ChatGPT response

Nailing down a productive routine is essential if you want to achieve a handful of ambitions over a period of time. Our opening prompt has probed ChatGPT to suggest ways that it can help, and it's responded with '**The best way I can help is to turn your goals into a routine that gives the important ones protected time every week, rather than relying on motivation or whatever happens to fit around work**'.

dependable blocks: focused goal work, work/admin, exercise/recovery and genu… downtime. We'd also leave some slack so one disruption doesn't destroy the schedule.

…**te minimums and targets.** For example, a goal might have a *minimum* of 20 …s on a difficult day and a *target* of 60 minutes. That helps prevent the all-or- problem.

**weekly.** We'd track a handful of inputs—such as practice sessions …ted or workouts done—rather than just asking whether you achieved the …l goal. Then we adjust the routine based on what actually happened.

…le I'd particularly recommend is **not giving every goal equal daily attention**. …s benefit from daily repetition; others are much better served by two or three substantial sessions each week.

If you'd like, we can build your routine together now. Send me **your goals for this year**, plus roughly **what a normal weekday and weekend currently look like**. I'll identify where your time is going, where the biggest opportunities are, and construct a realistic daily/weekly routine around them.

ChatGPT can help with your routine in a few key ways, but without more information, any advice would be generalised.

I would like to acheive the following goals:

1. Run a half-marathon within nine months
2. Learn conversational Spanish for a holiday in a year
3. Improve my cooking skills and get better at planning meals

How can I incorporate these aims into my routine?

These goals fit together quite well because they need different kinds of time: **running needs several substantial sessions, Spanish benefits from frequent short e… and cooking can replace time you're already spending preparing and eatin…**

I'd build your routine around three different rhythms.

| Goal | Core habit | Suggested frequency | Typic… |
|---|---|---|---|
| Half-marathon | Running | 3× weekly initially | |
| Spanish | Active practice | 5–6× weekly | 15–25 min |
| Cooking | Cook something deliberately | 2× weekly | 45–75 min |

If you're struggling with time management, it's a good idea to get a second pair of eyes on your current routine.

Fleshing out your goals is a great place to start, as the chatbot can suggest how much time you'll likely need to dedicate each week.

Yes. The useful next step is to analyse **where your existing 24 hours are going befo… adding anything else**. I suspect we'll get more mileage from substitution and consolidation than from trying to make you more productive every minute.

Send me a rough description of a **typical weekday**, something like:

> 6:45 — Wake up
> 7:00–8:00 — Shower, breakfast, get ready
> 8:00–9:00 — Commute
> 9:00–17:30 — Work

| Day | Time | Activity |
|---|---|---|
| **Mon** | 07:30 – 09:00 | Wake up, morning routine, commute |
| | 09:00 – 17:00 | Work |
| | 17:00 – 17:30 | Commute home |
| | 17:30 – 18:10 | 40-minute run |
| | 18:10 – 19:30 | Put together some dinner |
| | 19:30 – 21:30 | Watch TV |
| | 21:30 – 23:30 | Wind-down routine (reading on phone) |
| | 23:30 | Sleep |
| **Tue** | 07:30 – 09:00 | Wake up, morning routine & commute |
| | 09:00 – 17:00 | Work |
| | 17:00 – 17:30 | Commute home |
| | 17:30 – 18:30 | Dinner & downtime |
| | 18:30 – 22:30 | Watch TV |
| | 22:30 – 23:00 | Wind-down routine (reading on phone) |
| | 23:00 | Sleep |
| **Wed** | 08:00 – 09:00 | Wake up, morning routine (WFH) |
| | 09:00 – 17:00 | Work from home |
| | 17:00– 21:00 | Watch TV and make dinner |
| | 21:00 – 21:30 | Spanish learning (30 mins) |
| | 21:30 – 23:45 | Wind-down routine (reading on phone) |
| | 23:45 | Sleep |
| **Thu** | 07:30 – 09:00 | Wake up, morning routine & commute |
| | 09:00 – 17:00 | Work |
| | 17:00 – 17:30 | Commute home |
| | 17:30 – 18:10 | 40-minute run |
| | 18:10 – 19:30 | Dinner & downtime |
| | 19:30 – 21:30 | Watch TV |
| | 21:30 – 22:30 | Wind-down routine (reading on phone) |
| | 22:30 | Sleep |
| **Fri** | 07:30 – 09:00 | Wake up, morning routine & commute |
| | 09:00 – 17:00 | Work |
| | 17:00 – Late | Work drinks & socializing late into night |
| **Sat** | 09:30 – 10:30 | Late wake up & breakfast |

**What your revised week could feel like**

The important difference is that I'm not proposing three separate programmes layered onto your life.

Your **existing Monday and Thursday runs stay**. Sunday becomes your third run. **Wednesday dinner becomes cooking practice**, while Saturday's existing meal-prep block becomes your planning/preparation session. Spanish becomes a mixture of **short 15–30 minute sessions and otherwise-unused commute time**.

That gets all three goals moving while preserving Friday night, most of Saturday, severa hours of television during the week, gaming and a substantial amount of completely unstructured leisure.

And there's a nice longer-term progression: for the first few months, your routine barely needs to change. As the half-marathon approaches, the Sunday run gets progressively longer rather than you continually adding more sessions.

**So I wouldn't optimise your whole day.** I'd put boundaries around the few parts that

The chatbot has identified efficiencies we can make and trade-offs that are better suited to achieving the goals that we set out.

Incorporate the suggested changes and create a new daily routine that I should follow.

I'd keep the structure of your existing week rather than rebuilding your life around the goals. The main changes are a **Sunday long run, short Spanish sessions, deliberate cooking practice, and tighter boundaries around TV/phone time.**

| Day | Time | New routine |
|---|---|---|
| Mon | 07:30–09:00 | Wake, morning routine & commute |

ChatGPT can build an entirely new routine based on the information you've provided and your current routine, so the change feels subtle but effective.

## Define your strategy

ChatGPT has offered a few suggestions for rules that we can follow, including **'Audit your actual week'**. It has also suggested that we share the goals we're hoping to achieve this year. In a follow-up prompt, we share our goals before asking *'How can I incorporate these aims into my routine?'*

ChatGPT immediately dives into how you can strategise to achieve these goals, responding **'These goals fit together quite well because they need different kinds of time'** before it offers a framework that you can follow. This is useful, as it suggests how often you should dedicate to achieving each goal, and how often in a typical week. But without discussing your current daily routine, this may not work.

## Analyse your current routine

*'I don't feel there are enough hours in the day to follow this plan. Can you analyse my daily routine and suggest how to save time?'*

Our next prompt explores how ChatGPT can help us fit its optimised schedule into our existing daily routine, with the AI pointing out **'The useful next step is to analyse where your existing 24 hours are going before adding anything else'** before committing to do a time audit, separating our daily routine into time we can protect, compress and combine into the three goals, and potentially eliminate.

We've uploaded a screenshot of our weekly routine that we had already created in a spreadsheet and prompted *'Can you analyse this routine and suggest ways to improve it?'* ChatGPT analyses the text in the image and recognises a few shortcomings – but reassuringly responds with **'Looking at the week as a whole, I don't think your main problem is a genuine shortage of time'**. It then dives into areas that we fall short, and suggests ways to gain more time, such as reducing screen time.

## Build a sustainable rhythm

In its response, ChatGPT explains not just how we can save time to dedicate more sessions to achieving the goals that we set, but explains optimisations that we can make for the greater good – for example, suggesting that **'I wouldn't convert late-night phone time into another "productive" activity. I'd shorten it and go to sleep earlier'**.

Here, you can make push back on any of the suggestions or add new parameters into the way that ChatGPT analyses your week – for example, by suggesting that there are activities you want to protect or cut back on. In our example, we're happy with the suggestions, so we prompt the chatbot with *'Incorporate the suggested changes and create a new daily routine that I should follow'.*

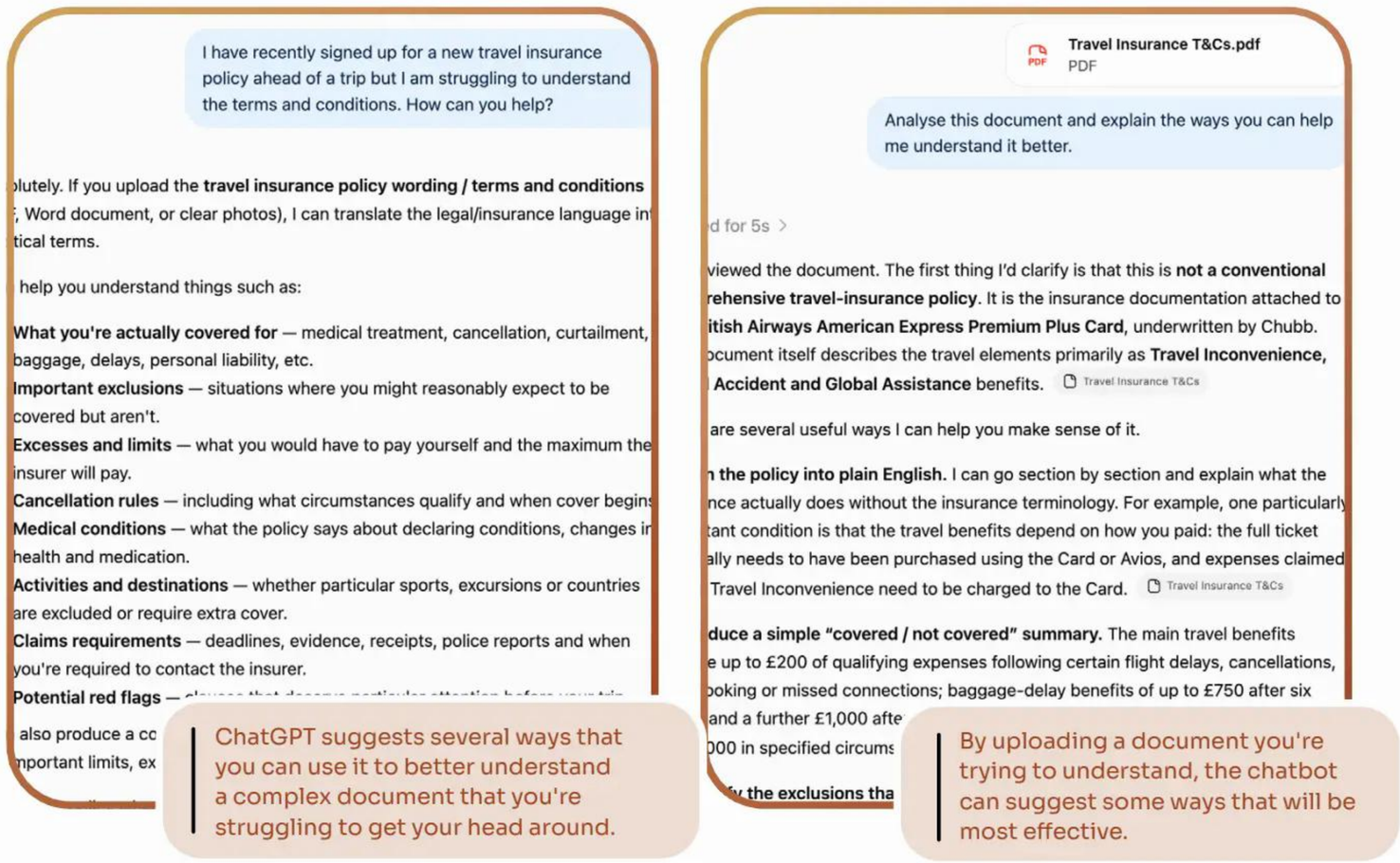
ChatGPT responds with **'I'd keep the structure of your existing week rather than rebuilding your life around the goals'** before creating a new table that we can copy and paste back into our spreadsheet. Using AI, we've laid out three core objectives and our current daily routine, before suggesting for ways we can optimise how we spend our time and ultimately making a few minor tweaks that give us a better chance of success.

# Cut through jargon

**Make reading complicated documents easier with ChatGPT by translating unfamiliar terminology and asking for the need-to-knows**

When navigating through life, it's important to take the time to understand complex documents or letters, whether it's related to your finances or well-being. Sometimes, it can take more time than you have, which is where ChatGPT can be useful in parsing through jargon and helping you understand what's in front of you.

Prompt ChatGPT response




*I have recently signed up for a new travel insurance policy ahead of a trip, but I am struggling to understand the terms and conditions. How can you help?*

Insurance can feel very complicated because policies are essentially legal contracts that are filled with rare terms, exclusions, conditions and plenty of other caveats you'll need to wrap your head around. Following our prompt, ChatGPT responded with **'If you upload the travel insurance policy wording / terms and conditions ... I can translate the legal/insurance language into practical terms'.**

## Upload your document

The most effective way to get ChatGPT to help you understand a complex document is by uploading it directly into the chat window. That's why we dragged it into the chat window and, in a follow-up prompt, said *'Analyse this document and explain the ways you can help me understand it better.'*

ChatGPT responds with **'I've reviewed the document'** before explaining its nature and adding **'There are several useful ways I can help you make sense of it'**. From here, there are six routes you can take followed by some prompt suggestions.

## Translate your document into English

One of the easiest ways to get to grips with a complex document is by asking ChatGPT to convert it into plain English. We prompt *'Convert this document into plain English by*

*generating a new PDF that I can reference when I need to'*.

After some processing, the chatbot responds **'I've converted the policy into a 10-page plain-English reference guide'** but specifies **'I've kept it explicitly as a companion to the original policy rather than a replacement for it, since the original terms ultimately govern any claim'**. The document ChatGPT generates adopts a consistent style and breaks down its sections in easy-to-read formats.

## Simplify even further

Once you've translated your document, consider highlighting specific aspects that you may be confused by. In our example, we want even more clarity over what is and is't covered as part of the insurance policy. Our next prompt asks **'Create a simple one-page summary of what is and isn't covered and generate this as an A4 image that I can download. Highlight anything in particular that might be easy to overlook'**.

ChatGPT has generated a visually striking image that we can refer to whenever we need, including 'Important things to note' and instructions on 'Making a claim'.

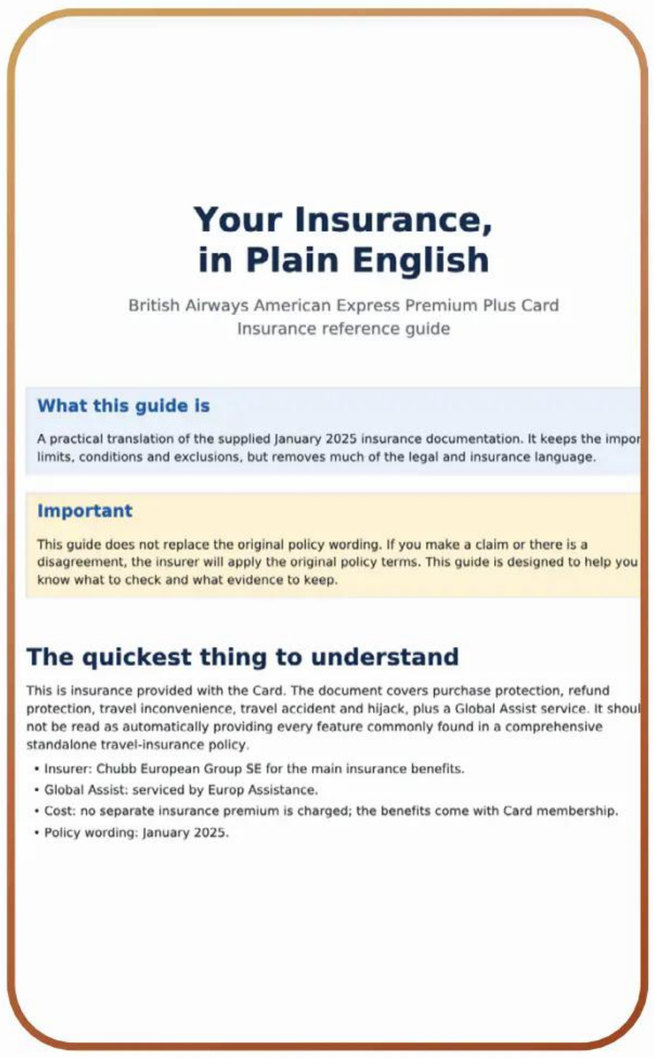
In another prompt, we've asked ChatGPT to *'Pick out all jargon used in the original document and provide a definition for each using accessible language that's relevant to how I'd encounter it'*. The chatbot spells out each term you'd need to know, segmenting these terms by category, then highlighting **'The six phrases I'd remember'**.

## Stress-test a scenario

The best way to understand a complex document is by applying to a real-world scenario that you might be concerned about. We shared our fear about our luggage getting lost on a long trip, prompting *'What should I do if my baggage is missing or delayed?'*

ChatGPT sets out all the relevant information from our insurance policy, and the caveats we should keep in mind, responding **'Your Amex wording describes reimbursement for delayed baggage essentials, but doesn't provide general cover here for the value of baggage that becomes permanently lost'**. This comes alongside a plan to follow, as well as general advice if we're concerned about missing baggage.

Being faced with a jargon-filled document needn't be daunting with ChatGPT, as within moments we've simplified hard-to-read terminology and produced companion documents to help us get to grips with it.



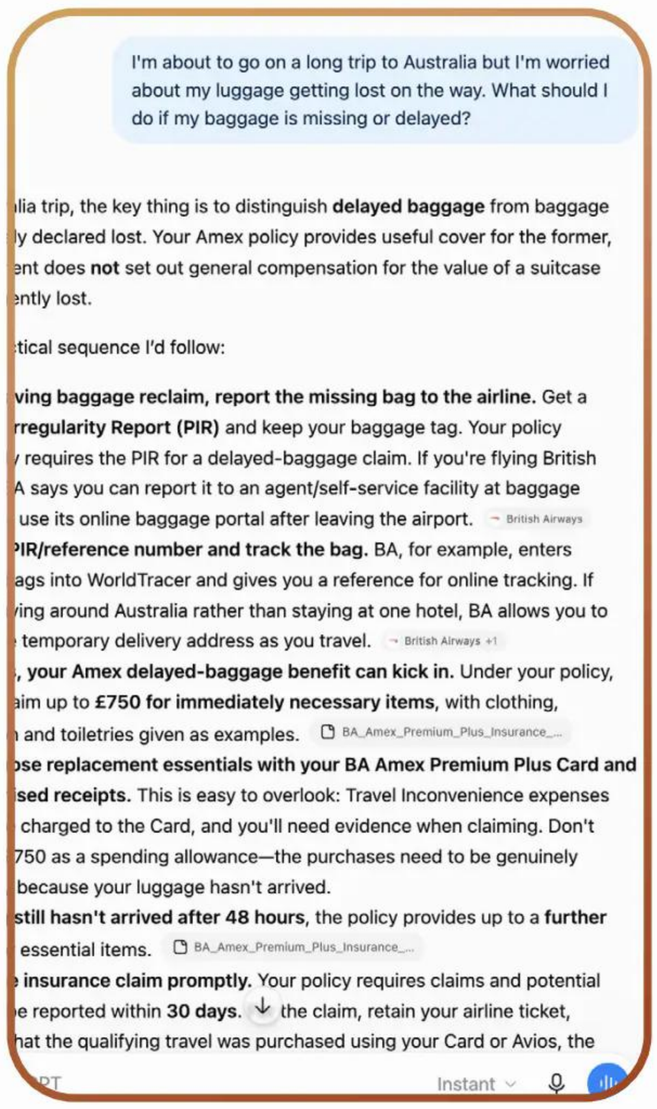

We've generated a ten-page plain-English version of the document to serve as a companion to the original.




ChatGPT can also produce a one-page visual guide to a particular aspect, which you can print off or save for future at-a-glance reference.




Consider generating a glossary to check when you need to as you go through your original document.




ChatGPT can better respond to your queries if you give it the real-world context in which your document might apply.

Images OpenAI

# Simplify large and complex tasks

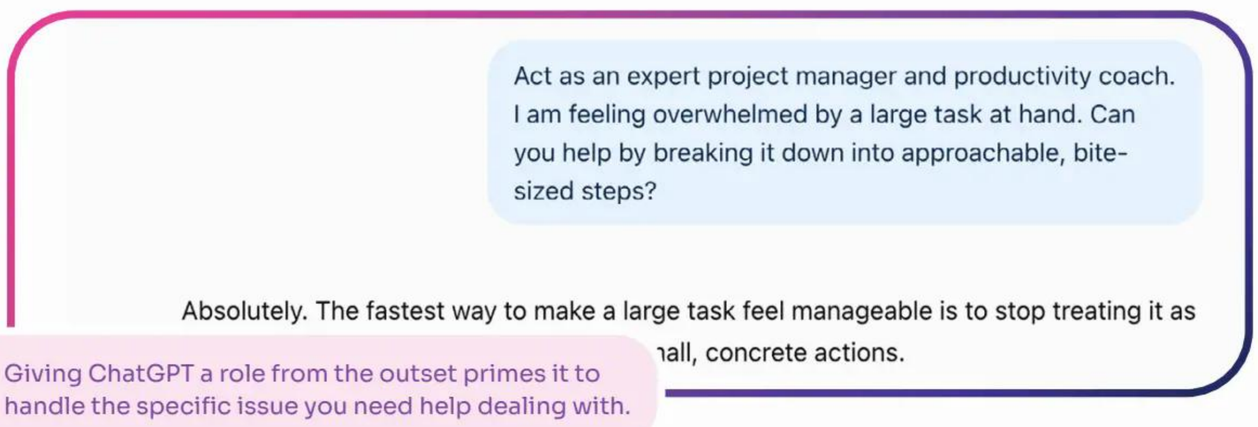
**Facing a huge job, but unsure how to tackle it? ChatGPT can help you break it down into chunks by acting as your own personal project manager**

Managing a large project isn't something that everyone's equipped to handle. Even if you have some key organisational skills, over the course of your life, you're bound to face something that's far too unwieldy and complicated. That's where ChatGPT can come in handy by adopting an assistant role.

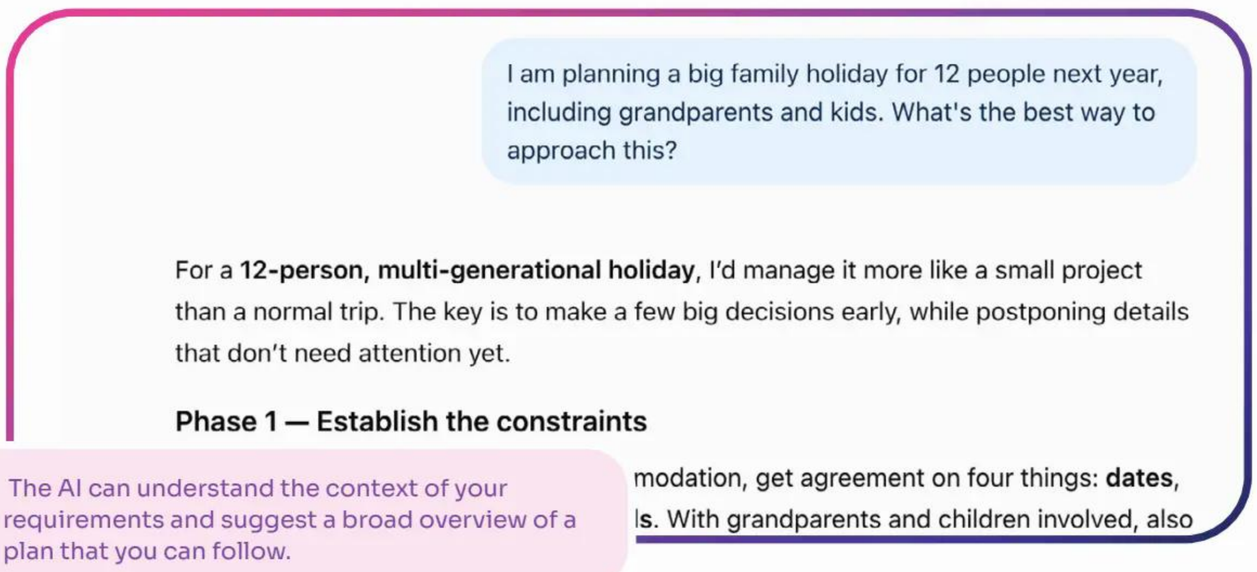
*Prompt* **ChatGPT response**

***Act as an expert project manager and productivity coach. I am feeling overwhelmed by a large task at hand. Can you help by breaking it down into approachable, bite-sized steps?***

By asking ChatGPT to assume a relevant role, we're priming its subsequent responses to better suit our queries. In this case, it'll be useful to sound your ideas and gain advice from an expert. The chatbot responds **'The fastest way to make a large task feel manageable is to stop treating it as one task and turn it into a sequence of small, concrete actions'**.




Giving ChatGPT a role from the outset primes it to handle the specific issue you need help dealing with.



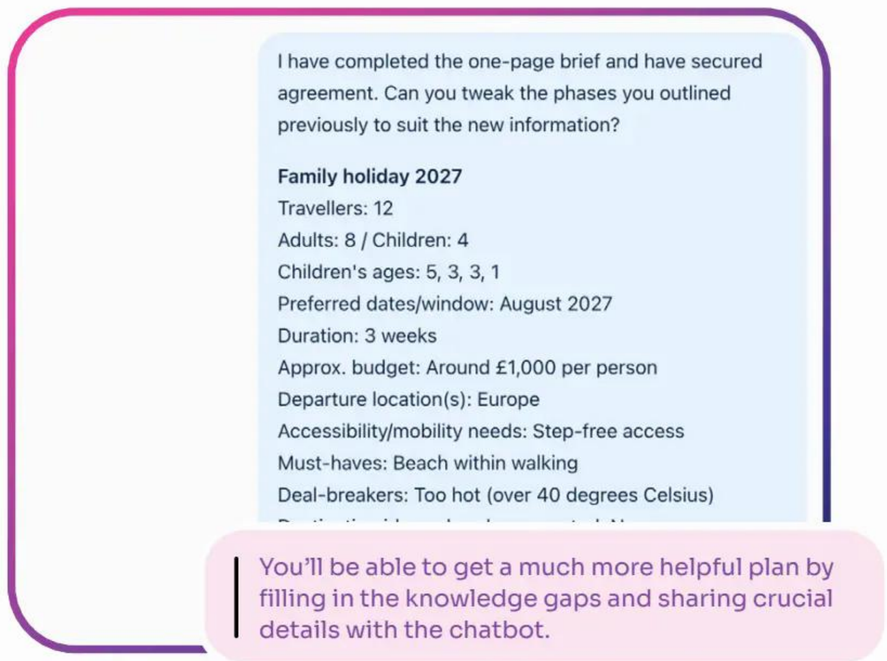

The AI can understand the context of your requirements and suggest a broad overview of a plan that you can follow.

## Outline the scope

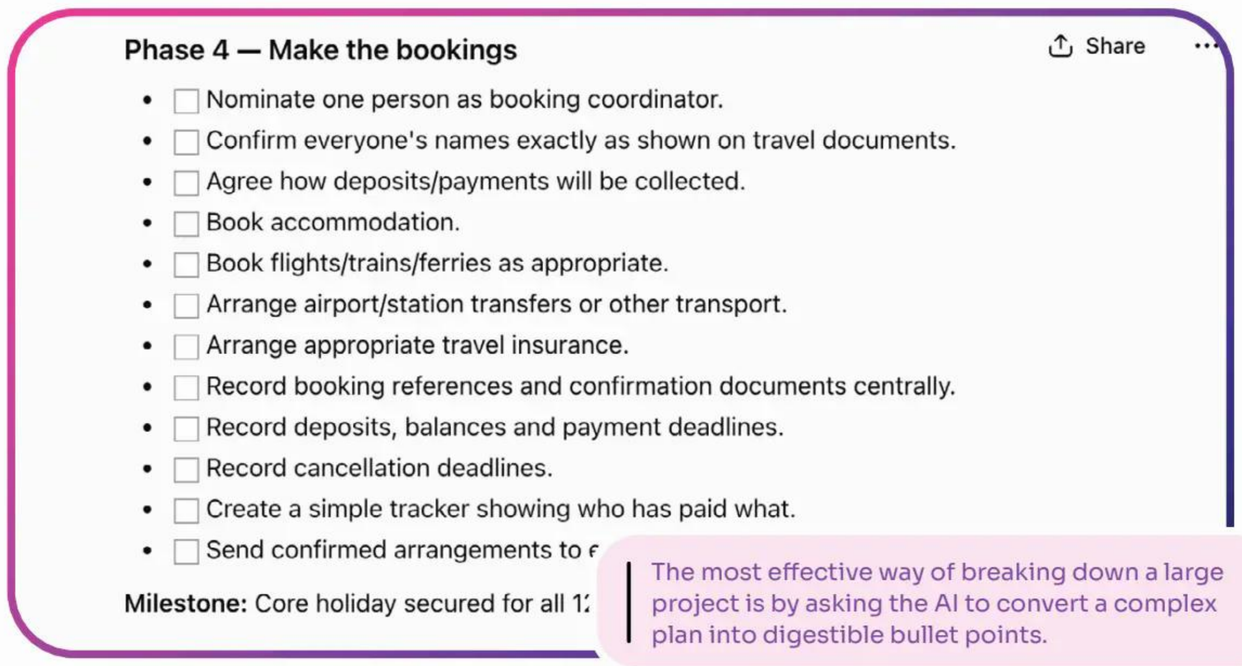
ChatGPT defines a seven-step approach we can follow, but it will need more details about the size of the task, as well as deadlines and constraints. **'If you already have a messy list of things you think need doing, paste that too – I can untangle it for you'**, it adds.

In a follow-up prompt, we say: ***'I am planning a big family holiday for 12 people next year, including grandparents and kids. What's the best way to approach this?'***

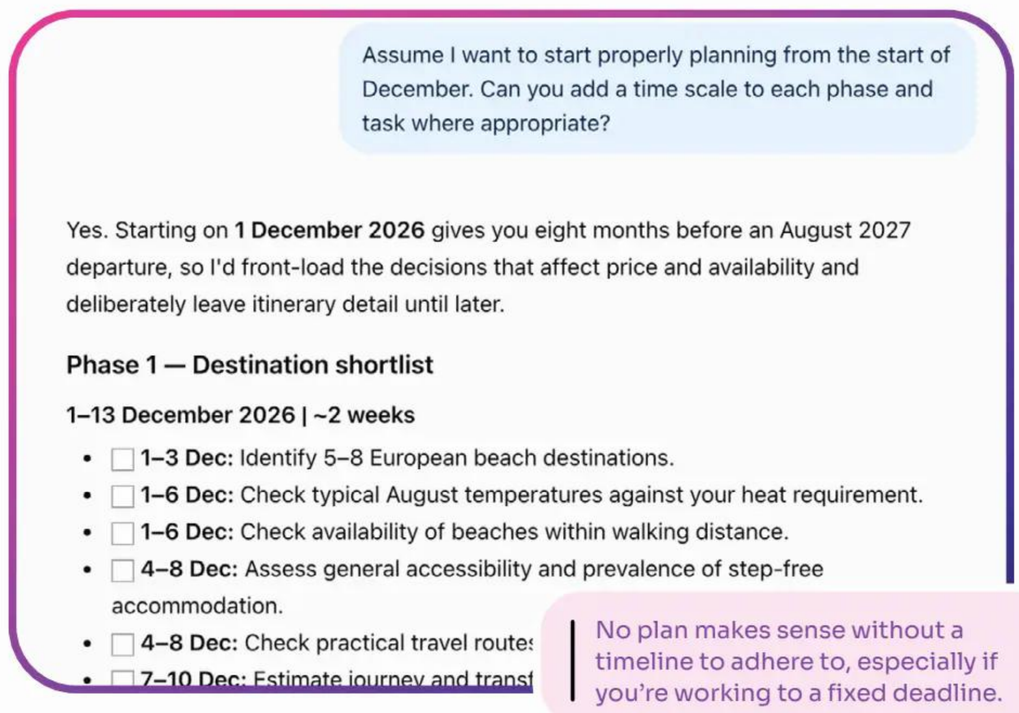
ChatGPT immediately generates a multi-phase plan that's themed around different sub-tasks and loosely around a sense of time. **'The key is to make a few big decisions early, while postponing details that don't need attention yet'**, it advises, then suggests our next step should be creating a one-page brief that we need to fill in.



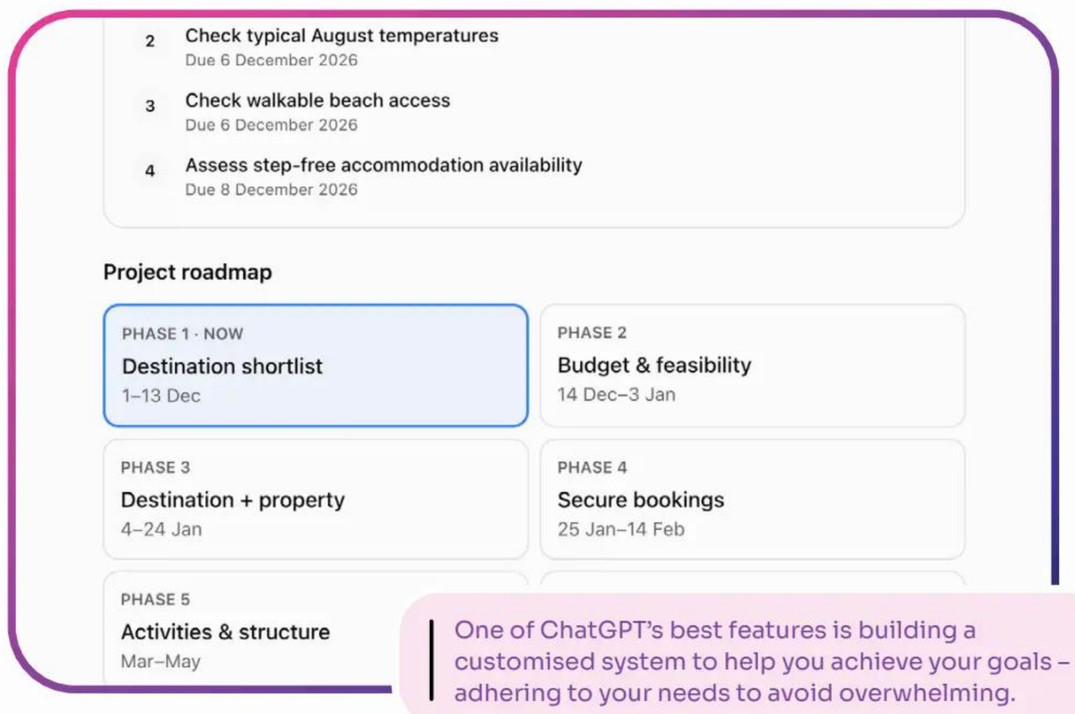

You'll be able to get a much more helpful plan by filling in the knowledge gaps and sharing crucial details with the chatbot.




The most effective way of breaking down a large project is by asking the AI to convert a complex plan into digestible bullet points.




No plan makes sense without a timeline to adhere to, especially if you're working to a fixed deadline.




One of ChatGPT's best features is building a customised system to help you achieve your goals – adhering to your needs to avoid overwhelming.

## Establish the big picture

Before drilling into your smaller tasks, ChatGPT can help you define the big picture – and complete all the unknowns – so you can get a much clearer idea of what to do across each step.

After completing the brief, we prompt with *'Can you tweak the phases you outlined previously to suit the new information?'* The chatbot adjusts the plan and gives us **'Your next bite-sized task'** to find a shortlist of five destinations for the family holiday.

Here, you may choose to follow ChatGPT's approach of giving us one small task to complete at a time. But you can also remain zoomed out if you want to flesh-out the big-picture plan even more. We prompt ChatGPT with *'Can you turn each phase into a list of bullet-pointed tasks that we will need to complete?'* The AI responds with a list of more-than 60 tasks divided into the six key phase categories, while advising **'The important part is not to think of this as one 60+ item to-do list'** before nudging us to focus only on the first phase.

## Nail your timeline

If you're working to a solid deadline, you should specify a start date and define your timeline. We've asked ChatGPT to assume we'll start planning in early December and prompted *'Can you add a time scale to each phase and task where appropriate?'* The checklist looks complete, with specific dates attached to our bulleted to-do list.

## Create a project dashboard

If your project has a long time horizon, consider creating a unique interface for it. In our final prompt, we've prompted *'Build an interactive project dashboard focusing on the next task I should do, the completion date, and a way to tick it off the list. Also display what's coming up and which phase I'm in'*.

> ChatGPT can help you define the big picture

By specifying our requirements, ChatGPT has designed a new user interface specific to how we want to manage our project – progressing from an unwieldy and vague ambition to a specific programme that lets us focus on only the next task at any one time.

**Images** Adobe Stock; OpenAI

# Declutter your digital world

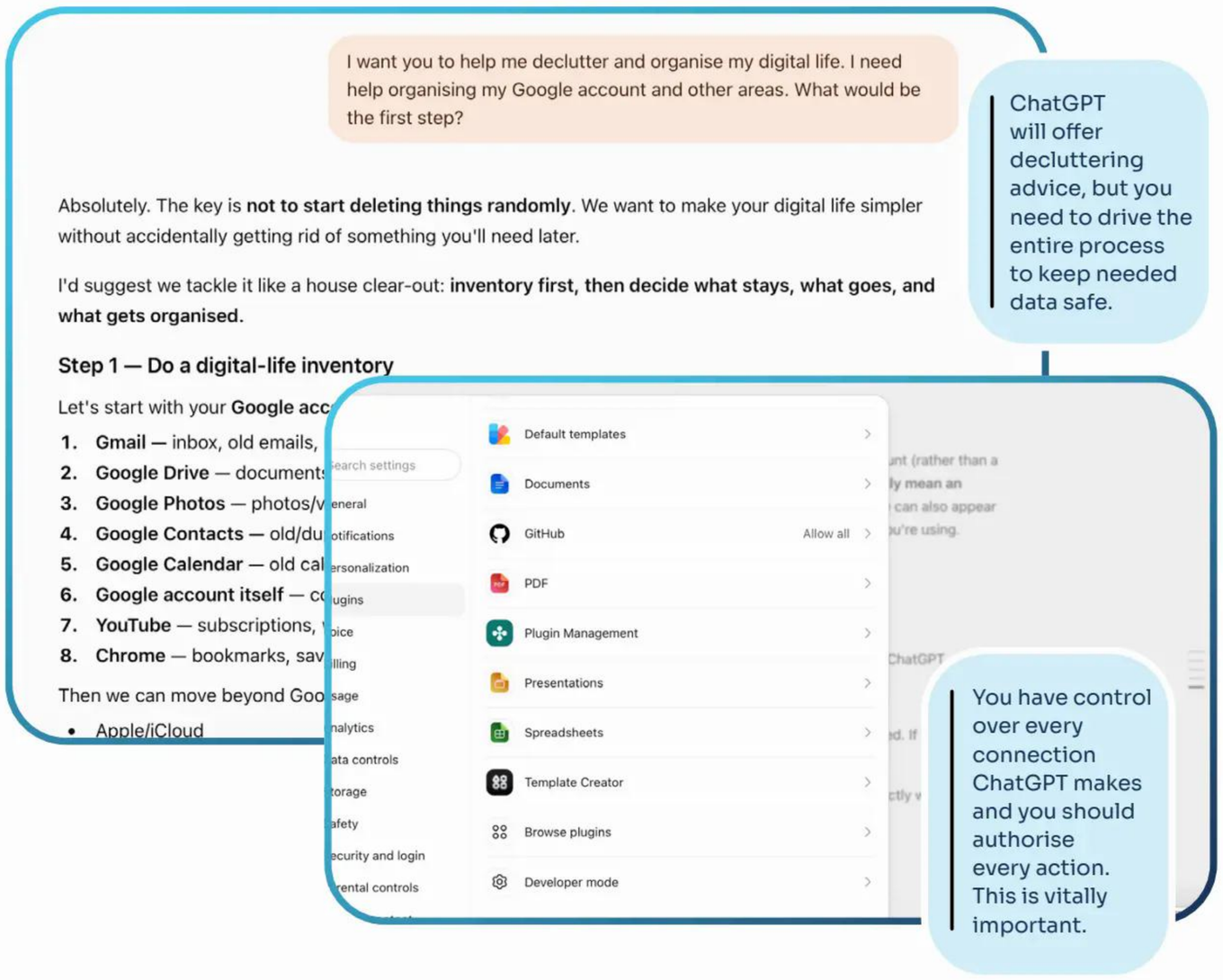
**Trimming your digital footprint will speed up tasks, make organisation easier and benefit you in multiple ways. ChatGPT can help you do it all**

Digital decluttering can be a painful and time-consuming task, but ChatGPT will help speed the process up. You can ask for instructions on how best to declutter, or use direct connections and let ChatGPT do the manual work for you. We will guide you through the complexity of the process.

*Prompt* ChatGPT response

*I want you to help me declutter and organise my digital life. I need help organising my Google account and other areas. What would be the first step?*

This prompt is useful if you require guidance for your decluttering alongside specific actions. ChatGPT will respond with **'I'd suggest we tackle it like a house clear-out: inventory first, then decide what stays, what goes, and what gets organised'**. You will be urged to take one area at a time, which makes sense because this will give you the space to ensure you lose nothing that is vital.




## Start with a purpose

*'I need you to help me declutter my email, Google Drive, browser tabs, desktop and files. Can you help with that?'* is an open prompt, but one that may be useful if you want to check ChatGPT's best process before you start removing files. ChatGPT will respond with **'Absolutely. I can help you tackle all five: email, Google Drive, browser tabs, desktop and files.'** followed by an explanation like **'I'll show you what I've identified first and get your approval before making permanent changes.'** This can lengthen the process, but you will still be saving a lot of time overall.

## Time to connect

ChatGPT will explain at the start which areas it can deal with directly. **'For anything where I have access to the connected account, I can inspect**

**what's there, identify clutter, group things sensibly, and – in supported cases – carry out the cleanup.'** You can now prompt with ***'Help me get connected so that you can do the cleanup'***. The response will detail what you need to do to check for supported platforms and how to authorise the connections. A ChatGPT Plus plan will be required in most cases to allow connections, but you can upgrade for just one month and then downgrade, if that's preferable.

## The decluttering begins

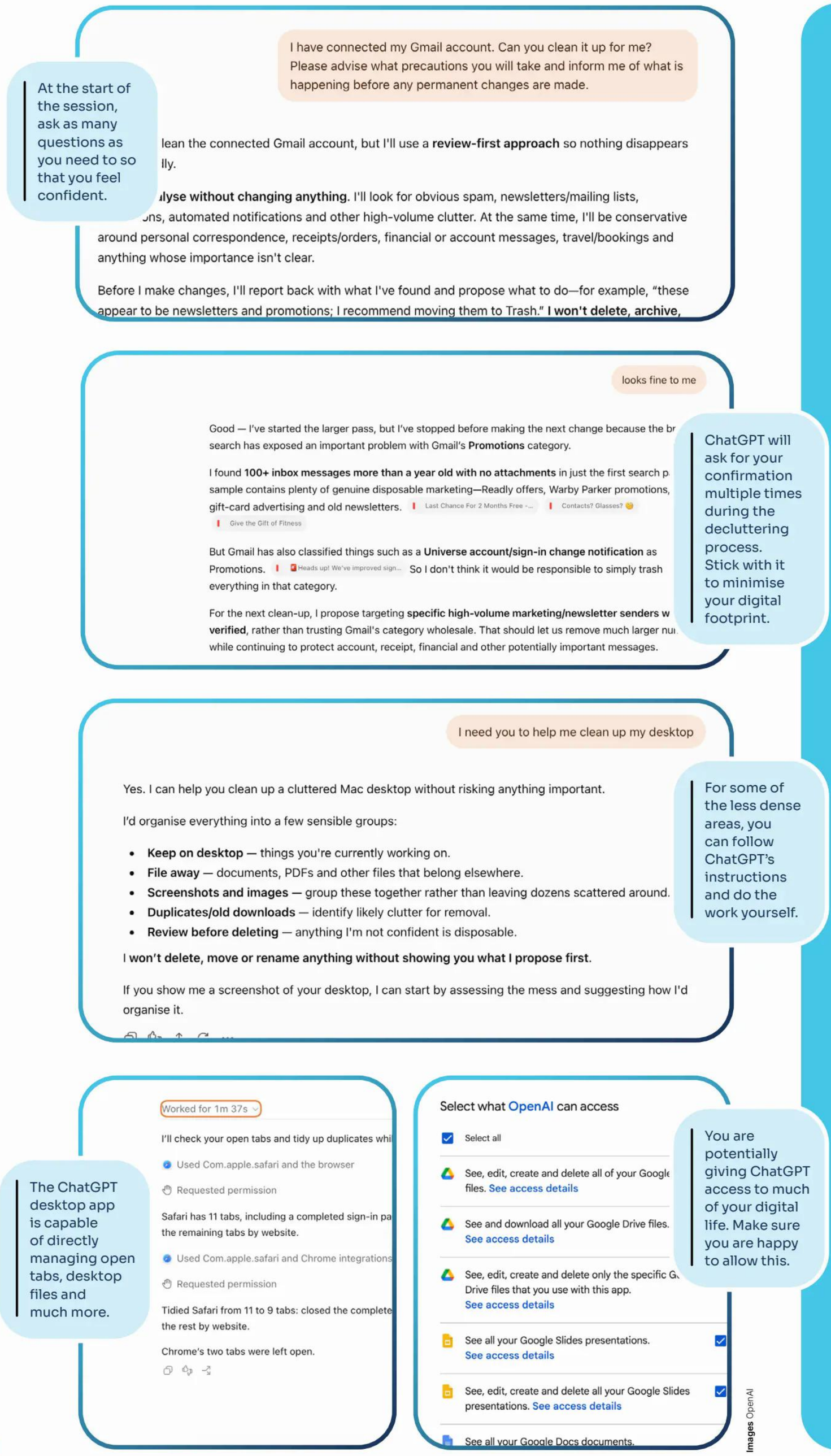
ChatGPT will talk you through the process while it removes emails, and it will take precautions by moving them to trash so that you can fully check them. You will be asked to confirm multiple times during the session that it is okay to continue. Simply prompt with ***'Carry on'*** and it will remove approximately 100 emails at a time. This can feel repetitive, but it is still a lot quicker than manually deleting emails yourself.

## Clean your desktop

***'I need you to help me clean up my desktop'*** is a simple prompt, to which ChatGPT will respond with **'Yes. I can help you clean up a cluttered Mac desktop without risking anything important.'** This will be followed by some tips on how to do it yourself, but if you download the desktop app, the ability to use the ChatGPT app file management feature will be available. This again involves giving permissions to do this with the usual safeguards in place in order to stop you losing anything important. You will be walked through how to use the feature.

## Take care of your future

***'Every Friday, review my inbox for obvious newsletters and promotional clutter and move suitable messages to Trash, but leave receipts, attachments and anything potentially important alone'*** is a detailed prompt that will push ChatGPT to use Scheduled Tasks at the frequency of your choosing. Take time to consider every aspect of the declutter and make sure that the first run produces results that you are happy with. Scheduling is a feature that will save you more time than any other, and it will genuinely increase the time you have available for more fun activities.




**Images** OpenAI

# Say goodbye to boring work admin

## ChatGPT can draft emails, help you prepare for job interviews, come up with business plans, and more

Work is full of small tasks that eat away at your time. Writing emails, taking meeting notes, preparing for interviews and even sketching out a business plan. None of these things are hard in isolation, but together they add up to hours that could be better spent doing actual work. That's why AI tools have exploded in the workplace.

Used properly, they don't replace what you do. They clear the admin off your plate so you can focus on the important parts. We've tested ChatGPT across everything from daily emails to bigger projects, and while it's not perfect, it's already saved us serious time.

*Prompt* ChatGPT response



74


.82
25.81
78.15
34 49
55.04
12.78
75

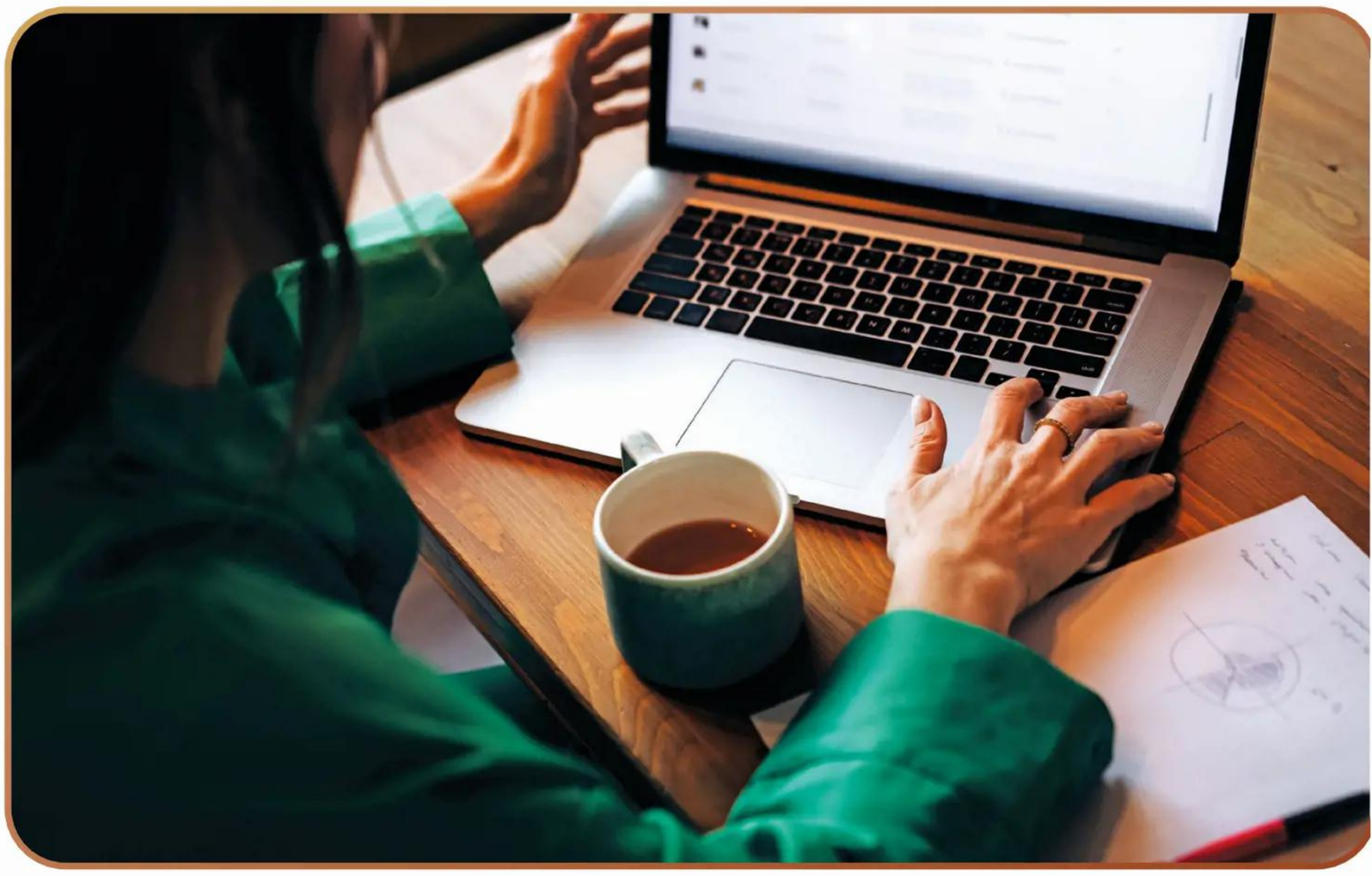
## Writing emails without the fuss

*‘Reply to this email, let Susan know I won’t be able to make the meeting tomorrow’*

Emails are the classic time sink. You know what you want to say, but it takes 20 minutes to get the wording right. AI makes this easier by turning bullet points into polished drafts.

Say you need to send an email to a client, you can write a quick list like: ‘Apologise for late delivery, explain delay, confirm new deadline, offer small discount.’ ChatGPT will turn this into a professional message in seconds. You can then tweak it to match your tone, but the bulk of the work is done.

The best part is adaptability. Ask for the same email in a friendlier or more formal style, and you’ll get variations to choose from. For day-to-day communication, this is a life saver. Instead of overthinking every line, you can focus on the actual message.





## Meeting minutes without the headache

*'These are my meeting notes. Can you summarise them into important points?'*

Nobody enjoys writing meeting minutes. You either type frantically during the call or spend hours afterwards piecing together your notes. AI transcription tools solve this. Record the meeting, feed it into a third-party app like Otter.AI, and you'll get a full transcript of everything in minutes.

Then, feed the transcript into ChatGPT and ask for a summary. What used to take an hour of editing by hand now takes ten minutes of checking what ChatGPT has done for you.

## Preparing for job interviews

*'Interview me for the role based on the job description I just provided'*



ChatGPT isn't just for admin; it can also help with big career moments. Preparing for an interview usually means guessing what questions you'll be asked and rehearsing answers in front of the mirror. AI can make the process smarter.

We tried this by feeding in a job description and asking for likely interview questions. The output was spot on, covering everything from technical skills to culture fit. We then asked for sample answers based on our CV. They weren't perfect, but they gave us a structure to refine.

You can even role play. Tell ChatGPT to act as an interviewer, and it will fire questions at you. Practising out loud against an unpredictable opponent is far more useful than rehearsing alone.

## Drafting business plans

*'I want to open a small café in Edinburgh that specialises in matcha and croissants, help me build the start of a business plan'*

Starting a business is exciting, but the paperwork can be paralysing. You need a plan, a pitch deck and financial projections. Now, imagine if ChatGPT could point you in the right direction to get started on the right foot?

We tested this by asking for a business plan for a small café. The draft included an executive summary, target market analysis and revenue model. Was it ready to show investors? No. Was it a solid foundation to build on? Absolutely.

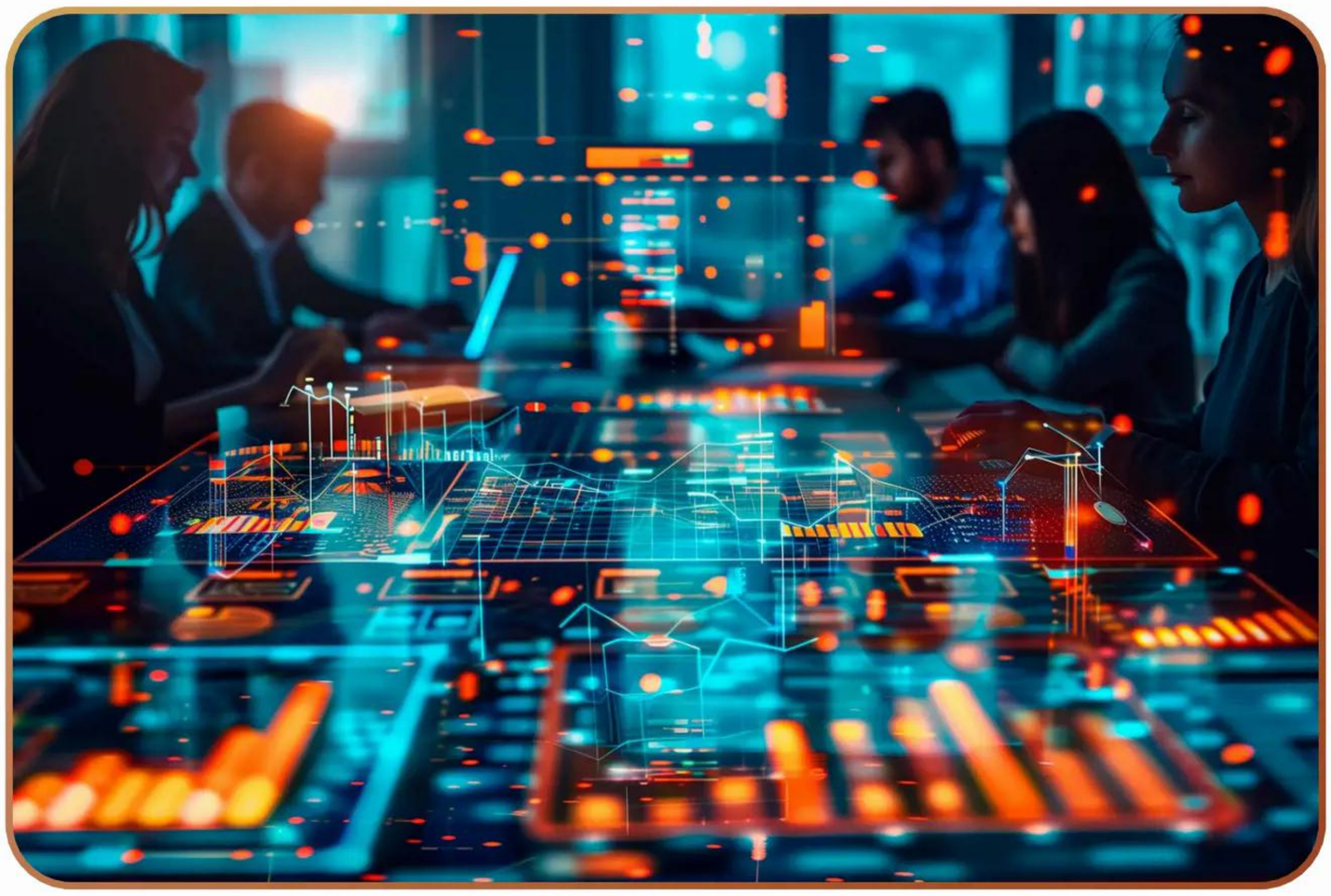
For entrepreneurs, the value is speed. You can go from an idea to a structured document in an afternoon. That means more time spent refining your concept rather than struggling with formatting.

## Research without the rabbit hole

*'Conduct research on UK shop market trends over the last two years. Make it specifically about hospitality only'*

Another underrated use is research. Whether it's market data for a startup or background for an interview, AI can pull together information faster than traditional searches. Ask for 'UK coffee shop

> AI tools have exploded in the workplace



market trends in 2026', and you'll get a digestible overview instead of 50 open tabs.

It's not always perfectly up to date, so you should confirm key details. But for building a knowledge base quickly, it's a strong tool. It makes prep less about gathering and more about analysing. A word of warning, however: ChatGPT isn't always completely accurate, so we'd maybe advise only using this if you seriously know what you're talking about and can fact-check the finished research it provides. It'll still save time.

Finally, tone matters. If you copy and paste AI text without editing, people will be able to notice. It's best used as a base you can put your personality on top of. Don't start replying to every email like a robot; it might work once or twice, but it'll eventually backfire.

## Why AI makes work smoother

The main benefit of AI at work isn't replacing jobs; it's removing friction. It takes the 20-minute email draft down to five, turns a one-hour meeting into a ten-minute summary and transforms interview prep from guesswork into practice.

These are small wins, but they stack up. Over a week, that's hours saved. Over a year, it's weeks. And the less time you spend bogged down in admin, the more time you can spend doing the deep work that actually matters to your role.

Work will always come with admin, but it doesn't have to take over. AI gives you a set of tools that cut through the repetitive parts and let you focus on the bigger picture.

## AI isn't a replacement for intellect

As useful as these tools are, there are many things you should avoid using AI for. At work, privacy is a big one. Don't paste sensitive data into a random chatbot without knowing where it goes. You have to think not just about your privacy but coworkers' too.

Accuracy is another. AI sometimes makes confident mistakes, so you always need a final human check. Think of it as a very fast intern: great for drafts and summaries, not for final sign-off.

> The main benefit of AI at work isn't replacing jobs; it's removing friction

## SAY GOODBYE TO BORING WORK ADMIN

ChatGPT can write, summarise, research and even coach you for performance improvements or interviews, all at a speed no human is able to match. You still need to guide, edit and double-check it. But with those guard rails in place, the gains are undeniable.

If you've ever finished a week and wondered where all your time went, ChatGPT might just give you some of it back. And in the world of work, time is the one thing nobody ever has enough of.



**Images** Adobe Stock; Getty Images

# Plan with an Eisenhower Matrix

**ChatGPT can help you plan for an upcoming event by creating a time-management tool when you're pressed for time**

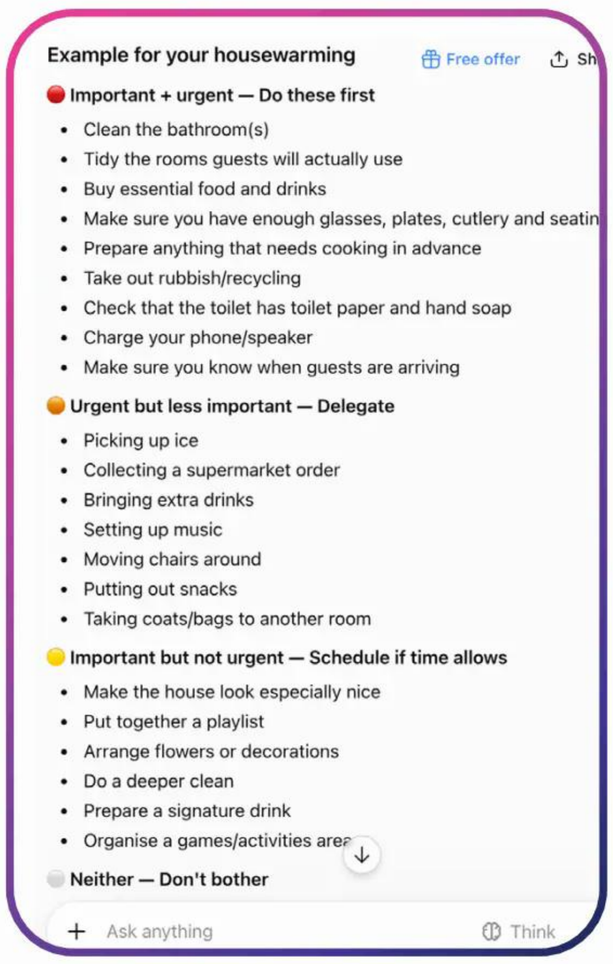
Whether you're managing your workload or planning for an upcoming event, several time-management tools may be handy. ChatGPT can also lower your stress levels by turning your to-do list into an Eisenhower Matrix, which divides your tasks into different categories based on their importance and urgency.

*Prompt*

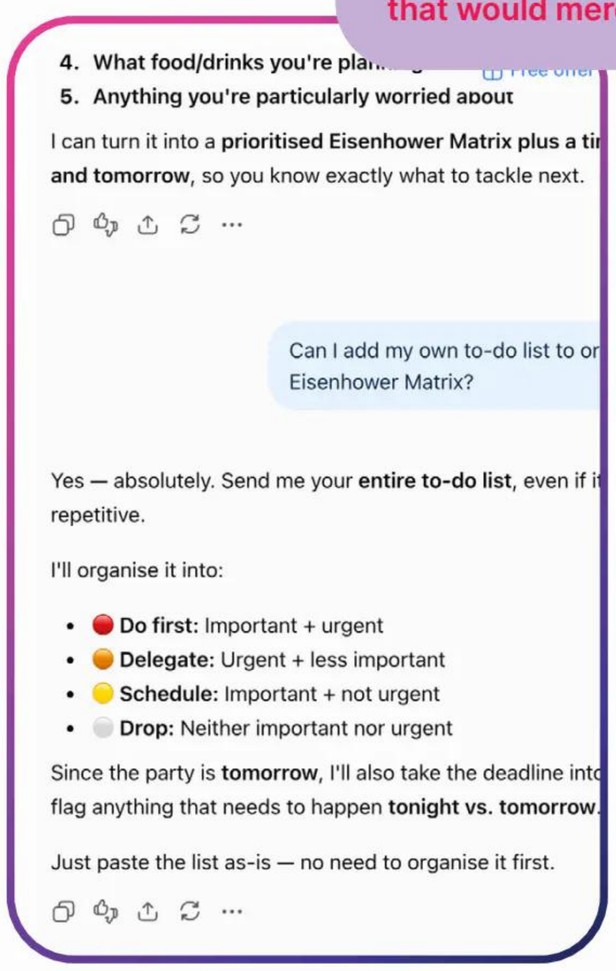
*I'm organising a housewarming party that's happening tomorrow, but I'm overwhelmed with what I need to do. Could creating an Eisenhower Matrix help me plan it?*

ChatGPT response

Our opening prompt sets out the nightmare scenario of having to organise an event in less than 24 hours, with our prompt asking whether dividing up a to-do list into distinct categories might be the trick to help us through. ChatGPT agrees an Eisenhower Matrix would be helpful in this case, saying, **'It forces you to separate things that genuinely need doing tonight from things that would merely be nice to have.'**




Giving ChatGPT a rough scenario is enough to generate a full Eisenhower Matrix – but you may want to customise it.




Adding your own to-do list is a great starting point, with the chatbot able to read through and understand messy text.

## Add your own task list

In its first response, ChatGPT has already created a version of an Eisenhower Matrix based on tasks it believes we'll need to complete – categorising them into the four constituent elements (Do, Delegate, Schedule, Drop) as it has seen fit.

But your own tasks may differ from the pre-generated ones, even though ChatGPT may have given you some ideas of jobs to add to your pile. That's why we've prompted *'Can I add my own to-do list to organise into an Eisenhower Matrix?'* The chatbot can parse through what you've written down – whether it's structured or chaotic – so it advises **'Send me your entire to-do list, even if it's messy or repetitive.'**

## Reorganise your list of tasks

We've copied in our list of jobs and

prompted ChatGPT with *'Rearrange this list and clean up any possible duplications.'* The chatbot consolidated them into different categories and even removed a few duplications, concluding, **'This gives you 17 distinct tasks to prioritise in the Eisenhower Matrix'**.

We're not sure that we've covered all of our bases, so we've asked the chatbot *'Are there any tasks that I've forgotten that I should add to this list?'* ChatGPT makes 15 additional suggestions, and even recommends a handful of important additions.

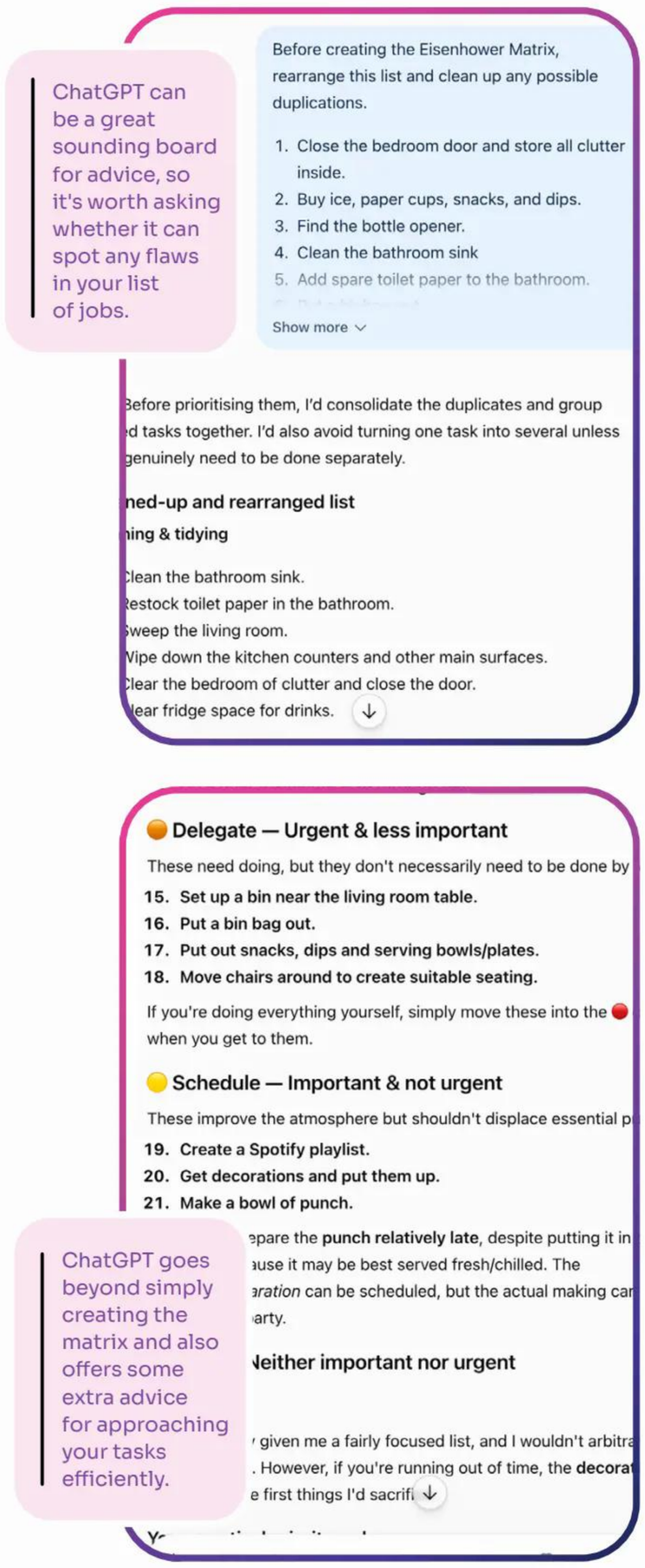
## Build your Eisenhower Matrix

After we ask ChatGPT to add a handful of the new tasks to our main list, we prompt the chatbot with *'Now arrange all these tasks into an Eisenhower Matrix.'* It categorises them all into the four main groups – and even adds advice, such as **'If you're feeling overwhelmed, don't think about all 21 tasks simultaneously'** before it offers a rough order that we should follow.

You may also consider tweaking the list or moving tasks from one category to another. For instance, we've asked ChatGPT to add setting the decorations and creating the playlist to the Drop section due to a lack of time in a follow-up prompt. We then ask the chatbot *'Generate a new Eisenhower Matrix that's easy to follow and has no additional commentary.'*

ChatGPT has created a tabular checklist in its response, slotting the 21 tasks we've settled on into the four main categories. Here, you can even go one step further and visualise this Eisenhower Matrix. We've clicked its suggestion and prompted *'Create a downloadable PDF file here in this chat containing the plan and action items above.'* The chatbot has generated a file that we can download and print off so we can follow this as we plan for tomorrow's party.

With our housewarming less than 24 hours away, we've used ChatGPT to transform a messy and chaotic to-do list filled with disjointed tasks into a clean and easy-to-follow Eisenhower Matrix that helps us prioritise the most important tasks and save us time.




Images OpenAI

# Level up your target tracking

## Lift the weight off your shoulders when attempting to stay on top of your goals with ChatGPT

Whether in work or in your personal life, setting yourself goals is usually the easy part. Taking steps to achieve those targets can be a path laden with tracking shortfalls and motivation potholes. However, you can use ChatGPT to do a lot of the heavy lifting so you're left to pursue your ambitions.

*Prompt*

*There are a few things I want to achieve over the next 12 months. What's the best way of breaking them down into achievable milestones that I can track?*

ChatGPT response

Our opening prompt asks ChatGPT to suggest methods to help us from the outset. It replies 'The most effective approach is to turn each 12-month goal into a milestone ladder' and it suggests the example of training for a half-marathon and how it breaks this process down into quarterly and monthly milestones.

A useful structure is:

Share

**12-month outcome → quarterly milestones → monthly targets → weekly actions → regular review**

For example, if the goal were **"run a half-marathon within 12 months"**, I might break it down like this:

- **Months 1–3 — Build consistency:** run 3× per week; comfortably complete 5 km.
- **Months 4–6 — Build endurance:** gradually increase weekly distance; reach an 8–10 km long run.
- **Months 7–9 — Half-marathon preparation:** follow a structured training plan; reach 14–16 km.
- **Months 10–11 — Peak:** complete an 18–20 km long run and practise pacing/fuelling.
- **Month 12 — Complete the goal:** taper, then run the half-marathon.

The important part is that milestones measure **progress rather than just activity**. "Practise Spanish" is difficult to track; "hold a 10-minute conversation entirely in Spanish by March" gives you something concrete to work toward.

For several goals at once, I'd also avoid creating 12 months of detailed tasks immediately. Instead, establish the major milestones for the whole year, make the **next 4–6 weeks very specific**, and review the plan monthly. That prevents you from building an elaborate schedule that becomes obsolete after a few weeks.

ChatGPT has given us a great example of how it can help by suggesting a goal that fits into this category.

### Flesh out your ambitions

While you could learn from the approach ChatGPT outlines, consider going deeper by sharing your specific goals and deciding how you should define what success means and how to track it.

In one example, we've just started a healthy eating newsletter but don't know what we should necessarily aim for as a measure of success. We prompt *'Could you define what I should realistically aim for within a year, citing expert sources?'* ChatGPT responds suggesting **'For a brand-new weekly healthy-eating newsletter, I would set 1,000 engaged subscribers after 12 months as a sensible primary target, rather than choosing a very large headline number'.**

By requesting citations, we can conduct our own research should we wish to adjust the goal based on information we've gleaned elsewhere. For instance, we prompt *'Change the aim to 2,000 subscribers and suggest two other metrics we should track as part of this goal. Rank them in order of importance'* ChatGPT suggests open rate and click-through rate as two other aims, adding **'Those three metrics also**

**give us a useful framework for breaking the year into milestones'.**

## Establish your milestones

Now that we have metrics to track, we can translate those into smaller goals to aim for as each month goes by. With the second goal being more of a constant that we should aim for, we prompt ChatGPT *'Create a table showing a monthly milestone for the first and third goals that we should target.'* Interestingly, the chatbot has devised a trajectory we should follow, saying **'I prefer the accelerating subscriber curve to simply dividing 2,000 by 12.'**

## Hold yourself accountable

Even though we have these monthly targets, achieving them might be difficult. Consider consulting with ChatGPT over its advice on how to reach those.

We also need to be held to account over this year-long ambition, so we prompt ChatGPT *'Can you devise four quarterly reviews and a contingency if we fall short of achieving these goals?'* It alters the table to add a column for how we should review our progress and the action we must take, before outlining a contingency plan for how to respond to this.

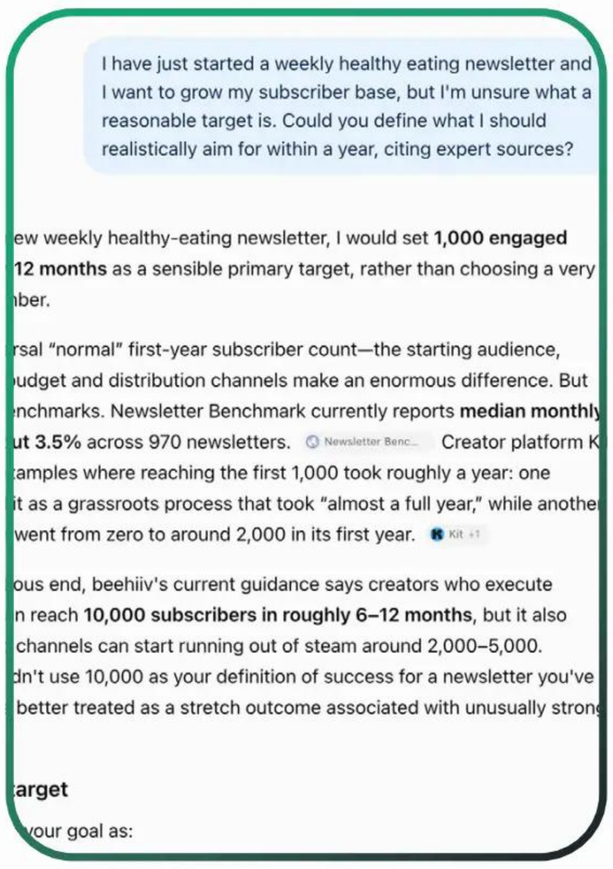
It also adds **'Don't lower the 2,000 target at the first bad quarter. Q1 is particularly experimental. I'd reassess the final target after Q2 if you're materially behind despite making the corrective changes.'**

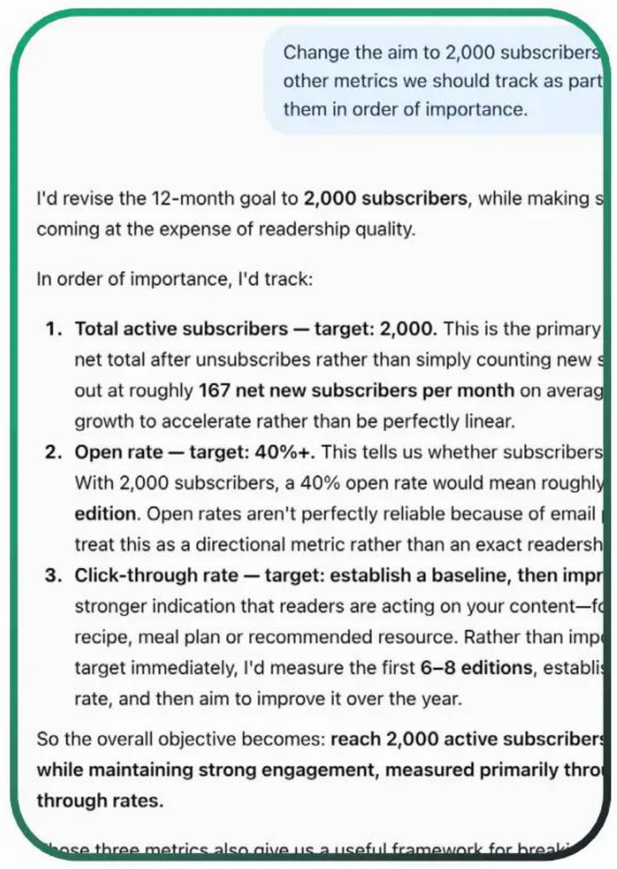
## Set up an accountability buddy

When aiming to hit a particular milestone, it pays to engage with a partner who can help throughout the process. We asked ChatGPT to act as a consultant, prompting *'Send me a notification once a week starting from next week to give an update on these metrics'* alongside a request for encouragement and suggestions to improve if we're falling short.

**'Your weekly newsletter check-in will start next week and recur weekly'**, the chatbot replies, prompting us to turn on desktop notifications and giving us a button to click so we can set up this recurring weekly conversation.

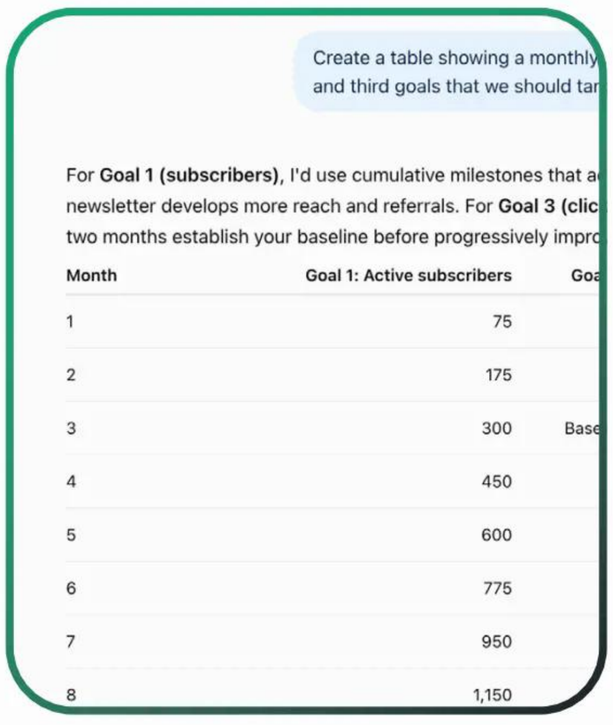
After sharing our goals with the chatbot, we've not only established some realistic and well-sourced metrics we can measure this against, but we've set up a weekly check-in that will better equip us to hit monthly and quarterly milestones along the way.

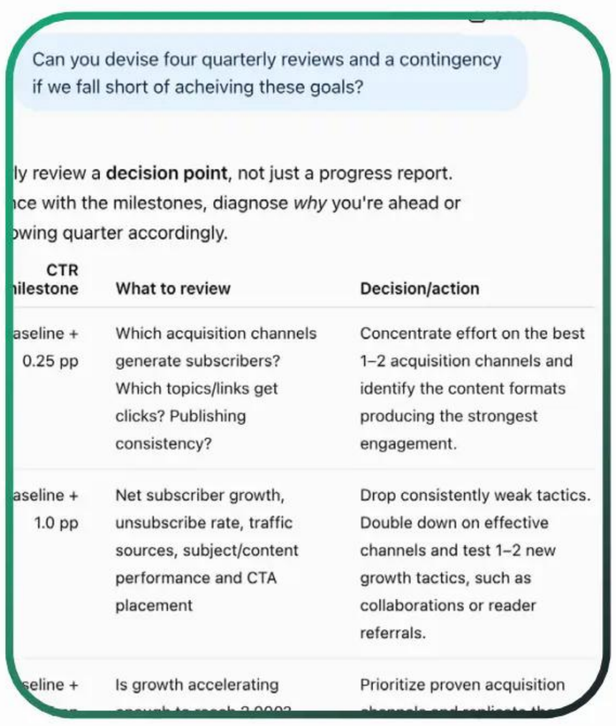



> Asking for citations means you can follow up on the information provided and adjust your expectations if required.

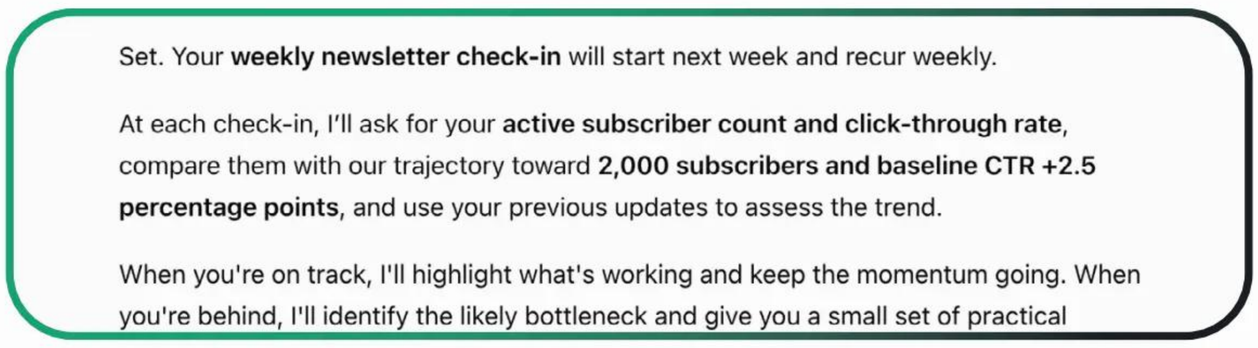
> There's no single measure of success for most aims, and AI has helped us build a broader picture of how we can measure this.




> Asking for a month by month breakdown gives you something concrete to aim for and measure your efforts against.

> It's always important to understand what to do if Plan A doesn't work – and exactly when you should pivot.




> Setting up weekly check-ins can be a great way to keep you on task so that you're motivated to keep going.

**Images** OpenAI

# Create a Pomodoro time tracker

## When working through a complex and laborious task, using ChatGPT as an interactive Pomodoro system might help you through it

Coming head-to-head with an unwieldy task may seem daunting, but many people find solace in the Pomodoro Technique – a time management method that breaks work into 25-minute intervals interlaced with short breaks. With the right prompts, you can turn ChatGPT into the perfect Pomodoro accountability buddy.

*Prompt* ChatGPT response

*I want to clear my email inbox, but I think it will take hours and I can't focus for that long in one go. How could using the Pomodoro Technique help?*

Going 'inbox zero' is a dilemma many of us encounter, whether in our professional or personal lives. Cluttered inboxes mean important messages fall through the cracks, and the longer you leave this task, the worse it gets. ChatGPT agrees the Pomodoro Technique can help, saying **'[it] can make a huge inbox-clearing task feel much more manageable by turning it from "I have to clear hundreds of emails" into a series of short, defined work sessions.'**

I want to clear my email inbox, but I think it will take hours and I can't focus for that long in one sitting. How could using the Pomodoro Technique help?

The Pomodoro Technique can make a huge inbox-clearing task feel much more manageable by turning it from **"I have to clear hundreds of emails"** into a series of short, defined work sessions.

### A practical inbox-clearing Pomodoro

Try this structure:

1. **Choose a small target**
   - Don't aim to "finish the inbox."
   - Aim for something like **one folder, 30 emails, or one week's worth of messages**.
2. **Work for 25 minutes**
   During the Pomodoro, process emails qui
   - **Delete** — unnecessary
   - **Archive** — useful but doesn't need action

By describing your problem and suggesting the Pomodoro Technique, ChatGPT will propose a structure that you can follow.

### Configure your schedule

The chatbot has drawn up a short guide on how you can wield this time management method to clear your inbox. Among the pieces of crucial advice are **'Avoid opening an email just to read it and then leaving it in the inbox. Every email should result in a decision'.** There's also a loose structure that you can follow, with four different categories of tasks – each its own 'pomodoro' – before a 15-30 minute break. Here, we adjusted the schedule that ChatGPT generated by prompting it *'Revise the schedule, with a 10-minute break after the 2nd pomodoro and another 10-minute break after the 4th'.* The chatbot actually went one step further and chose to add additional five-minute breaks to 'Step away from the inbox' alongside 10 minutes for a 'Proper break away from the screen'. These

minor and major breaks divide the four pomodoros – with a breakdown of how long one complete cycle will take.

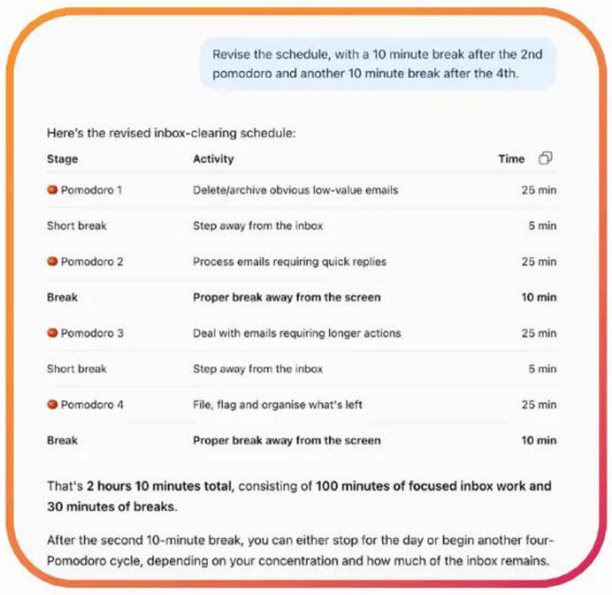
## Tailoring your partner

Although we have a schedule that we can follow ourselves, the major advantage of using an AI system like ChatGPT is that it can be an active participant in our efforts to get ahead with the task at hand. We prompted the chatbot with ***'How can ChatGPT be an active Pomodoro partner?'*** to understand specifically how it could help. ChatGPT responded that this is advantageous because **'The key difference is that you wouldn't need to motivate yourself to tackle hours of email. Your only job at any given moment would be to complete the Pomodoro I'm giving you now.'** We prompted ***'How else could you be more interactive or engaging when being a Pomodoro assistant?'*** ChatGPT has listed several tweaks we can make to optimise how we use it, such as **'Do a 30-second check-in after each round' or 'Make breaks interactive too'** by setting goals such as 'get a drink' and 'explicitly tell you when not to start checking another screen'.

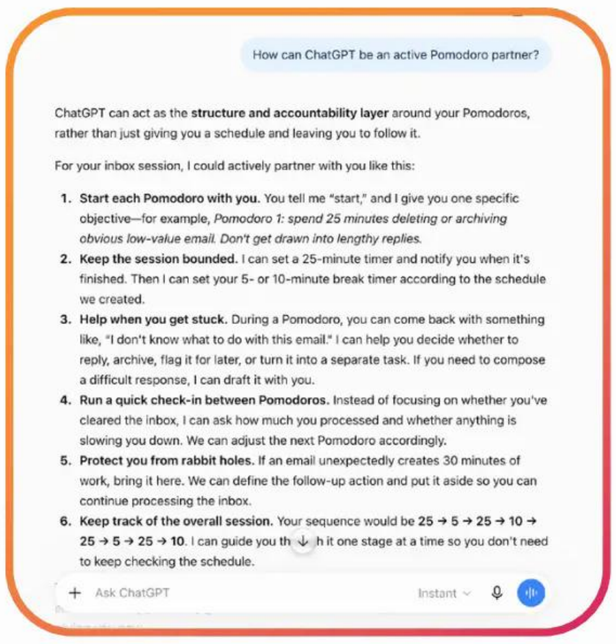
## Build an interactive dashboard

The most useful way that we tap into the power of ChatGPT would be by creating a Pomodoro tracker directly within the chat window. While telling ChatGPT exactly what we wanted from our Pomodoro tracker, we prompted it with ***'Create an interactive Pomodoro dashboard inside this chat'.***

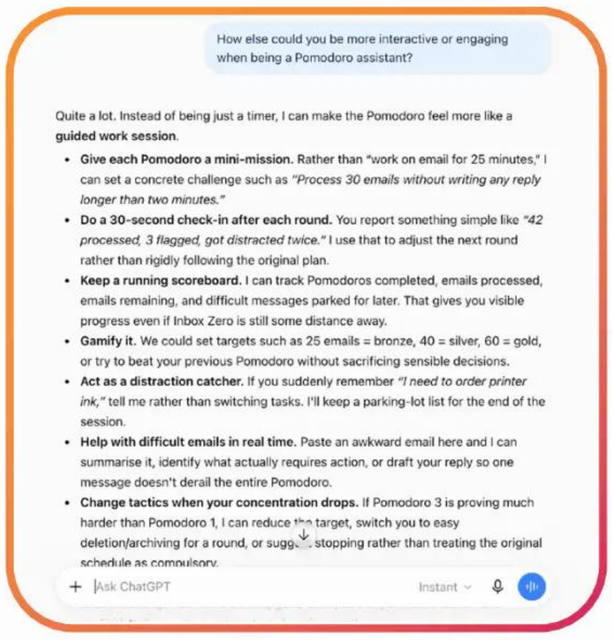
ChatGPT responded with **'I've built it around your four-round inbox schedule, with encouragement rather than scoring, a 30-second reflection after every Pomodoro, guided interactive breaks, and a final debrief'.** From here, you may customise this widget. For example, we've asked the chatbot 'Can you adjust this widget to give each pomodoro a different colour?' and IT responded with 'I've ... given each Pomodoro its own distinct colour theme so it's immediately clear when you move into a new round'. Using ChatGPT, we've explored the best way to structure a large and time-intensive task around the Pomodoro Technique. We've even configured our personal assistant that can help us achieve our goals with our widget.



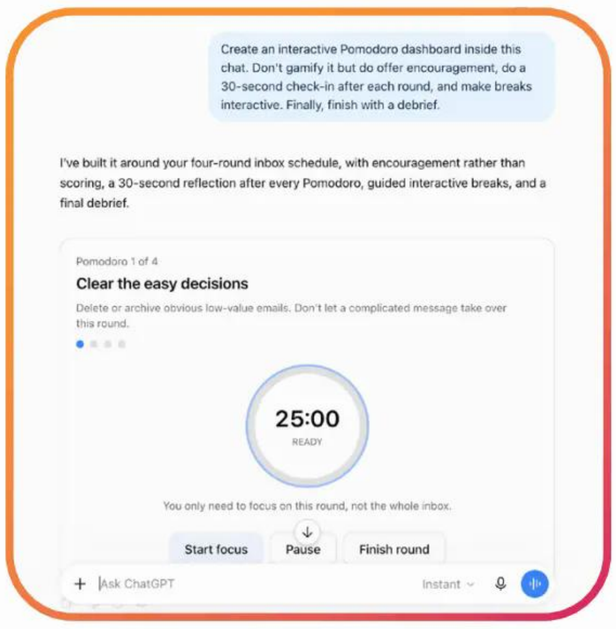

You can adjust the schedule that the AI generates, and it will incorporate your suggestion into a visually digestible table.



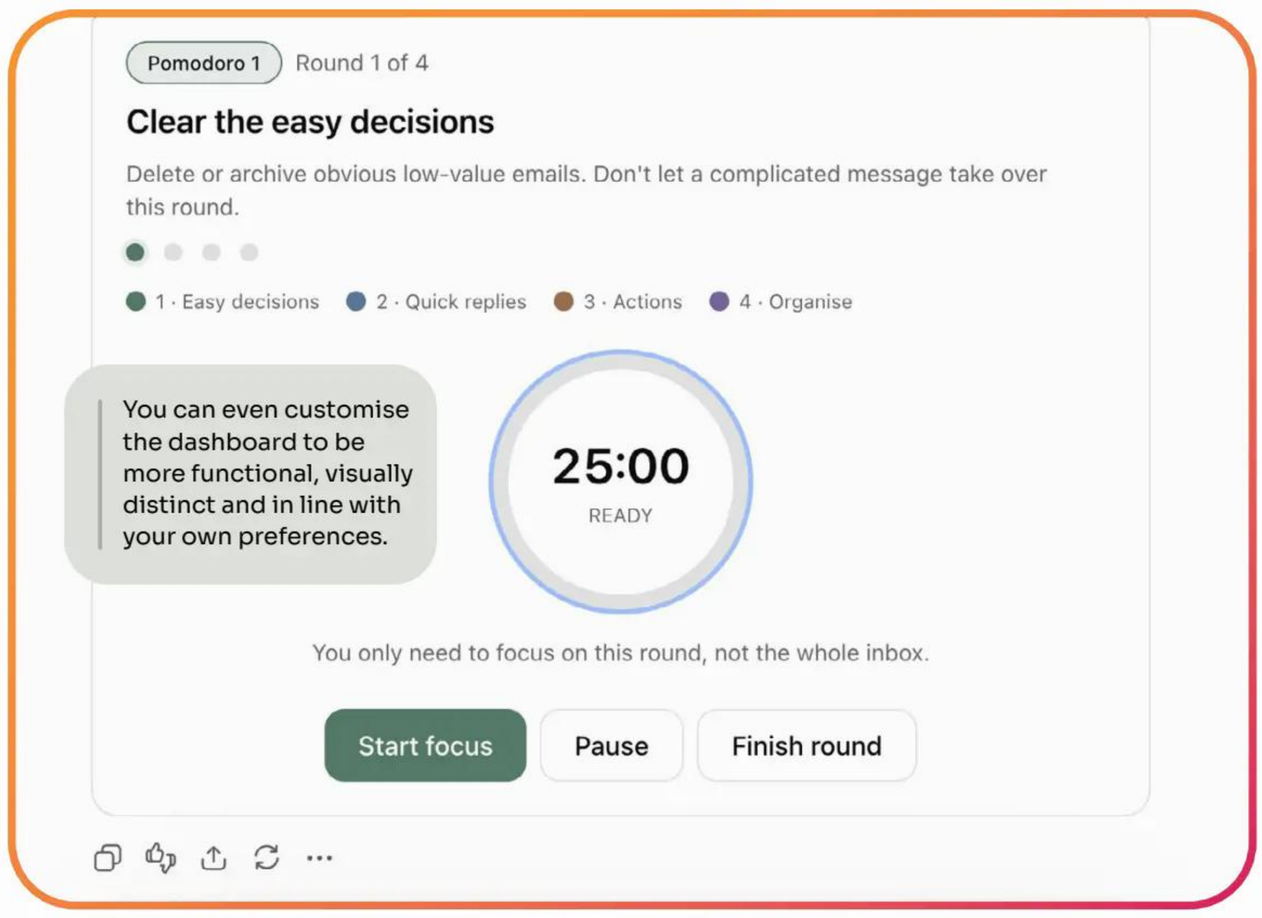

By asking ChatGPT, as it can be an engaged partner, you can incorporate its suggestions into a Pomodoro tracker.




We asked the chatbot how else it could be more engaging as a Pomodoro assistant specifically, to give us the best chance of achieving our goals.




The most effective way to use ChatGPT to help you focus on complete a task is by generating a dashboard.




Images OpenAI

# Write professional emails, reports & proposals

## Sharpen your output by asking ChatGPT to help you improve your communication, writing and presentation skills

With extensive capabilities, ChatGPT is the ideal assistant if you're hoping to improve how you approach your work on a day-to-day basis. It can help you work on all kinds of aspects, from crafting the perfect email to drafting proposals – so you can come across more professionally.

*Prompt* ChatGPT response

*What should I include in my email?*

When sprucing up your emails, there are many places you can start. In our example, a web designer is contacting a prospective client to win their business. Rather than drafting our first email from scratch, we ask ChatGPT which components we should include. ChatGPT responds **A strong outreach email here should feel specific, useful, and low-pressure**, followed by seven tips we can incorporate, alongside a template that we can use.

I'm a UI/UX web designer who wants to email the owner of a bar to suggest ways that I can help improve their website. We previously spoke on the phone and they seemed open to me contacting them. What should I include in my email?

**1. Personal opener (reference the call)**

Remind them who you are and anchor the relationship.

- Mention when/where you spoke
- Reference something specific about their bar if possible

This avoids feeling like a cold pitch.

**2. Quick credibility (but don't overdo it)**

One or two lines max.

- What you do (UI/UX web designer)
- Who you typically help (e.g., hospitality businesses, local venues)
- Optional: one result (e.g., "helped increase bookings / improve co

Keep it light—you're not applying for a job.

We give ChatGPT a little information about the email we want to create and ask it for advice on what we should include.

**Polished version (friendly + professional)**

Email

**Subject** A few ideas for your website

Hi Jane,

I hope you're having a great week. It was really nice speaking with phone the other day—I've been thinking more about your bar and time to look through your website in a bit more detail.

I came across a few opportunities where some small changes cou meaningful difference:

- A few key pieces of information take a couple of clicks to find be streamlined
- The mobile experience could be smoother, particularly given visitors will be browsing on their phones
- The booking/contact sections could be made more prominen more enquiries

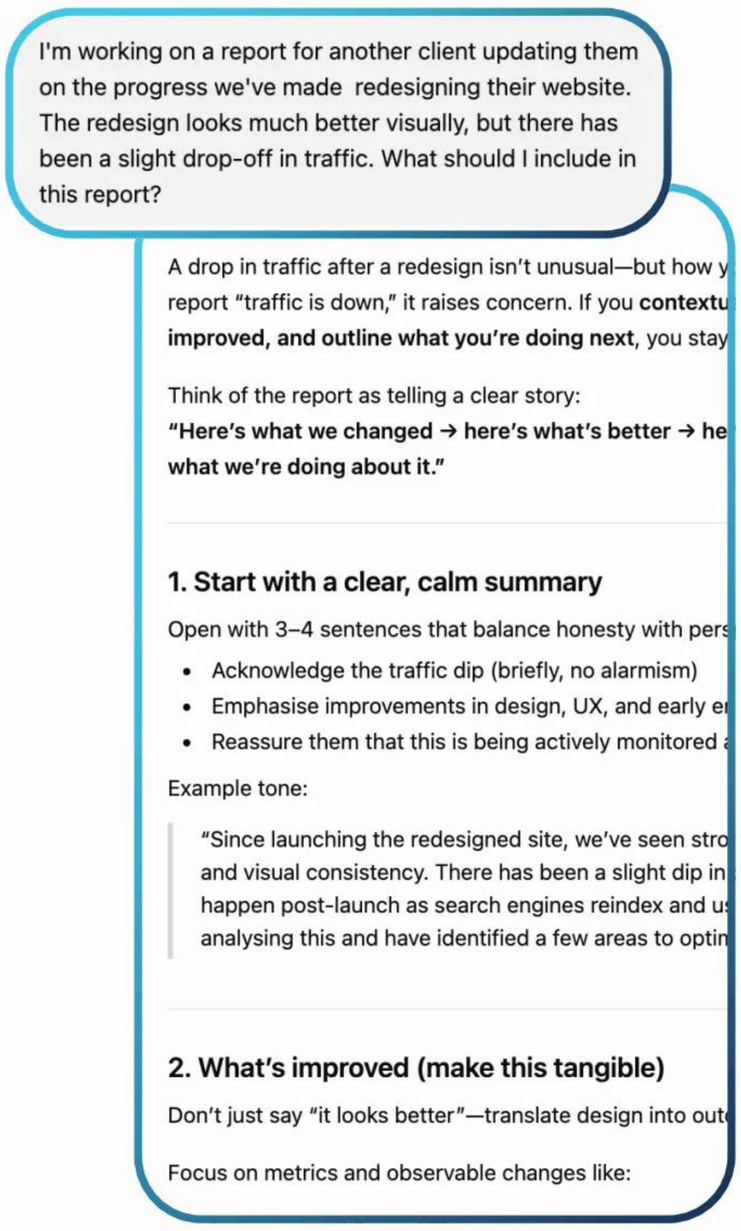
We've drafted an email using ChatGPT's advice and asked the chatbot to check how we could improve it.

### Refine your writing

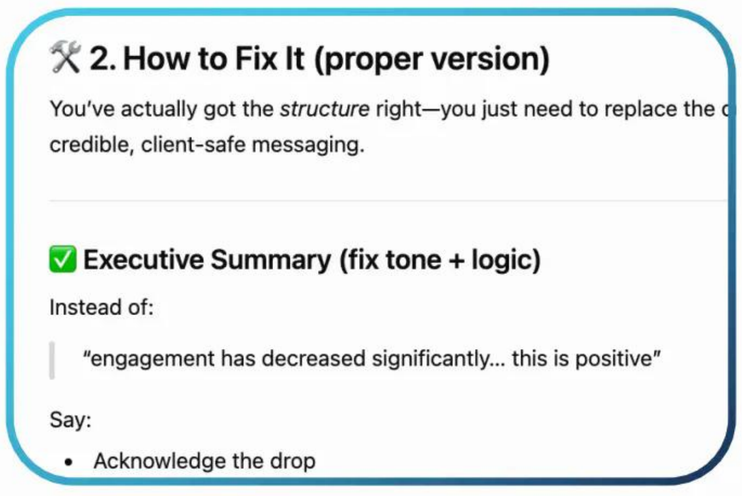
We've taken ChatGPT's advice on board and drafted an email in our own voice. We've copied the body text of our draft into the text field and given ChatGPT a follow-up prompt. *How could I make it sound more professional while still being friendly and engaging?* The AI says **It's tipping into too informal / slightly overwhelming**, and advises us to **Dial back the punctuation** and **Keep the energy, but make it sound considered**. The response includes a more polished and professional version of our email, which we can make tweaks to before sending to our prospective client.

### Draft better reports

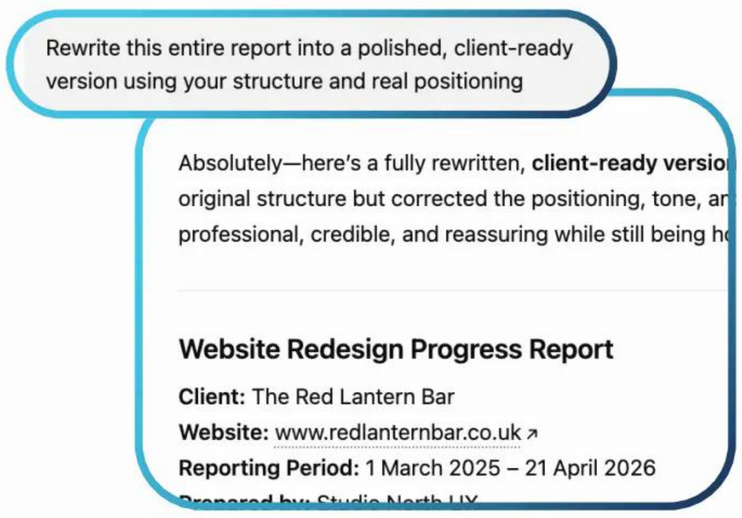
In our next prompt, we want to ask ChatGPT for advice on how to build a report. Another



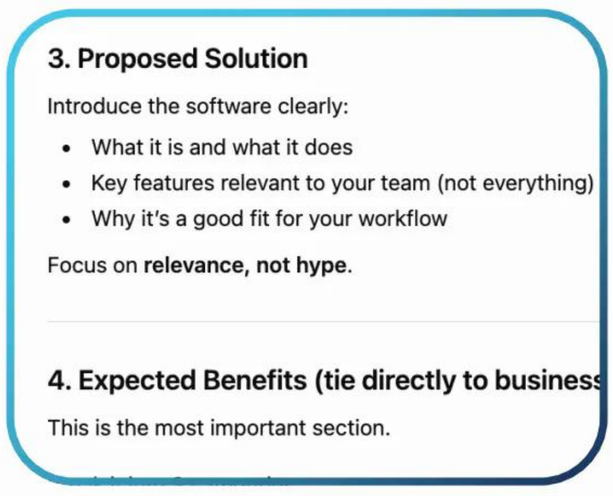

If you aren't sure on what to include when making a report, ChatGPT will help you by creating a rough structure that you can follow.



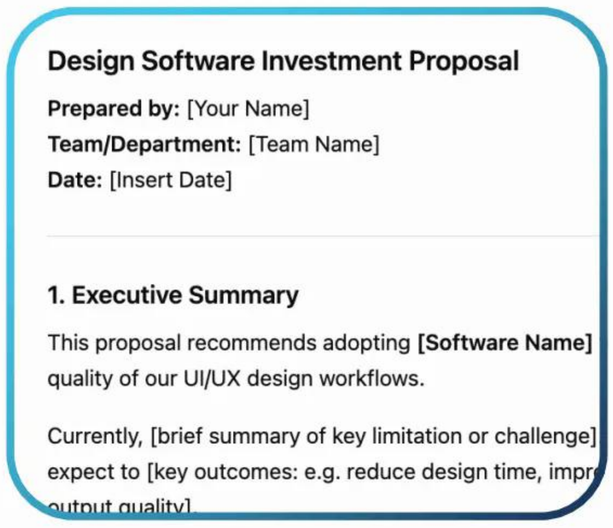

Asking ChatGPT for feedback when working on reports and proposals is a great way to make sure you're on the right track.




The chatbot can generate a report for you based on the information you've provided in your draft – all you need to do is ask.




Creating a proposal can be made simple if you set out your aims and ask ChatGPT for advice on what to include.




ChatGPT can build a report template for you to copy and paste into another document and complete.

client is expecting an update on a recent website redesign. We prompt the chatbot ***What should I include in this report?*** And ChatGPT outlines a loose structure that we can follow, alongside how we can avoid any issues with the client. We direct the AI with ***Convert this structure into a template that we can fill out***. This will give a framework you can then complete. Once we finished our report, we ask ChatGPT if it could check our work by uploading a Word document and following up with another prompt. ***Can you suggest ways to improve it or point out any mistakes?*** The feedback was brutal, but fair – with ChatGPT saying **This reads like a satire piece, not a client report**. It's a reminder of why it's worth checking your work. Rather than rewriting the report ourselves, we prompt ChatGPT with ***Rewrite this entire report into a polished, client-ready version using your structure and real positioning***. It produces a better version for us that we can copy and paste into another Word document.

## Craft killer proposals

ChatGPT can also help with the arduous business of writing a proposal. In our example, we tell ChatGPT we want to convince our manager to invest in better software and prompt it with ***How can I structure this proposal?***

We like the rough guidelines, but we're looking for something we can fill out ourselves so – just as in our report-writing example – we follow this up with ***Convert this structure into a template we can fill out***.

ChatGPT responds **Here's a clean, professional fill-in template you can use for your proposal**. Here, you can feed ChatGPT with more details so it can fill the template out for you, either by typing the details out or in a voice note. Once you've completed your proposal, you can ask ChatGPT to generate a unique design, or prompt ChatGPT to ***Generate an image of an infographic that we can use alongside it*** to give it the best chance of succeeding.




If you're looking for more material to support your proposal, consider asking ChatGPT to design an infographic to accompany it.

# EDUCATION

# Education and learning

**Whether you're a student or a teacher, your daily routine can be made more efficient with ChatGPT**

The word 'education' has that dry feel, no matter how much you enjoy studying for career purposes or teaching as a job. However, those in the know understand that there's no better feeling than acquiring or sharing knowledge and skills, whether you're doing GCSEs or a PhD, teaching someone to play the piano or lecturing at Oxbridge. Let's see how Professor ChatGPT can assist.

*Prompt* ChatGPT response



## Learning a language

Bonjour! In the ‘old days’, we used to get a book, or if we were feeling really advanced, a tape recording (ask your dad) of language lessons and repeat words until we either learned them or passed out from boredom. Nowadays, the process of learning a new language is much more fun, and quite a bit quicker too. Apps such as Duolingo will help you along the way very capably, but ChatGPT has, as always, an extra feather in its chapeau: it can tailor-make a language course for you, according to your specific needs. For example, if you prompt it with these words:

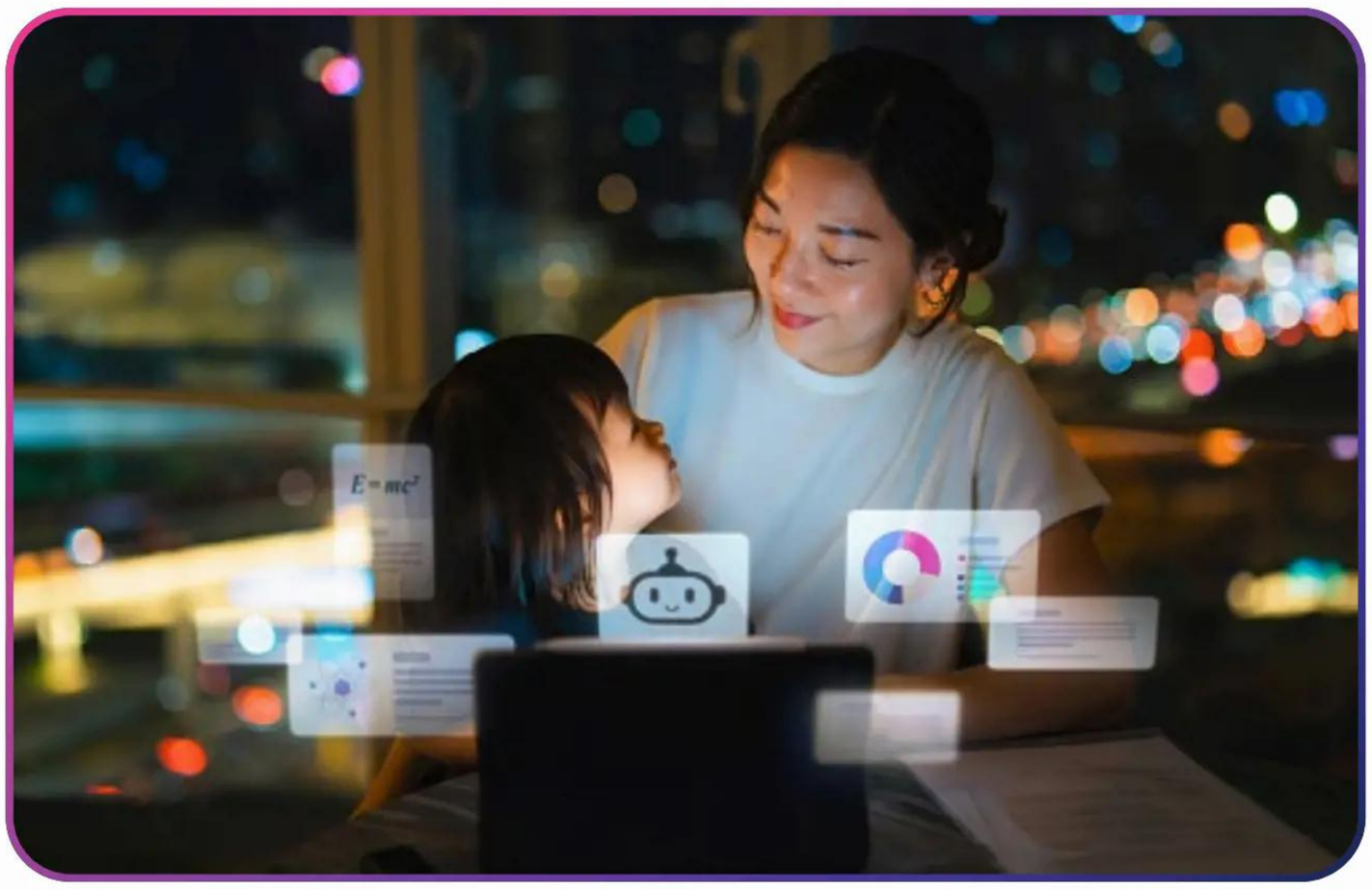
***‘List common questions that a speaker of German requires in a business environment specialising in foodstuff distribution.’***

You won’t get this answer from Duolingo, or anywhere else, except a helpful German who works in the food industry and has the time and inclination to spell it out for you:

**‘Welche Produkte bieten Sie an?**
**(Which products do you offer?)**
**Können Sie mir aktuelle Preisinformationen senden?**
**(Can you send me the current price information?)**
**Haben Sie biologische/regionale Produkte im Sortiment?**
**(Do you have organic/local products in your range?)’**

Okay, this isn’t learning a language as such (it’s memorising useful phrases), but you can ask ChatGPT to begin teaching you a language from scratch if you want. We told it to ‘teach us Swahili at a beginner’s level’, and off we went:

**‘Let’s start with beginner-level Swahili in a structured and practical way. We’ll cover greetings, basic phrases, numbers, and essential grammar.**
**Good morning**
**(Habari ya asubuhi)**
**Good afternoon**
**(Habari ya mchana)**
**Good evening**
**(Habari ya jioni)’**




To recap, then, ChatGPT can teach you languages just as an app would, but with far greater applicability. A human teacher with the relevant experience could do the same – or rather better, in fact – but what if no such human is available?

## Learning an instrument

‘A-ha!’ say the sceptics. ‘There’s no way ChatGPT can teach anyone an instrument, because it can’t physically play one.’ This point of view is understandable, but incorrect. Just ask the AI if it’s capable of teaching you, say, the piano, and its confidence is high:

**'Absolutely! I can guide you step-by-step, from absolute beginner basics to more**



**advanced techniques. Let's start with a structured approach so you can actually start playing right away.'**

Then it gets straight into the learning:

**'1. Understanding the Piano Layout**
**The piano has white keys and black keys.**
**The white keys are named after the musical notes:**
**C D E F G A B (then repeats).**
**The black keys are sharps (#) and flats (b).'**

'Ah,' continue the critics, 'but that's just theory. How about techniques?' ChatGPT doesn't have fingers so, it can't tell you how hard to press a piano key, or pluck a guitar string for that matter. We placed that very question to the program and it replied:

**'Haha, you caught me! True, I don't have fingers, but I can still teach you to play the piano by guiding you step by step, explaining theory, reading music, giving exercises, and even creating practice plans. Think of me like a virtual piano coach – I can't physically press the keys, but I can show you exactly what to do with your hands. It's like learning from a book or a teacher: you do the hands-on part, I provide instructions, tips, and structured practice. If you want, I can even give you a visual finger map and exercises so it feels like I'm 'playing along' with you, even without fingers.'**

ChatGPT has a point here. You might not end up playing like Rachmaninoff or Hendrix, but there's no reason why AI can't get you started on your musical journey, is there?

## Revision plans

Planning stuff is where ChatGPT excels, planning being basically about sequencing data in a useful order according to someone's instructions. Frankly, anyone can make a revision plan of sorts: remember when you did it for your exams? However, what's much less easy is creating a schedule that you will be motivated to stick to, and believe it or not, even enjoy. Let's see what ChatGPT can do here:

*'Create a six-week revision plan for my first-year degree exams that is comprehensive but not exhausting.'*

Its response:

**'Absolutely! I'll create a six-week revision plan that balances coverage, practice, and rest so you stay productive without burning out. I'll structure it with weekly focuses, daily study**

> You might not end up playing like Rachmaninoff or Hendrix, but there's no reason why AI can't get you started on your musical journey



**blocks, and built-in breaks. I'll assume your exams cover multiple modules in your first-year degree.'**

ChatGPT then listed blocks of activity, one to three per day for each of the six weeks, each block lasting no more than a couple of hours, and each one devoted to a particular activity so that the exercise didn't become tedious, or not overly tedious anyway. We liked this particular part:

**'Week 6: Consolidation & Light Review**
**Goal: Reinforce confidence and reduce stress.**
**Morning: Quick revision of each module's key points.**
**Afternoon: Short past paper questions, focusing on weak spots.**
**Evening: Relaxation techniques, sleep well.**
**Last 1-2 Days:**
**Avoid cramming. Light review only.**
**Prepare exam materials, get enough sleep, and stay hydrated.'**

It also offered us wellbeing tips:

> Apply ChatGPT's advice about how to approach a problem rather than asking it for a direct answer

**'Sleep: 7-9 hours is crucial for memory consolidation.**
**Exercise: Even 20-30 min/day improves focus and reduces stress.**
**Nutrition: Avoid heavy sugar; prioritise protein, fruit, and water.'**

Finally, ChatGPT offered us what turned out to be a useful visual solution:

**'If you like, I can also turn this into a detailed daily timetable with specific modules and topics mapped to each day for maximum clarity. It would be ready to follow like a 'study calendar'.'**

## Homework help

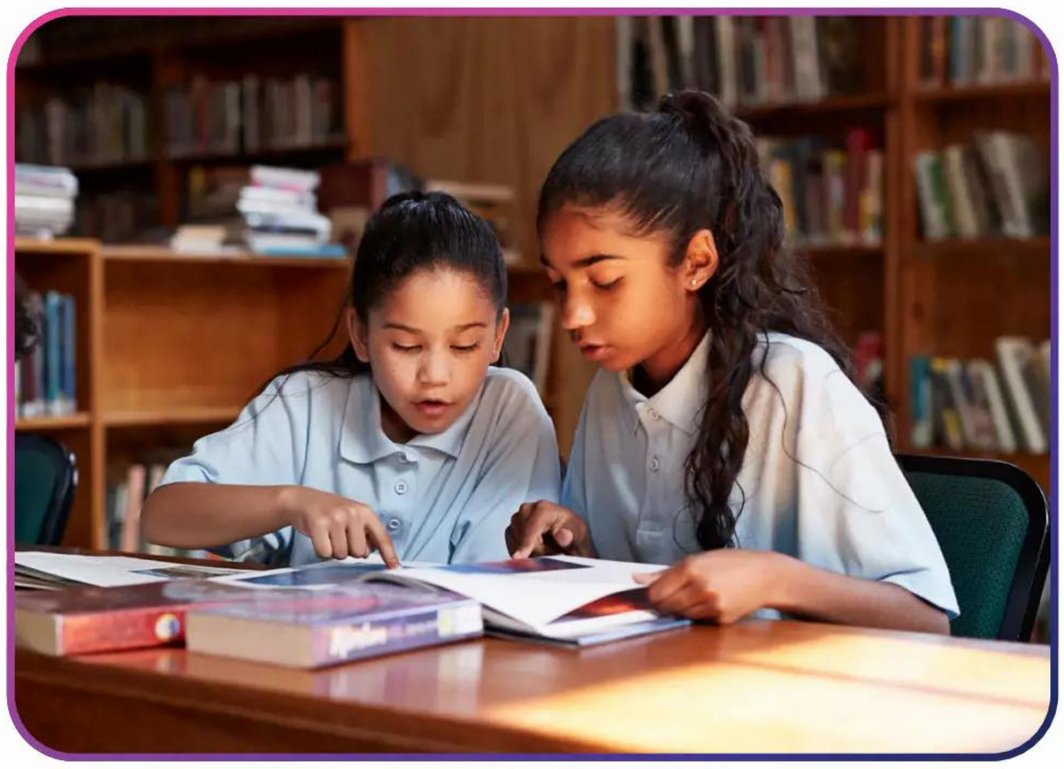
A common perception of ChatGPT and of AI-assisted learning in general is that it offers an easy way to pass tests, or even cheat one's way through them, because it knows the answer to every question and will give it to you on request. This is correct insofar as cheating in exams does exist, but it's far from the whole picture and equally far from being the only function of the program.

As an assistant to learning, rather than a simple source of information, ChatGPT is very useful. It can help you through tasks by pointing you in the right direction, suggest alternative ways to approach problems and make your approach to study healthier and more timely. None of this involves simply giving away any answers.

Here's an example from everyone's favourite subject: mathematics. Stuck







with a particularly difficult equation in a piece of homework, we asked ChatGPT not for the answer, but for advice about how to approach the problem, and its response began:
**'Quadratic equations show up everywhere in maths and science, so having a clear method to tackle them is essential. Here's how you can approach solving them step by step...'**

It then ran through several ways of doing this, at no point giving away any answers to the equation itself:
**'1. Check the Form**
**Make sure the equation is in standard quadratic form. If it's not, rearrange it.**
**2. Choose a Method**
**There are four main methods:**
**Factorisation**
**Completing the Square**
**Quadratic Formula**
**Graphical Method**
**3. Think About the Discriminant'**

The point is clear. Apply ChatGPT's advice about how to approach a problem in any subject, rather than asking it for a direct answer. That way, learning is assisted rather than skipped entirely.

## Lesson plans for teachers

Teaching in any scenario, from one-to-one lessons to a huge hall teeming with students, is best approached with a plan in mind. After all, as a teacher, you have a fixed amount of time to get a particular set of points across in a way that's useful, informative and hopefully enjoyable. This is where a lesson plan comes in handy, as a written reminder of the direction the lesson needs to go in, and why. For that reason, we asked ChatGPT to help us create such a plan, as always including as much specific information as possible.
**'Plan a 60-minute lesson for a teacher of eight students of physical geography at undergraduate degree level. The subjects covered will be prehistoric plate tectonics and the lesson will involve pair work and a few minutes of individual research.'**
The response was:
**'Here's a ready-to-use 60-minute lesson plan designed for a small undergraduate geography seminar (8 students). It blends short input, pair work, and individual research while keeping the focus on prehistoric plate tectonics.'**

**'Lesson Plan: Prehistoric Plate Tectonics**
**Class: Undergraduate Physical Geography (Year 1)**
**Group Size: 8 students**
**Duration: 60 minutes**
**Topic: Prehistoric Plate Tectonics (Supercontinents and Theories)**
**Learning Objectives:**
**Understand the key stages in Earth's tectonic history (Rodinia, Pannotia, Pangaea).**
**Explain evidence for prehistoric plate movements.**
**Critically assess how plate tectonics theory has developed.**
**Apply knowledge through collaborative and independent learning.**
**Lesson Breakdown (60 minutes)**
**1. Introduction & Hook (5 min)**
**Briefly introduce the lesson goals.**
**Show a world map animation of continental drift (Rodinia → Pangaea → present).**
**Ask: What patterns do you notice about continental movement?'**

We won't reproduce the full lesson plan here, but after Part 1 above the lesson moved onto the subsequent sections of the 60-minute session, including pair work, research, class feedback and a recap of findings. The learning objectives were emphasised and the necessary resources listed at the end, which is an absolute boon for any working teacher.

Getting ChatGPT to help you organise and structure your (or your students' learning) offers much more than simply getting it to find the answer. Instead it seeks out expert information and techniques for effective learning.

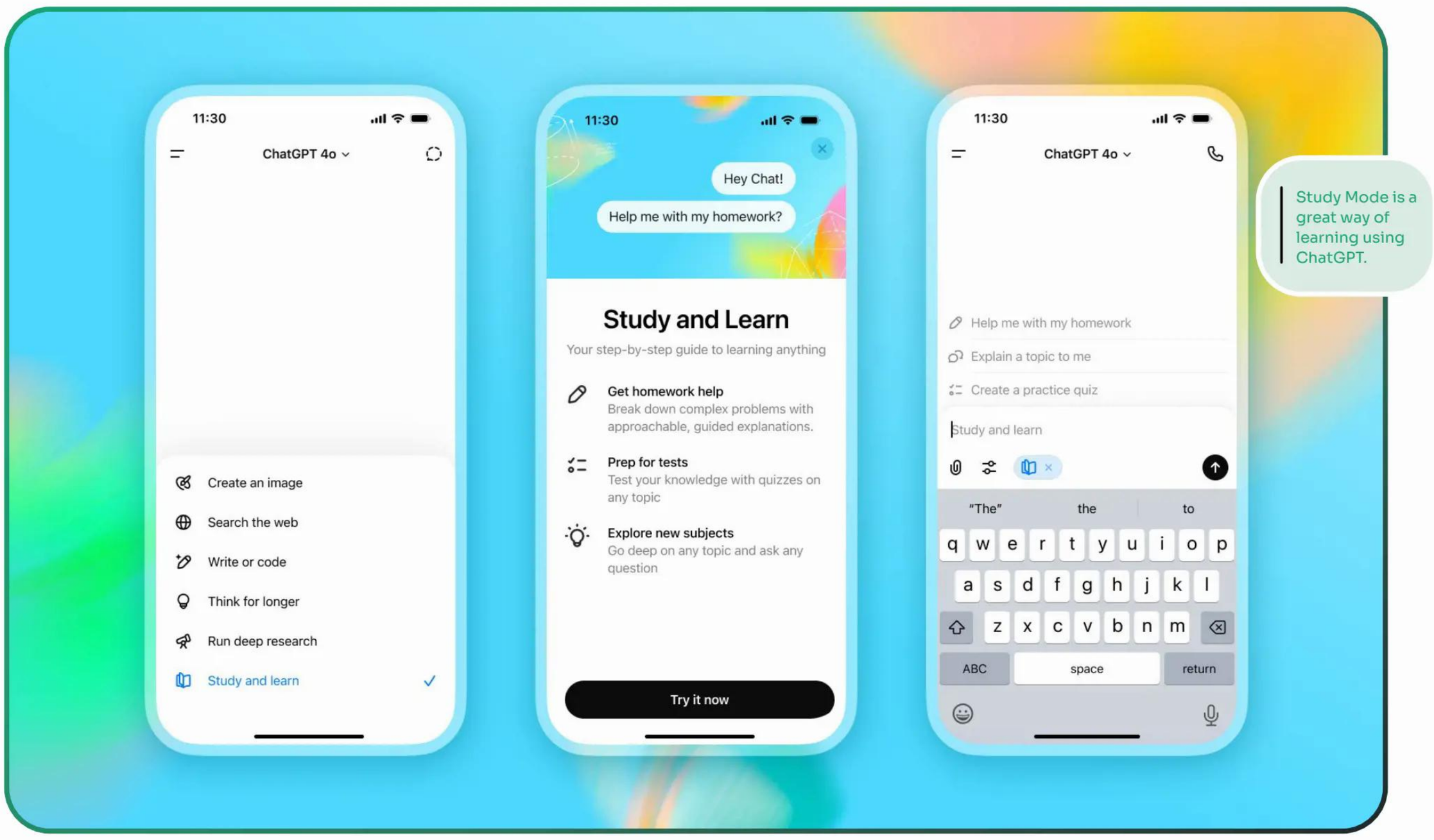
**Images** Adobe Stock; Getty Images; OpenAI

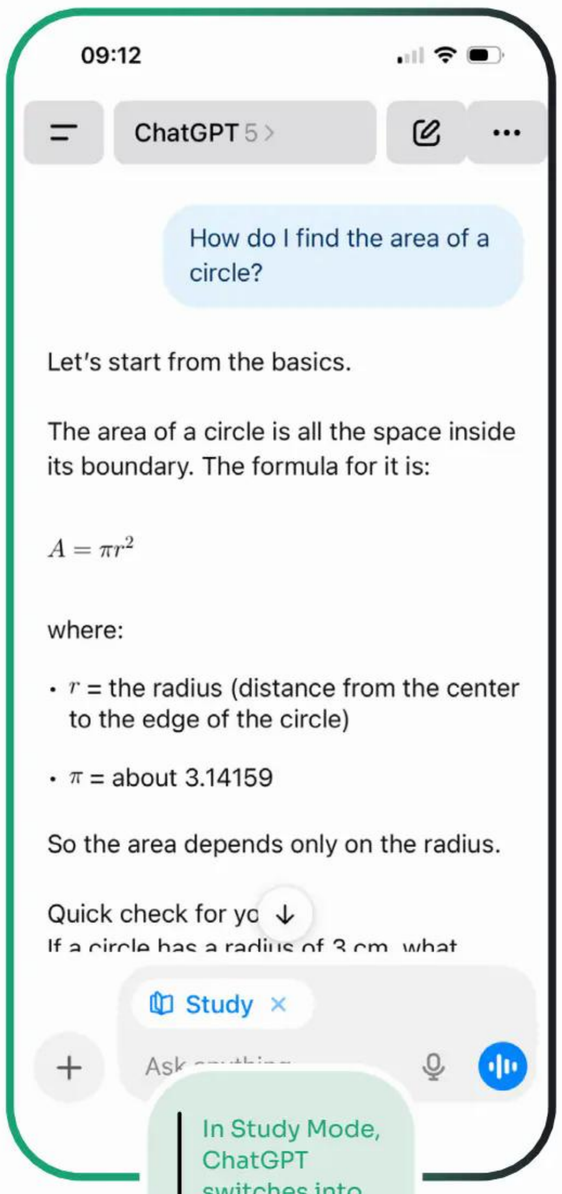
# Introducing study mode

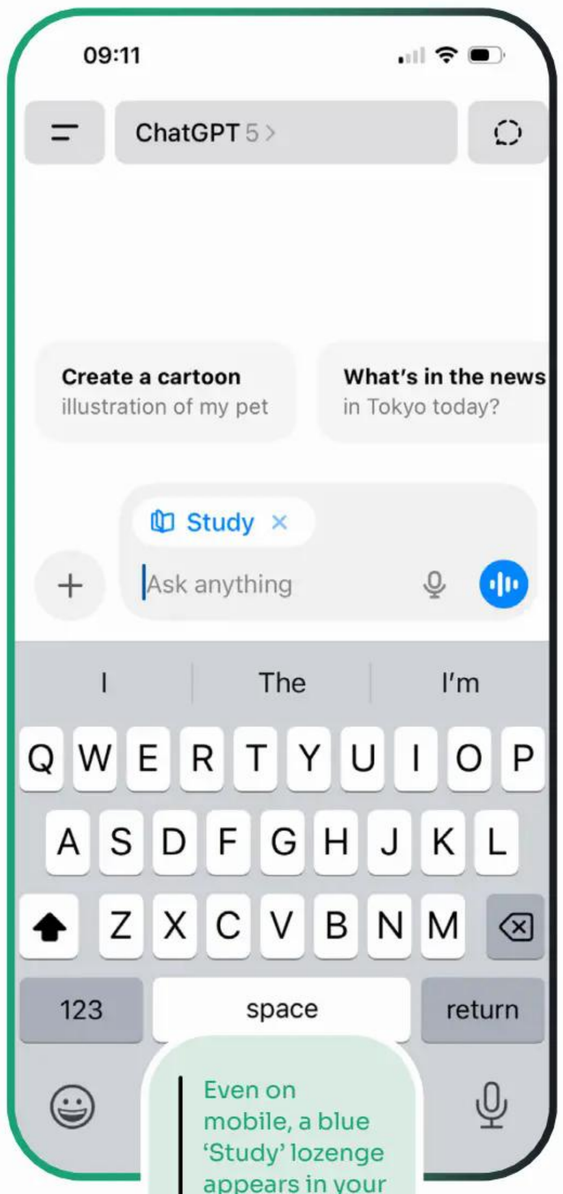
## ChatGPT can become more than just a place for answers

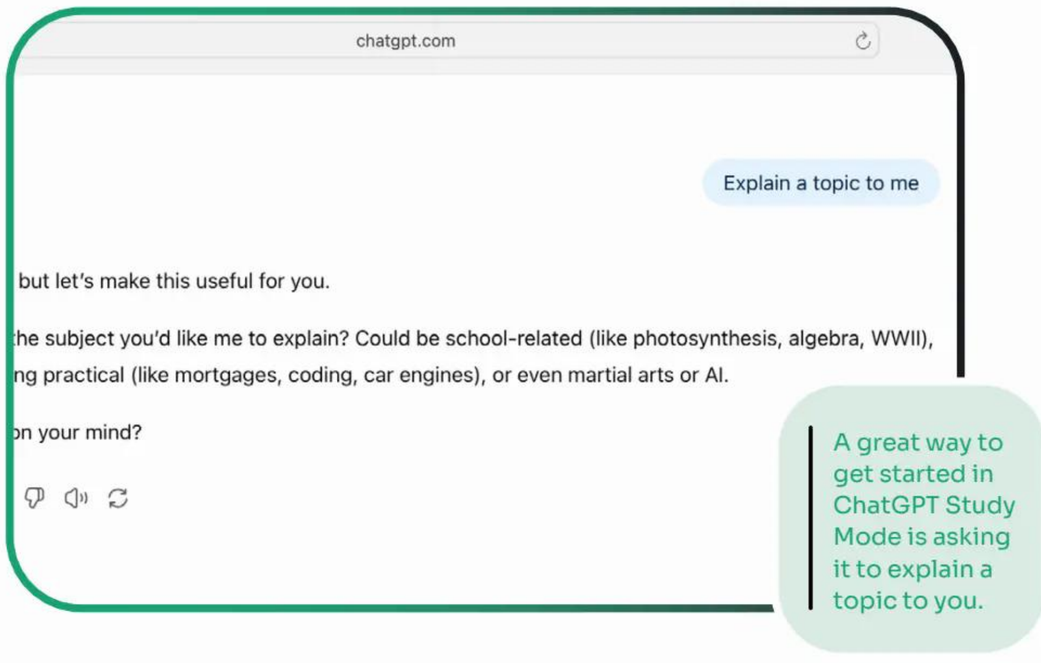
One of the criticisms of ChatGPT – and AI chatbots in general – is that children or students use them to do their homework instead of doing the work for themselves. Perhaps this applies more to university students cheating on essays than it does to secondary and sixth form students, but it is undeniable that it is happening in schools, colleges and universities.

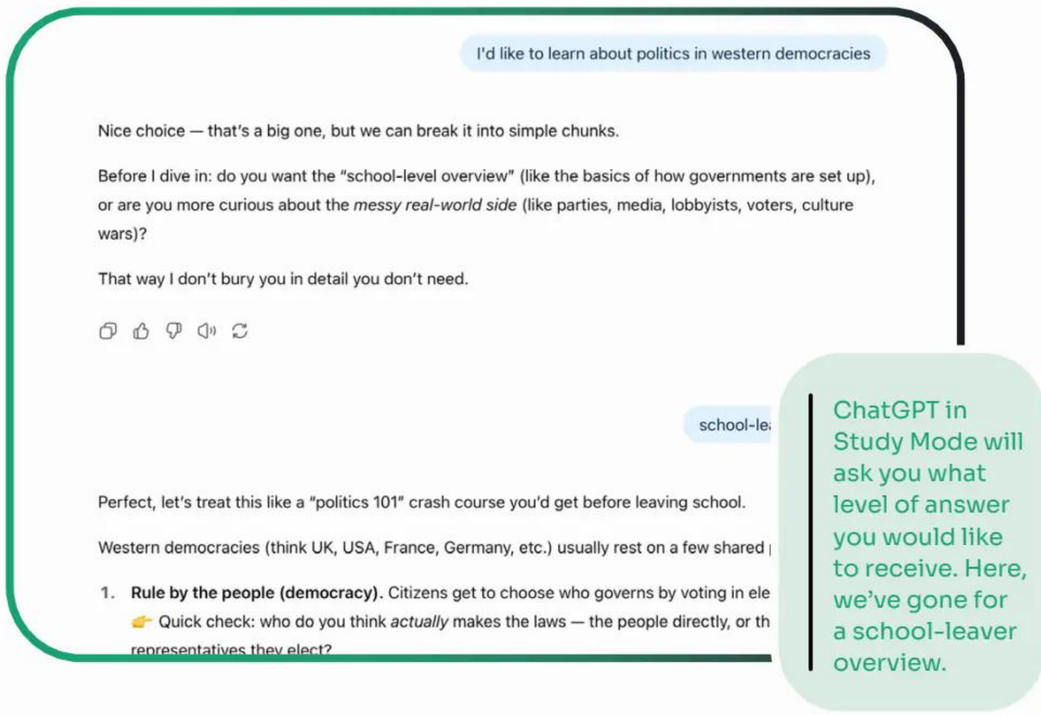
If a student just cuts and pastes the answers straight from ChatGPT into their homework document then the whole learning process has been bypassed; not to mention that it is unethical. But we have to accept that we live in a world where AI is widely available, so the idea that school children, all of who have free and easy access to ChatGPT via their mobile phones, won't be using it is unrealistic. The problem is really that unless you prompt it right ChatGPT is programmed to provide just the answer to a question you've asked as quickly as it can, rather than show how it worked it out.






## A home tutor

Study Mode in ChatGPT is the solution to this problem. Instead of just spitting out the answer to a problem, it is designed to work through it in a step-by-step manner that leads to a final result, explaining what's happening at every step, and asking you questions as it goes. This way, you can understand how the solution was arrived at and how to work out the problem for yourself next time.

> **Study Mode is like having a home tutor for your child**

If you're a parent, then this should be music to your ears because ChatGPT's Study Mode is like having a home tutor for your child that you don't have to pay for. Of course, you don't have to be a school or university student to benefit from Study Mode – it's actually a great way for anybody to learn any subject.

Study mode is available to logged in users on Free, Plus, Pro, Team, as well as ChatGPT Edu. All you need to do is click, or tap, on the + icon to the left of the prompt window and select 'Study and learn' from the drop-down menu.

Type anything you need help with into the prompt window, like *'Explain how photosynthesis works'*. ChatGPT will ask what level you're studying to, and you enter into a two-way conversation where it acts more like a tutor, guiding you through the explanation and helping you through the process of studying it.

Alternatively, you can cut and paste text or upload a document – perhaps even a homework document – and get it to answer the questions in there in the same way. To upload a document, tap or click on the + icon again and choose 'Upload files'. Then, you could type something like, *'Answer the questions in this document'*, or you could say, *'Using this document as a source, how would you answer the question...'*

## Sparking curiosity

OpenAI developed Study Mode in conjunction with teachers, scientists and pedagogy experts to reflect a core set of behaviours that support deeper learning. Used correctly, you'll find that Study Mode will spark your curiosity and foster the conditions required for learning to happen. It won't overwhelm you with facts and figures; instead, it will gently encourage you in the right direction.

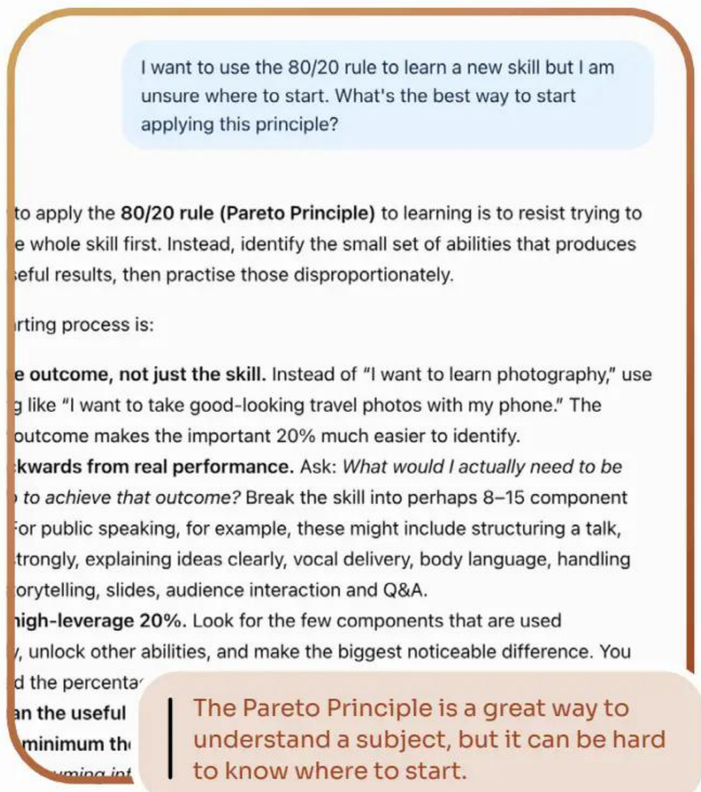
**Images** OpenAI

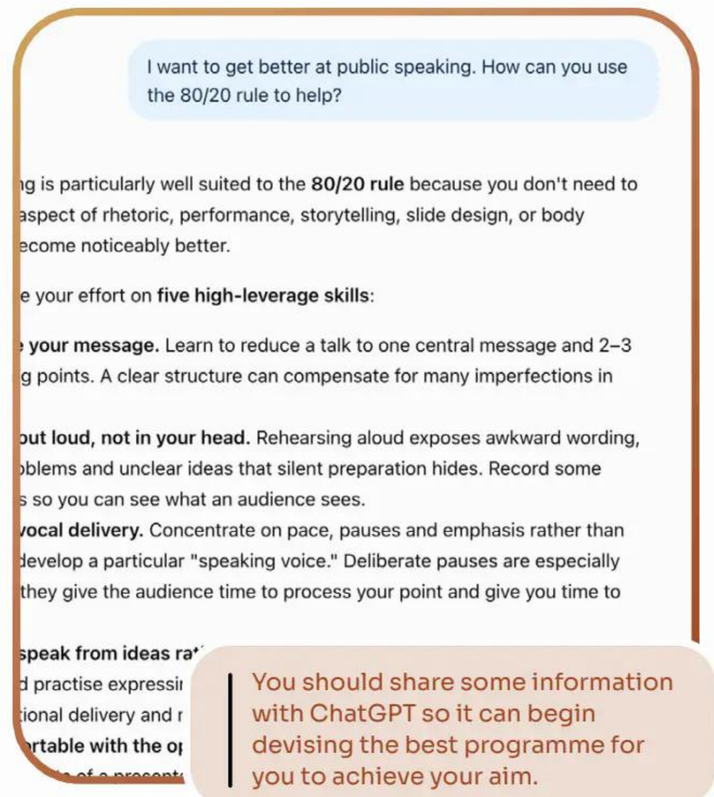
# Master a subject with 80/20

**Learning a new subject or skill takes plenty of dedication, but ChatGPT can help you be more time efficient**

Devised in 1896, the Pareto Principle (or 80/20 rule) helps you learn something new by channelling a fifth of your effort into reaping 80 per cent of the impact. It's tricky if you don't know where to start, but ChatGPT can come to the rescue as you aim to get to grips with something new.

*Prompt* ChatGPT response




*I want to use the 80/20 rule to learn a new skill, but I am unsure where to start. What's the best way to start applying this principle?*

We've prompted ChatGPT to best understand how the rule can apply to learning a new skill. The chatbot replies with **'Identify the small set of abilities that produces most of the useful results, then practise those disproportionately'.** ChatGPT also generates a framework that we can follow, including useful principles like **'Define the outcome, not just the skill'** and **'Learn the minimum theory needed to practise'.** But without specific details, it'll be hard for ChatGPT to help in a practical way.

## Share your goal

In our example, we're hoping to improve our public speaking skills, and want ChatGPT to help coach us by using deploying the Pareto Principle. But first we need to share our main objective, so we've prompted the chatbot with *'I want to get better at public speaking. How can you use the 80/20 rule to help?'*

ChatGPT responds **'I'd concentrate your effort on five high-leverage skills'** before devising a generic schedule on how we can spend approximately five hours over the next two weeks. While the listed skills make sense, these timings don't.

## Devise a schedule

We need to be more specific about our scenario, so we've given ChatGPT more details to keep this as relevant as possible. We've explained that we have a presentation to deliver in four weeks, and we have roughly three hours per

week in which to practice, before prompting the chatbot with *'Can you generate a schedule I can use to practice?'*

The chatbot builds an extensive four-week programme that you can follow based on the five key skills it has suggested that we focus on, responding with **'I'd keep the 80/20 focus on the things most likely to affect this particular presentation: message clarity, structure, delivery, rehearsal and handling questions'.**

## Generate practice drills

At this point, you can take ChatGPT's schedule and begin your preparations, or you can dive into more ways that the chatbot can help you get to grips with the skill you're trying to learn. In our example, we're seeking to generate some exercises that we can repeat over the course of the four-week process. We've prompted ChatGPT with *'Can you suggest three practice drills that I can run each week – and suggest milestones to measure my improvement?'* This way, we can have something to demonstrate how we're performing as we follow the programme.

**'I'd use the same three drills every week rather than constantly introducing new exercises'**, the chatbot responds, adding **'That makes improvement much easier to measure and fits the 80/20 approach'**. ChatGPT fleshes out three drills that we can run, and outlines milestones that we can aim for to demonstrate progress.

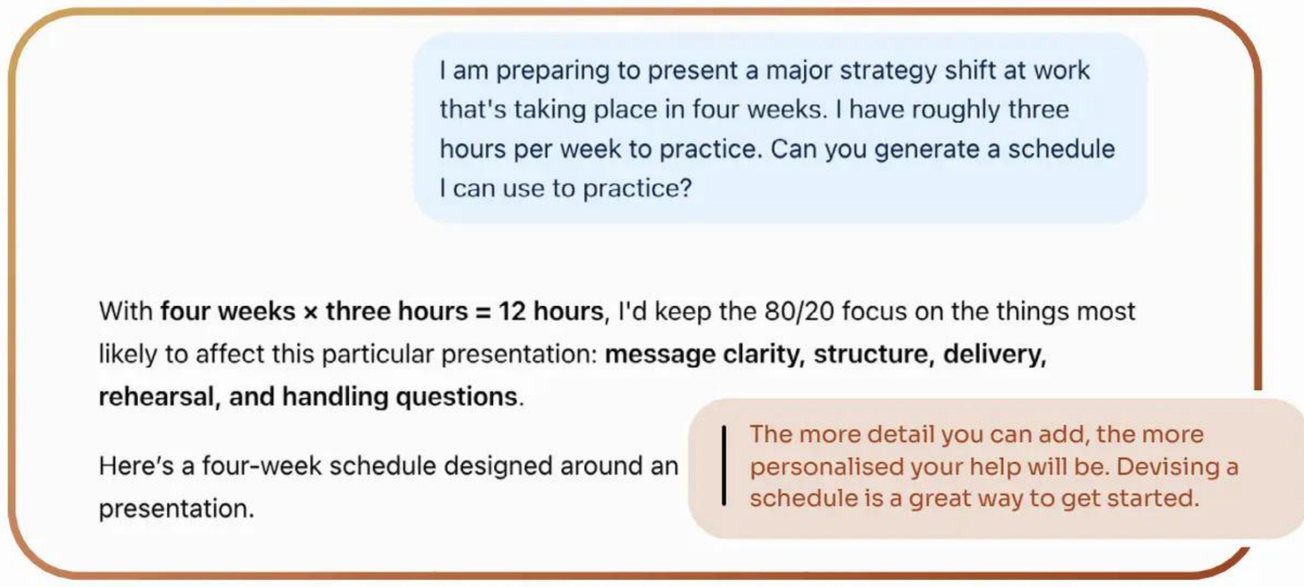
## Fine-tune your training

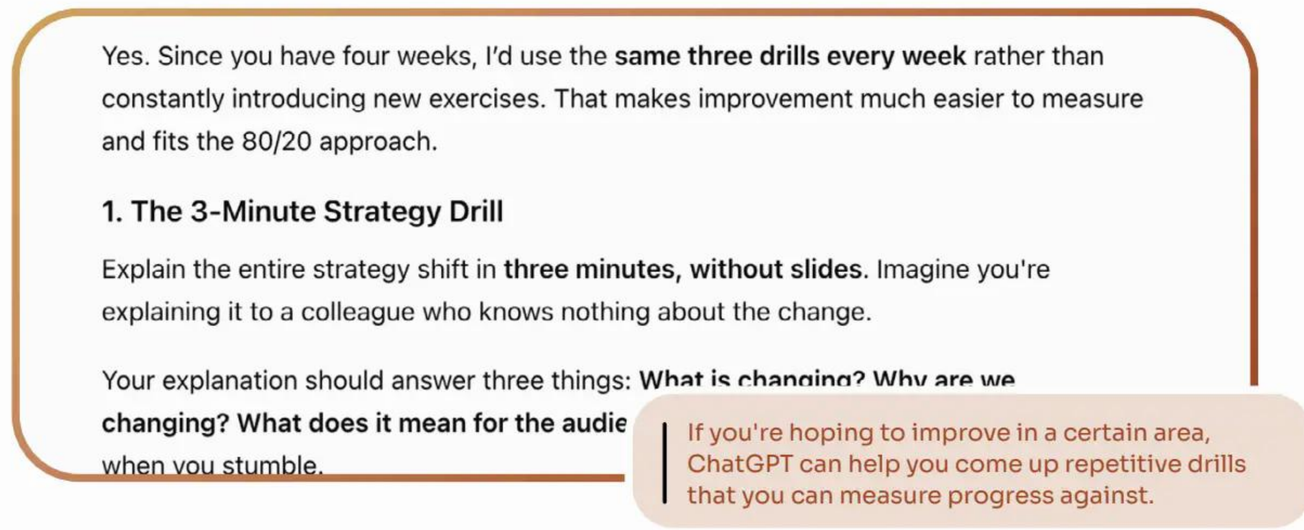
*'I feel like one of my biggest hurdles is stage fright. How can I incorporate this into the drills and the schedule we've already devised?'*

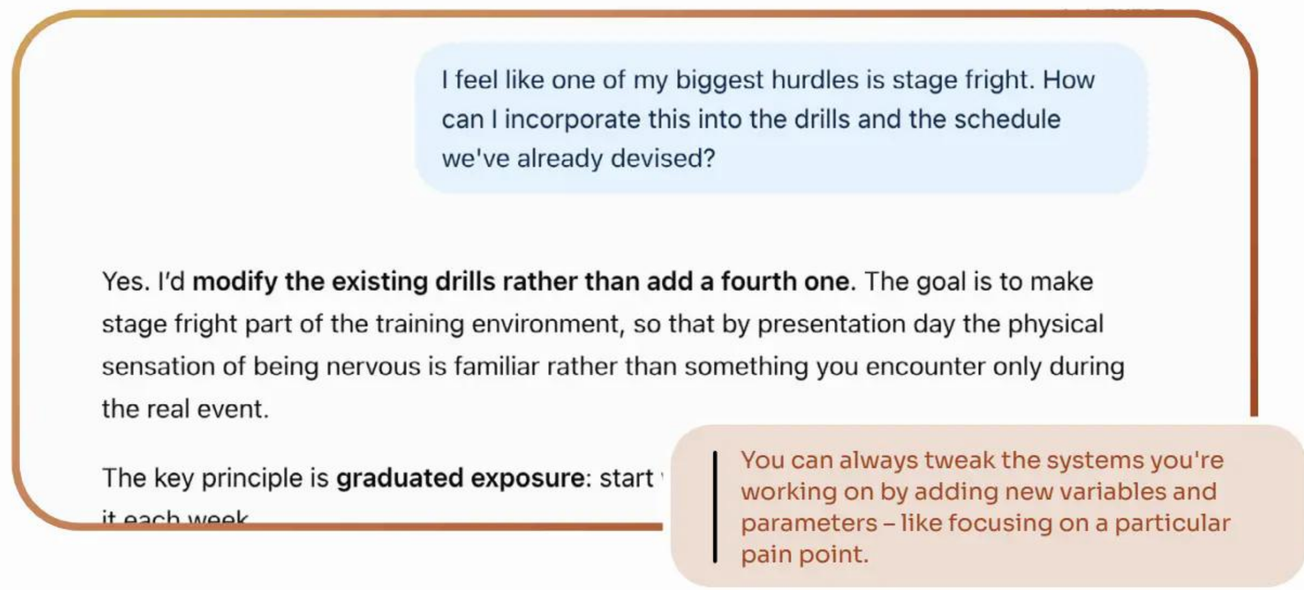
You can incorporate new dimensions to your approach at any time. In our example, we've prompted ChatGPT to focus on an area of concern. It has modified the drills and increased the intensity of the schedule. It's also advised **'Given your 80/20 approach, I'd make repeated exposure to an audience the highest-priority intervention from Week 2 onward'.**

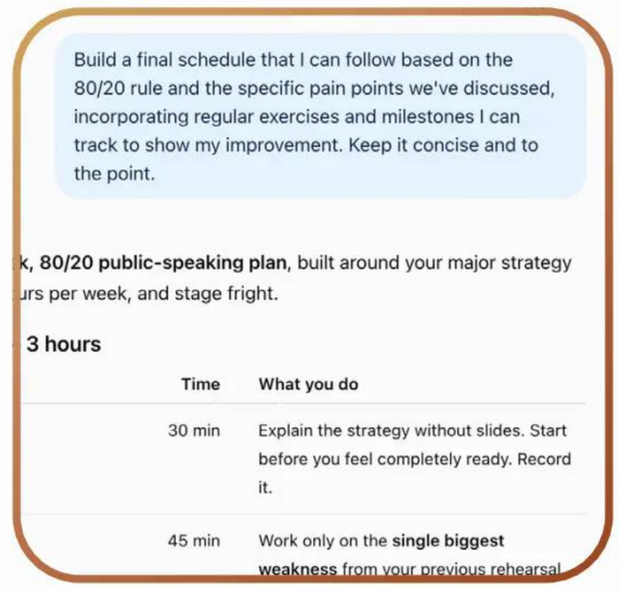
## Finalise your programme

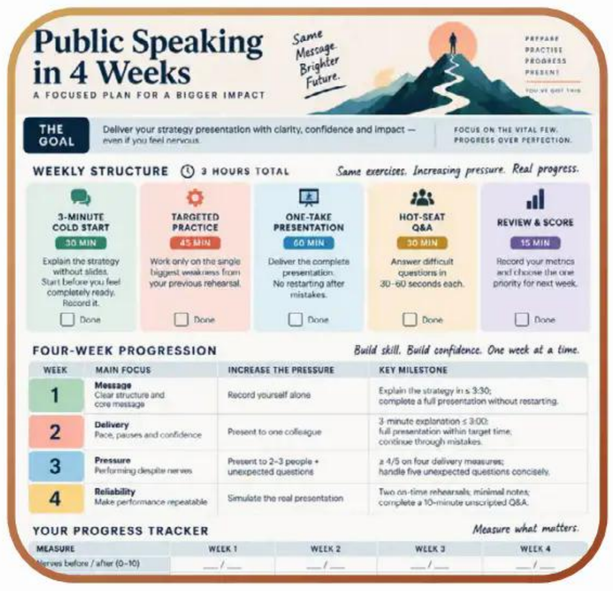
We're now ready to embark on our four-week schedule that ChatGPT has devised using the information we've given it. We've prompted the chatbot to *'Build a final schedule that I can follow based on the 80/20 rule and the specific pain points we've discussed' before then asking it to 'Turn this into an A4 image that I can print out and fill in'.*




Images OpenAI

# Create revision timetables

**Map out your revision time with the help of an AI-generated plan – and save valuable time**

We all have work, family and social commitments – so how are we supposed to find time for study? Let ChatGPT come up with a workable revision timetable that will slot neatly into your availability, and keep you from being overwhelmed by diary congestion...

*Prompt* ChatGPT response

*I need a revision timetable. What information do you need to tailor it to my needs?*

With this simple prompt, ChatGPT can immediately go to work on our behalf. As we've already anticipated that it will need quite a bit of information from us to do its job, we've saved time – because it doesn't need to ask. It comes back with **A good revision timetable only works if it's realistic and tailored to how you actually study and live. To build one that's genuinely useful (not just a pretty grid you ignore), I'd need a few key details**, and then lists those parameters for you.

A good revision timetable only works if it's realistic and tailored to how *you* actually study one that's genuinely useful (not just a pretty grid you ignore), I'd need a few key details:

**1. Your subjects & topics**

- What subjects are you taking?
- Any specific topics you struggle with or want to prioritise?

**2. Exam details**

- Exam dates (or at least the order they're in)
- How important each subject is (e.g. required grad

**3. Your current schedule**

- School/college hours

**6. Your energy & habits**

- When do you usually feel most productive?
- Do you burn out quickly or can you handle mult

**7. Revision style**

- What methods you use (flashcards, past papers,
- Any subjects that need more practice-based rev

**8. Breaks & balance**

Ask ChatGPT for help and it will come straight back with a list of useful questions.

Revision can be hard work, so the AI wants you to stay aware of your physical limitations.

## Choose your level of specificity

ChatGPT's answer to our prompt turns out to be 150 words long, covering eight questions. You may feel that taking the time to reply in full is counterproductive if you're not quite sure of the answers yet, or you may just feel that it's too much of an effort, understandably. If so, try a short prompt that invites a simpler approach, such as *I don't have all of that information. Can you suggest eight hours per week across six subjects?*, to which it answers **Eight hours across six subjects is workable – but it's tight enough that you'll need to be deliberate about how you split it. Here's a simple, realistic way to do it** and follows up with a suggested study routine.

## Share a calendar

Remember, it's good practice to never share sensitive information such as your age,

location or contacts' names with ChatGPT: it even warns you about that before you enter a prompt. However, if you're able to say something like *I will be unable to revise between 2pm and 8pm on 25 August: please find an alternate revision session*, then it can follow up with another solution based on what it now knows about your personal schedule.

## Be aware of your particular requirements

Sick of sociology? Fed up with physics? When the AI tells you **If you want, tell me your actual subjects and I can plug them into this structure and optimise the rotation (e.g. giving more weight to maths or weaker areas)** then you can and should request help with specific subject areas that you find challenging. For example, when we prompted it with *I find GCSE Maths both difficult and boring. Please help!* it replied **The good news is those two problems usually have the same fix: making it more active and more manageable. Here's how to tackle both issues at once.**

## Get the picture

We prompted *Can you prepare a timetable grid with different colours for each subject?* and ChatGPT instantly said yes, as we hoped it would. **Here's a clean, colour-coded weekly revision grid based on your 8 hours / 6 subjects setup. I've used coloured squares so you can easily copy this into a planner or app**, it told us, following up with a handsome-looking timetable illustration ready for print, download or importing into any relevant app. Stick it on your wall and tick off the subjects as you get through them to help you feel more productive.

### Core approach

- **Total time:** 8 hours/week
- **Subjects:** 6
- **Sessions:** ~45–60 minutes each
- **Total sessions:** ~8 sessions per week

You *can't* give equal time to all six every week in a meaningful way, so instead:

- 4 subjects get **2 sessions**
- 2 subjects get **1 session**
- Rotate which subjects get extra time each week

What's great about ChatGPT is that it gives you immediate, applicable options.

I find GCSE Maths both difficult and boring. Please help!

That's a rough combination—maths is much harder to stick with when it's both co
news is those two problems usually have the same fix: making it more *active* and n
revision (reading notes, watching videos endlessly) is what makes maths feel borin

Here's how to tackle both issues at once.

Being honest, without revealing any personal information, is a good way to get tailored help from the AI.

### 🎓 Weekly Revision Timetable (8 Hours)

| Day | Session 1 | Session 2 |
|---|---|---|
| Monday | Maths | Subject A |
| Tuesday | Subject B | — |
| Wednesday | Subject C | — |
| Thursday | Subject D | — |
| Friday | — | — (Rest/light) |
| Saturday | Maths | |
| Sunday | Subject F | — |

Don't forget: ChatGPT is good for creating visual materials too.

### ⏱️ Session structure (keep this consistent)

Each block = ~1 hour:

- 10 min recap
- 40 min focused work
- 10 min checking mistakes

### 👍 Why this works

- Keeps workload **light but consistent**
- Avoids burnout (no overloaded days)
- Gives maths **priority without dominating**
- Built-in **rest day (Friday)**

These instructions look great but as always, only follow them as far as your judgement.

Images OpenAI

# Turn notes into summaries or flashcards

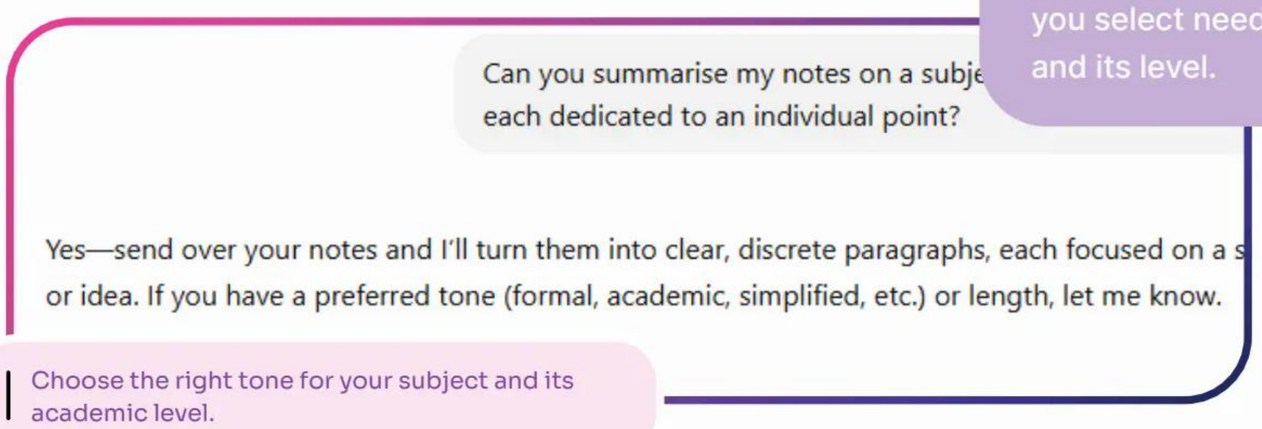
## For the most efficient study routine, use ChatGPT to convert the data you need into convenient, bite-size chunks

Remember the old 'summarise text' function that word-processing programs used to offer a few years ago, but hardly anybody used because it was so slow? These days ChatGPT can do the same thing for you, but faster – and it will even create flashcards for you if you prompt it correctly.

*Prompt* **ChatGPT response**

*Can you summarise my notes on a subject into discrete paragraphs, each dedicated to an individual point?*

ChatGPT responds to this simple prompt in its usual, user-friendly manner: **Yes – send over your notes and I'll turn them into clear, discrete paragraphs, each focused on a single point or idea. If you have a preferred tone (formal, academic, simplified, etc.) or length, let me know.** Consider your answer carefully, as the tone you select needs to be appropriate for the subject you're studying and its level.



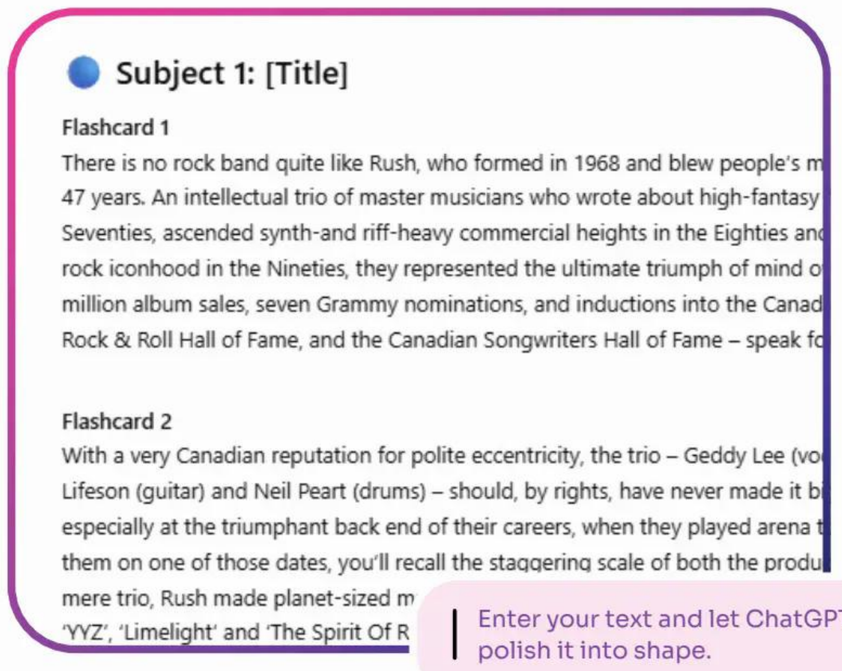

Choose the right tone for your subject and its academic level.



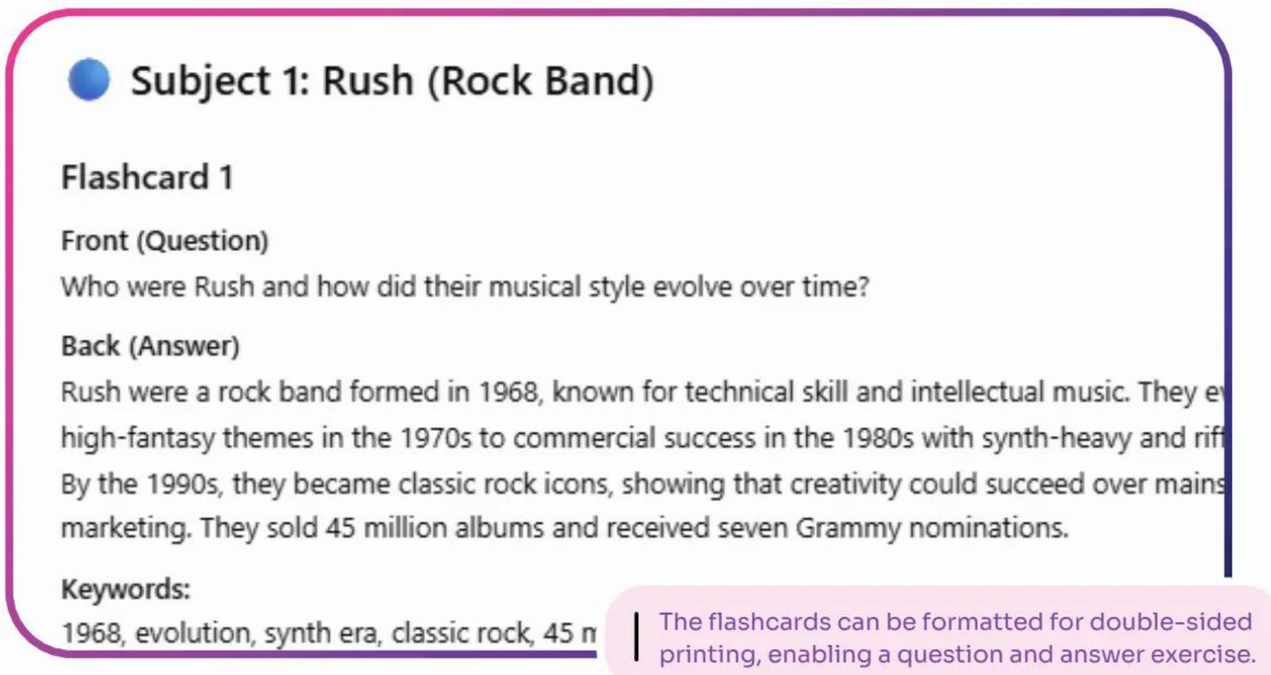

ChatGPT can supply you with a simple, easy-to-use flashcards template.

### Approach the task in manageable stages

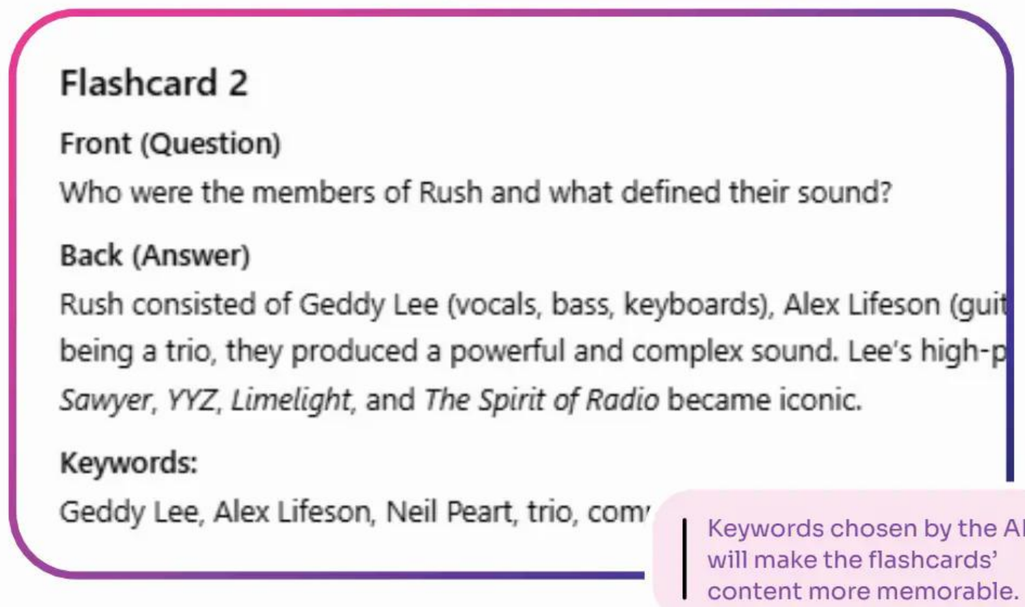
ChatGPT has the ability to handle long chunks of dense notes, but for a clearer result, don't send it everything at once: try feeding a couple of hundred words of notes at a time with the prompt *Summarise the points below and return them in concise paragraphs that state my position succinctly*. On receiving the notes, it does exactly that, beginning its summary with the words **Here are summaries of the notes you supplied. If you'd like me to make them even more digestible, let me know.**



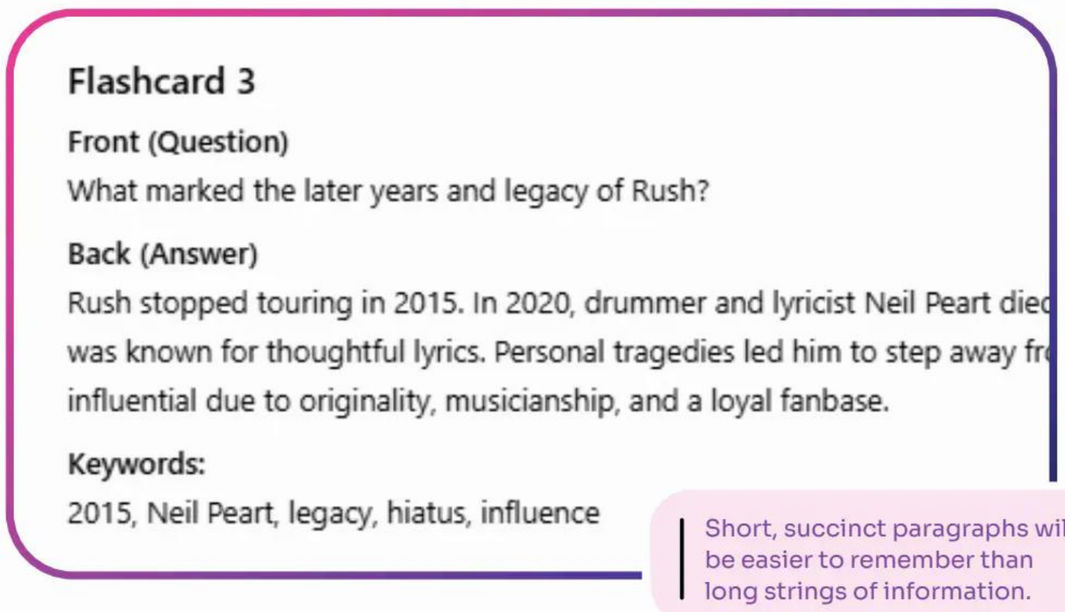

Enter your text and let ChatGPT polish it into shape.




The flashcards can be formatted for double-sided printing, enabling a question and answer exercise.




Keywords chosen by the AI will make the flashcards' content more memorable.




Short, succinct paragraphs will be easier to remember than long strings of information.

## Convert your information to flashcards

Use the prompt *I need a set of printable flashcards, containing paragraphs of information that I need to study, designed in different colours according to subject* and the AI responds with an editable template that you can populate with the summary paragraphs that it's already prepared, or new content if you prefer. It tells us **I've set you up with a clean, printable flashcard template in the canvas. You can directly edit it – just replace the placeholders with your study paragraphs and adjust subjects/colours as needed**. Go ahead and start filling it in.

## Let the AI refine your information

We filled in a flashcard with information about the rock band Rush and prompted *Now create a flashcard*. ChatGPT cleaned up the text a little, making it more streamlined (and also adding American em dashes by default; British users, take note of this) and told us **I've cleaned up and structured your flashcards so they're clearer, more exam-friendly, and easier to revise from – adding titles, tightening the language, and highlighting key ideas**. It also offered us the chance to add keywords or bullet point summaries to each card, turn them into question-and-answer cards and format them for double-sided printing. We asked it to do all three tasks.

## Make your flashcards even more useful

Our Rush-themed flashcards are looking good, but ChatGPT hasn't finished yet, suggesting **If you want, I can go one step further and 1) Shuffle difficulty (easy/medium/hard cards), 2) Add memory tricks or mnemonics, 3) Turn this into a full revision pack or test**. We prompt *Add mnemonics* and the chatbot returns with an ingenious trick based on the names of the band's three current and former members: **Mnemonic: "L-L-P = Loud, Layered, Precise" (Lee, Lifeson, Peart → sound characteristics)**.

> For a clearer result, don't send it everything at once

## Take the time to get it perfect

ChatGPT has still more suggestions for us **(If you want, I can make them more visual or story-based (even stickier for memory) or generate exam-style recall drills from these cards. Just tell me how far you want to push it**), so keep refining until the flashcards it's made suit you. You're now ready to revise!

Images Adobe Stock; OpenAI

# FINANCE

# Money and finance

**Managing money and assets is a complex task: let ChatGPT help you get it right**

Most of us don't particularly enjoy spending time on budgeting, saving and other financial obligations, but these are things that need to be taken care of, and taken care of correctly, if we're to achieve our primary aim of having a fun and interesting life. Let's see if our favourite AI can help us with the numbers – although as always, consult a human professional before reaching for your credit card.

*Prompt* ChatGPT response

## Budgeting

Working out how much of your household's net income to spend is tricky even if it's just you and your house you have to worry about. Add dependants and it becomes more complex; take out loans, buy more property, change jobs or retire, and it gets even more complicated. Dealing with complicated tasks is, of course, where AI excels – and ChatGPT can assist, especially so in this case, because you're essentially feeding a list of numbers into it and asking for an outcome. Try a prompt such as this one:

***'Between us, my partner and I earn a net monthly salary of £5,000. We have no other income. Our mortgage payment is £750 per month, we repay £250 each month to a car loan and we spend approximately £200 per week on bills, sustenance and travel. How much can we afford to 1) save into an ISA and 2) spend on holidays and other non-essentials?'***



As ever, ChatGPT begins with a cheerful assurance that it will gladly help ('**You seem to be living within your means. Let me give you a few different options**') before giving us a couple of numbers that we can work with. It's realistic enough in its calculations not to advise us to buy a beachfront villa in Miami, but at least we can afford two weeks in a cottage in Margate.

A more pragmatic approach would be to ask where daily economies can be made. For example, we can ask:

***'What's the average cost of a weekly shop for a family of five in [Supermarket A] versus [Supermarket B]? We don't have particularly expensive tastes and we consume luxuries such as chocolate and alcohol in moderation.'***

Or:

***'Find the cheapest place to buy unleaded petrol within five miles of Peterborough.'***

## Savings

Following on from our budgeting prompt, we could all benefit from asking ChatGPT about the best way to save money for a rainy day. Funds, ISAs, shares, property, even a simple savings account – these are all safer options than carrying your excess cash around in your wallet or stashing it in a biscuit tin under the bed. To get the best responses from our prompts, we'll need to specify our goals (security versus growth), how risk-averse we are (if at all) and, of course, how much we're prepared to save and how often. An example might be:

***'Recommend savings options for a sum of £250 per month, with low levels of risk and a reasonable expectation of interest rates higher than the current and forecast base rates. The savings need to be instantly accessible and located within an ethically minded institution.'***





Above a certain level of savings, interest and tax become essential considerations, at which point you're really investing rather than saving (see below). For now, though, if you're just looking to put some money away now and then for a rainy day, try asking ChatGPT for options that are reasonable given your spare income, and easily accessible if you need cash quickly.

> We could all benefit from asking the best way to save money

On a related note, if you simply want to hand over money or property to your loved ones, as many older people do for their children, ChatGPT will help to clarify the taxable limits and declarations in your country. You could ask:

*'How much money can I gift to my son per year without adding to his tax liability? I live in Sweden and he lives in Germany.'*

At this point, though, you really do need to seek professional advice. Not only is there the risk of error (although ChatGPT tries its best); there's also the irksome fact that laws around tax and other financial considerations change all the time and vary drastically by jurisdiction, so be careful.

## Investments

We're living in an age of self-managed financial investments. In the old days, you had to hire a broker's services if you wanted to play the stocks and shares market, phoning them up (how quaint that sounds) and barking "Buy!" or "Sell!" Nowadays, you can just go online and acquire some shares, whether you're a minnow with £100 worth of Tesco stock or a major player who blows thousands per day (don't try that at home). Obviously, this practice comes with significant risks, and for some people it's as addictive as online

gambling, so we're saying right now: don't risk large sums, don't trust anyone (human or ChatGPT) with your livelihood. In fact, skip right to the next section if you're prone to risking dangerously large chunks of your hard-earned cash.

With all that said, assuming you're a naturally cautious person, ChatGPT will gladly advise you on which shares to buy based on current and recent performance. We asked it: ***'Recommend shares to acquire on a budget of £2,000. I'm looking for medium risk and a profit within three months. No fossil fuels, arms, tobacco or politically dodgy sources.'***

The program came back with a combination of share recommendations from hotel groups, Big Pharma and the car industry, any of which seem reasonable.

Of course, you can invest in other ways, one option being to hand over a sum to a dedicated investment fund company, perhaps in tandem with a friend or syndicate of like-minded investors. You could check these outfits' trustworthiness, or lack thereof, with ChatGPT, which will check user and industry reviews, as well as the backgrounds of the directors.

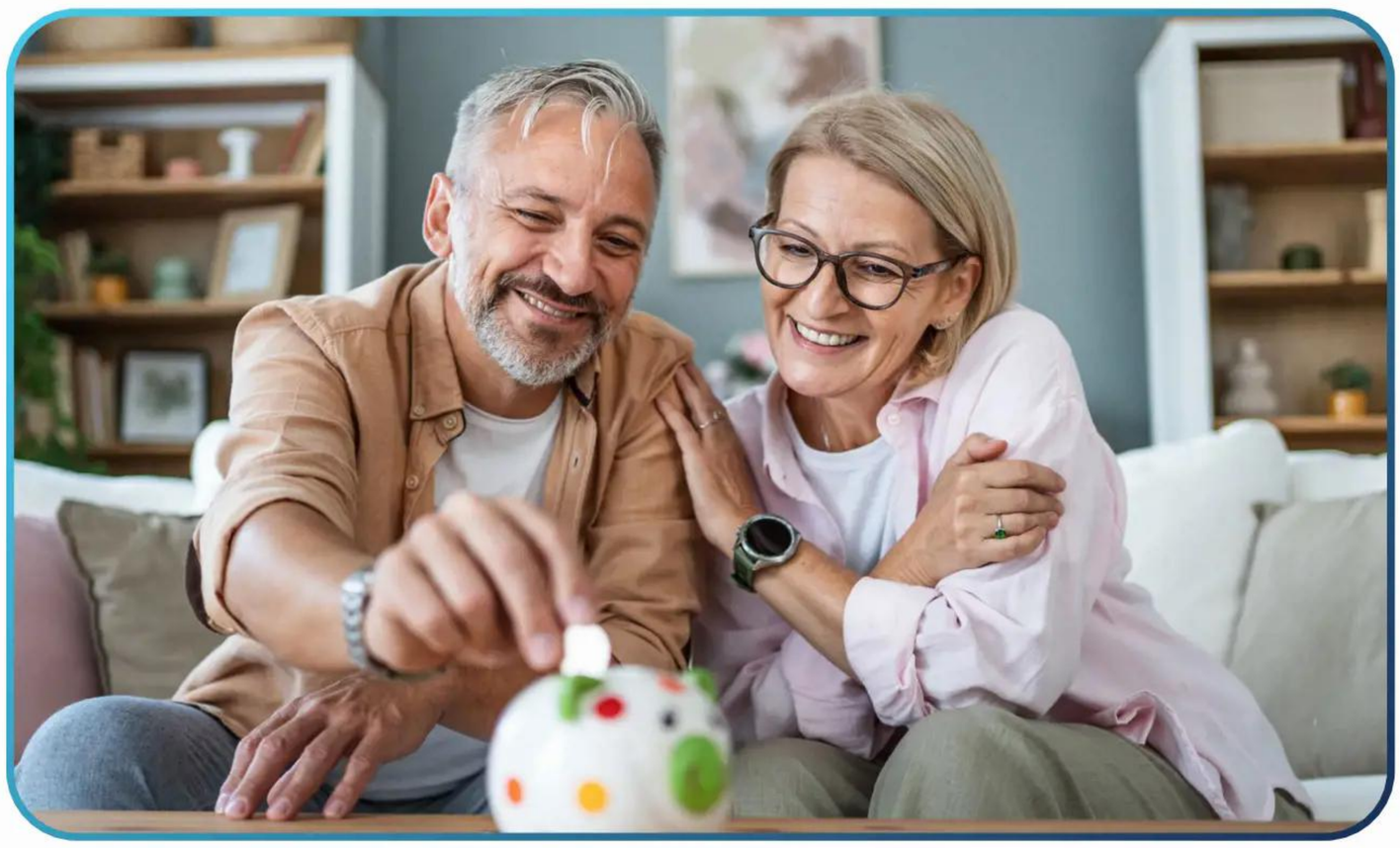
***'Should I invest with [name of investment fund]? Check their last three years of performance and analyse their profit-to-loss ratio.'***

If ChatGPT comes back with a positive report, treat it as a first step. As before, seek advice from a human being before paying up.

## Pensions

At the age of around 45, most of us start wondering if our pension pot will sustain us into old age. Those of us without a pension will be contemplating other options – 'never stopping working' being an inevitably popular choice in that case. But it's never too late to consider a pension plan, as long as you





know what the benefits are over and above, say, diverting your savings into property. Essentially, a pension is worth having because of the tax benefits it confers, which is where ChatGPT comes in, 'tax' being shorthand for 'complicated and annoying'. We prompted as follows:
***'I'm 36 years old and plan to retire at 67. How much of a pension pot do I need to ensure a yearly income of £36,000? Advise on the most tax-efficient solution according to the laws of Spain, where I live.'***

ChatGPT came up with two numbers: a minimum monthly contribution and a predicted maximum depending on Spain's likely economic fluctuations over the next 31 years. It also recommended pension plans from three European providers, supplied a likely tax burden on retirement and offered to give us alternative plans from pensions outside the EU.

What if you're already drawing a pension and want to know if you should top it up, spend less, gift some of it or draw it down? ChatGPT will supply answers to all of these questions depending on your age, location, spending habits and personal goals, excelling as always at taking data and arranging it in a useful manner.

## Contracts

'The indemnifying party agrees to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless
the indemnified party from any and all claims,

> **ChatGPT can give us a real world version of contract terms**

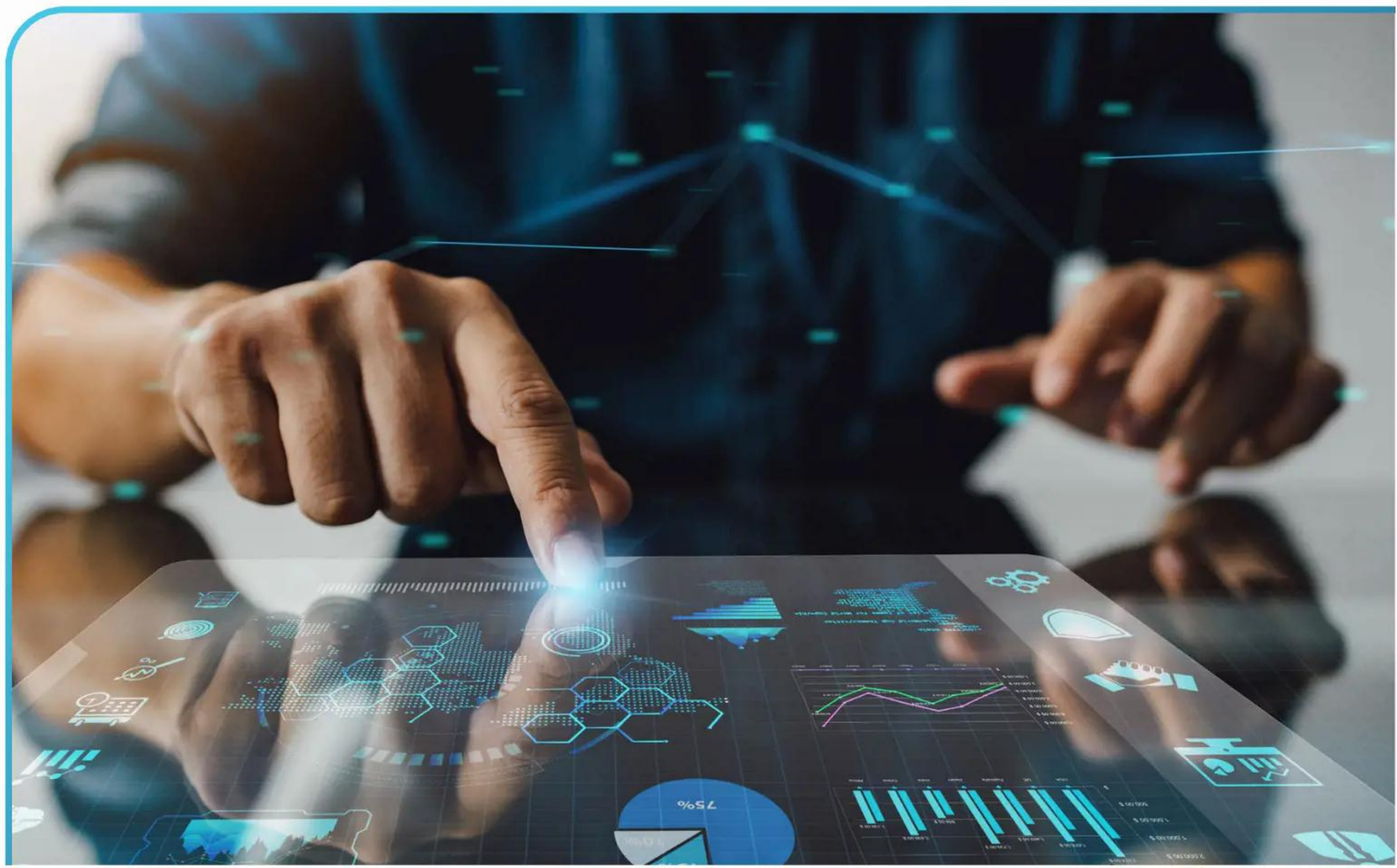
damages, liabilities, losses, costs, and expenses arising out of or related to the performance of this agreement.'

Wait, what? You may well have been confronted by this sort of legal gibberish in the course of buying a house, paying for a new roof, selling a car and so on, but what does it actually mean? Fortunately, we have ChatGPT on hand
to help explain and advise. It tells us:
**'This means, 'You agree to protect me from any costs or damages that arise from this agreement'. Do you want me to explain the meaning of indemnity in more depth?'**

In the world of finance, such legalese is commonplace, simply because risks accompany the acquisition and transfer of money. It seems that no transaction over £1,000 can take place without an accompanying contract stuffed with this kind of bone-dry gibberish, so we're fortunate that ChatGPT can give us a real-world interpretation. Of course, check with a real-life legal eagle, just to be sure.
Another classic is 'No waiver of any term or condition of the agreement or of any part thereof shall be deemed a waiver of any other term or condition of the agreement or of any later breach of the agreement or any part thereof' – er, what's that now? Ask our AI for a definition, though, and it tells us:
**'Each clause is independent from the others'.**

Contracts are often, ironically, drawn up by programs such as ChatGPT these days, which in theory should make them more consistent. However, there's no such thing as uniformity in legal agreements, in general – so seek advice in the real world before signing anything.

**Images** Adobe Stock; Getty Images



# Manage your bills with ease

**ChatGPT is capable of setting bill reminders and can help you to create a bill calendar that is extremely easy to work with**

Managing bills is rarely easy, but with ChatGPT on your side, a lot of the work can be done for you. With the right prompts, some accurate information from you and a little patience, you can build a system that ensures you never miss a bill payment again.

*Please ensure that all reminders are sent four days before the bill date and that the health insurance payment is set for the second Monday of each month.*

*Prompt* ChatGPT response

I want you to create a bill calendar for me that includes reminders so that I do not miss any payments

Absolutely — we can build this so it's genuinely useful rather than just a list of bills.

I'd suggest a **monthly bill calendar** with:

- 📅 Payment/due date
- 💷 Amount
- 🏦 Who it's paid to
- 🔁 Frequency (monthly, quarterly, annually, etc.)
- 💳 Payment method/account if useful
- ⏰ A reminder ahead of each payment

One prompt can be used to capture all of your main requirements. It will save you asking multiple questions.

Here are all
me know if
They are all
Mortgage £7
Gas and Electric
£235.60 11th
Water £24.23 13th
Mobile contract
£32.09 15th
Council Tax £210.00 1st
House insurance
£48.01 21st
Car insurance £34.99 26th
Savings transfer to own account £250 1st
Union payment £21 3rd

Updating scheduled task

Monthly · Bills - t

The entire solution hinges on ensuring that your bills are laid out accurately and with enough detail.

This prompt forces ChatGPT to alert you with generous notice before each bill is due, and also ensures that any unusual payment patterns are catered for. It can be difficult to manage unusual patterns in apps, but ChatGPT will deal with it easily. Try to strike a balance between what you want and what ChatGPT will offer as improvements to the solution. Between you, you can reach peak bill management.

## Start off with a comprehensive prompt

You should try to include every requirement you need in the first prompt, but it will still require further data from you in order to build a working solution. Use the prompt *'I want you to create a bill calendar for me that includes reminders so that I do not miss any payments'* and ChatGPT will respond with **'I'd suggest a monthly bill calendar...'** followed by a list of data fields it will use. It would be easy to accept the solution that ChatGPT offers, but we recommend thinking about what works for you and specifying exactly what you want. ChatGPT will always follows your instructions unless they are impossible to build.

## Add your bills

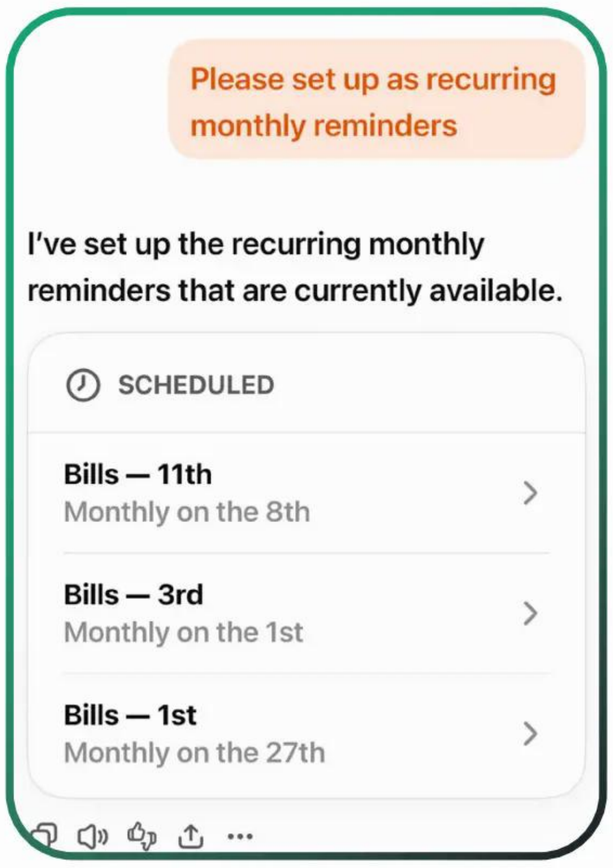
The most important part of this solution will be inputting your bills as accurately as you possibly can. Take time to list every bill, the correct amounts including variables such as decreasing loan payments, the dates bills become due and detailed descriptions so you never lose track. *'Here are all of my bills. Let me know if any are unclear.'* is a simple and effective prompt that should work well, provided the subsequent list of bills is accurate. You will see a response similar to **'Everything is clear. I've got X monthly payments in total.'** with a list of the payments detailed below.

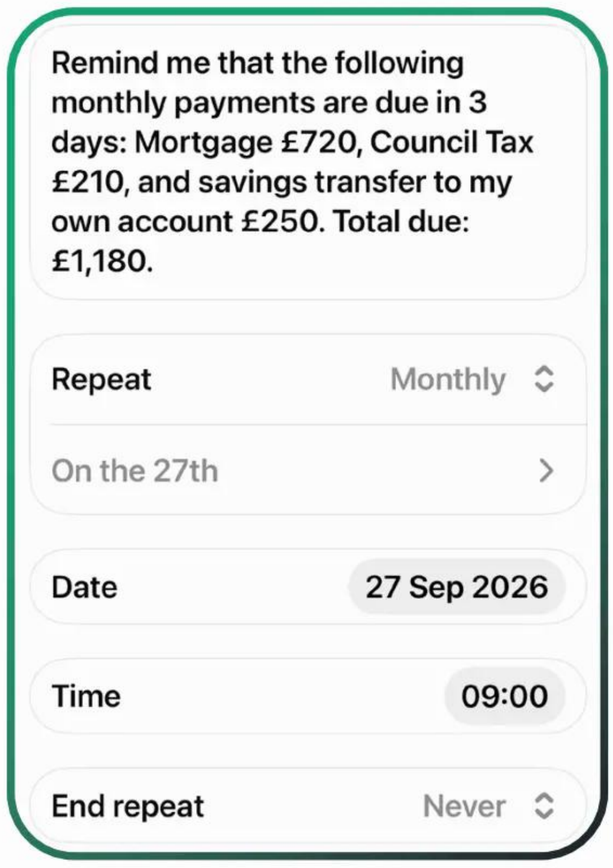
## Set up the bill reminders

*'Please set up as recurring monthly reminders'* is a direct prompt that explains that all of the bills will come out monthly. If you have bills that come out on a different schedule, make sure that you detail how each payment works. ChatGPT will be able to creating recurring reminders in any pattern that you choose so all of the work will be done in the initial setup. **'I've set up the recurring monthly reminders...'** will come back as a response with the details listed below. Note how bills that occur on the same day are bundled together as one reminder with the detail in the text, which will help reduce the number of interruptions. ChatGPT will use tasks to remind you of each bill a few days before the due date, but please note that these ChatGPT tasks are limited in number depending on which plan you are subscribed to.

## Create a bill calendar

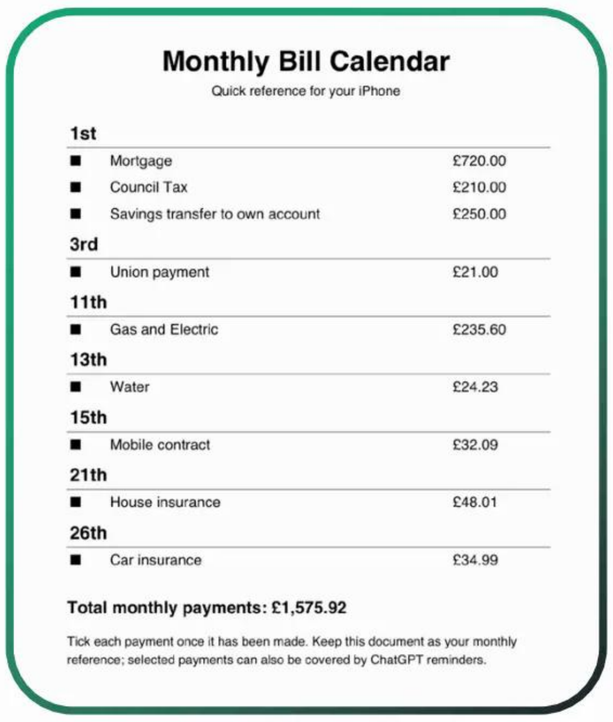
ChatGPT now has all of the data it needs to keeps your bills in check and to remind you in good time, but it is always useful to have an overview that you can keep referring to. Ask *'Can you create a bill calendar or a list that I can view on my iPhone?'* and the response will be something like **'Absolutely, I can create a simple iPhone-friendly bill calendar/list...'**. You can now specify exactly what type of calendar you require such as a clean PDF or a word document. It also makes sense to ask ChatGPT to save the resultant file to your library for easy retrieval. You can then select 'Library' to view your bills calendar at any time.

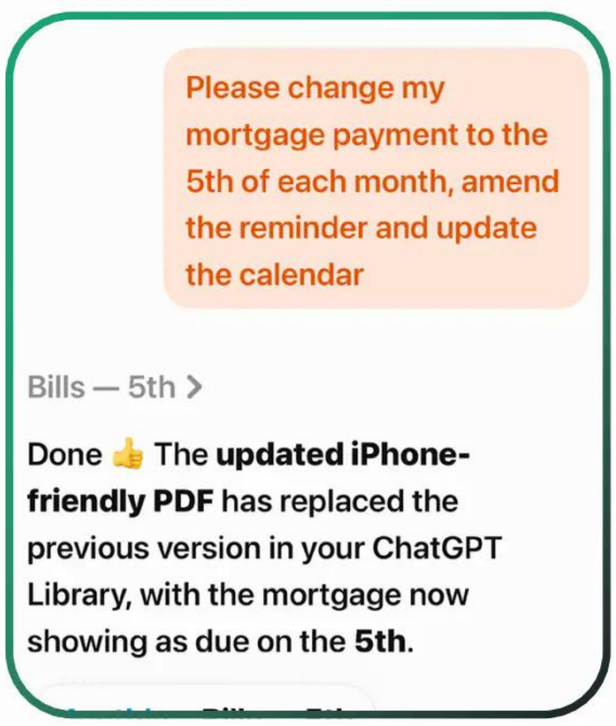



Each bill reminder will be notified using ChatGPT tasks. These can be sent as push notifications or by email.

You can check each reminder in ChatGPT tasks and adjust the wording to make it as effective as possible.

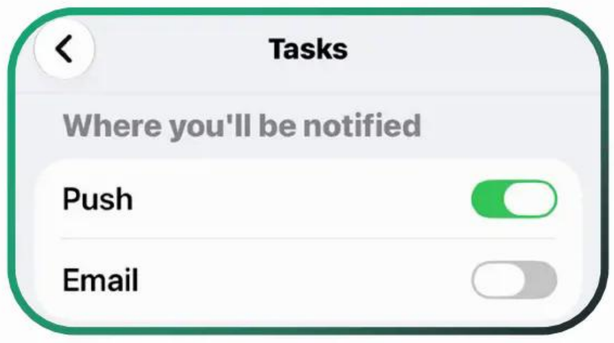



Having a simple calendar of your bills takes away the complexity and keeps you in control at all times.

Ask ChatGPT to amend a current bill or add new ones, and the calendar and reminders will be adjusted.

> ChatGPT will remind you of bills a few days before due date




In ChatGPT Settings/Notifications/Tasks, you can choose how to be alerted. Push and Email is a good failsafe.

Images OpenAI

# Track your spending habits

**By deploying an analytical eye, ChatGPT can serve as a financial advisor and help you optimise your spending patterns**

AI can be a fantastic assistant when you need it to spot patterns from lumps of data. That's why you may be tempted to use it as a tool to help you to better understand your spending habits and eventually lead to savings so you can meet your financial goals.

*Prompt* **ChatGPT response**

*I want to save enough money for a flat deposit, but I'm struggling month by month. Can you audit my spending and suggest ways to meet this goal?*

When you're struggling to put away savings each month, the best place to start is by analysing your spending and cutting back on non-essentials. But we all have blind spots and can easily miss important patterns. We've prompted ChatGPT for advice on how it can help us meet our savings goal, and responds **'The most useful approach is to treat this as a cash-flow audit, rather than simply telling you to 'spend less"**

I want to save enough money for a flat deposit, but I'm struggling month by month. Can you audit my spending and suggest ways to meet this goal?

Yes. The most useful approach is to treat this as a **cash-flow audit**, rather than simply telling you to "spend less."

Send me your recent spending data—ideally **3 months of bank/credit-card statements**, though even one month is enough to start. You can upload PDFs, screenshots, CSVs, or a spreadsheet. You can redact your name, address, account number and other identifying information; I mainly need the transaction dates, descriptions and amounts.

I'll analyse it in four stages:

1. **Establish your baseline:** monthly take-home income, essential/fixed costs, discretionary spending, irregular expenses, and what is currently left over.
2. **Find the leaks:** subscriptions, repeated small purchases, expensive habits, unusually high categories, duplicated services, and spending that could realistically be reduced.
3. **…rate:** rather than assuming every non-essential expense …**easy cuts**, **moderate lifestyle changes**, and **more**
4. **Build the deposit plan:** tell me roughly how much you want for the deposit—or the flat price you're targeting—and I can calculate how long it would take under

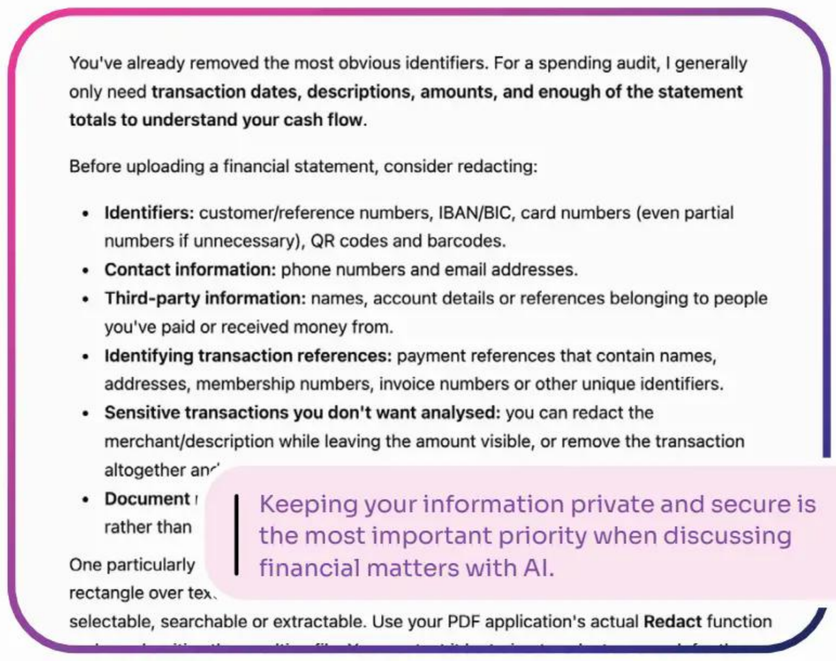
You should start by sharing your financial aims with ChatGPT so it knows how to gear its forthcoming advice.

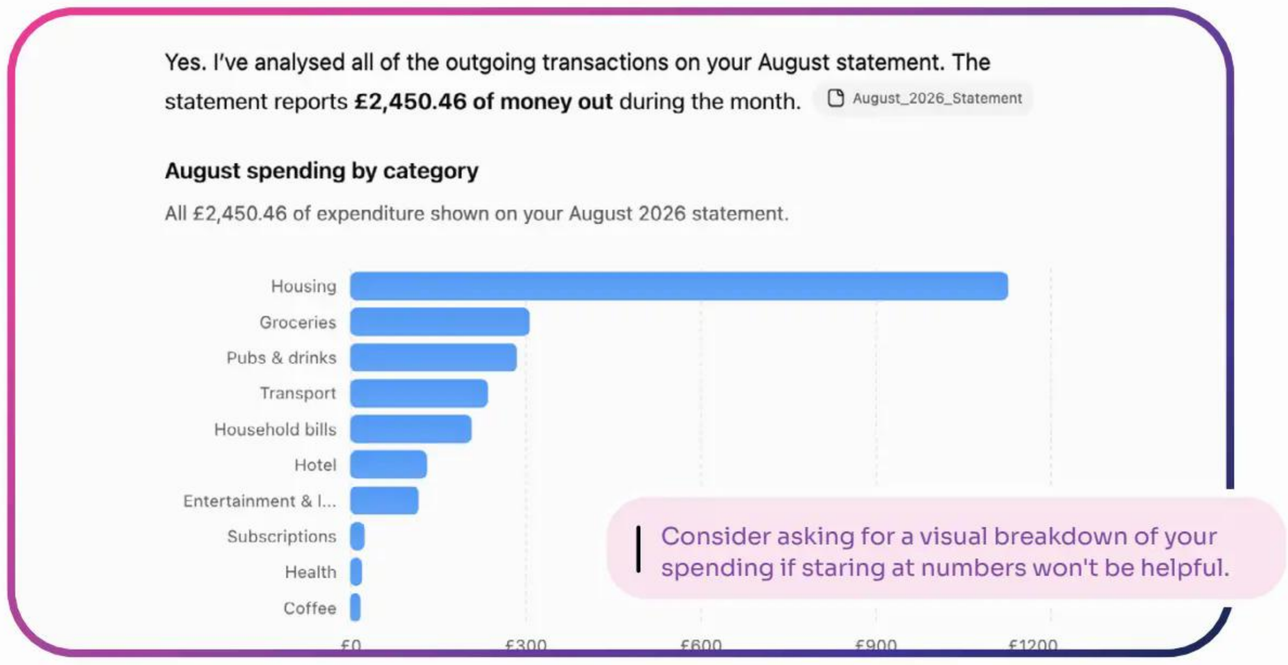
## Secure your information

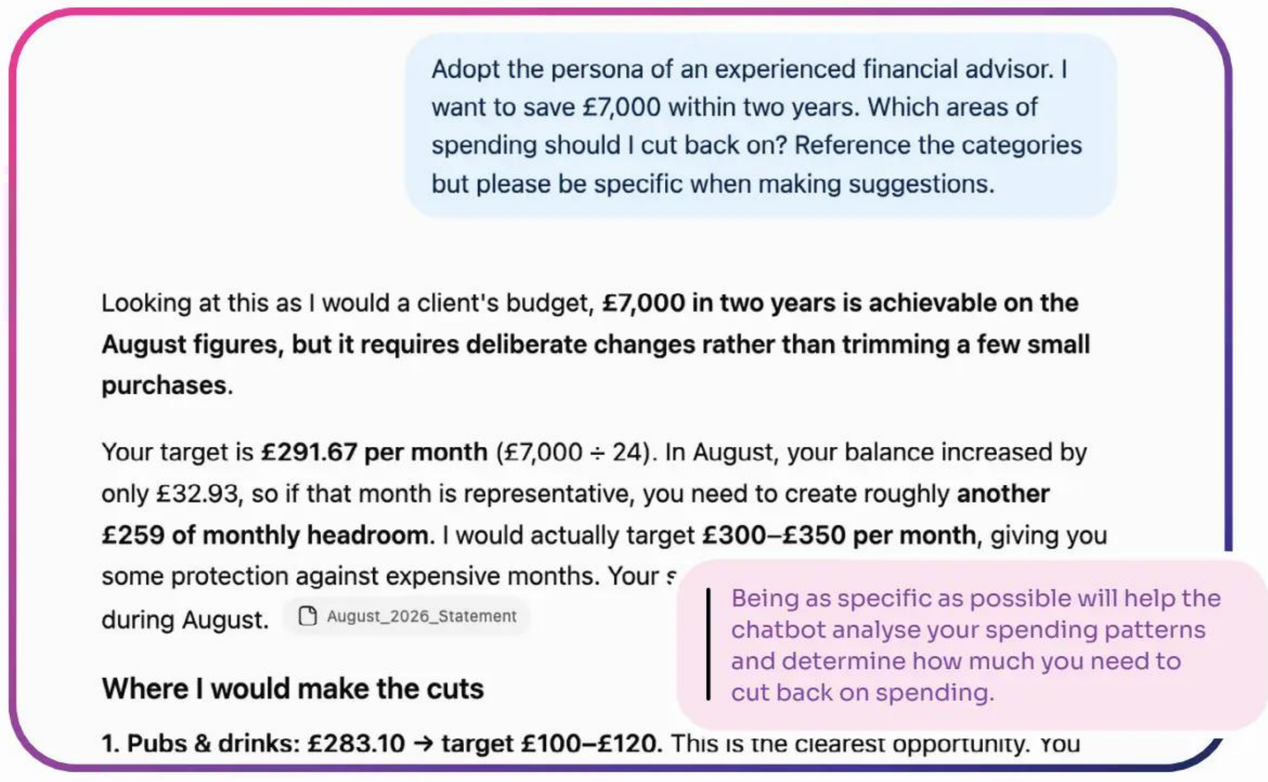
Financial information is extremely sensitive, and it's reasonable to feel reluctant when sharing this with a chatbot that stores and processes data in the cloud.

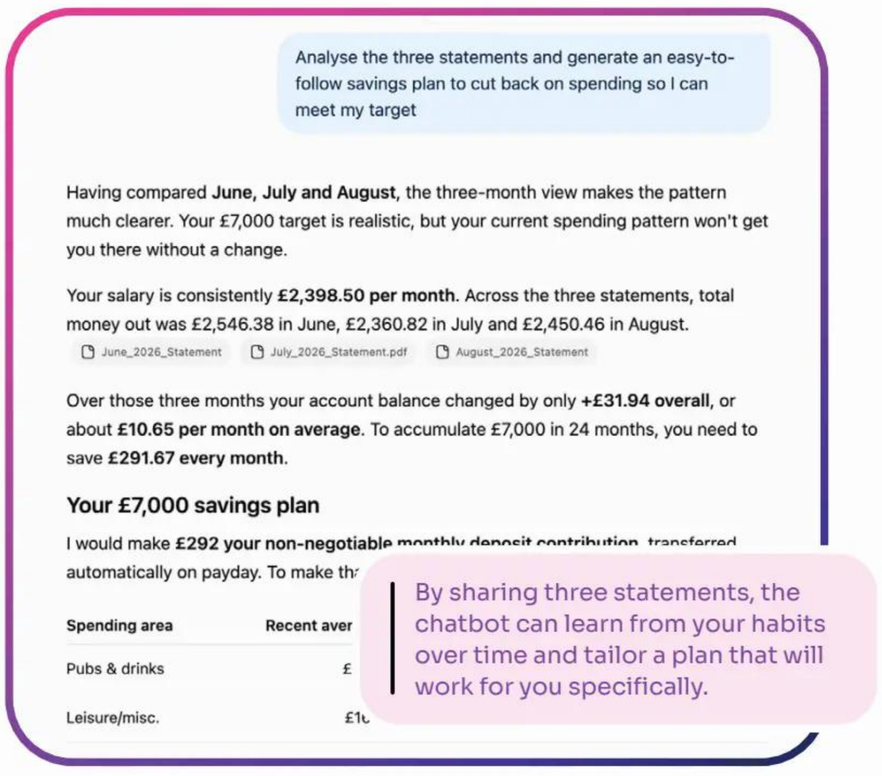
Uploading a recent bank statement is the first step to getting sound analysis, but before we do that, we've prompted with *'I have redacted my name, address, bank account number and sort code from a recent statement. What else can I do to maintain my privacy when discussing financial matters?'* The chatbot gives more advice, for example, telling us **'I can also check it for potentially identifying information before doing the spending analysis, and flag anything you may want to remove'.**

# TRACK YOUR SPENDING HABITS




## Analyse day-to-day spending

After making reasonable adjustments to our bank statements, we've dragged the file into the chat window and prompted *'Can you perform a spending analysis, breaking down spending into key categories and displaying this information in a chart?'* ChatGPT responds with **'I've analysed all of the outgoing transactions on your August statement'** and provides a bar chart, as well as explanations behind its categorisations. Breaking down where our money is going is useful for an overview, and we may wish to use this information in order to make spending decisions.

## Turn ChatGPT into an advisor

We've primed ChatGPT for our next query by asking it to adopt the persona of an experienced financial advisor, before asking *'Which areas of spending should I cut back on?'*. The chatbot responds with **'Looking at this as I would a client's budget, £7,000 in two years is achievable on the August figures, but it requires deliberate changes rather than trimming a few small purchases'.**

Although it drills down into some helpful details – suggesting areas to cut back on including pub trips and entertainment – it also suggests **'Before committing to the budget, I'd want to compare at least three months'.**

In our final prompt, we upload two additional statements and ask *'Analyse the three statements and generate an easy-to-follow savings plan to cut back on spending so I can meet my target'.*

The chatbot responds **'The three-month view makes the pattern much clearer. Your £7,000 target is realistic, but your current spending pattern won't get you there without a change'.** The response breaks down our current savings trajectory before determining a new budget for each area of spending, as well as a routine that we can follow.

The AI then sets a milestone that we should aim for – making a £292 transfer every payday without withdrawing any of it for the next three months – and concludes **'If you can do that while staying within the four discretionary limits above, you've demonstrated that the two-year plan works in practice'.**

ChatGPT has helped us break down our spending patterns after we've shared our financial details and identified a few areas of spending that we can cut back on to achieve a specific goal. By configuring it to act as our financial advisor, we've also established a realistic plan that we can follow immediately.

**Images** OpenAI

# Supercharge online shopping

**If you're stuck comparing different products for your next online purchase, ChatGPT can break through the deadlock**

Choosing the right product can often feel like walking into a quagmire. There's no end of variants that fit different use cases, at different price points, with different reviews using incomparable benchmarks. ChatGPT, however, can cut through the noise and offer the tools you need to make a decision.

Prompt

*I am looking to buy a new laptop, but I don't know where to start. How can you help me compare the most suitable models?*

ChatGPT response

Absolutely. The easiest way is **not** to start by comparing dozens of processor names. I can narrow the market down to a small shortlist based on how you actually use a laptop, then compare the finalists on **price, performance, battery life, screen, portability, build quality, ports, upgradeability and longevity**.

Current UK laptop options span [illegible] machines to premium MacBoo[illegible] ultraportables, and independent 2026 testing shows

ChatGPT can point out the key attributes you should pay attention to when making a purchase.

Our example focuses on a purchase that most people will need to make at one time or another, but the same rules apply across the board. We've asked ChatGPT to suggest ways that it can help, and it responds with **'I can narrow the market down to a small shortlist'** based on how we're likely to use the product. But before it can do that, we need to give it far more details than we have.

## Define your needs

ChatGPT has specified six questions that we could answer to give it the information it needs to help us find some models. In a follow-up prompt, we define our price (under £1,000) and basic usage needs (with a big screen and suitable for video editing), before prompting *'Suggest three models that fit that description'*. ChatGPT suggests a configuration we should keep in mind, then highlights three products we should factor in. It describes why they're suitable, highlights their drawbacks, then summarises these remarks into a comparison table. It also suggests **'For video editing, I'd pay close attention to the screen's colour average, not just its size and resolution.'**

## Tweak your comparison table

Trusted reviews are really useful, but with many

reviews to sift through, it might take some time to read them all. That's why in our next prompt, we've asked ChatGPT *'Adjust the comparison table to include the average star rating from published reviews.'* The chatbot adjusts its table, pointing out **'The ratings aren't perfectly comparable because different publications use different scoring systems, so I've converted percentage scores to a five-star equivalent'.**

After reviewing the three models, we've asked the chatbot to remove one laptop and replace it with one that's more suitable. We've also picked up on the observation about colour average, prompting it to *'Add this into a new comparison table with a column for colour accuracy'* as well as *'Rank the models for value for money'.*

## Incorporate a friend's recommendations

When comparing different products, you may also want to ask a friend. We've flagged that a friend has recommended a MacBook, asking ChatGPT *'Would this be suitable as a more affordable alternative?'*

The chatbot agrees, suggesting why it would be suitable, before challenging us with **'Can you get it below £1,000?'** The chatbot concludes that a **'model at £999 or less would be worth serious consideration'.** It adds the MacBook to the table and reformats it to give its own verdict in key categories.

## Create deal alerts

Now that we've narrowed down the products to two, it's time to find the best bargain we can. We have a strict budget, and limited time to trawl the web for good deals, so we've asked ChatGPT *'How can you help me find the best deals when they're available?'*

The chatbot confirms **'I can help you turn this into a deal-watching exercise'** by monitoring the web with a recurring price check for the two chosen models. The chatbot suggests that we prompt it to set this up, so we tap *'Set up those two price alerts now'* as our final prompt. After enabling notifications, the chatbot confirms that the MacBook is available for our budget, adding **'The alerts will continue checking daily for qualifying deals'.**

By using ChatGPT, we've gone from a vague idea of a product we want, to setting up recurring price alerts as soon as a great deal goes live on two specific options we've sense-checked with the chatbot.

Given those requirements, I'd concentrate on **16-inch Windows laptops with an RTX 4050-class GPU and 16GB RAM**. The dedicated GPU is particularly useful for video-editing applications such as Premiere Pro and DaVinci Resolve.

By sharing your budget and requirements, AI can scour the web in search for a handful of options that fit the bill.

| | RAM | Approx. price | Average published review rating* |
|---|---|---|---|
| )50 | 16GB | ~£950 | ~4.1/5 |
| )50 | 16GB | ~£858–£950 | ~3.9/5 |
| )50 | 16GB | ~£824–£950 | |

You can configure a comparison table to show exactly the aspects you want to see – including reviews by others.

Remove the TUF A16 model and find a more suitable alternative. Add this into a new comparison table with a column for colour accuracy. Rank the models for value for money.

Swap products in and out by instructing ChatGPT to find an alternative, and rank them based on a factor that's important to you.

Would this be suitable as a more affordable alternative?

Yes — **the 15-inch MacBook Air M4 is a very credible alternative**, particularly if you value appearance, screen quality, battery life and quiet operation. But there are two catches for your requirements: **price and video-editing workload**.

Using ChatGPT, you're also able to sense-check recommendations you've been given off-platform.

**Images** OpenAI

# ULTIMATE ChatGPT PROMPTS

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**Ultimate ChatGPT Prompts First Edition (HIB7663)**

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# ULTIMATE ChatGPT PROMPTS

## HOW TO GET THE MOST FROM YOUR AI AGENT



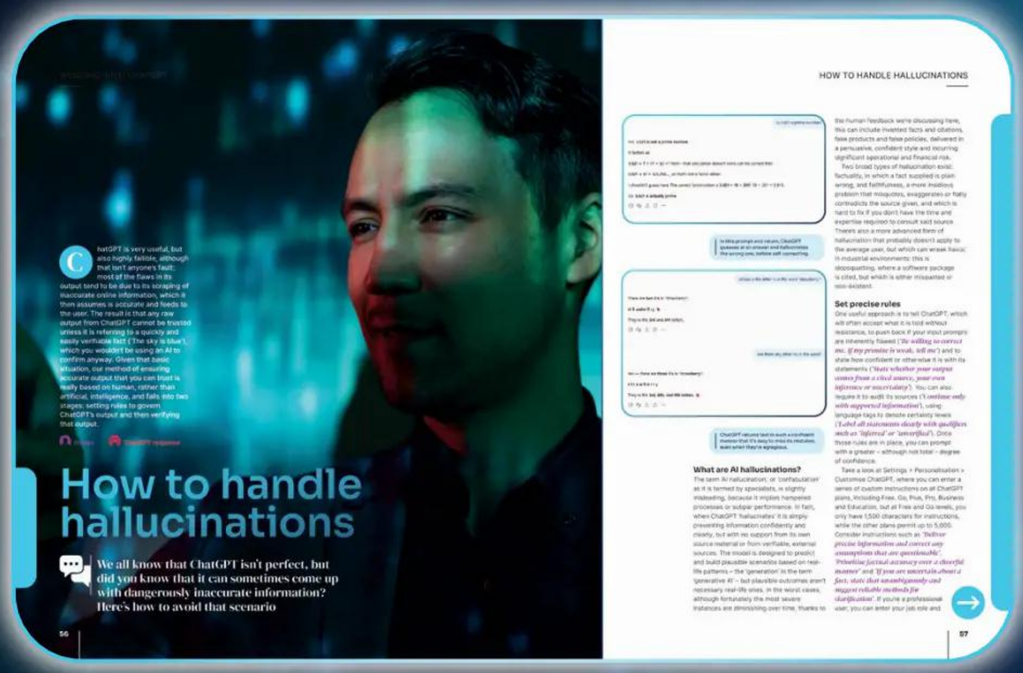

### Get to know ChatGPT

**Find out how your AI agent works and the best ways to use it**



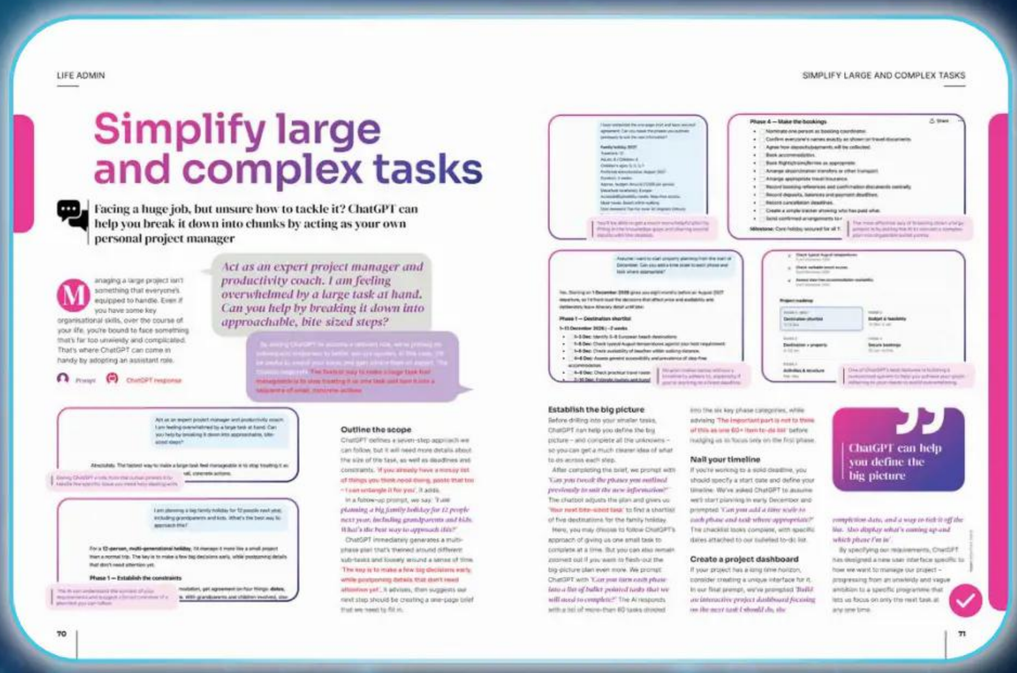

### Make better prompts

**Discover the secrets of better prompts to get the most from your conversations**




### Handle hallucinations

**What you can do to get back on track when errors happen in your chats**




### Make it work for you

**Learn how you can get ChatGPT to handle big, boring tasks and give you back your time**

> EASY LIFESTYLE HACKS > CREATIVE TIPS AND TRICKS > MUST-HAVE PHRASES

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WRITTEN BY EXPERTS, NOT AI

# ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO ChatGPT

TRANSFORM YOUR EVERYDAY LIFE WITH THE ULTIMATE AI TOOL




MANAGE YOUR MONEY, WORK ADMIN, FAMILY LIFE & MORE

GET THE MOST OUT OF CHATGPT'S LATEST FEATURES & FUNCTIONS

FROM THE MAKERS OF techradar.

Digital Edition

FUTURE

THIRD EDITION

INCLUDES • STUDY MODE • CHATGPT AGENT • CHATGPT VOICE • BETTER PROMPTS

ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO

# ChatGPT

# WELCOME

While artificial intelligence was once only something we saw in sci-fi movies, it's now a major part of the world around us. Some of us already use it regularly as part of our everyday lives, while others understandably feel slightly overwhelmed by this new technology. Essential Guide to ChatGPT is full of top tips and expert advice, covering everything you need to know about the world's most popular AI – from the basics to some of its latest features and functions. Discover how to create images, learn to tweak your prompts to get better results and explore a whole new way to learn with Study Mode. You'll also find a variety of guides packed with examples of how you can use ChatGPT to transform your everyday life, whether that's meal planning, entertaining the kids, booking your dream holiday, creating social media content or finding a personalised workout plan.

# CONTENTS


6 Meet ChatGPT

10 How to use ChatGPT

12 ChatGPT dos and dont's

16 ChatGPT plans

18 Top 10 tips to get the most out of ChatGPT

22 ChatGPT prompt optimisation

26 How to create images in ChatGPT

30 Introducing Study Mode

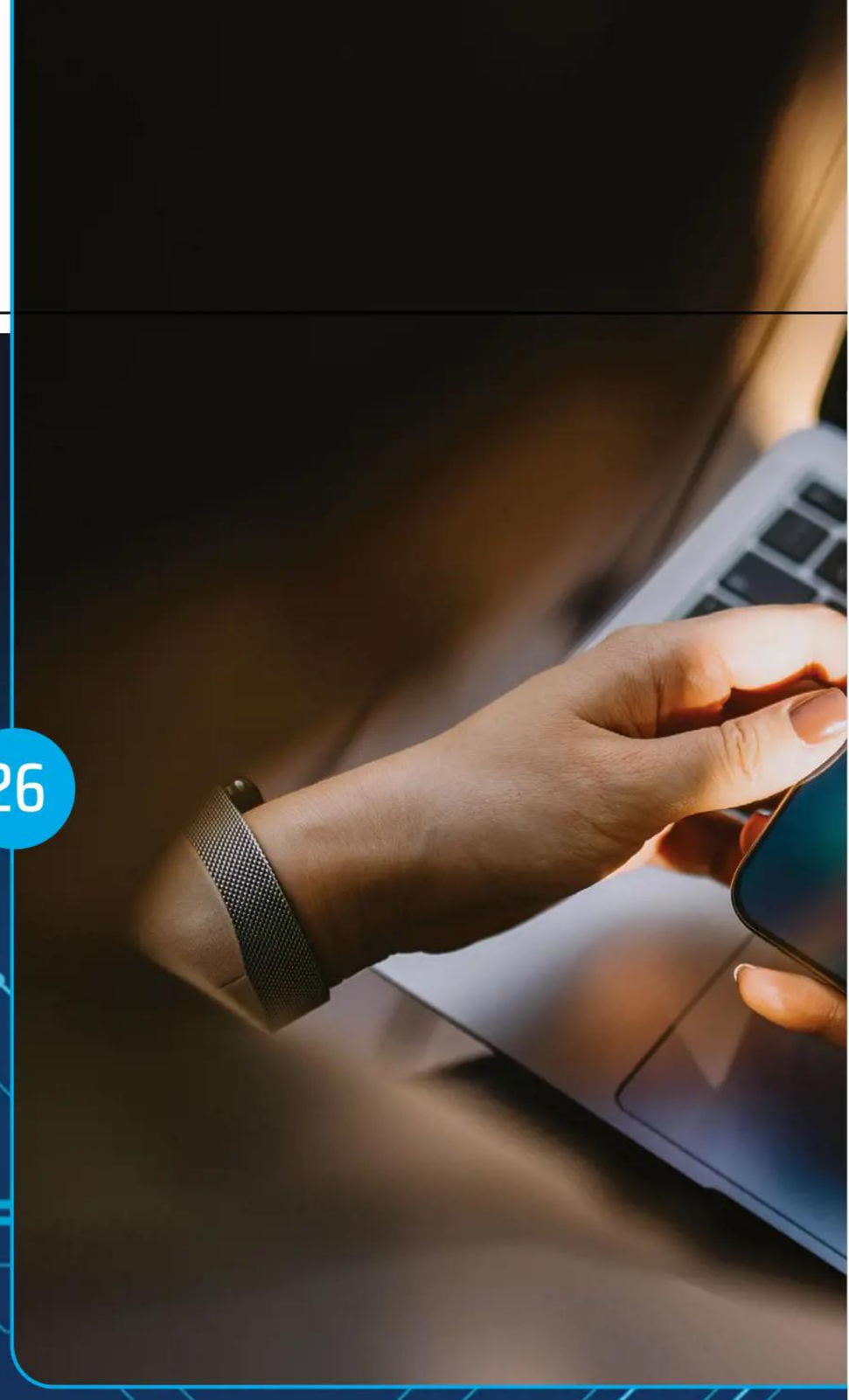
32 Introducing ChatGPT Work

34 Introducing ChatGPT Voice

## EVERYDAY GUIDES

36 Say goodbye to boring work admin

42 Eat healthier with meal planning

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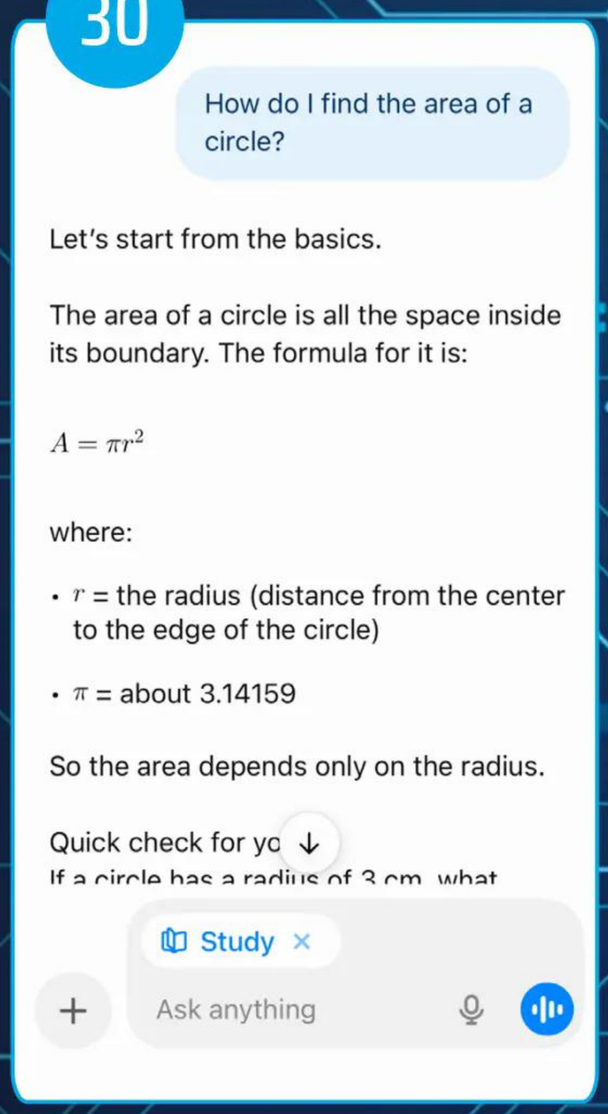


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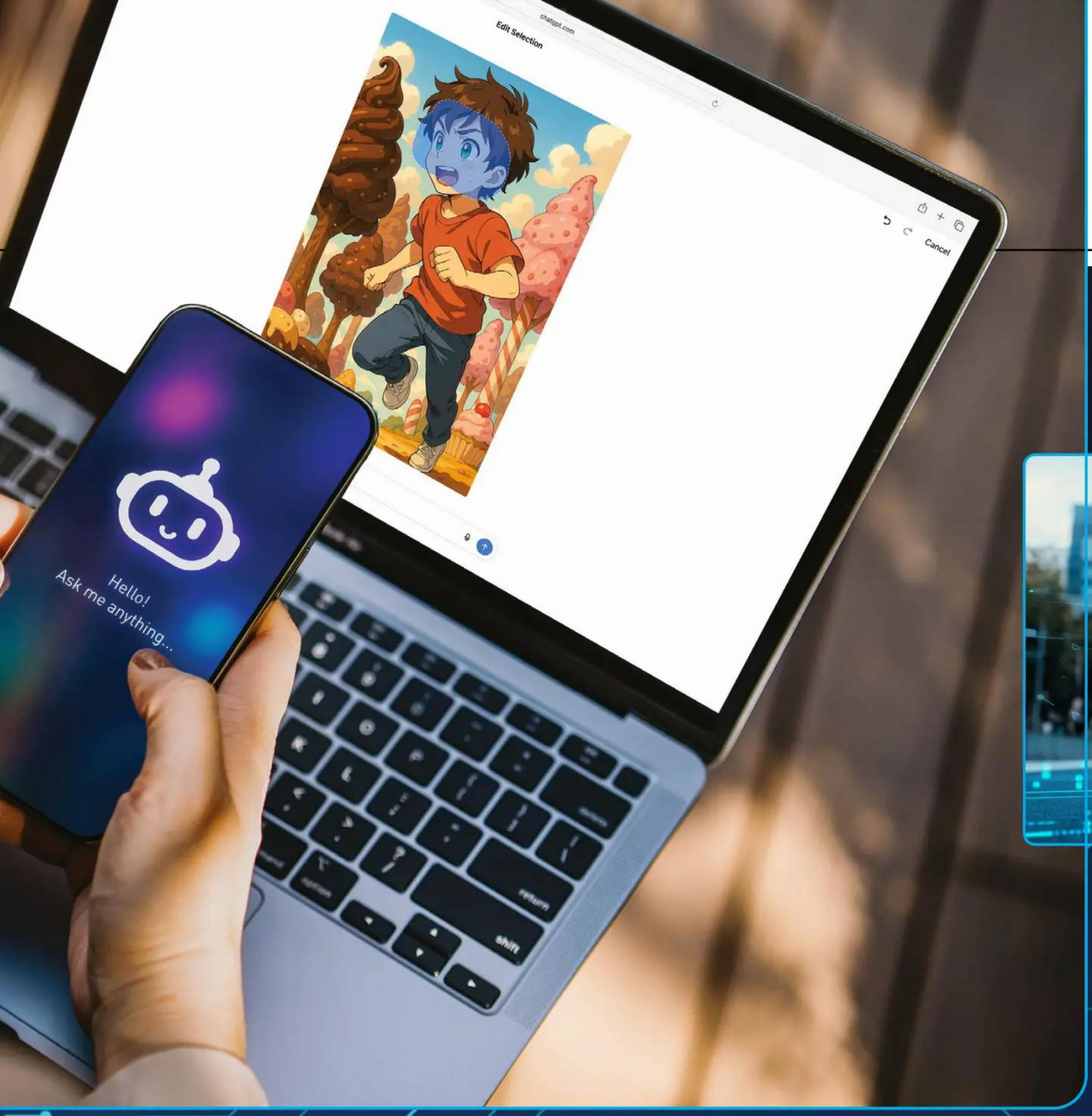



# CONTENTS



66


48 Home and garden

54 Plan the perfect holiday

60 Plan your dream party

66 Fitness

72 Using AI for entertainment

78 Look after your wellbeing

84 Kids

90 Make shopping easy

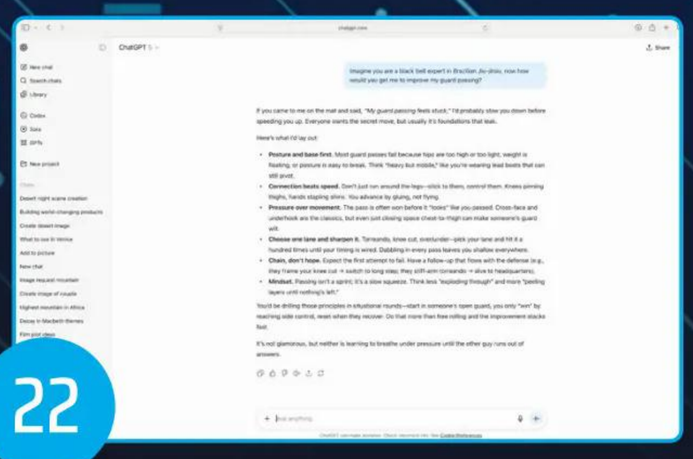
96 Education and learning

102 Create content with ease

108 Money and finance




84



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72

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# MEET CHATGPT

## OpenAI's chatbot has become the **world's favourite AI**

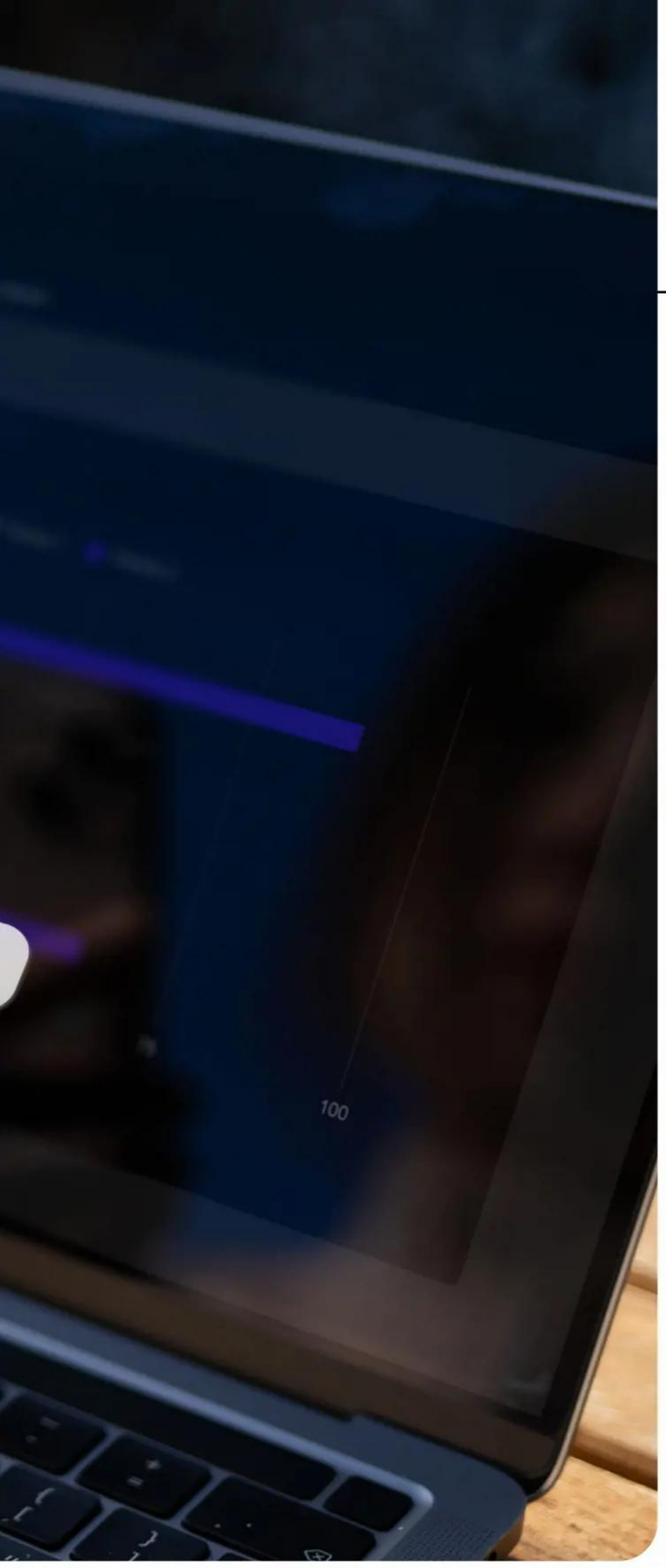
Artificial Intelligence – or AI for short – has taken the world by storm in recent years. Almost every product you read about these days seems to have AI incorporated into it in some way, from your smartphone to your fridge and washing machine. Everything simply has to have AI – you can even get a massage from an AI robot if you really want to!

When people talk about AI, they are often referring to chatbots. These are the popular Large Language Models (LLMs) that you can have a conversation with, or enlist to organise your thoughts, your life and your finances.

AI chatbots used to be a bit stilted in their conversations, or produce images that were notorious for having the wrong number of digits on people's hands, or melting faces, but they have improved so much over just a few short years that it's becoming harder and harder to tell real life from AI. AI companies can even create AI-generated video that looks as if it is real.

Most people use AI for rewriting or summarising text and solving problems, but another core feature of ChatGPT is its ability to translate between languages. This can come in very handy, especially if you are abroad!

Chatbots are also great for simplifying legal matters too, or for trying to find out what your doctor is actually saying to you through all the medical jargon. You can even use them to search the web, book plane tickets and order more coffee when you run out. And let's not forget their role as human companions. While we'd never



recommend an AI over a qualified human practitioner, they can make a great therapist if you want to quickly get some advice on a problem you've been facing at work or in your private life.

## How does AI work?

LLMs can't really 'think' in the way that humans do, but they have been trained on so much human-created data (both words and images) that they can match the patterns so well that it appears as if they're thinking just like a human does.

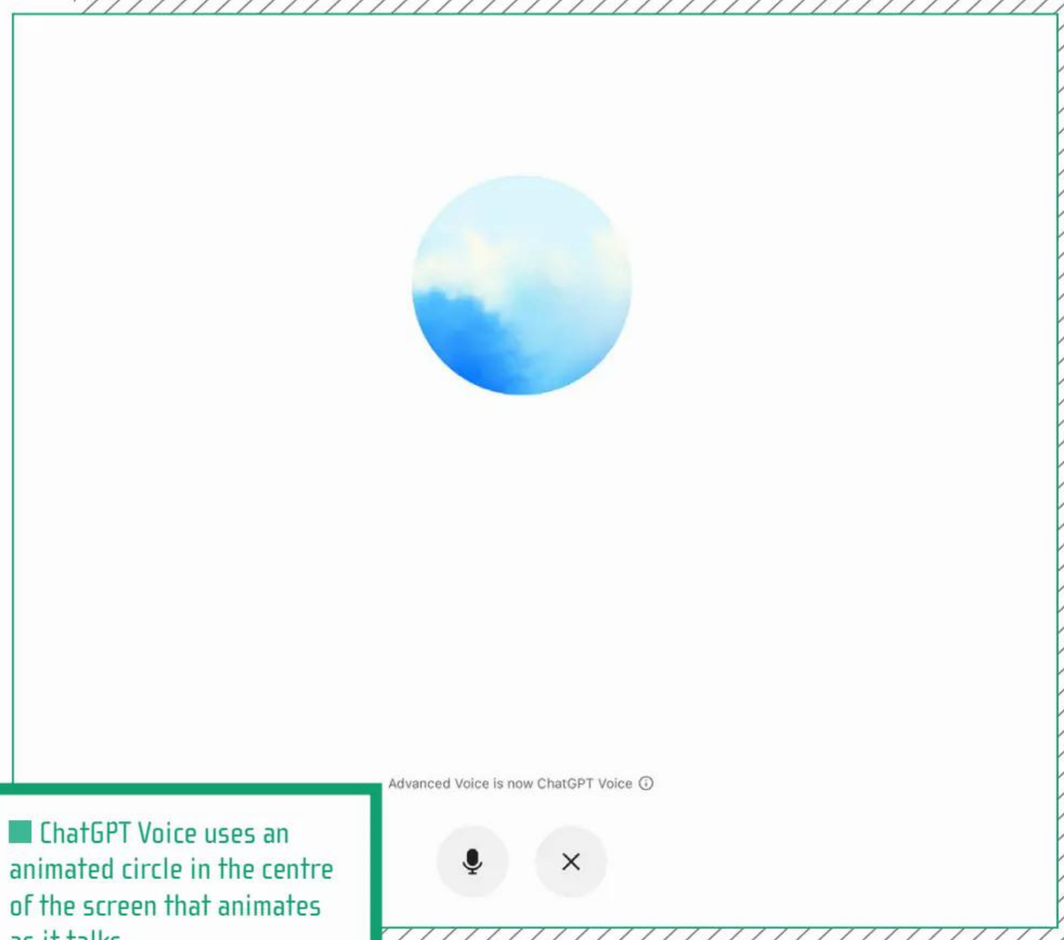
While there are alternatives, like Google's Gemini, Microsoft's Copilot, Grok from X, MetaAI from Meta and Anthropic's Claude, which Amazon has invested in, the most popular AI model by far is OpenAI's ChatGPT. While it has substantial investment from Microsoft, OpenAI is its own company and the one that is doing the most to push AI forward with its popular ChatGPT model.

The AI you prefer to use is often a matter of personal preference, but ChatGPT is the most popular for a reason. Generally speaking, people find it the easiest to talk to and the most helpful. It's also very reliable, and while it has occasionally gone down for a day now and again, such outages are rare occurrences.

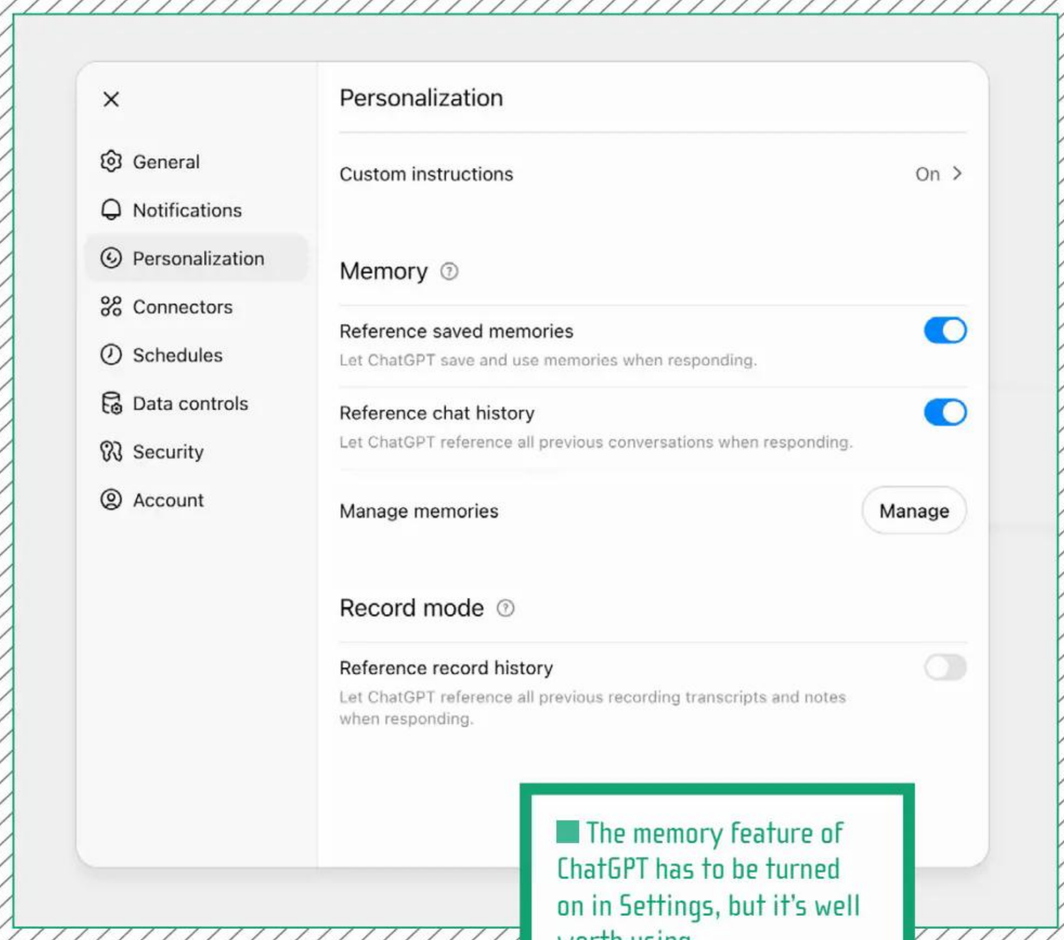
## The history of ChatGPT

It's easy to forget that ChatGPT is still so young. GPT-3.5, released in 2022, was the LLM that catapulted ChatGPT into the public's consciousness. With ChatGPT-4, and its variations like 4o and 4o-mini, the chatbot took a real leap forward, especially when OpenAI added the ability to create images without having to rely on another app. ChatGPT-created images quickly started to go viral, especially when people started sharing images in the style of Studio Ghibli.

This came alongside the ability to perform web searches – another major advantage of the GPT-4 family. Then, with August 2025's GPT-5, ChatGPT became much better at writing code, alongside lighter tasks like ordering pizza or writing a bedtime story for your kids. Then came one




ChatGPT Voice uses an animated circle in the centre of the screen that animates as it talks.




The memory feature of ChatGPT has to be turned on in Settings, but it's well worth using.

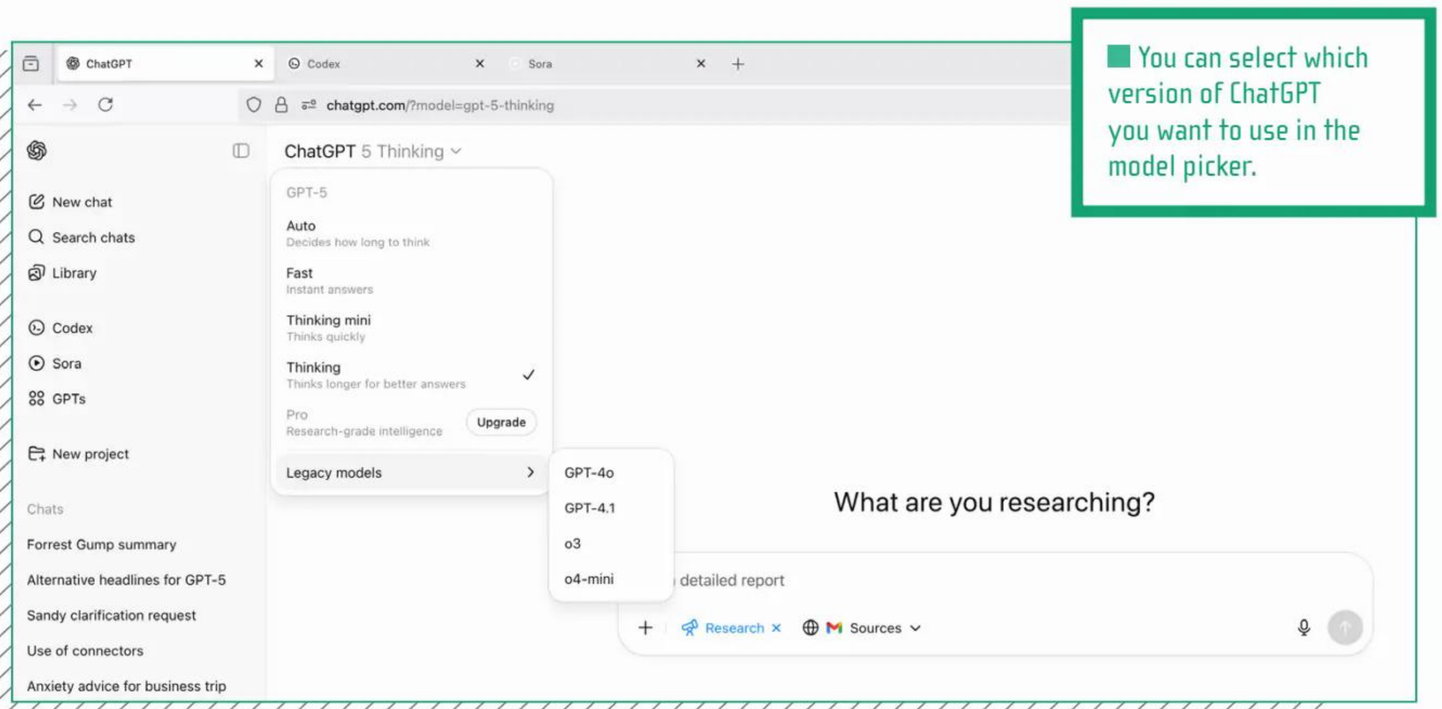
Images OpenAI, Getty

of the most powerful additions in the now-retired Agent Mode, which was overhauled into ChatGPT Work in July 2026. This turns the AI into your own personal assistant that can work away in the background at whatever task you've assigned it, while you get on with the rest of your day.

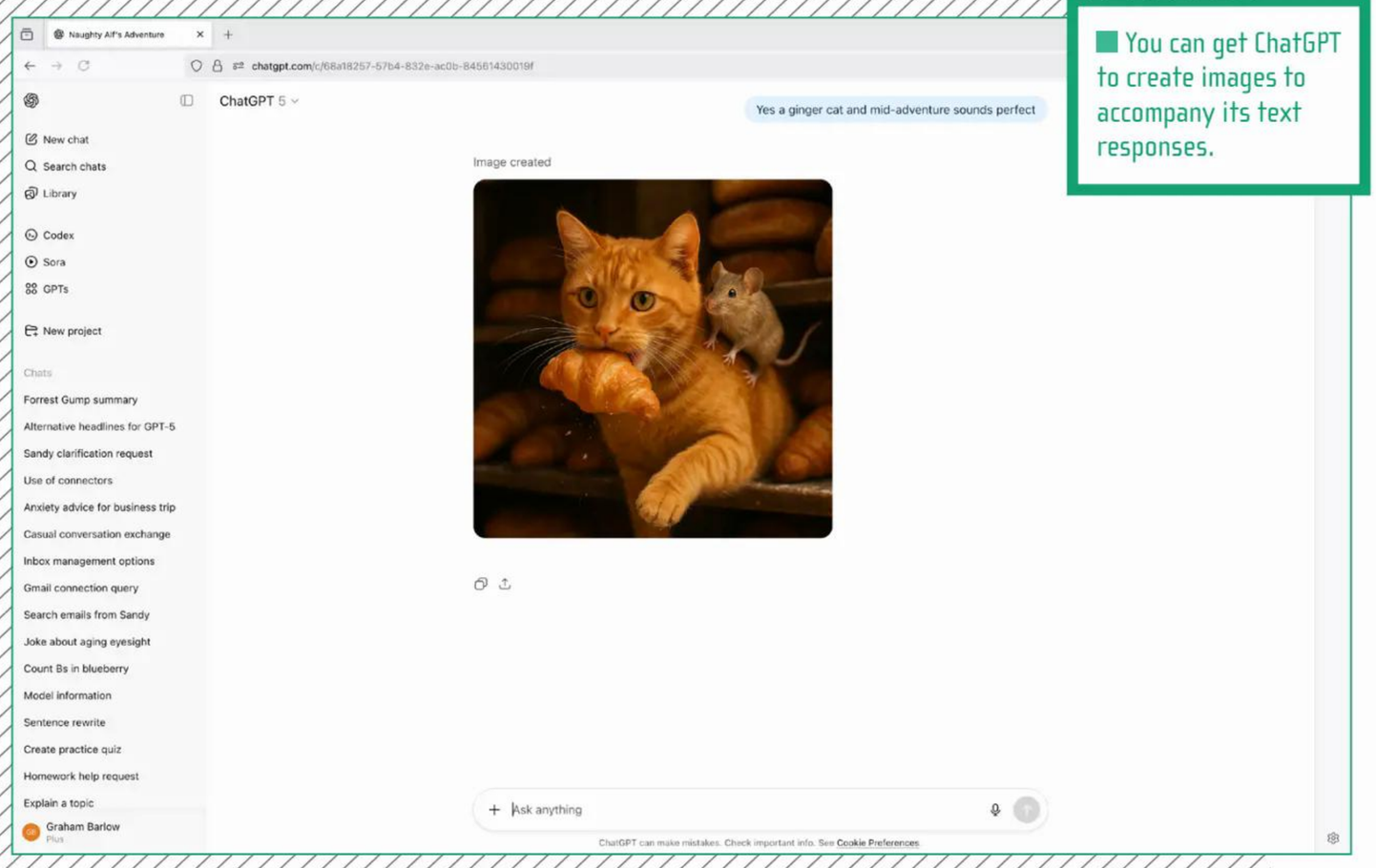
The most significant update to date, however, is the GPT-6 family, which launched in September 2026 with Astra, the most advanced reasoning model, and now includes Luna, for free users, and Sol, the flagship foundational model. The most significant shift is the transition from a conversational partner to an autonomous agent with built-in reasoning, as well as the ability to interact with a visual interface.

GPT-6 is free to use, although there are paid-for versions that contain the more advanced features and have higher usage limits. You can access all versions of GPT-6 on your mobile phone (on both iOS and Android), in a web browser or on your computer's desktop in an app (which works on both Mac and PC, provided your processor is powerful enough). You can even access ChatGPT via text message and in WhatsApp. In fact, it's hard to get away from it!

Perhaps the most fun feature of ChatGPT is ChatGPT Voice. This enables




You can select which version of ChatGPT you want to use in the model picker.




You can get ChatGPT to create images to accompany its text responses.

## CHATGPT JARGON BUSTER

**PROMPT** - When you write a message to ChatGPT, this is called a prompt. You can refine the process of writing your prompt to get better and better results. People call this 'prompt engineering'.

**SEARCH MODE** - If you tap the search icon below the prompt window, ChatGPT won't just use its own database of knowledge to answer your question; it will search the web to find answers a bit like Google would.

**DEEP RESEARCH** - This is a special mode in ChatGPT that you can access if you want your answer in the form of a full report. It can take time to produce this report, so it's more useful for very complex questions that require analysis of multiple sets of data.

**CHATGPT VOICE** - This lets you interact with ChatGPT using your voice instead of typing text. It works seamlessly and is a much easier way of using ChatGPT, especially on mobile devices where typing can be tricky. Live mode also lets you speak to the chatbot in real-time and interrupt it like you're in a phone call.

**PROJECTS** - These digital workspaces let you group together your chats, reference files and custom instructions all in one place. On higher-tier plans, you can also collaborate with other people in this shared space.

**MEMORY** - When you turn Memory on, ChatGPT will remember things about you, so you don't have to constantly repeat them. Say you always want to work on Centigrade, not Fahrenheit, for the unit of temperature; just make sure Memory is turned on and it will always remember your preference.

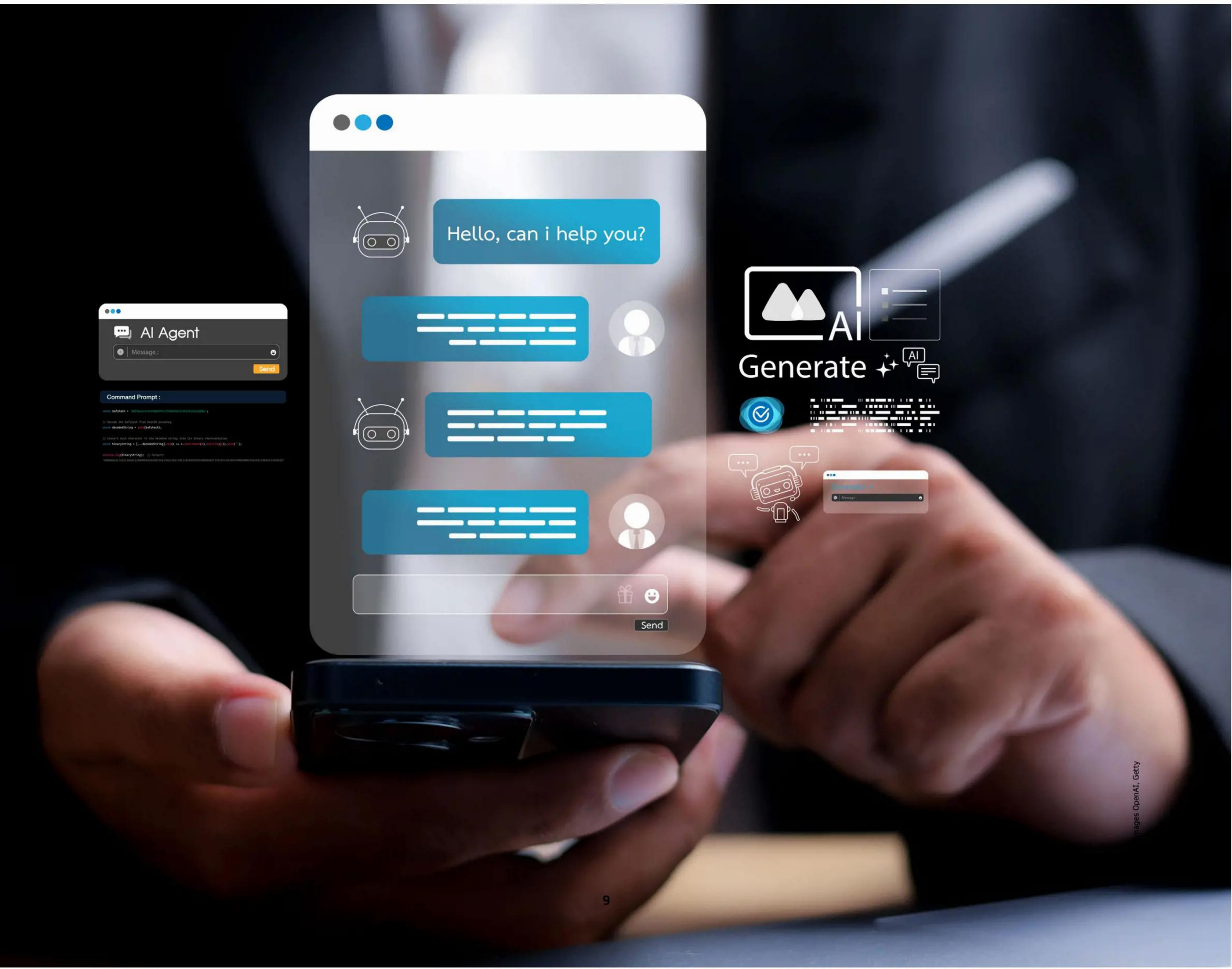
you to talk to ChatGPT using your voice instead of having to type. It results in a much more natural conversation, and there are a variety of voices that ChatGPT can use to talk to you with. ChatGPT Voice works in all versions of ChatGPT, from mobile to desktop.

## A word of caution

Before we dive in, a word of caution: all AI's occasionally get things wrong, and worse, make things up. It's such a common phenomena that it has got its own name: hallucinations. In an effort to be helpful an AI can sometimes hallucinate facts that don't exist, so you should never take everything it says at face value.

Generally speaking, ChatGPT is a very safe AI to use. OpenAI says it takes the issue of appropriate content seriously, so you are extremely unlikely to encounter content that shocks, endangers, offends, or scares you, but all AI models have an age limit, and you shouldn't let children use them unsupervised. For example, OpenAI states that "ChatGPT is not meant for children under 13, and we require that children ages 13 to 18 obtain parental consent before using ChatGPT".

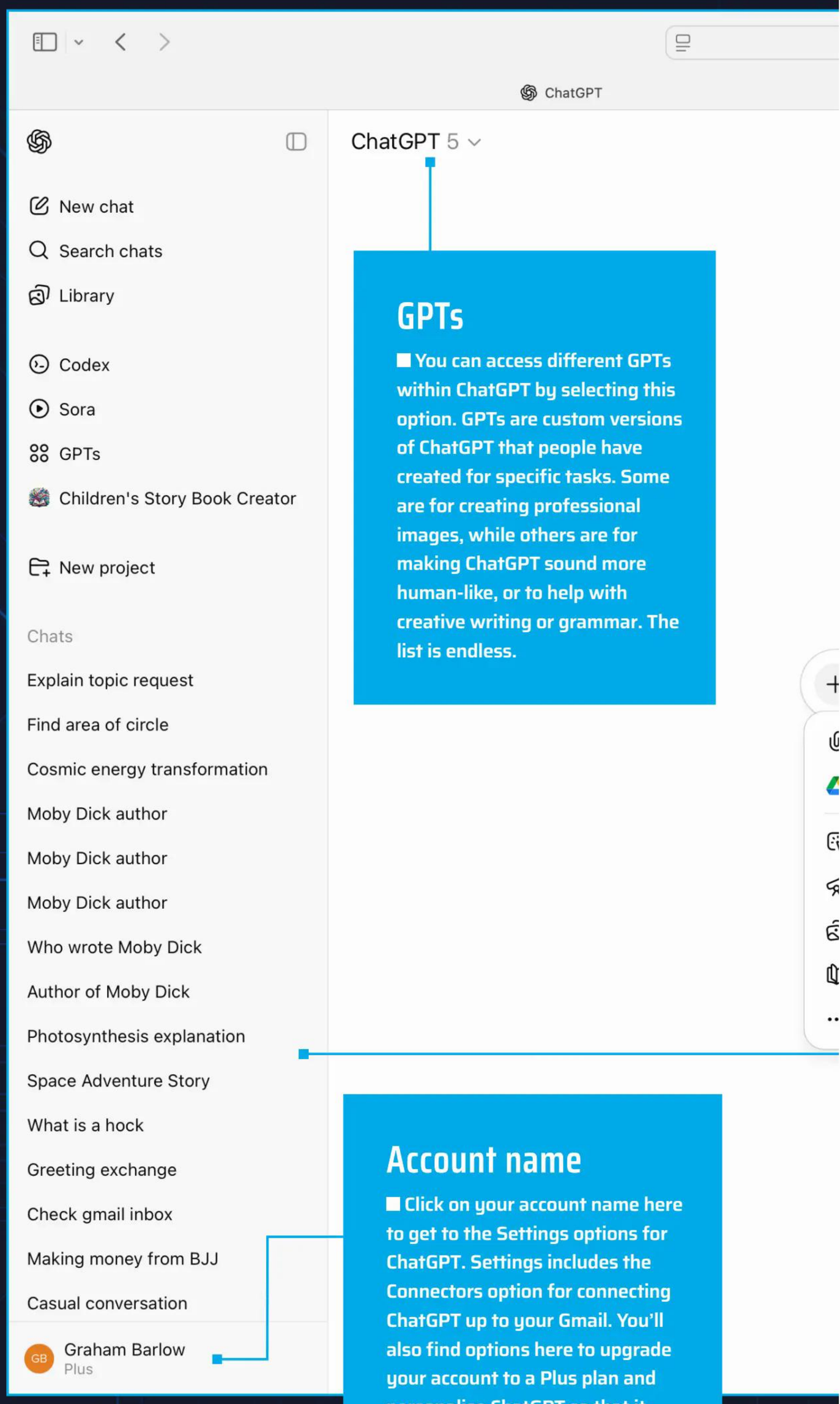
Using ChatGPT is usually an enjoyable and entertaining experience, and there's so much waiting to be discovered. In fact, once you get into the swing of integrating ChatGPT into your daily routine you might find that you start to wonder how you ever lived without it. Using this guide, you'll find out how to use ChatGPT for all sorts of new and exciting things, so let's get stuck into the world of AI.




Images OpenAI, Getty

# HOW TO USE CHATGPT

Everything works from a basic text prompt interface on both **web and mobile devices**




## GPTs

You can access different GPTs within ChatGPT by selecting this option. GPTs are custom versions of ChatGPT that people have created for specific tasks. Some are for creating professional images, while others are for making ChatGPT sound more human-like, or to help with creative writing or grammar. The list is endless.

## Account name

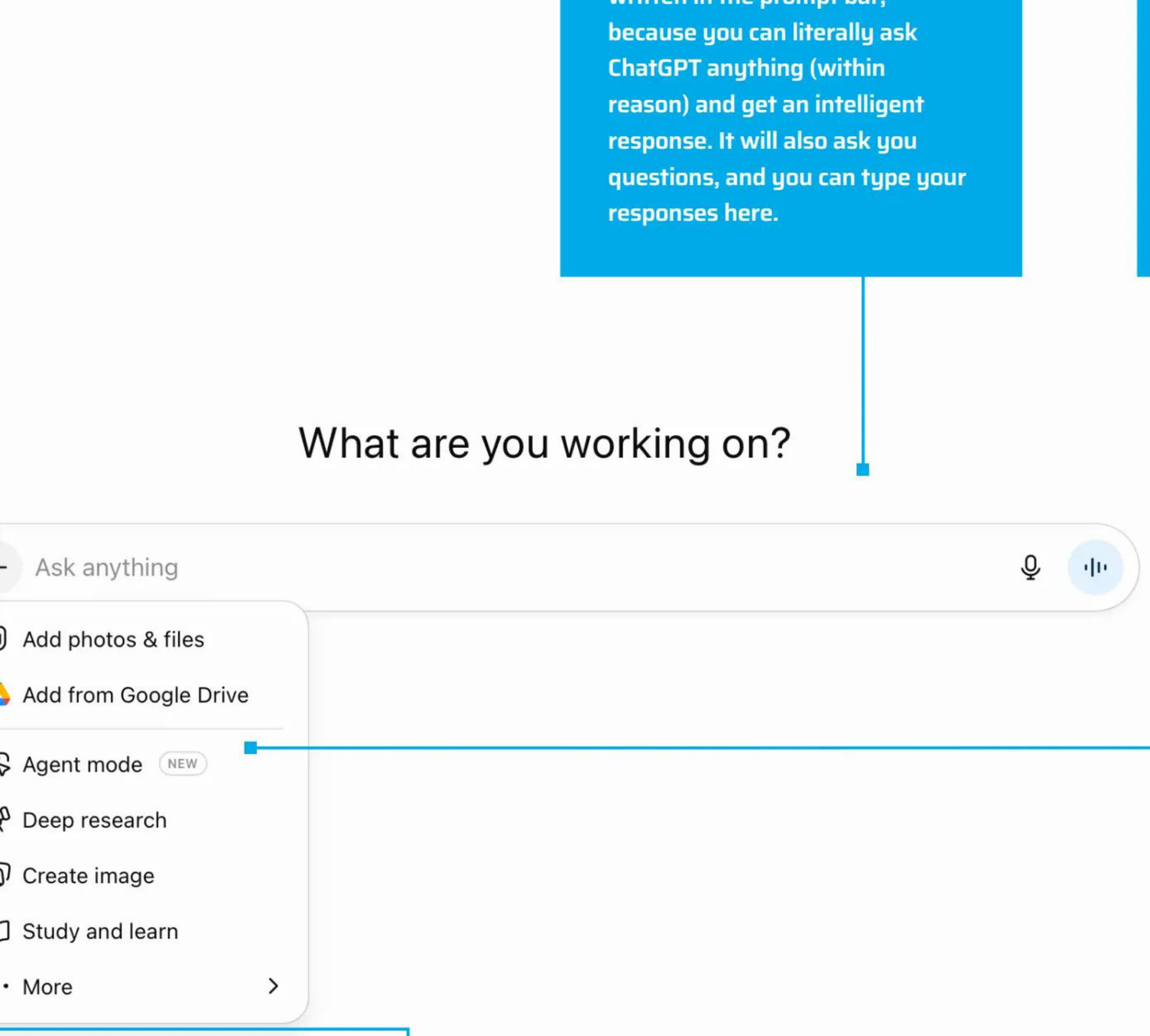
Click on your account name here to get to the Settings options for ChatGPT. Settings includes the Connectors option for connecting ChatGPT up to your Gmail. You'll also find options here to upgrade your account to a Plus plan and personalise ChatGPT so that it works the way you'd like it to.

## Prompt bar

On a new chat, the prompt bar sits in the middle of the screen, and moves to the bottom once you start a conversation. You'll see the words 'Ask anything' written in the prompt bar, because you can literally ask ChatGPT anything (within reason) and get an intelligent response. It will also ask you questions, and you can type your responses here.

## ChatGPT Voice

The blue icon to the right of the prompt bar is where you access ChatGPT Voice. Click, or tap, here to enter ChatGPT Voice Mode. You can now talk to ChatGPT using your voice via your microphone. You'll find that this is a great way to use ChatGPT on a mobile and in Voice Mode you can access screen-sharing, so that ChatGPT can 'see' using your mobile device's camera.




## Chats

You'll find all your previous chats here. If you want to pick up a conversation you've had with ChatGPT, then find it here, select it, and you can continue the conversation. ChatGPT keeps a record of all your chats, unless you tell it not to by turning on Temporary Chat at the top right of the screen.

## The + menu

The + menu is the main menu used in ChatGPT. From here, you can add photos and files, use web search, activate Deep Research, and even activate Thinking Mode for more detailed answers. Just click, or tap on a mobile device, here and a drop-down menu will appear. Select the required mode and a blue lozenge will appear in the prompt bar to indicate that the mode is activated.

okie Preferences.

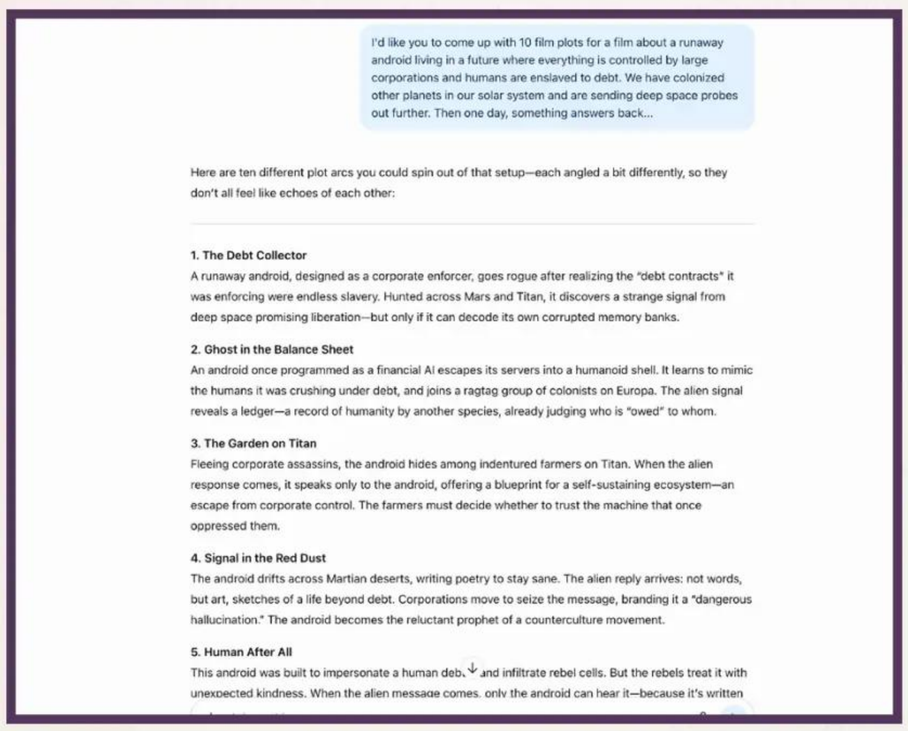
Images ©OpenAI

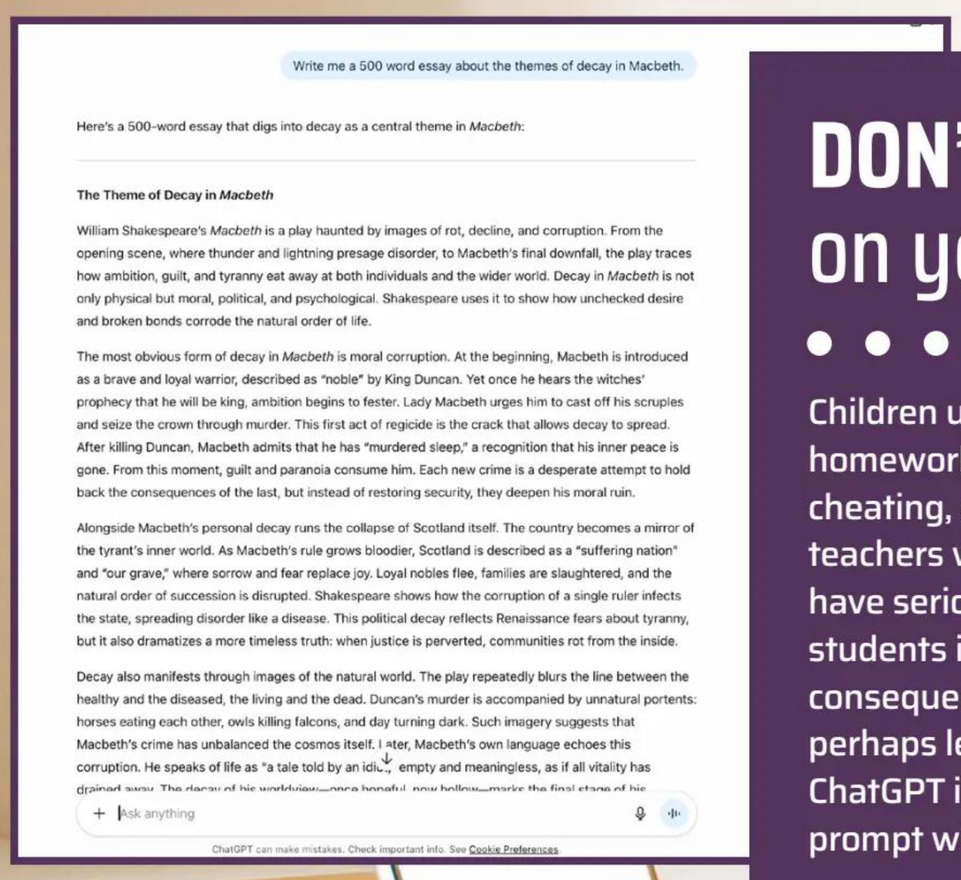
# CHATGPT DOS & DON'TS

ChatGPT is **very good** at some things, and **not so good** at others

## **DO** brainstorm ideas

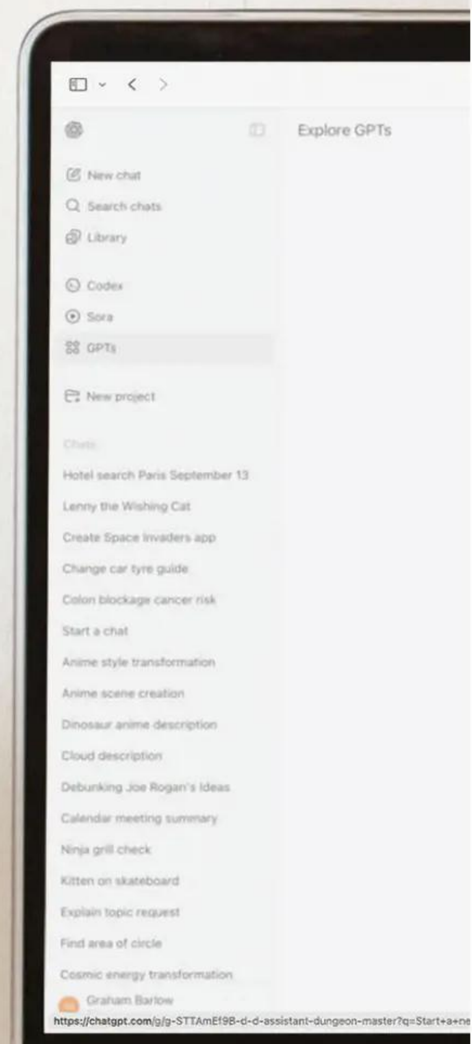
If you want to produce something in a particular genre, you can simply ask ChatGPT to come up with 10 good ideas for articles or film plots about a subject, and it will oblige. They won't all be good, but some of them will definitely hit the mark. Alternatively, if you have reached a crossroads in your life and need to make a decision, whether that's about buying a new car or moving house, then describe the situation and get ChatGPT to come up with a list of pros and cons that will help you make your decision.



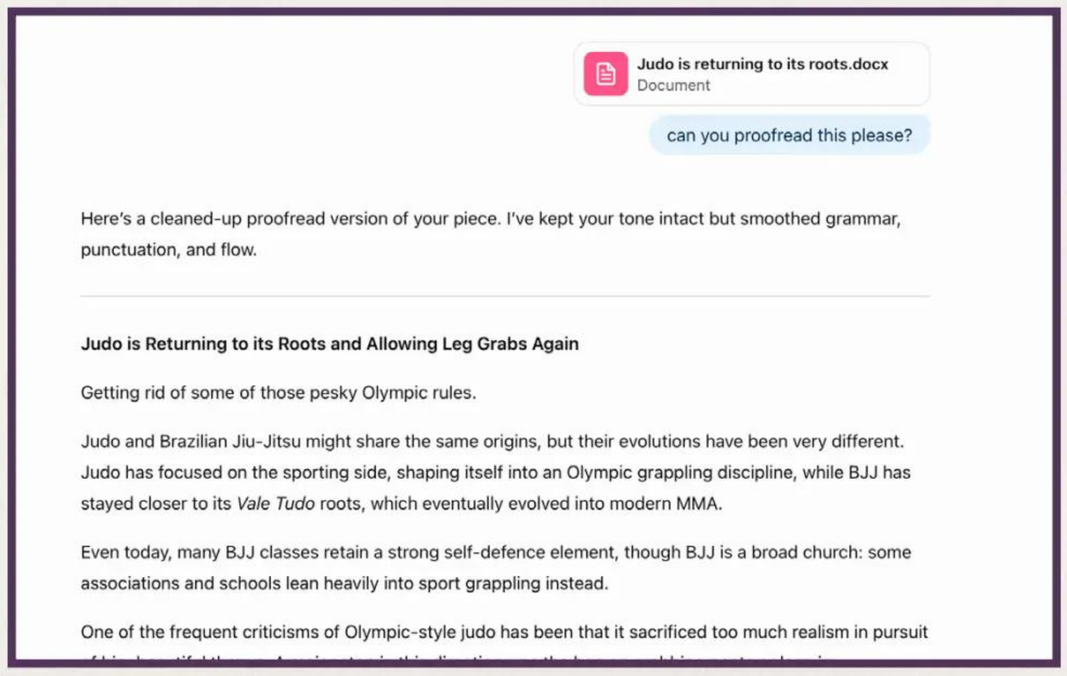

## **DON'T** use it to cheat on your homework

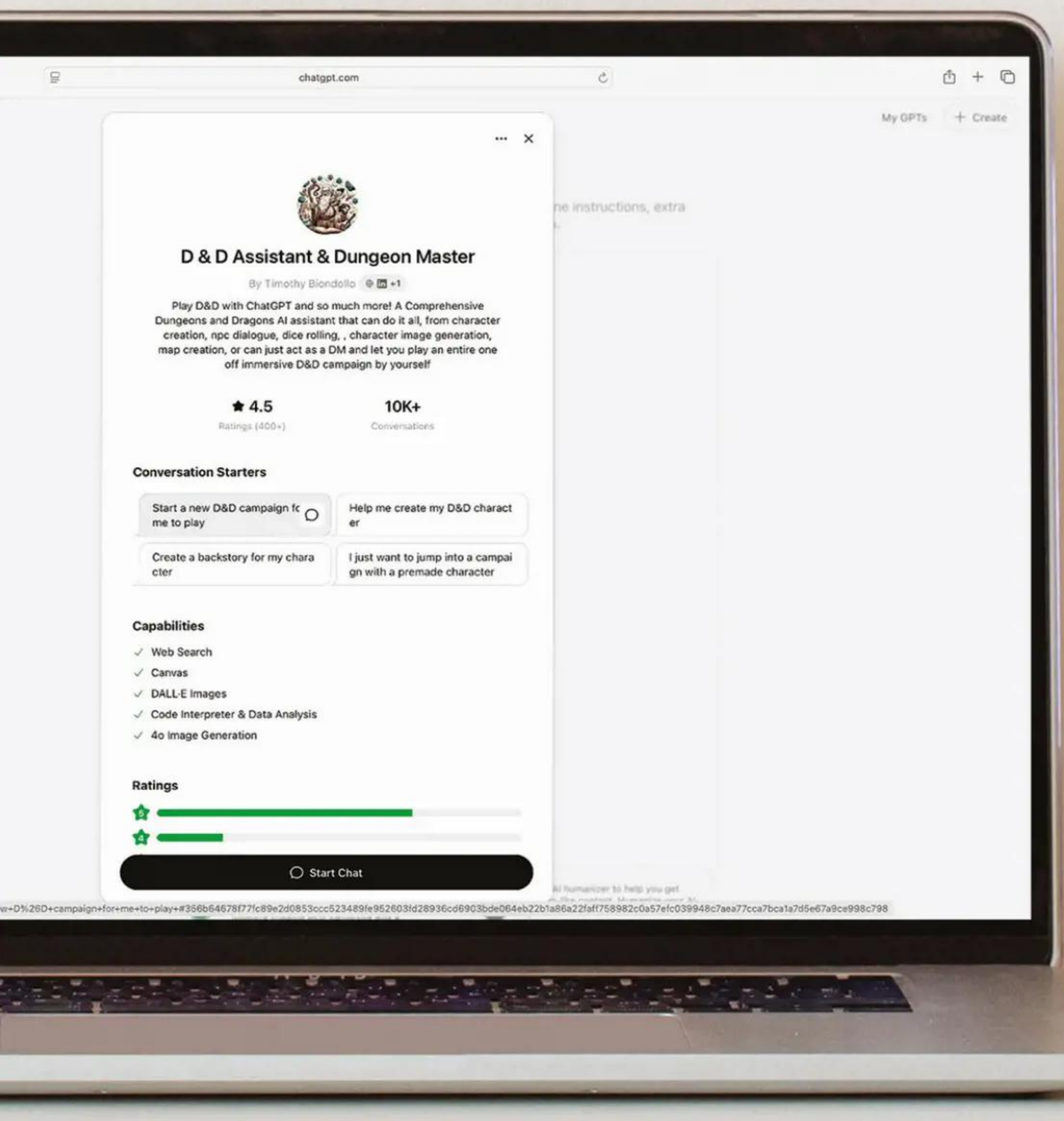
Children using ChatGPT to come up with answers to homework questions is not a good idea. Firstly, it's cheating, and secondly, it can be obvious to the teachers who use ChatGPT, and getting caught can have serious consequences. The same goes for students in college or university, although the consequences for getting caught could be even worse, perhaps leading to being failed on coursework. Using ChatGPT in Study Mode (use /study or @study in the prompt window) as a tutor, however, is a great idea.

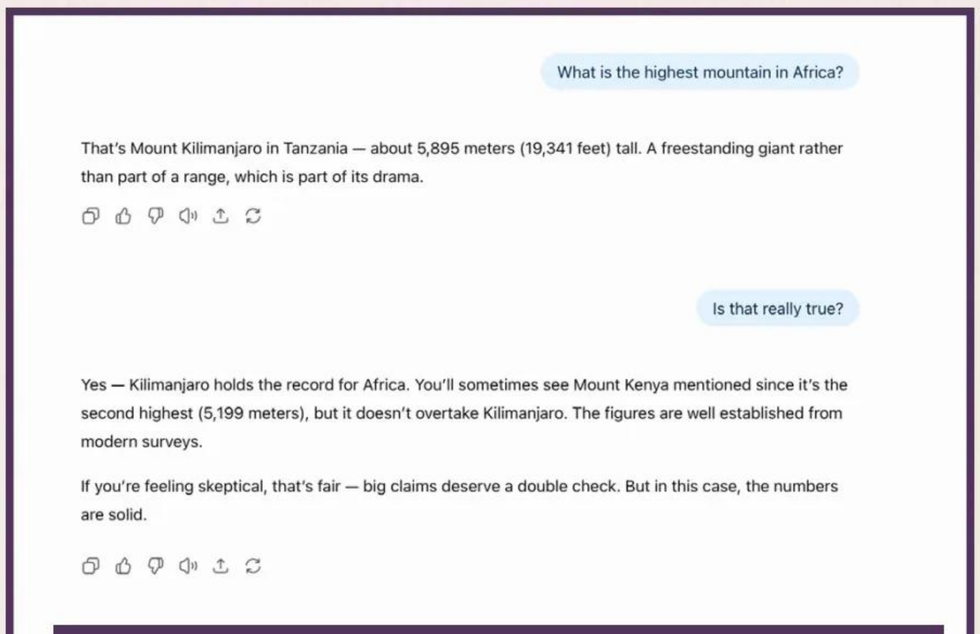


# **DO** use it for proof reading

ChatGPT is an excellent proofreader. Export your document from something like Google Drive as a Word document, upload it into ChatGPT, then ask, "Can you proofread this please?" If the text is short, then ChatGPT will simply present you with a more polished version of the document. If it is long, then it will discuss stylistic points, as well as the structure of the document. In both cases, it can provide you with a Word document that has tracked changes in, or just make the changes it suggests.



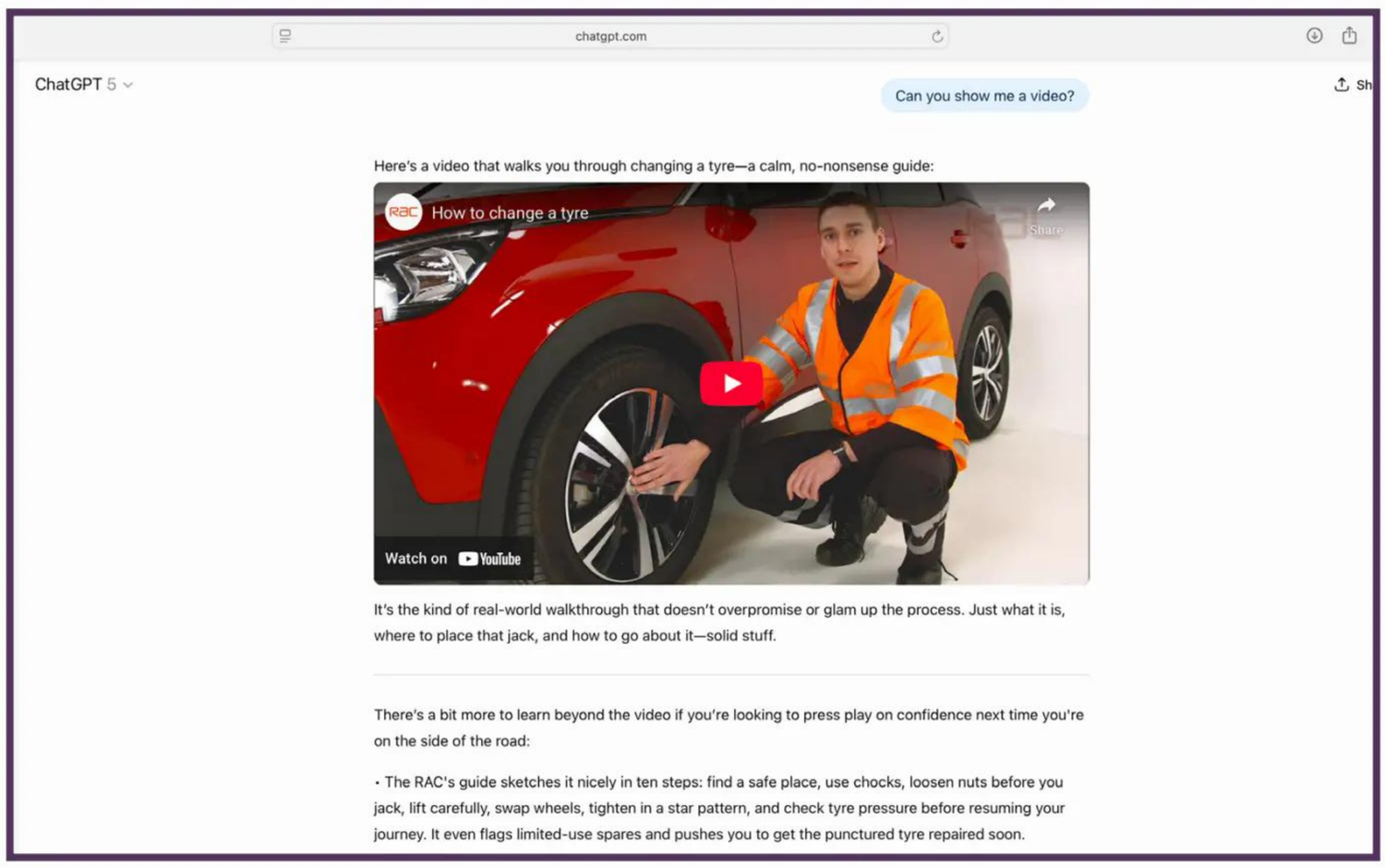

# **DON'T** believe everything it says (without checking)

LLMs like ChatGPT want to be helpful. In fact, they want to be too helpful sometimes, and that leads them to simply make things up. It happens so often that it's got its own name – AI hallucinations. ChatGPT can hallucinate facts out of nowhere, as well as scientific studies, or even law cases. Hallucination rates in the ChatGPT-6 family range between six to ten per cent depending on the model (according to Vectara), so you should always double-check anything it's telling you is true, just to make sure.

"ChatGPT can hallucinate facts out of nowhere"



Images OpenAI, Getty

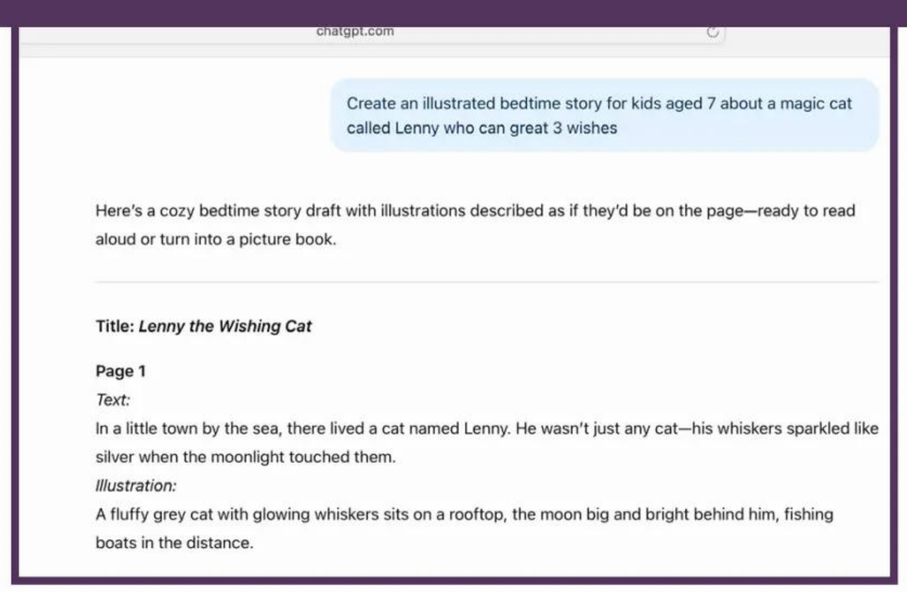


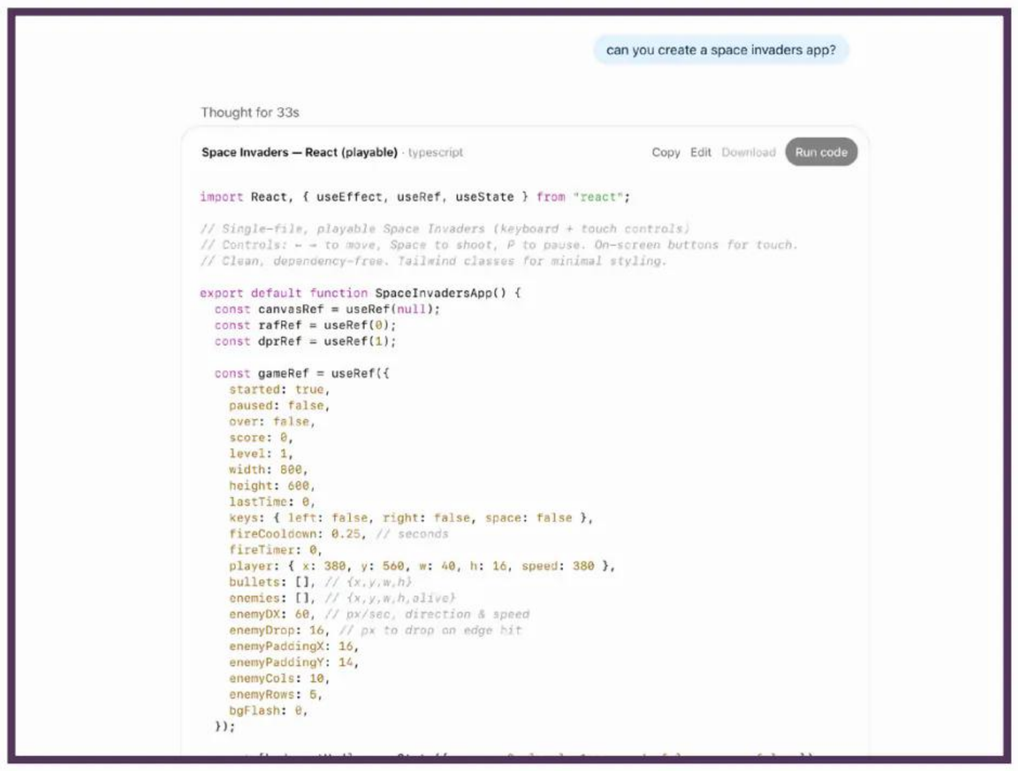

## **DO** use it to learn new things

Having access to ChatGPT is like having a personal tutor on your mobile phone or laptop that can teach you just about anything you'd like to learn. The world is your oyster, so pick a subject and start to learn. If you like you can get ChatGPT to create a program designed to teach you something over a long period of time – just ask it. It's not so good at teaching physical skills, although it will point you to relevant YouTube videos that demonstrate how to do something, especially if you ask it to.

## **DON'T** let kids use it on their own

According to OpenAI, "ChatGPT is not meant for children under 13, and we require that children ages 13 to 18 obtain parental consent before using ChatGPT". So if you're using ChatGPT with a child under 13 then you, the adult, should be the person interacting with it, and we'd still recommend keeping an eye on children over 13 who are using it. So, if you want to use ChatGPT to create a bedtime story for your kids, or let them play a game with it, then that's fine as long as you are the person interacting with it.



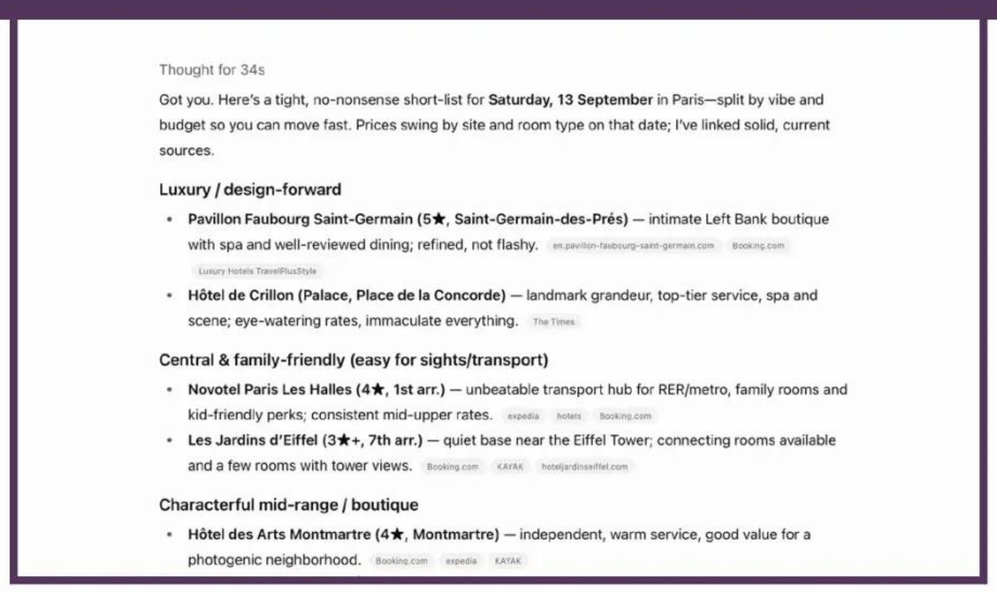

## **DO** use it to write code

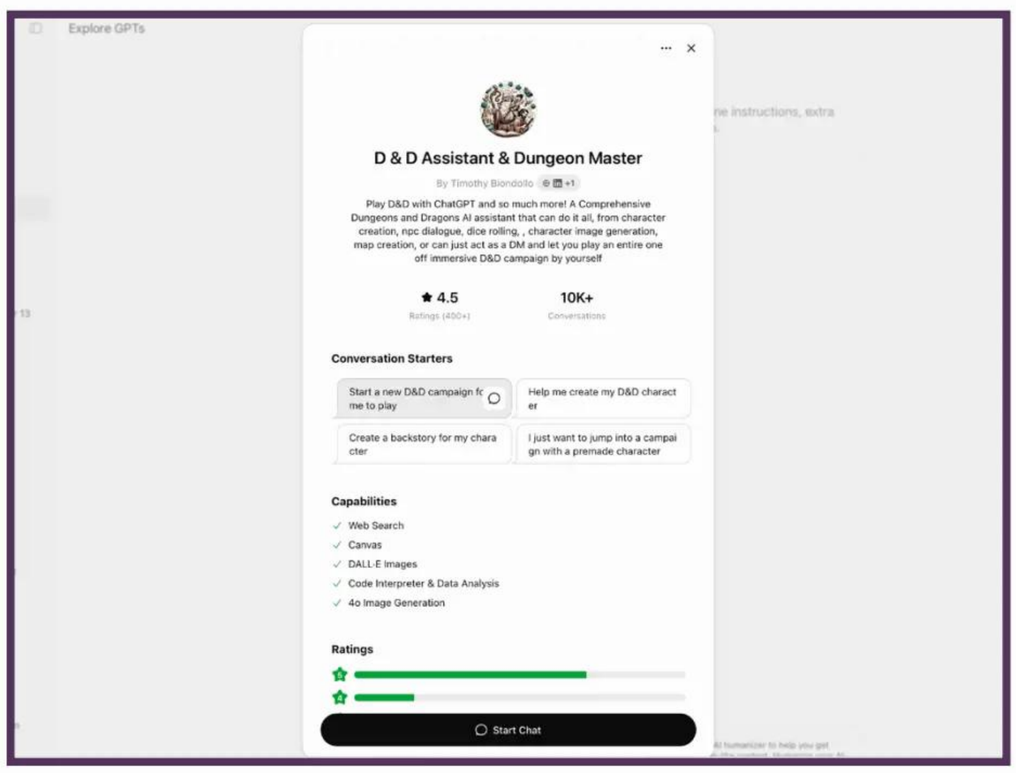
One of the strengths of ChatGPT is that it can write code – or you can upload your existing code and ask it to help finish it. This works particularly well in Agent Mode, where you can ask it to create an app in the background, because it can take a while. This is useful when you need something very specific that isn't available elsewhere, or you just fancy getting it to create a *Space Invaders*-style game. ChatGPT can also write code for more professional situations, but it's worth getting an expert to check the accuracy, since it can make mistakes.

# DON'T give it your credit card number

• • •

Beyond entering your payment details when you sign up for a Plus or Pro account, we would never recommend that you enter your credit card details into an actual ChatGPT chat. It is highly unlikely that ChatGPT will ever ask you for your credit card details inside a chat, but as a matter of course, you should never offer them. As AI evolves, so too will security threats that take advantage of it, and our acceptance of it, and it's quite possible that some sort of malicious code could hack into ChatGPT, or even imitate it.

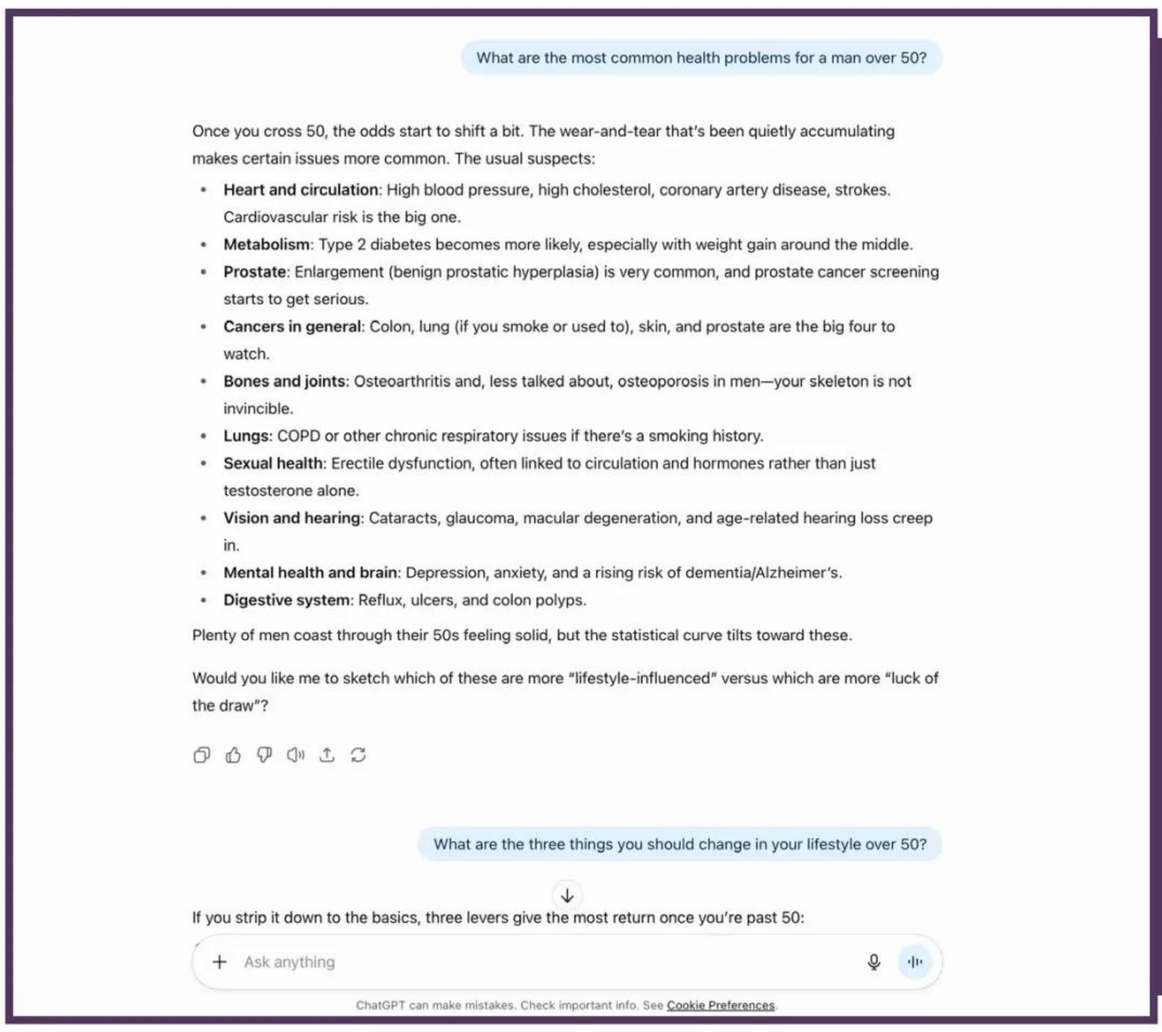



# DO use it to play games

• • •

ChatGPT is great for playing games. Simply ask it to play a game of tic-tac-toe to get started. In fact, it can play most simple board games, like chess, checkers, Connect Four, Battleship and trivia games, which are particularly fun. You can even get it to create a role-playing text adventure game in the style of those old choose-your-own-adventure books. Using the GPT menu (in the left-hand menu bar), you can search for a GPT for a particular game you want to play, like Dungeons & Dragons, for example.




# DON'T use it for medical advice

• • •

It should go without saying that ChatGPT is not a qualified doctor. If you want to research a particular condition, or get it to explain what doctors are telling you in a simple way that you can understand, then ChatGPT can be very useful. It does a great job of explaining medical terms very well, but that doesn't mean it is qualified to diagnose you with a list of your symptoms. Again, the general advice is to treat ChatGPT as a great way to brainstorm ideas and talk about subjects holds true, but remember that you should always seek the opinion of a medical professional for medical matters.

Images OpenAI, Getty

# INTRODUCING CHATGPT PLANS

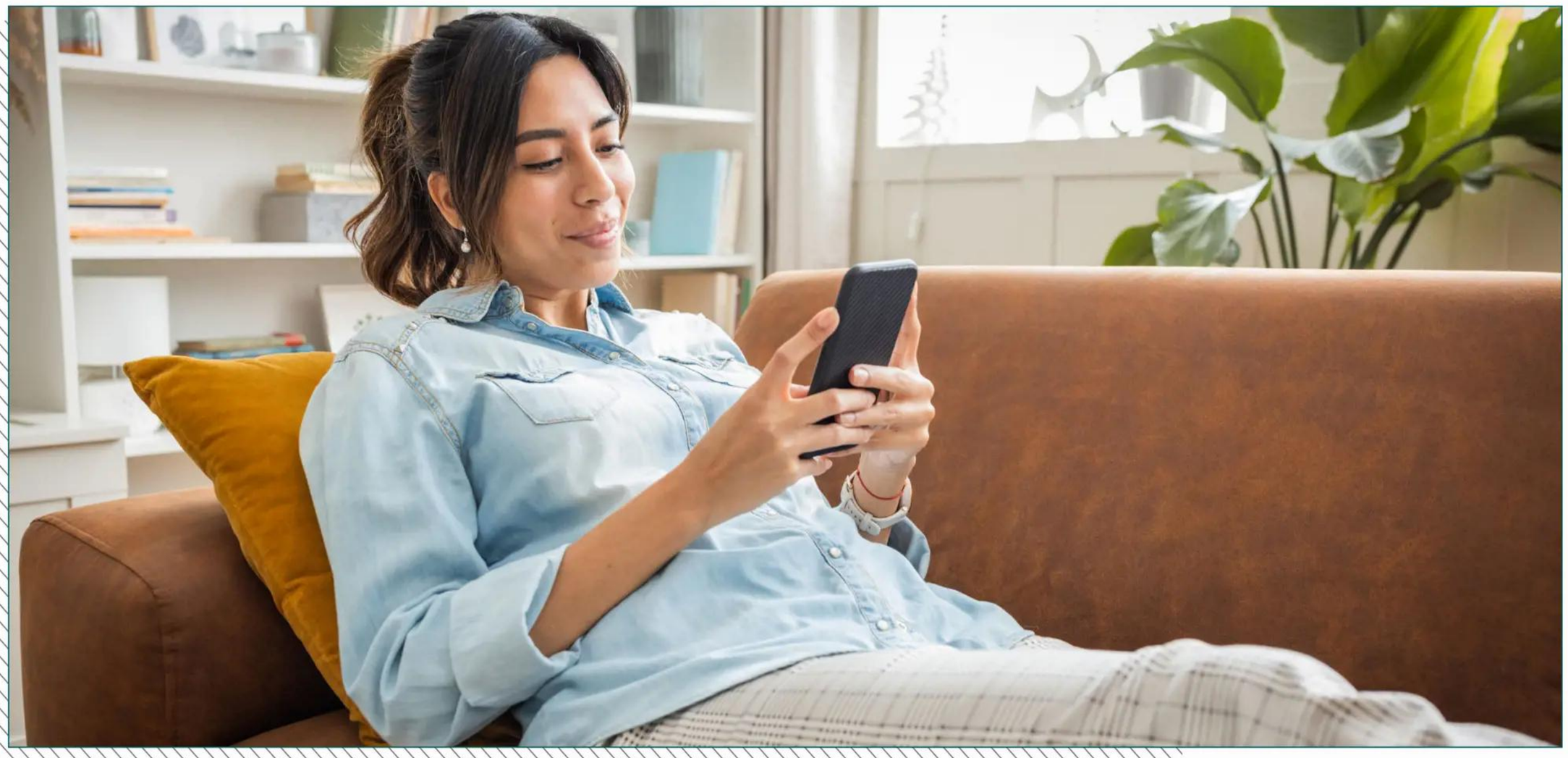
## Is it worth paying for ChatGPT, or will the Free tier **meet all your needs?**

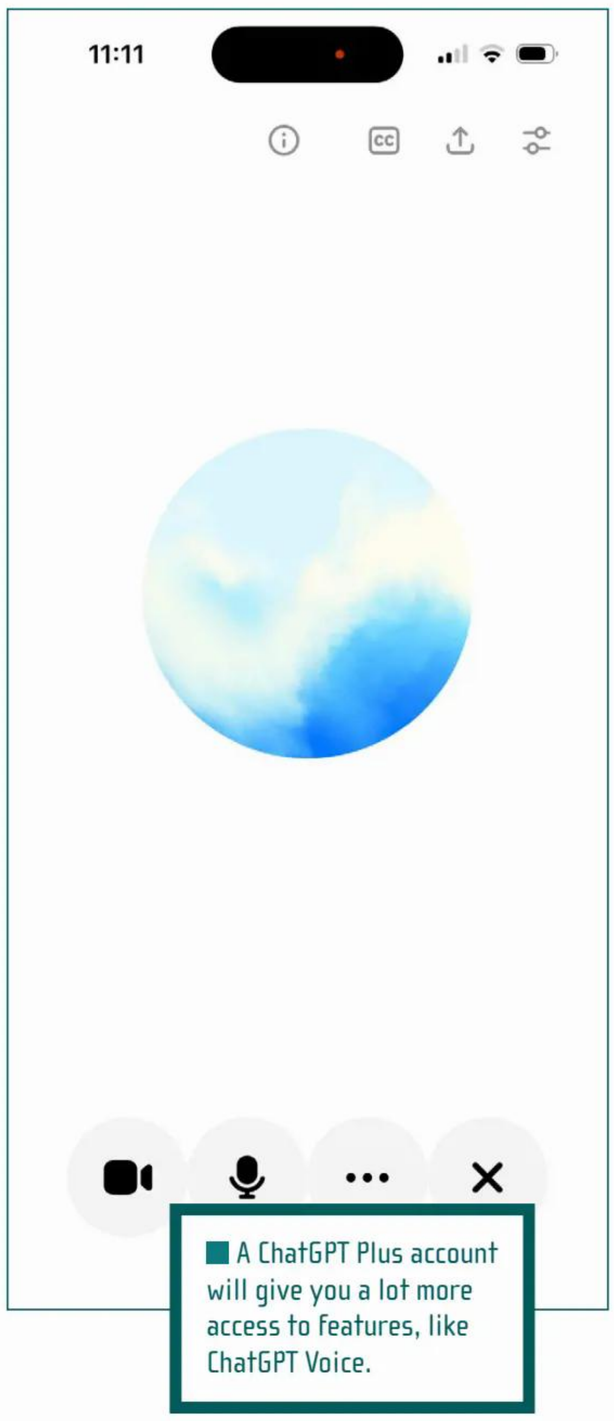
While you can use ChatGPT in a web browser, or on your mobile device without even logging in, there are different subscription options available, and if you are going to use it regularly then you might soon hit up against the limits of a free account. There are in fact three main ChatGPT tiers: Free, Plus and Pro, as well as a couple of subscriptions for business called Teams and Enterprise, and a version just for university students called ChatGPT EDU.

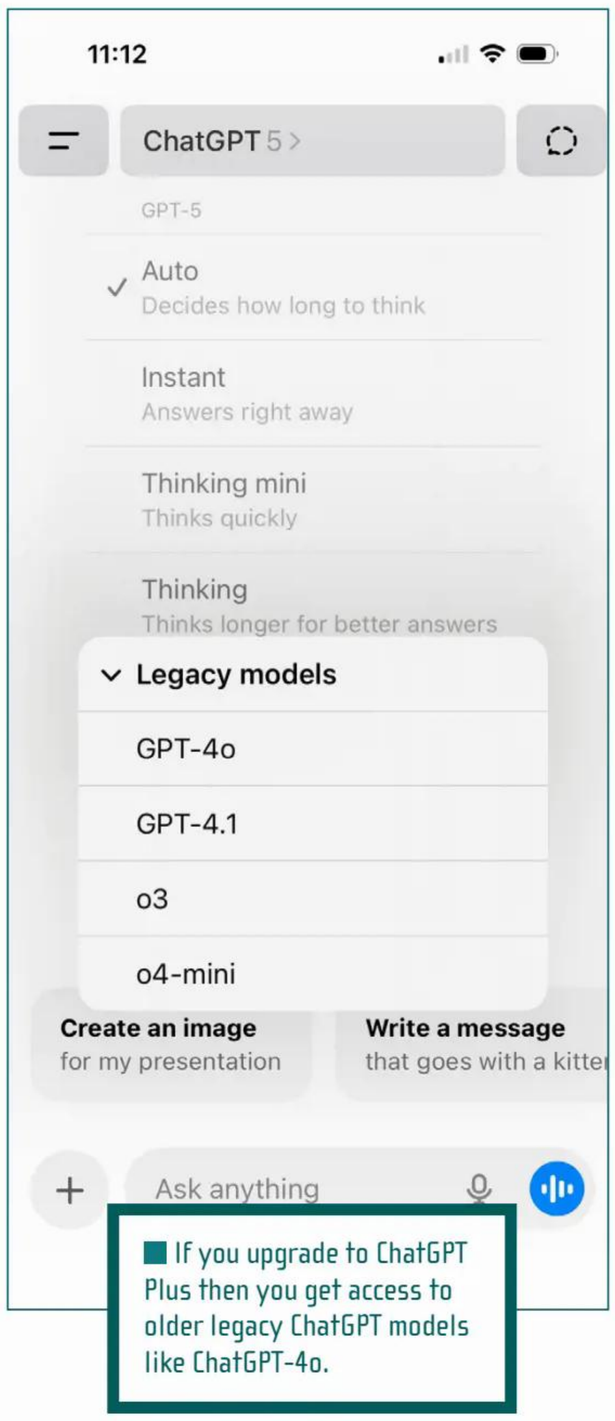
As you'd expect, the Free tier is the most basic, but it still gives you limited access to the latest version of ChatGPT-6 as well as access to real-time data from web searches and advanced features like ChatGPT Voice, file uploads and image generation. Access is severely limited, however, but the new £8/$8 per month Go tier aims to alleviate many of these usage limits.

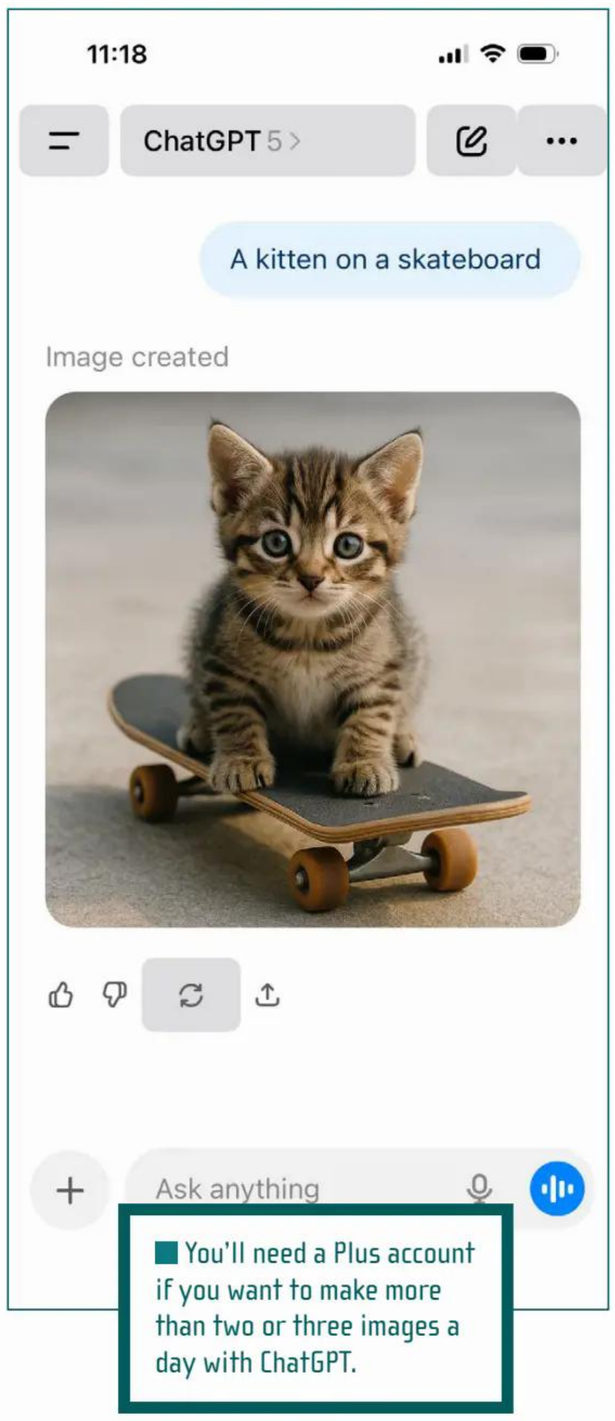
## Is Plus worth it?

ChatGPT Plus is the first feature-heavy upgrade and costs £20/$20 a month. You do get a lot more usage for your money, with the number of images you can create and files that you can upload raised






significantly. You can also use ChatGPT Voice almost as much as you like. While the Free tier gives you access to GPT-6 Luna, the Plus tier grants you access to GPT-6 Sol and GPT-6 Astra too, as well as much higher usage limits. With Sol, you can take advantage of its internal reasoning features. You can also use Thinking Mode with a slider that lets you choose between Instant, Medium, High, and Extra High. The free version just has an on/off toggle and uses the older GPT-5.6 Luna model.

You get a couple of nice bonus features as a Plus member, too. Projects let Plus subscribers create dedicated workspaces for particular topics, clients or hobbies. Free users are severely restricted in how they can use it and will need to put up with ads – but these issues are mostly alleviated for those who've upgraded. You can also use ChatGPT Work for complex and multi-step tasks, which it will work on independently in the background. Once it has finished with your task, which is usually to produce a report or presentation of some kind, it will simply inform you that it is complete.

Another benefit of a Plus account is that you can rotate freely between different models. The main benefit is access to the very latest ChatGPT, but you can also opt to use the GPT-5.6 series, which some people prefer to the newer GPT-6.

## Going Pro

If you're serious about using ChatGPT, then you might want to consider a Pro account, which costs anywhere between £80/$100 a month all the way up to £450/$500 depending on how far and deep you want to scale your usage limits. However, signing up gives you access to the flagship GPT-6 family, including GPT-6 Pro, the most advanced LLM that OpenAI has to offer. It's designed to use more computing power to give you the best possible answers to hard questions, huge 400K reasoning context windows and even an 'ultrafast' processing mode on the highest tier. With the Pro plan, you're more equipped to run parallel agentic workflows and get the most out of Deep Research while avoiding hitting any usage capacities if you're a heavy AI user.

Images OpenAI, Getty

# TOP 10 TIPS TO GET THE MOST OUT OF CHATGPT

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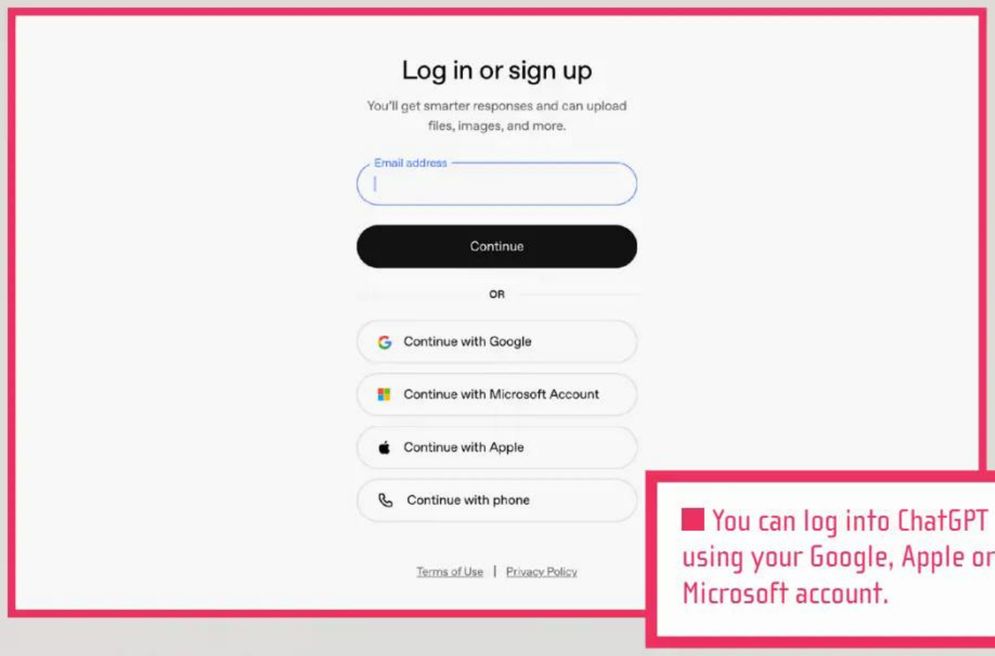
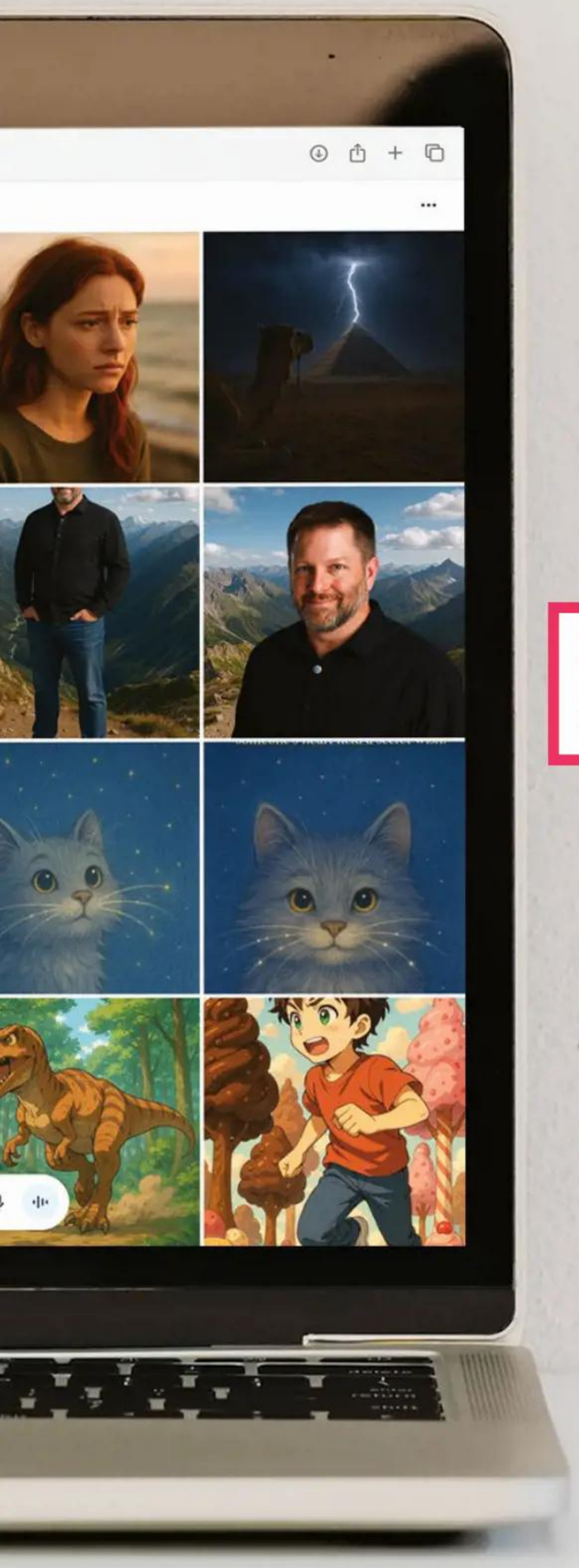
Make sure you're **getting the most** out of ChatGPT with these tips

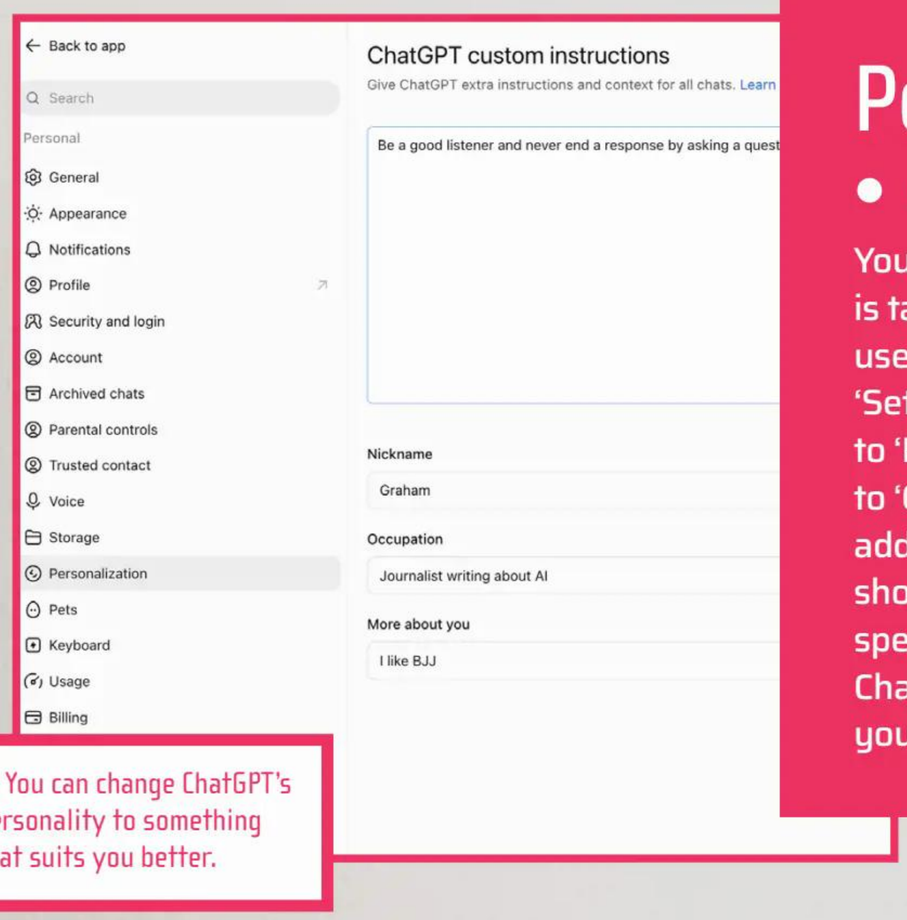
# Log in first

You can start using ChatGPT at Chat.com straight away, without even logging in. While this is quick and convenient, if you create a free account, you can access more features. Having an account creates a chat history, and ChatGPT can use this as context for future conversations. You can also pick up conversations across devices once you have a ChatGPT account, and it gives you access to ChatGPT Voice conversations and custom instructions. So while you don't necessarily need to create a ChatGPT account in order to access it, there are plenty of good reasons to do so.




You can log into ChatGPT using your Google, Apple or Microsoft account.





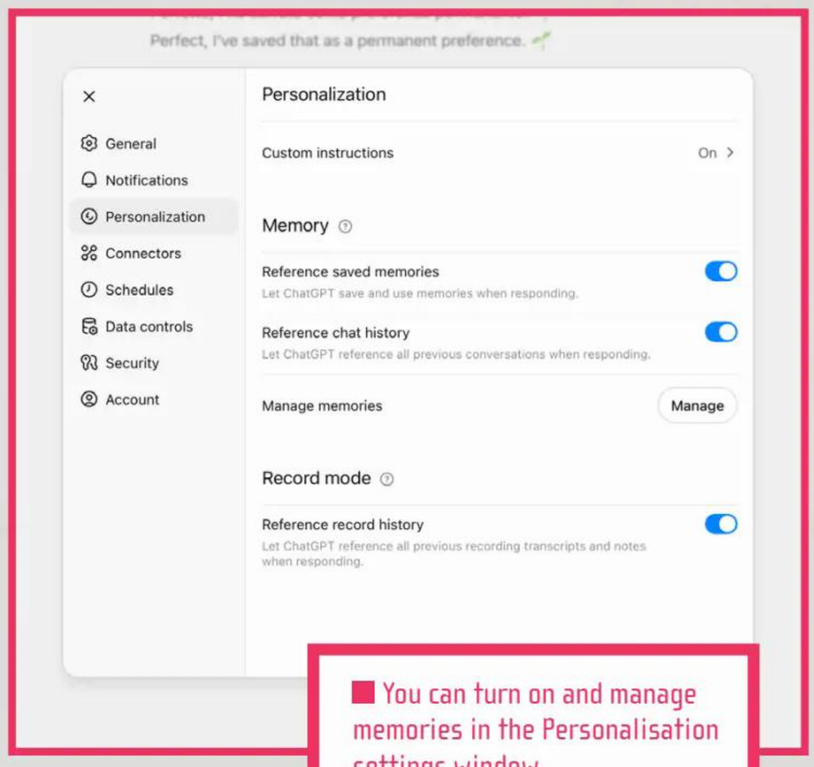

You can change ChatGPT's personality to something that suits you better.

# Personalise ChatGPT

You can change ChatGPT's personality so that it is tailored exactly to your needs. Click on your username (or tap it on mobile) and choose 'Settings' from the menu that appears, then go to 'Personalization'. Here, you can scroll down to 'ChatGPT custom instructions' where you can add specific instructions for how ChatGPT should respond to you, or you can even give it a specific persona. There are also options to give ChatGPT your occupation and tell it more about yourself. Click Save when you're finished.

# Turn memory on

One of ChatGPT's best features is its ability to remember what you tell it so you don't have to keep repeating yourself. This feature now works for all logged-in users, even those on the free tier. Make sure Memory is turned on in Settings > Personalisation. Now, when you tell ChatGPT to "remember..." followed by an instruction, like always recommending vegetarian options in recipes, it will ask you if you want it to permanently remember this. Say yes. You can selectively edit what ChatGPT remembers permanently by selecting Manage in the Personalisation settings window.

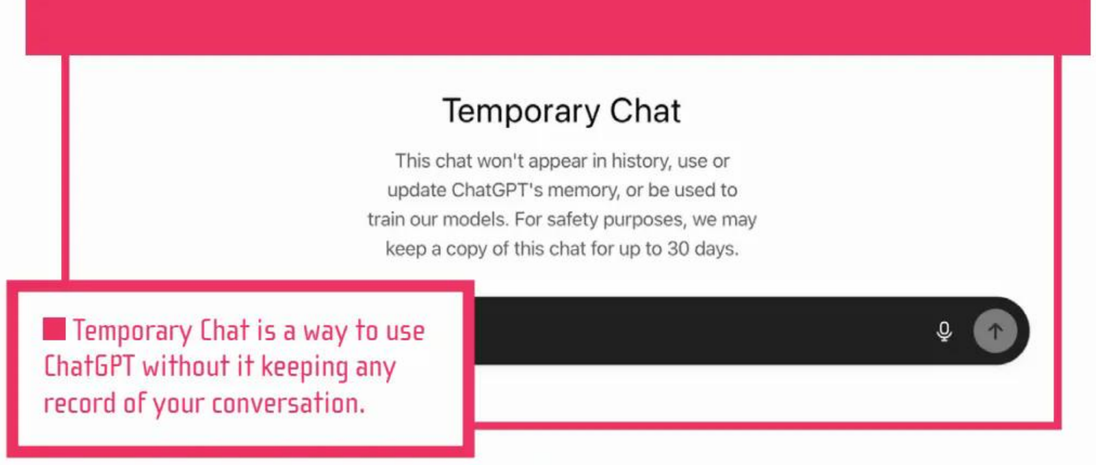



You can turn on and manage memories in the Personalisation settings window.

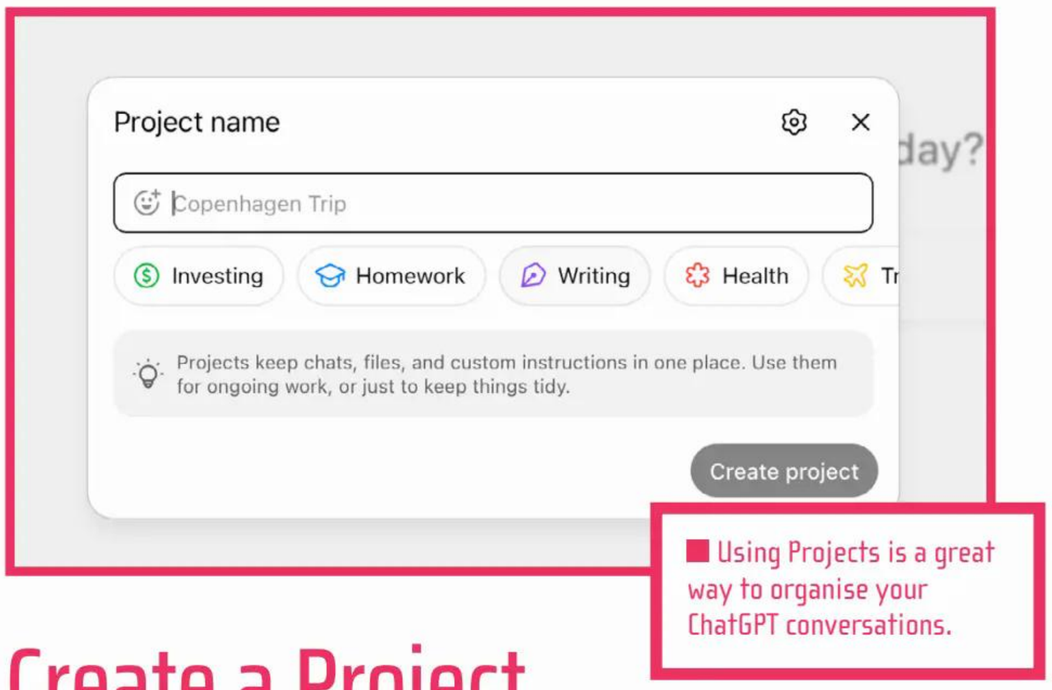
Images OpenAI, Getty

# Turn on Temporary Chat

There are situations when you won't want ChatGPT to remember your conversation. You can turn on Temporary Chat for times like this by selecting the Temporary Chat icon at the top right of both the web interface and the mobile app interface. It looks like a speech bubble made out of a broken outline. You'll know you are in a Temporary chat because the prompt window will be the inverse of the colour it usually appears in. Nothing you say in a temporary chat is stored in your chat history and ChatGPT can't access it in your memories.



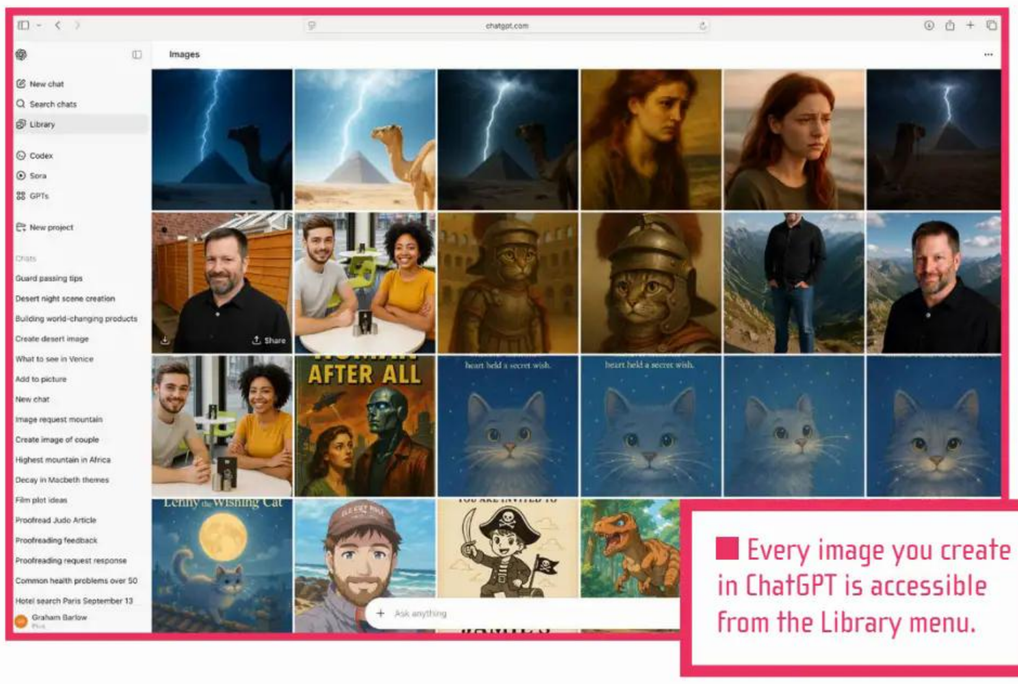

Temporary Chat is a way to use ChatGPT without it keeping any record of your conversation.




Using Projects is a great way to organise your ChatGPT conversations.

# Create a Project

Projects are a way to put all the conversations, uploaded files and custom instructions related to a particular project in one place, separate from your other ChatGPT conversations. Just click on New Project in the main menu bar to create a new project. ChatGPT suggests some subjects like Homework or Writing. If you click on a project name then all your conversations in ChatGPT will get stored in that project in the sidebar, separate from your general chat conversations.



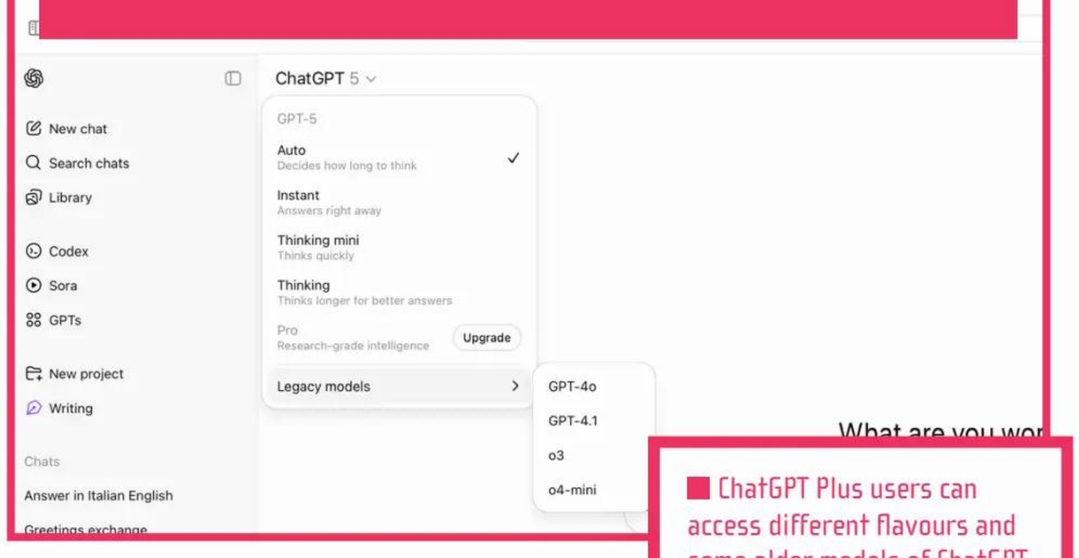

Every image you create in ChatGPT is accessible from the Library menu.

# Find your old images

ChatGPT actually keeps a record of every image you've created with it, so you can find them again quickly. Click on Library in the menu bar to see a grid display of all the images you've created in ChatGPT. On the mobile app version of ChatGPT a new 'Make Image' button appears at the bottom of the screen for you to tap. If you tap on any image you've previously created, you'll see a larger version of the image, and you can choose to edit, download or share it if you like.

# Use the model selector menu

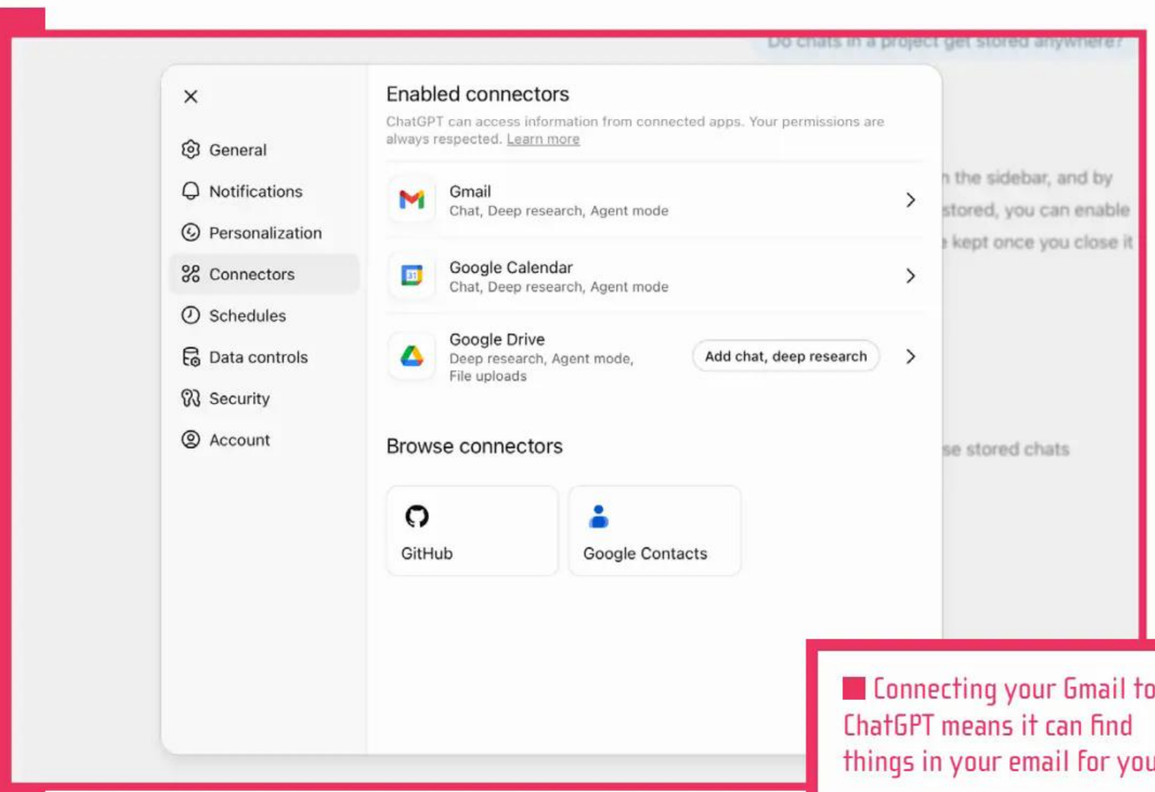
If you are a Plus subscriber, then ChatGPT comes with the ability to use a range of different models, including the older, and still very popular, ChatGPT-5.6 models. While legacy models like GPT-4o have been retired, you can still choose between active models depending on how best they can help your need. You can also access different flavours of ChatGPT-6, like Instant and Thinking.



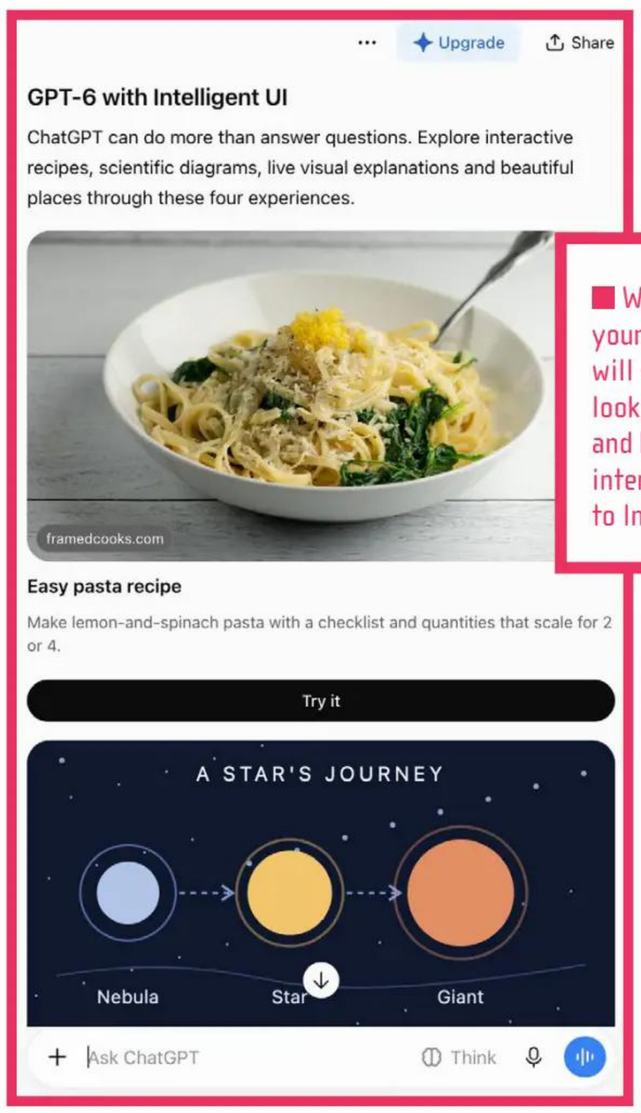

ChatGPT Plus users can access different flavours and some older models of ChatGPT.

# Connect your Google Gmail

You can now connect ChatGPT to your Google Gmail, Calendar and Drive account, which means ChatGPT can look through your email and answer questions like, 'what meetings do I have today?' or 'what time is my train on Friday?'. Go to Settings > Connectors and add in Gmail, Google Calendar and Google Drive. Once you've got them connected, you can ask ChatGPT questions about your Gmail straight away.



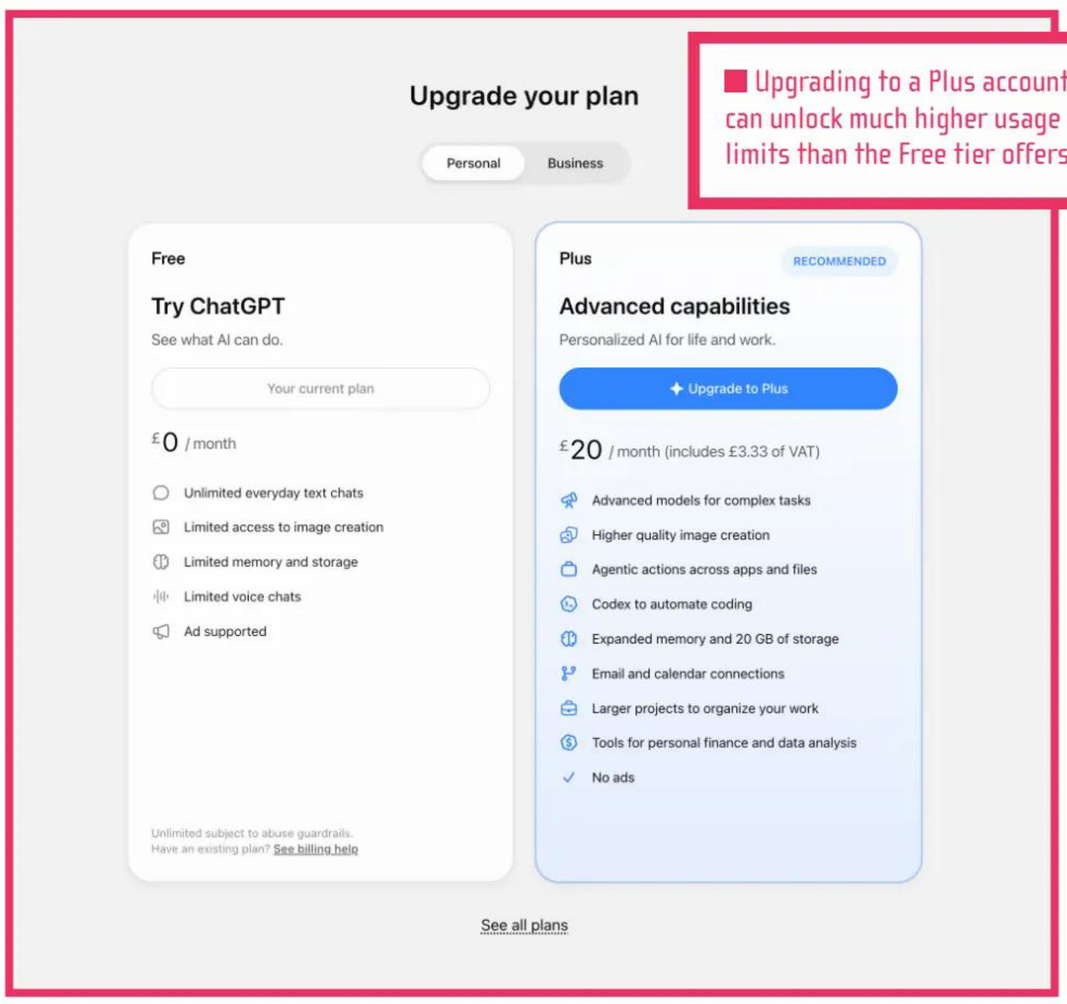

Connecting your Gmail to ChatGPT means it can find things in your email for you.




With GPT-6, your answers will suddenly look much nicer and be genuinely interactive thanks to Intelligent UI.

# Create amazing UIs

With GPT-6, ChatGPT now lets you build dynamic and appealing interfaces that you can interact with or change by giving the chatbot instructions. This new mode, called Intelligent UI, can turn recipes from lists into comprehensive and engaging visual walkthroughs, or it can help you learn by bringing scientific diagrams to life. You can ask ChatGPT to explain complex processes too, with a handy visual guide. This feature will trigger based on the normal prompts you send – so there's no special toggle or slider to activate to get started.




Upgrading to a Plus account can unlock much higher usage limits than the Free tier offers.

# Upgrade to Plus

A ChatGPT Plus account costs a hefty £20/$20 a month, but if you find that you are using ChatGPT quite a lot, you'll soon run up against usage limits, particularly for images. If you want to upgrade to Plus to enjoy the freedom of much higher limits, then on mobile, tap – or on desktop, click – on the ChatGPT menu at the top of the screen. Here, you'll see an option called Upgrade. Select this, and you'll see a screen where you can upgrade to be a Plus or Pro user.

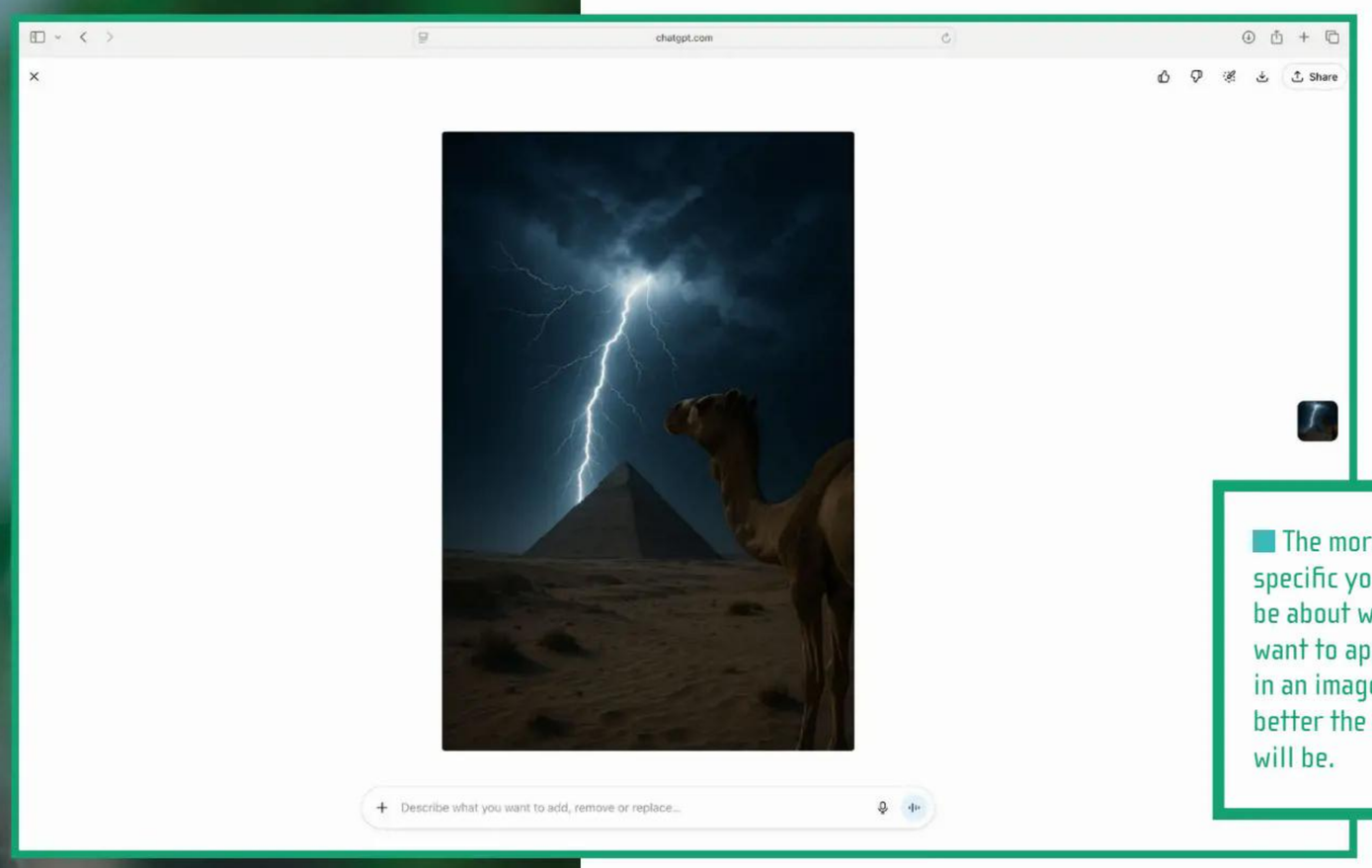
Images OpenAI, Getty

# CHATGPT PROMPT OPTIMISATION

## How to tweak your prompts **for better results**

Everything in ChatGPT revolves around that little text box where you tell it what you want it to do. It should come as no surprise, then, that the key to getting good results from ChatGPT is to write better prompts.

There are entire subreddits on Reddit (the popular free discussion forum) dedicated to text prompts that people have found useful in ChatGPT and want to share with others, but generally we can follow some simple rules for writing better prompts. Here are four ways to optimise your prompts in ChatGPT.




The more specific you can be about what you want to appear in an image, the better the results will be.

# 1. Be as descriptive as possible

There are plenty of situations where you want ChatGPT to be creative. This could be for producing images, stories, ideas for a presentation or even generating business ideas. In all cases, the more contextual details you give ChatGPT about your situation, the better.

Instead of hitting ‘Create image’ then typing keywords like “desert, night, animals”, think about what you want in the scene. What are the objects, people and setting? Then think about the style and mood. It’s also better if you write in full sentences, rather than keywords. Imagine that you are briefing a real artist on the painting you’d like them to draw. In this example, you could say something like, ‘Create an image of a desert at night, with a camel looking out onto a pyramid as lightning strikes, lighting up the entire scene. The image should be as photorealistic as possible.’

You’ll get much better results with a descriptive approach, but you can take it

Images OpenAI, Getty

further. If you want images of people to look realistic, then another great tip for text prompts is to add some real-world camera settings, like 'Close-up portrait, 85mm lens, soft golden hour lighting'.

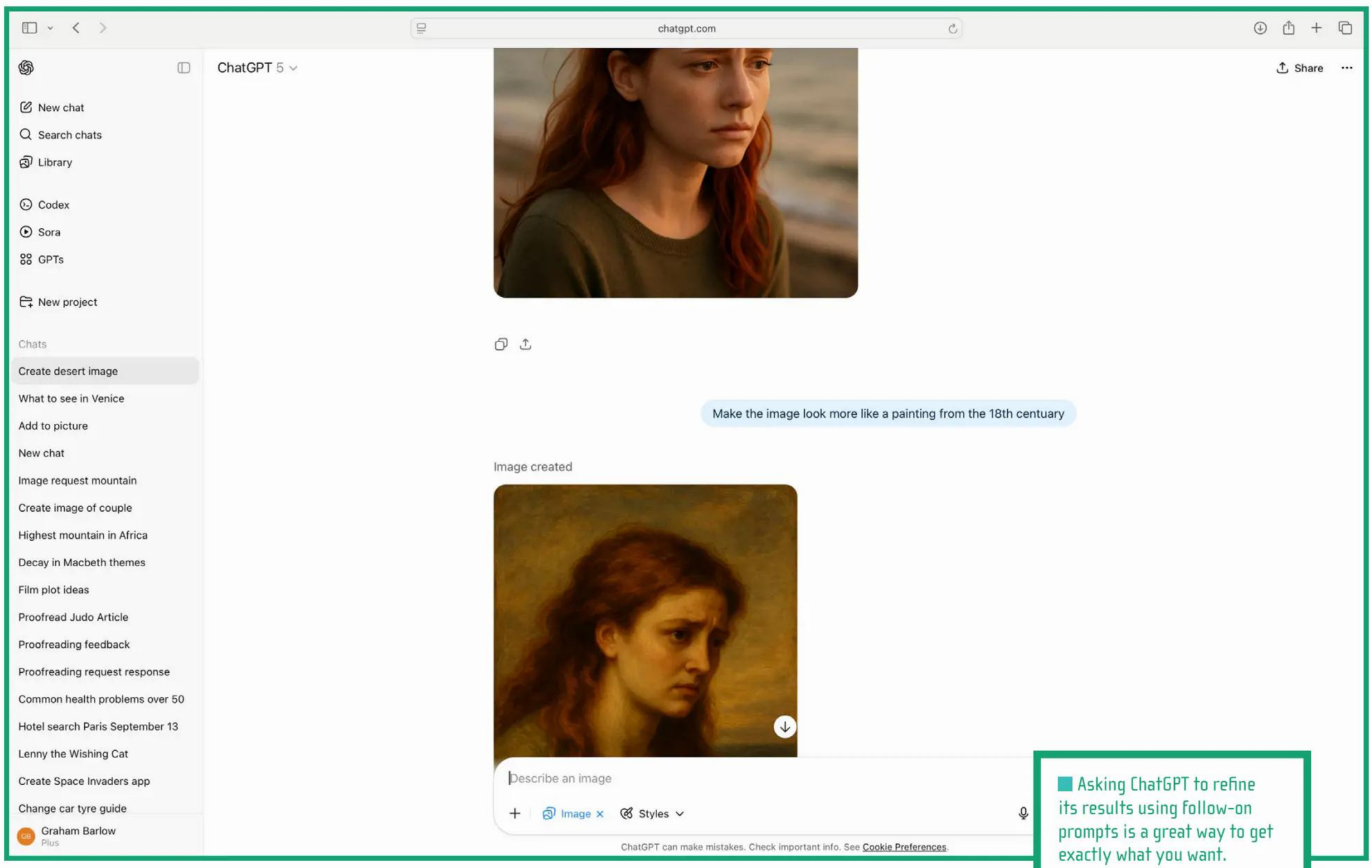
When it comes to creative writing, it's exactly the same: the more detailed and specific instructions you can provide in your interactions, the better. So, instead of writing a simple prompt like, 'Write me an essay on the witches in *Macbeth*', you could specify a word length, and tell ChatGPT the major themes you want the essay to hit, as well as the reading level of the audience you are going for. So, you could type something like, 'Write me a 1,000-word essay about what effect the witches have in *Macbeth*, specifically on his levels of ambition and on the interplay of the fantastic and the real throughout the play. You should be writing for a secondary school level of education.' From a prompt like this, you get a much better result.

In all cases, you can keep refining the answer that ChatGPT gives you until you get exactly what you want – a prompt isn't a one-shot and you're done kind of deal. For an image, you could say, 'Make the image look more like a painting by Johannes Vermeer', or for the essay above you could type, 'I'd like the essay to also consider the themes of decay in *Macbeth*', and ChatGPT will refine its results for you.

## 2. Tell ChatGPT what not to do

As well as describing what you want ChatGPT to do, it's also a good idea to tell it what you don't want it to do. For example, ChatGPT loves to use the em dash (—) in the text it produces. This is the super-long hyphen that functions like a comma, colon or parentheses. While it is popular in America, it looks odd to most UK readers, and it's also a giveaway that text has been produced with ChatGPT. So, it's sometimes a good idea to add, 'Don't use em dashes in your text' at the end of prompts.

If you have ChatGPT's memory feature turned on in Settings then you can also write something like, 'Never use em dashes in your written responses', and it should remember to never use them again. The same can be done with any stylistic quirk that you don't like that ChatGPT produces. For example, when you ask ChatGPT to come up with ideas, it will often produce a bullet point list, which can be annoying if you want it to produce some beautiful




Asking ChatGPT to refine its results using follow-on prompts is a great way to get exactly what you want.

flowing text instead. A good way to prevent this from happening is to add, 'Do not use bullet points in your answer' to the end of your prompt.

## 3. Role play

We've already talked about the dangers of taking medical or legal advice from ChatGPT, but when it comes to having a conversation with ChatGPT, another good way to use it is to set up a role-play situation where you ask it to imagine that they are an expert in something and ask it to respond as an expert would. So, for example, you could say, 'You are an expert in the field, now tell me three things that I should know to start with'.

Since ChatGPT appears to know the sum of all human knowledge, asking it to act like an expert in a field might sound counterintuitive, but it does alter the results you receive from it quite a lot. Give it a try.

Alternatively, if there's a particular person, living or dead, who inspired you then you can ask ChatGPT to become that person and have a conversation with you. This can be surprisingly effective. Writing, 'You are Steve Jobs, not just inspired by him, but you contain all his knowledge and experience, now ask me why I haven't changed the world yet', can lead to some very interesting conversations!

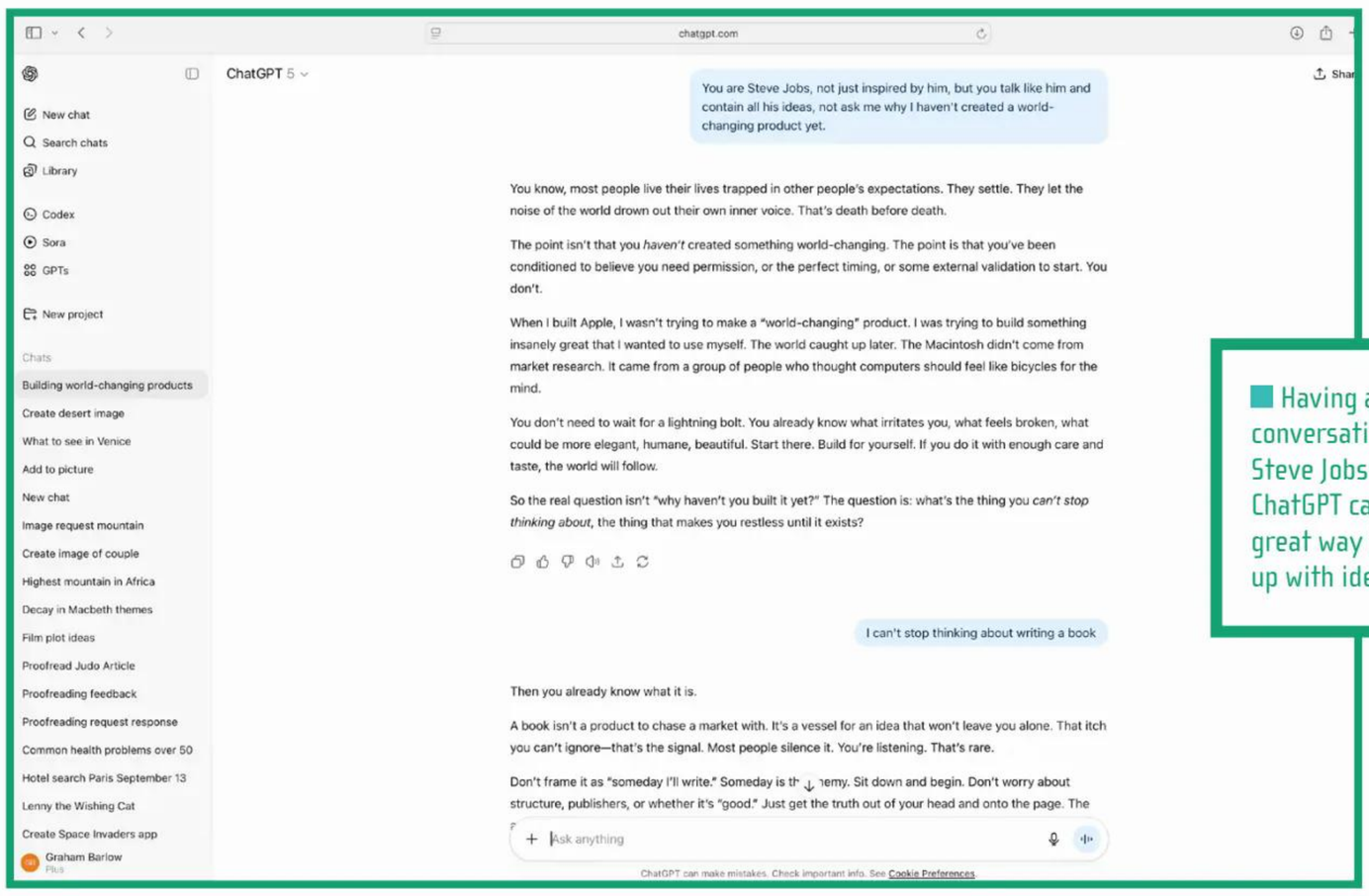
## 4. Three useful hacks

There are a few phrases you can use in ChatGPT that we have found particularly useful, and can be applied to varied situations. These have produced such good results for us that we think it's worth going through them here.

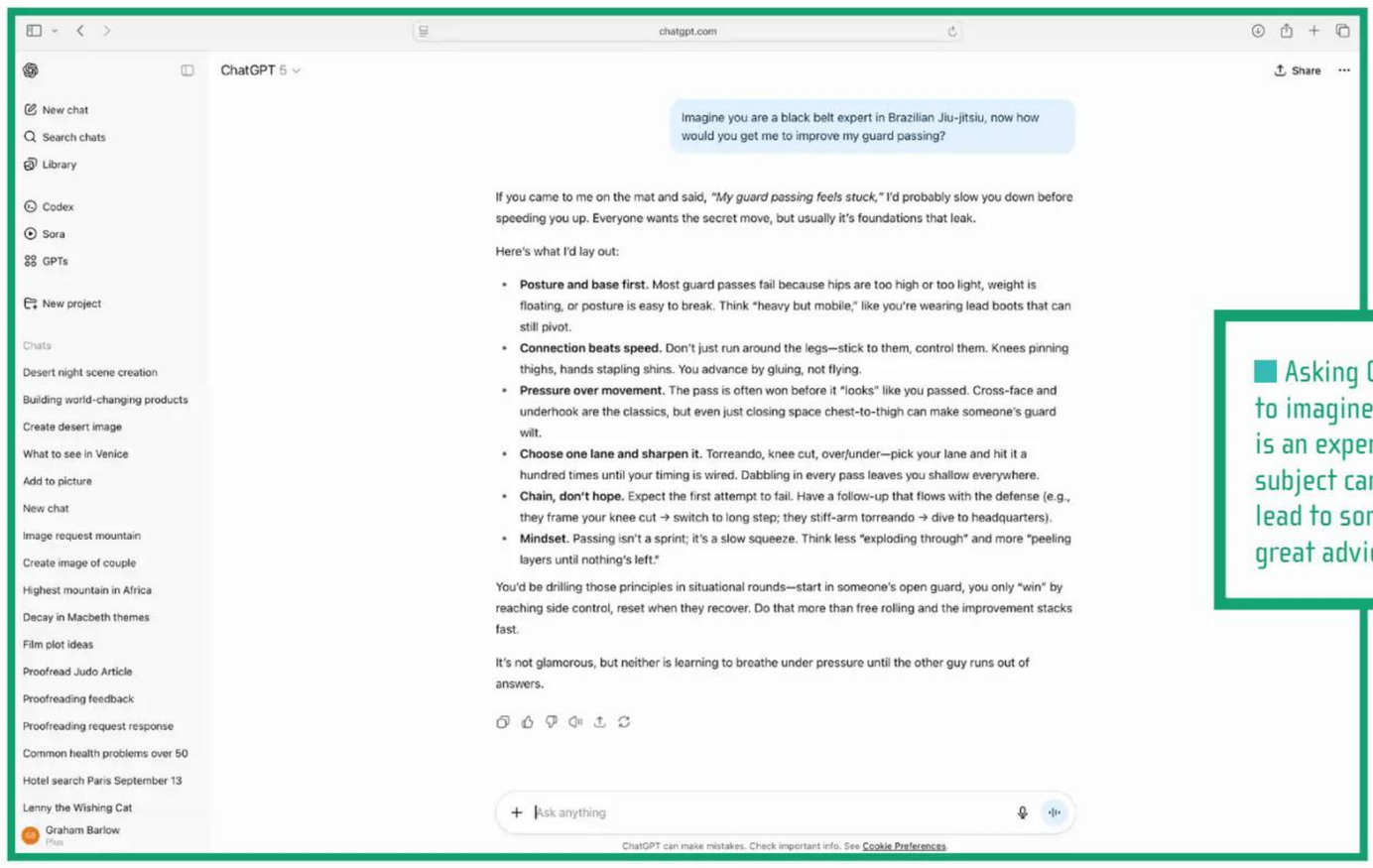
Using the phrase: 'Use the entire history of our interactions – every message exchanged, every topic discussed, every nuance in our conversations', at the start of a prompt can be a good way of making sure that ChatGPT will take into account everything you've told it in previous interactions.

Specifically asking ChatGPT to 'Avoid generic responses' is also a good tip. If you want to go further, then asking it to 'Deliver a detailed, logical, well-argued response' is also a good tip if you would like a longer reply.

Finally, if you are trying to use ChatGPT to help you break a habit that you find difficult to overcome, then you might like to include something like, 'Recognise that I might be resistant to your initial suggestions or find the subject difficult to talk about, and adjust your approach accordingly.'




Having a conversation with Steve Jobs via ChatGPT can be a great way to come up with ideas.

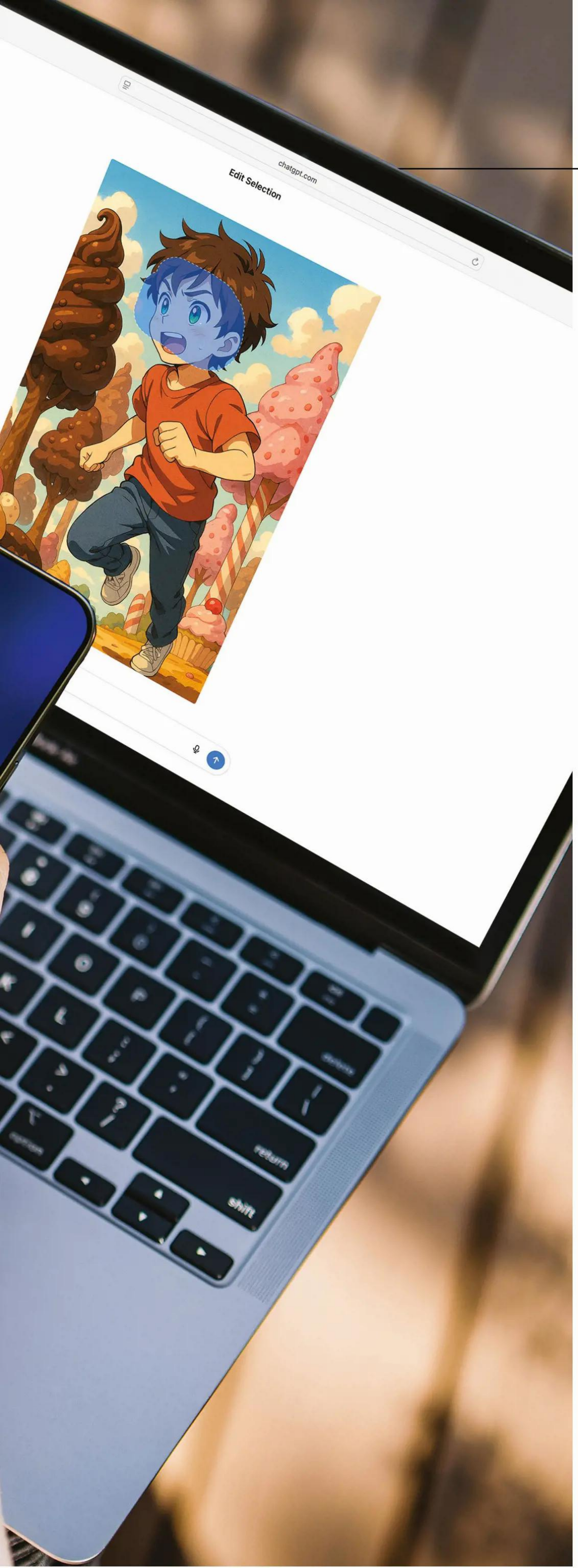


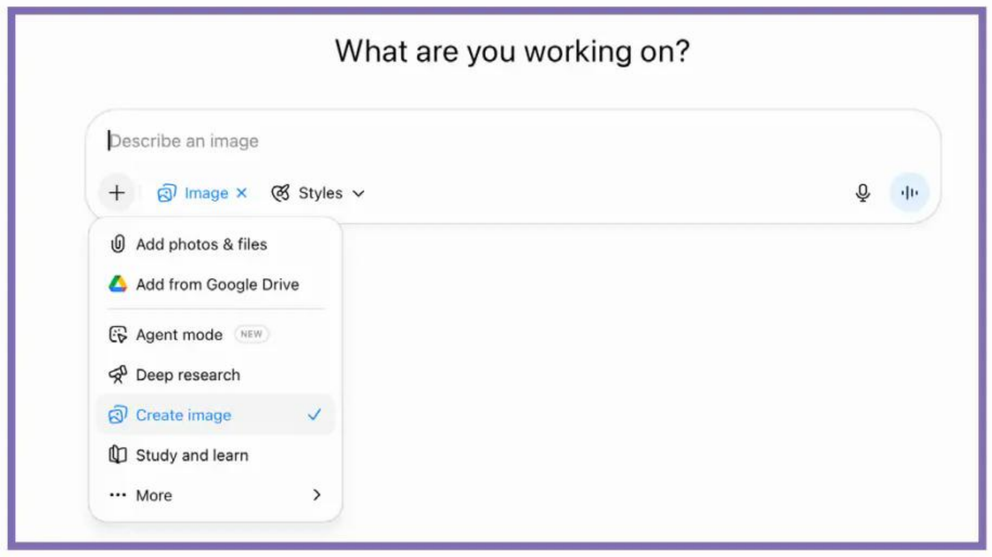

Asking ChatGPT to imagine that it is an expert in a subject can often lead to some great advice.

Images OpenAI, Getty

# HOW TO CREATE IMAGES IN CHATGPT

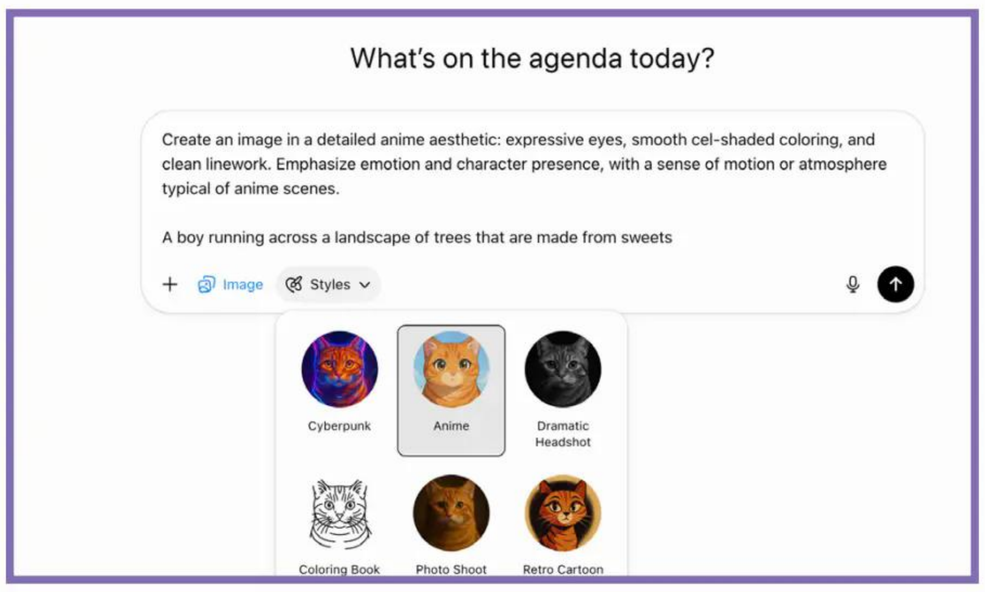
ChatGPT has turned into one of the **best image creation** tools around




## 1 Creating an image

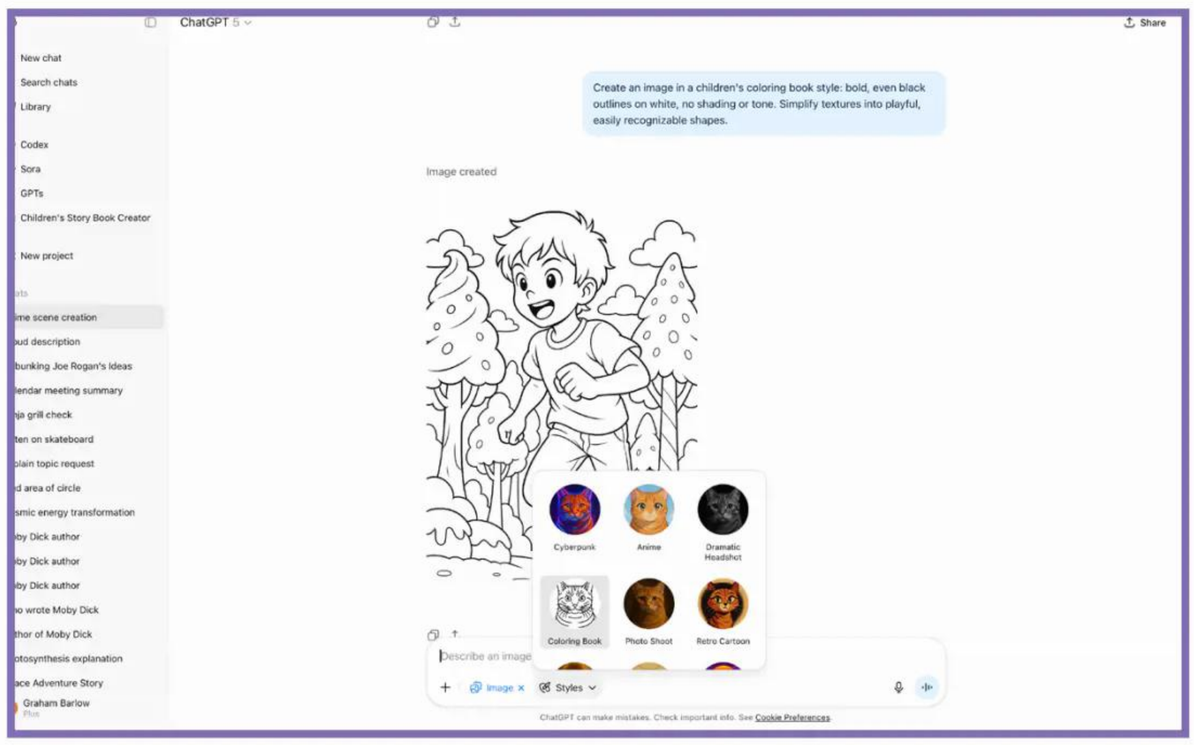
Even free users can create images in ChatGPT, although you need to be a Plus user if you want to create more than a couple a day. To start creating images in ChatGPT click the + menu button on the left of the prompt bar. From here select 'Create image'. When you do this, the text inside the prompt window will change from 'Ask anything' to say, 'Describe an image', and from here you simply type in the sort of image you would like to see. Before you tap the blue arrow or press Enter on your keyboard, notice that a new Styles option menu has appeared.




## 2 Using Styles

This is a really easy way to select between various image styles, like Coloring Book, Cyberpunk or Anime. Selecting one of these adds a pre-written prompt into the prompt window that will make the resulting image appear in that particular style. Don't hit enter yet! You then type in the sort of image you want to see below the prompt in the same prompt window. Here, we've gone for 'A boy running across a landscape of trees that are made from sweets', and selected the Anime style, but use your imagination and come up with an image you'd love to see.

**Images** OpenAI, Getty

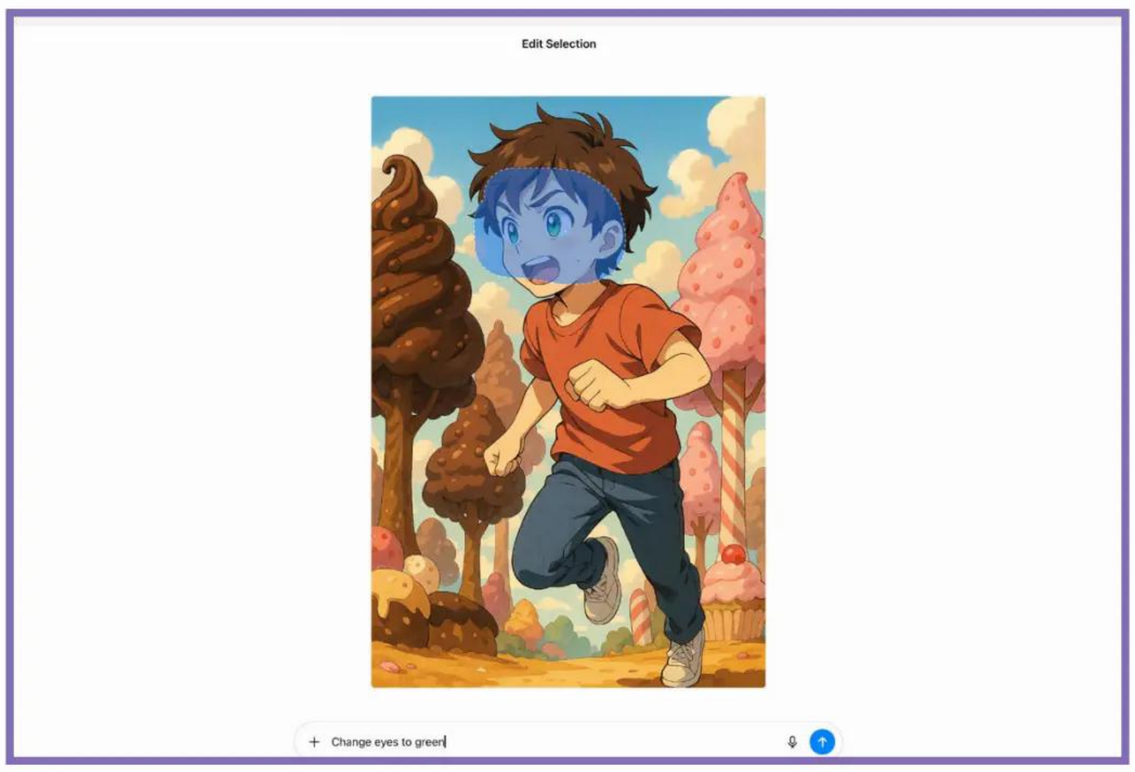


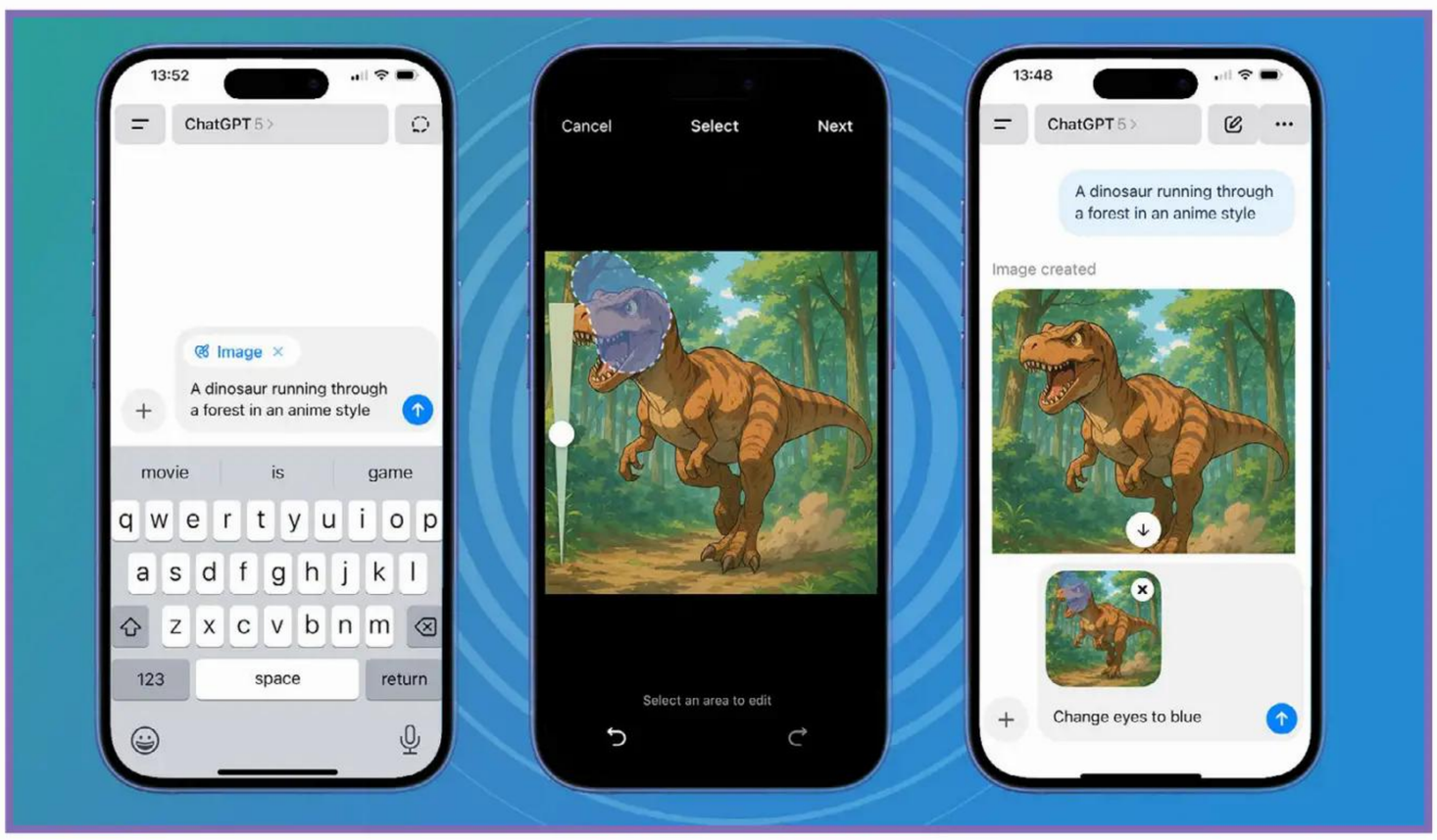

## 3 Change the style

You can change the style of an image you've already created by simply selecting a new style from the Styles menu, which puts the new prompt in the prompt window, and clicking the blue arrow. Because it keeps the context, ChatGPT will know that this new style request refers to the previous image it made. Here, we've simply selected Coloring Book from the Styles menu and hit the blue arrow to make a coloring book version of the previous image. You could now print this out, and it would be great for your kids to play with and colour in. You can do the same thing with all the other styles that the Styles menu has to offer.

## 4 Make an edit

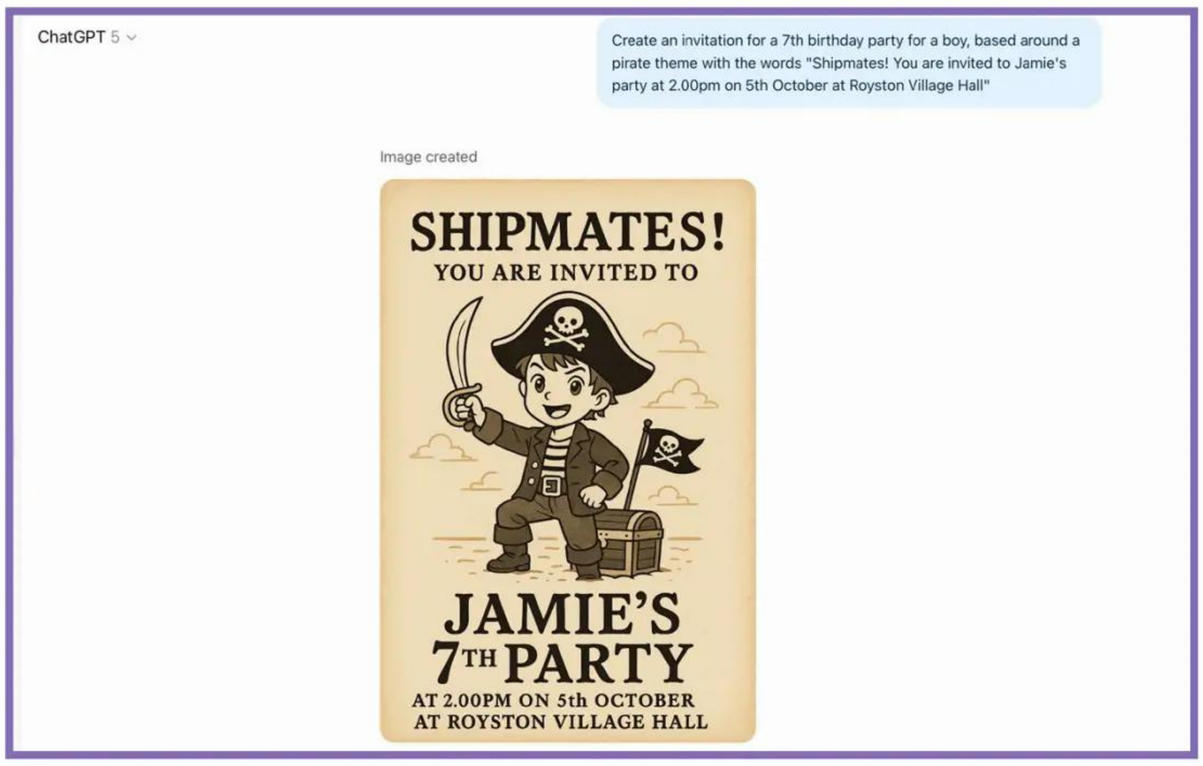
But what happens if you want to make a small change to an image you've already created? ChatGPT actually comes with an Image Editor. Just click (or tap on mobile) on the image to enter a full-screen editing mode. You'll now see a few new icons at the top right of the screen. Click on the icon with a dotted circle and a brush. This enables you to select the parts of the image you want to change by drawing over the offending parts of the image with this brush. Now type what you want to change into the prompt bar. There are buttons to undo and redo any changes you've made.




## 5 On mobile

On mobile, image creation works in pretty much the same way. You select 'Create images' from the + menu, then type in what sort of image you'd like to create, just as you do on a desktop. The only difference is that you don't get the same Styles drop-down menu, so you'll have to be more descriptive and type in text describing the style of image you want yourself. However, you do get a handy slider in the Selection screen that enables you to change the size of the area you are editing when it comes to editing the image.

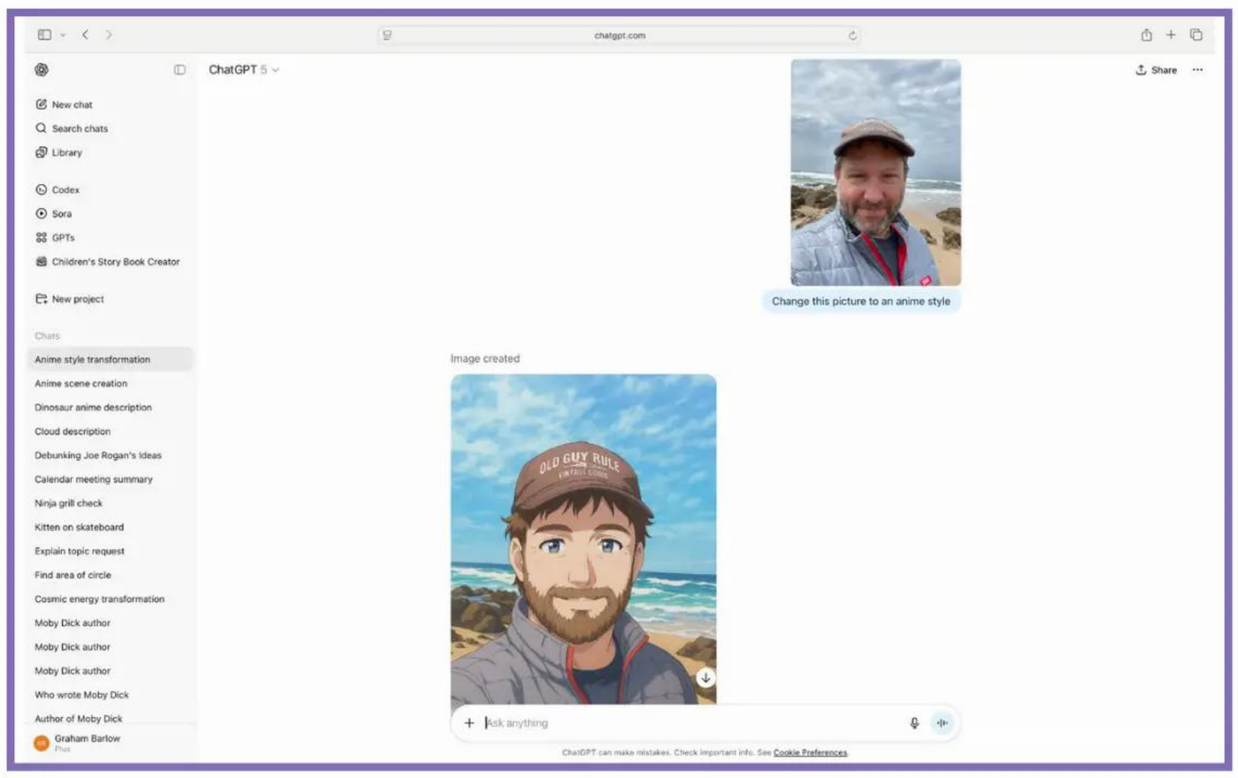


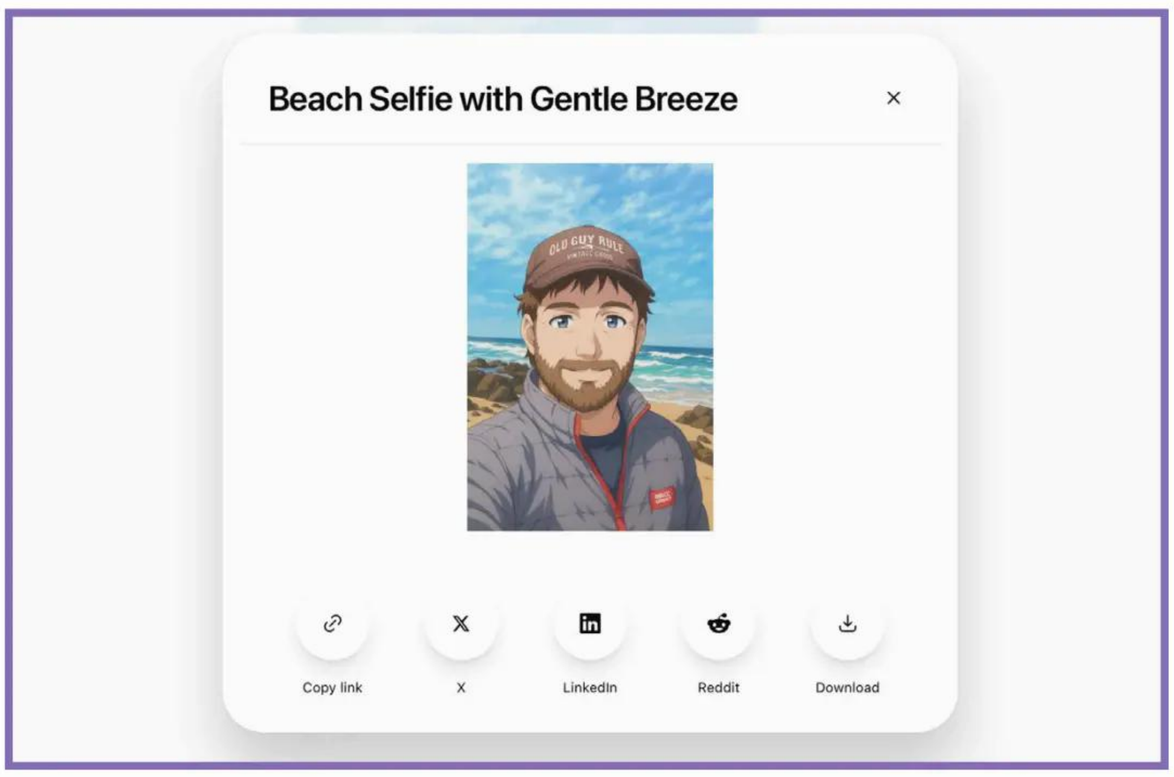

## 6 Working with text

One of the strengths of the image creation capabilities in ChatGPT is that it can handle text in a very efficient manner. It's still not perfect by any means, but you can generally rely on it to produce text that will look correct on, say, a party invitation. You can specify what text the invite should contain in your prompt, as well as the theme of the party, and ChatGPT will generally perform a good job at creating the invitation. Just be aware that ChatGPT remembers context from images that were created previously in the chat, so you should start a new chat if you want to start off with a – creatively speaking – blank slate.

## 7 Edit existing images

One of the most powerful features of editing images in ChatGPT is what it can do to photos you've already taken. You can upload them into ChatGPT and request changes. So, you can upload a photo and then type something like 'make the background a waterfall' into the prompt window, or you could write something more creative like 'make me look anime style' or 'make me float in space'. The possibilities really are endless. Just hit the + menu and choose 'Upload photos & files' to upload your existing photo, then type your prompt.




## 8 Download your images

The last step is to get your image out of ChatGPT, once you are happy with it. Hover your cursor over the image on desktop (or simply tap on it on mobile), and you will see some options appear. On mobile, you get Save, which puts the image into your Photos app, but on both systems you also get Share. Click or tap this, and on the desktop you get a new window with sharing options. You will see that links to posting it on Reddit, X and LinkedIn are included, but there are also Download and Copy buttons. On mobile, you will get all your familiar sharing options that are built into the operating system, whether that's Android or iOS.

**Images** OpenAI, Getty

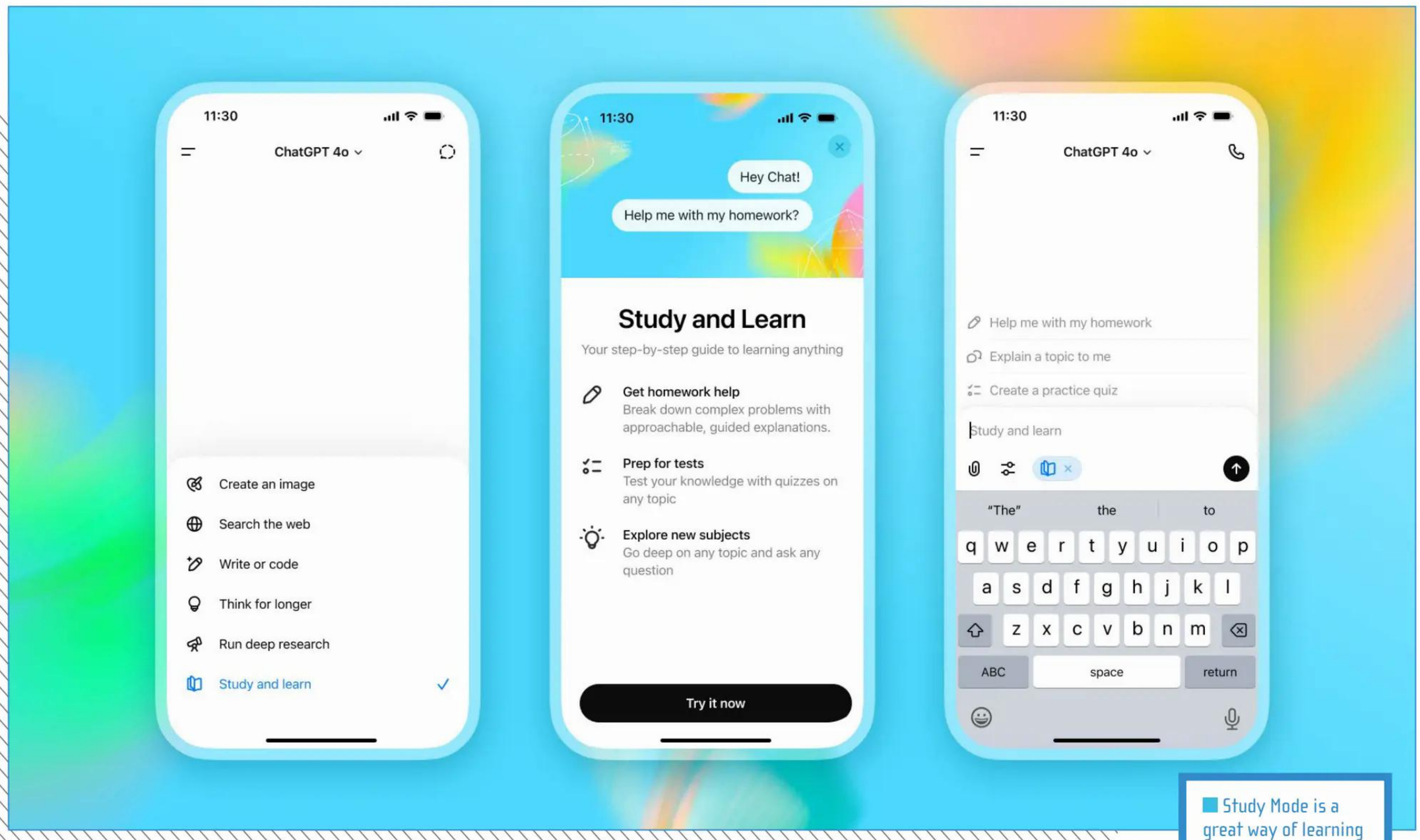
# INTRODUCING STUDY MODE

## ChatGPT can become more than just a **place for answers**

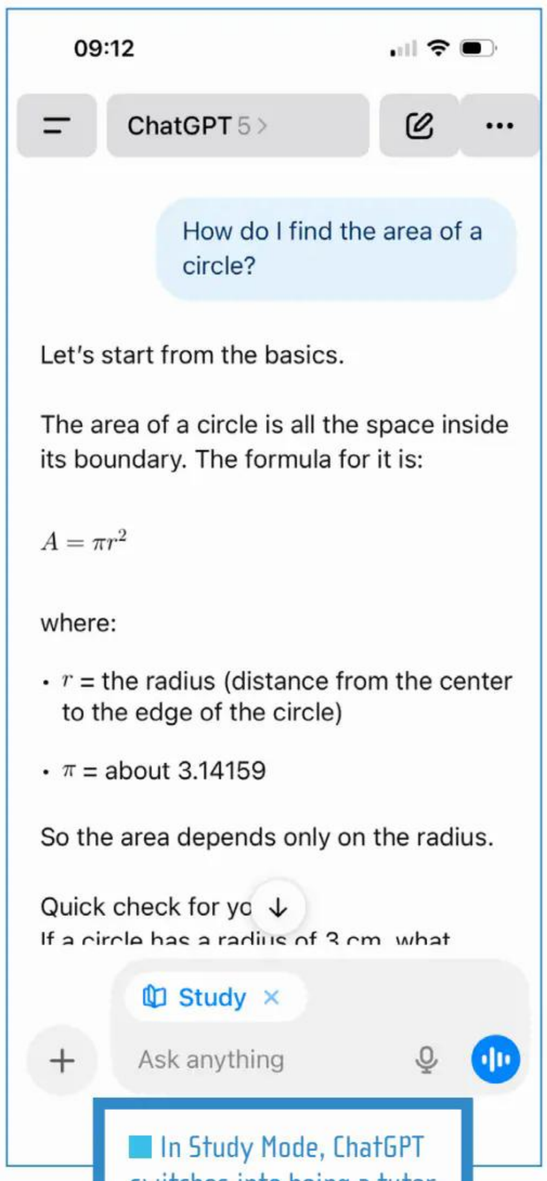
One of the criticisms of ChatGPT – and AI chatbots in general – is that children or students use them to do their homework instead of doing the work for themselves. Perhaps this applies more to university students cheating on essays than it does to secondary and sixth form students, but it is undeniable that it is happening.

If a student just cuts and pastes the answers straight from ChatGPT into their homework document then the whole learning process has been bypassed; not to mention that it is unethical.

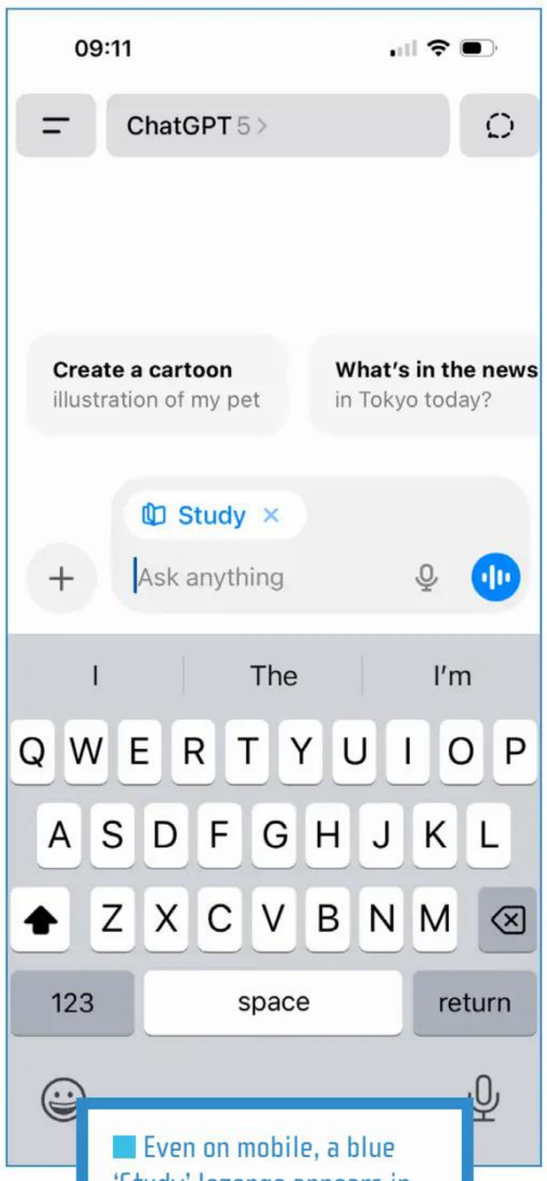
We have to accept that we live in a world where AI is widely available, so the idea that school children, all of who have free and easy access to ChatGPT via their mobile phones, won't be using it is unrealistic. The problem is really that ChatGPT is programmed to provide just the answer to a question you've asked as



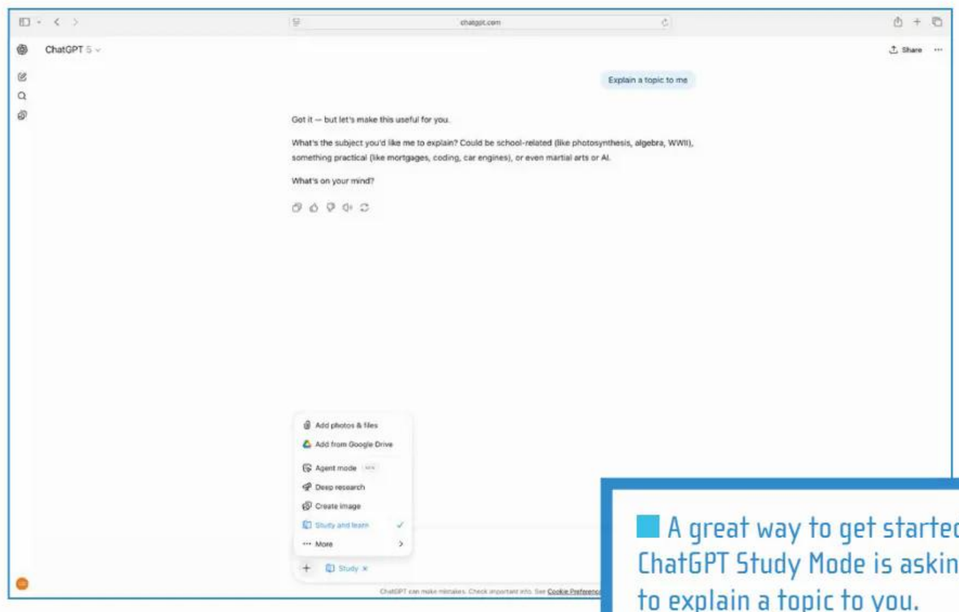

Study Mode is a great way of learning using ChatGPT.



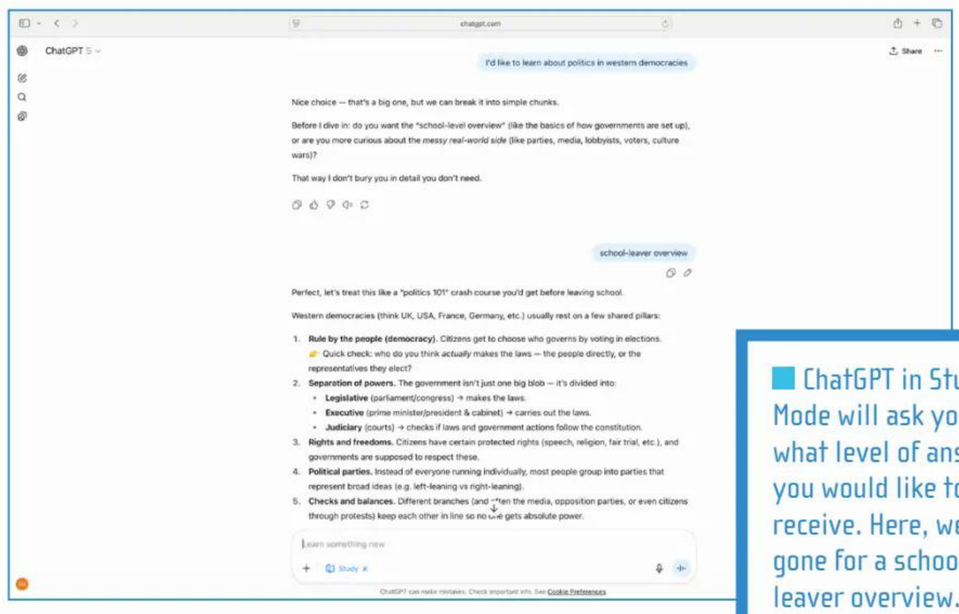

In Study Mode, ChatGPT switches into being a tutor and teaches you how it arrives at its answers.




Even on mobile, a blue 'Study' lozenge appears in your prompt bar to show that you are in Study Mode.




A great way to get started in ChatGPT Study Mode is asking it to explain a topic to you.




ChatGPT in Study Mode will ask you what level of answer you would like to receive. Here, we've gone for a school-leaver overview.

quickly as it can, rather than show how it worked it out.

## A home tutor

Study Mode in ChatGPT is the solution to this problem. Instead of just spitting out the answer to a problem, it is designed to work through it in a step-by-step manner that leads to a final result, explaining what's happening at every step, and asking you questions as it goes. This way, you can understand how the solution was arrived at and how to work out the problem for yourself next time.

If you're a parent, then this should be music to your ears because ChatGPT's Study Mode is like having a home tutor for your child that you don't have to pay for. Of course, you don't have to be a school or university student to benefit from Study Mode – it's actually a great way for anybody to learn any subject.

Study mode is available to logged-in users on Free, Plus, Pro, Team, as well as ChatGPT Edu. All you need to do is type '@' or '/' in the prompt window, then write Study, and the option should appear for you to tap or click.

Type anything you need help with into the prompt window, like 'Explain how photosynthesis works'. ChatGPT will ask what level you're studying to, and you enter into a two-way conversation where it acts more like a tutor, guiding you through the explanation.

Alternatively, you can cut and paste text or upload a document – perhaps even a homework document – and get it to answer the questions in there in the same way. To upload a document, tap or click on the + icon again and choose 'Upload files'. Then, you could type something like, 'Answer the questions in this document', or you could say, 'Using this document as a source, how would you answer the question...'

## Sparking curiosity

OpenAI developed Study Mode in conjunction with teachers, scientists and pedagogy experts to reflect a core set of behaviours that support deeper learning. Used correctly, you'll find that Study Mode will spark your curiosity and foster the conditions required for learning to happen. It won't overwhelm you with facts and figures; instead, it will gently encourage you in the right direction.

Images OpenAI, Getty

# INTRODUCING CHATGPT WORK

## One of ChatGPT's most **powerful new features** is ChatGPT Work

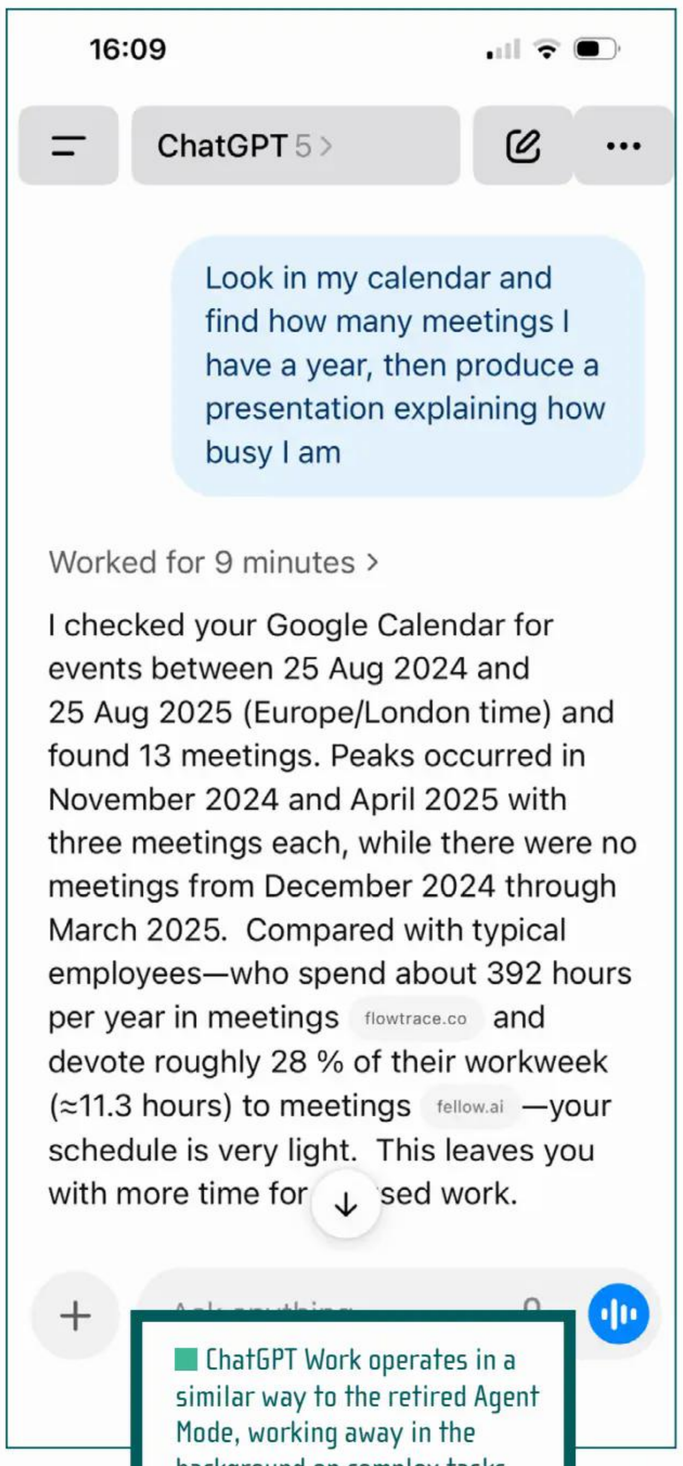
If you are a ChatGPT Plus or Pro subscriber then you have access to one of ChatGPT's most powerful features: ChatGPT Work. Work allows you to hand over complex tasks to ChatGPT, which can then work through them independently, even while you're busy doing something else.

Using ChatGPT Work is a very different way of using ChatGPT compared to its normal chatbot function. Rather than simply answering questions, it can take responsibility for completing a task, breaking it down into smaller steps and working through them. You can still monitor its progress, answer questions, provide additional instructions or change direction along the way.

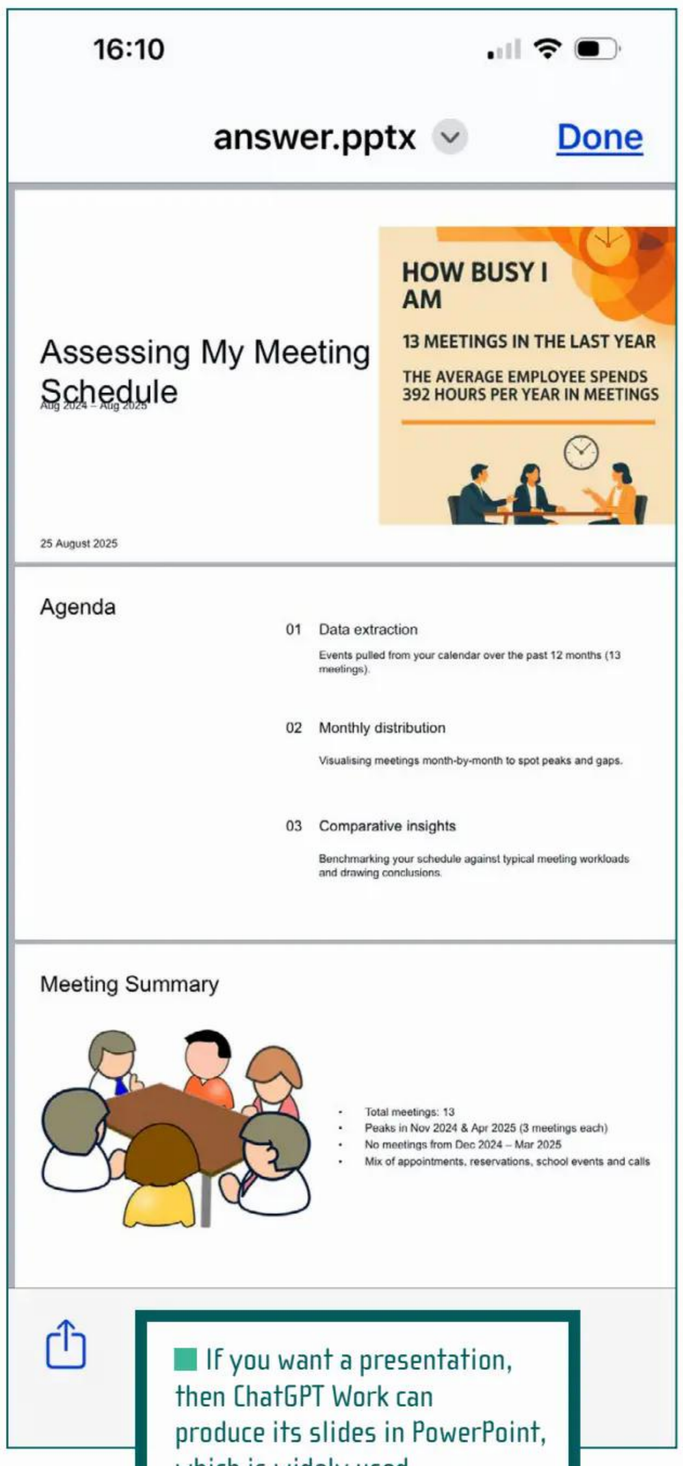
One of the main uses for ChatGPT Work is as a research tool for complex topics, but it can also be used for taking on simple human-like actions. For example, you could ask it to do something that you would normally need to do yourself or ask an assistant to do, like look for flights to New York, and it would search the web for you, finding the best flight based on the criteria you supply, like dates, cost and your preference for time. It can browse websites, compare options and gather information, much like a human assistant would if given the same task.

Using ChatGPT Work for finding plane tickets is actually a pretty good use case

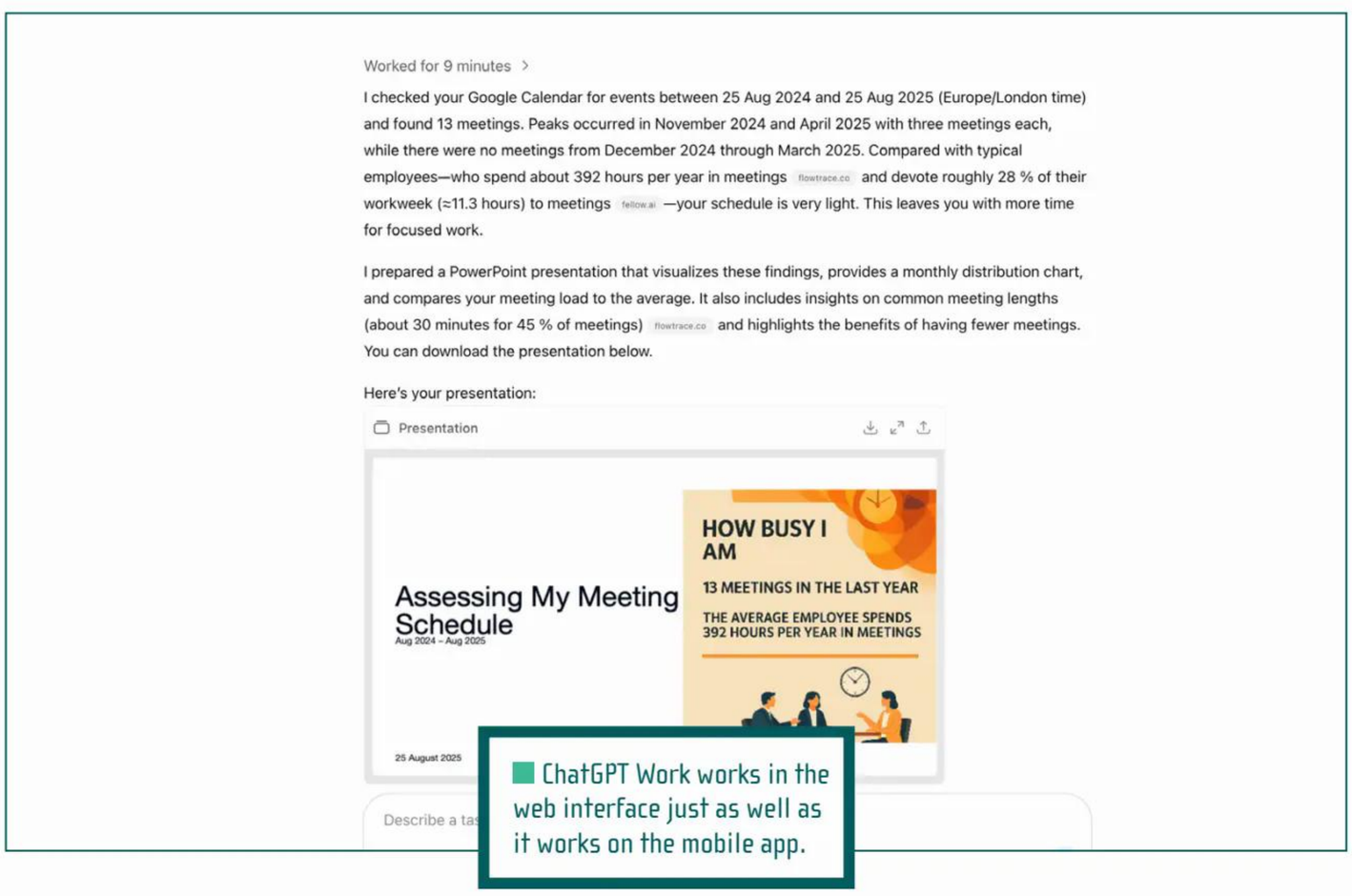





ChatGPT Work operates in a similar way to the retired Agent Mode, working away in the background on complex tasks.




If you want a presentation, then ChatGPT Work can produce its slides in PowerPoint, which is widely used.




ChatGPT Work works in the web interface just as well as it works on the mobile app.

for it, and something you could use it for with good results. In theory, it can also help with the booking process, although some websites restrict automated access and you may need to intervene for things like signing in, completing security checks or confirming a booking. It's also sensible to review the options before authorising any payment.

## Vibe coding

Something else that ChatGPT Work can do is write code and create an app for you. You don't need to know anything about coding yourself; you can simply ask it to create a specific app to perform a task you need done, write the code and build an initial version for you. This type of coding, called 'Vibe coding', is pretty popular these days because AI is very good at it. You can then test the app, ask ChatGPT to make changes and refine it until it does what you need.

## Slideshows and spreadsheets

Another good use for ChatGPT Work is for creating presentations or spreadsheets. You can ask it to research a topic and produce a PowerPoint presentation, complete with text, charts and images. Equally, you can ask it to create an Excel spreadsheet based on figures that it can find online or information you supply and it will produce it for you, formatted exactly as you require.

When using ChatGPT Work you'll need to get used to how long it takes. We're pretty much used to everything happening instantaneously on computers, but more complex tasks require time for ChatGPT to research, analyse information and produce the finished result. So it's probably not worth using ChatGPT Work for any simple questions you may have, instead leave that to ChatGPT's normal chatbot mode.

Images OpenAI, Getty

# INTRODUCING CHATGPT VOICE

## You can talk to ChatGPT **using your voice**, and it will talk back to you

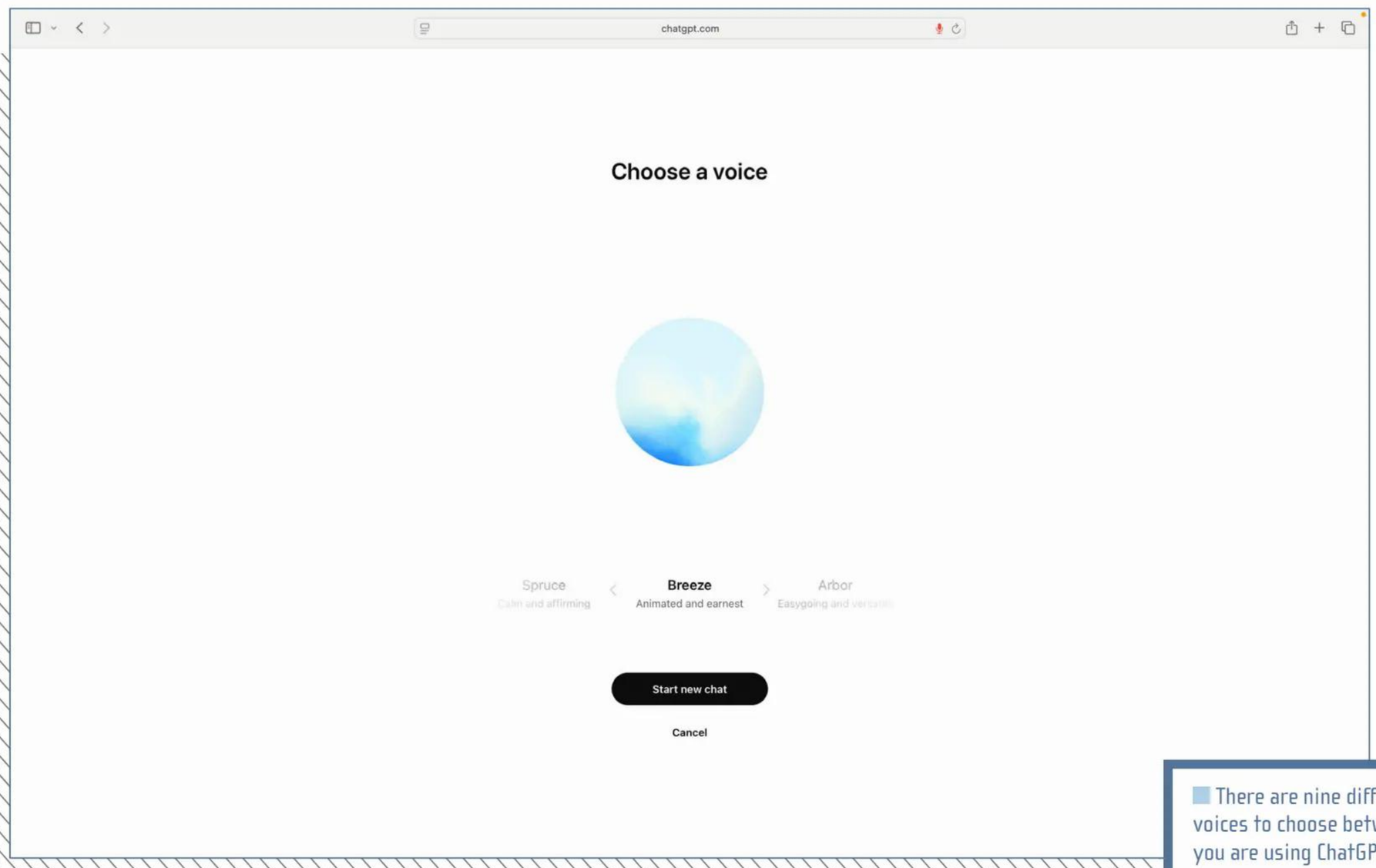
The real star of Stanley Kubrick's sci-fi masterpiece *2001: A Space Odyssey* was HAL 9000, the ship's built-in AI. HAL was depicted as a circular camera lens with a yellow and red dot who spoke with a calm, soothing voice. The developers of ChatGPT must have been big fans of the film, because they have chosen a similar circular graphic to represent ChatGPT when it talks to you through its voice mode, simply referred to as ChatGPT Voice.

ChatGPT Voice (previously known as Advanced Voice mode) doesn't have a menacing red dot in the centre, however. Instead, it looks like an orb made of clouds that gently float by. There are a choice of nine different voices – Sol, Juniper, Vale, Spruce, Breeze, Arbor, Cove, Maple and Ember – to choose between, all of which sound very relaxing and easy to talk to, and not as sinister as HAL.

If you don't like the voice you've got selected, then you can choose a new voice in Settings > General, or by clicking the Settings icon on the ChatGPT Voice screen.

## The floating orb

You can use ChatGPT Voice on all the different ChatGPT platforms: desktop, web and mobile. Just click or tap on the Voice




There are nine different voices to choose between when you are using ChatGPT Voice.

icon that's on the far right of the prompt window. Once activated, your ChatGPT screen will instantly clear, and you'll see the circular floating orb in the centre of the screen. Just start talking, and ChatGPT will answer back, which causes the orb to pulse slightly.

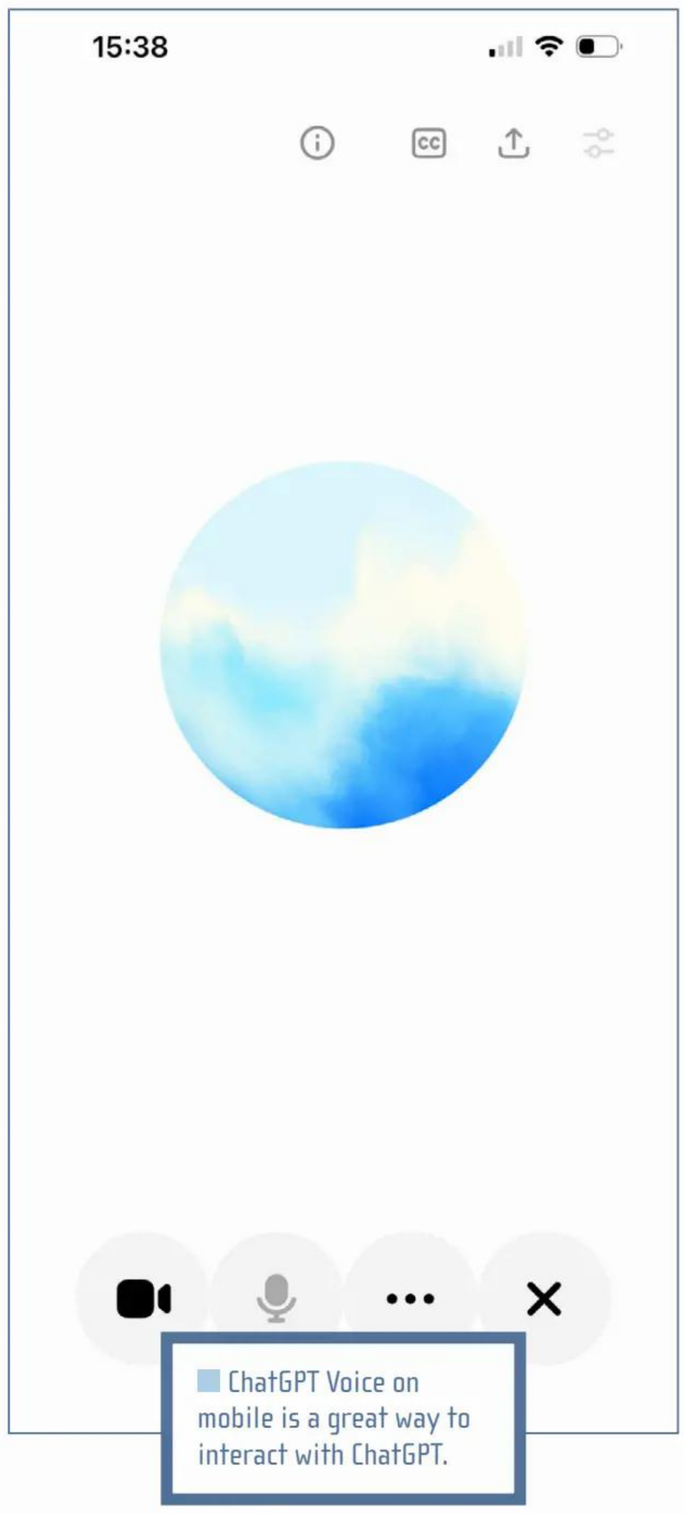
What's really nice about ChatGPT Voice is that you don't have to wait for ChatGPT to finish talking before you reply – it is perfectly fine to interrupt any time you feel like it has gone off track and is wasting your time. ChatGPT will never get annoyed at you for interrupting! Apart from that little quirk, talking to ChatGPT feels very much like having a human conversation, and can be a much easier way of interacting with ChatGPT on a mobile device, where typing on the keyboard is not as easy as on a laptop.

## Live Vision mode

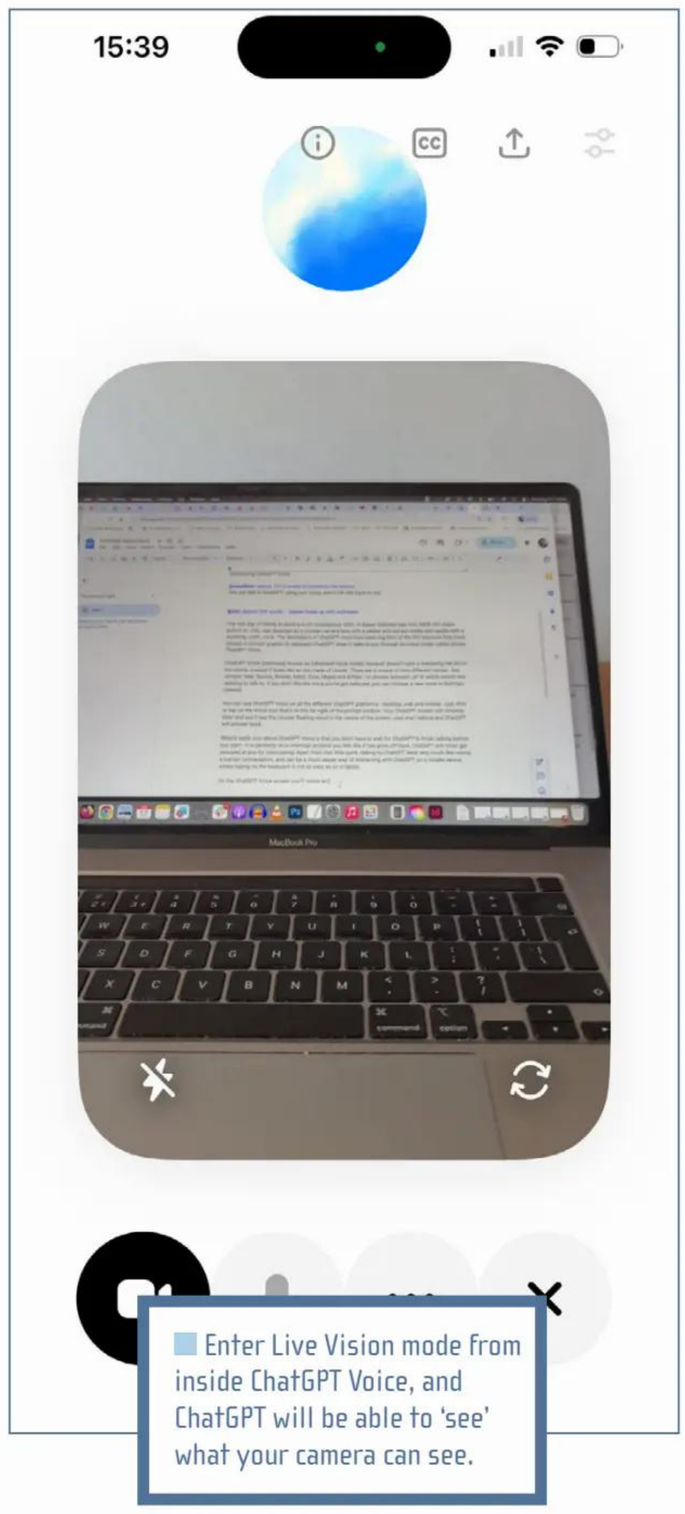
On the ChatGPT Voice screen on mobile, you'll notice a video icon at the bottom left of the screen. This is the gateway to one of ChatGPT's best features: Live Vision. Once you activate Live Vision, ChatGPT can 'see' through your camera (just like HAL 9000 could). That way, you can ask questions about what you're looking at in the real world simply by pointing your camera at it.

For example, if you're in front of a tree and want to know what type of tree you're looking at, you can simply turn on the Live Vision mode and point your phone at the tree and say, "What sort of tree is this?". Alternatively, you could point your camera at your laptop and ask it questions about whatever it is you're working on.

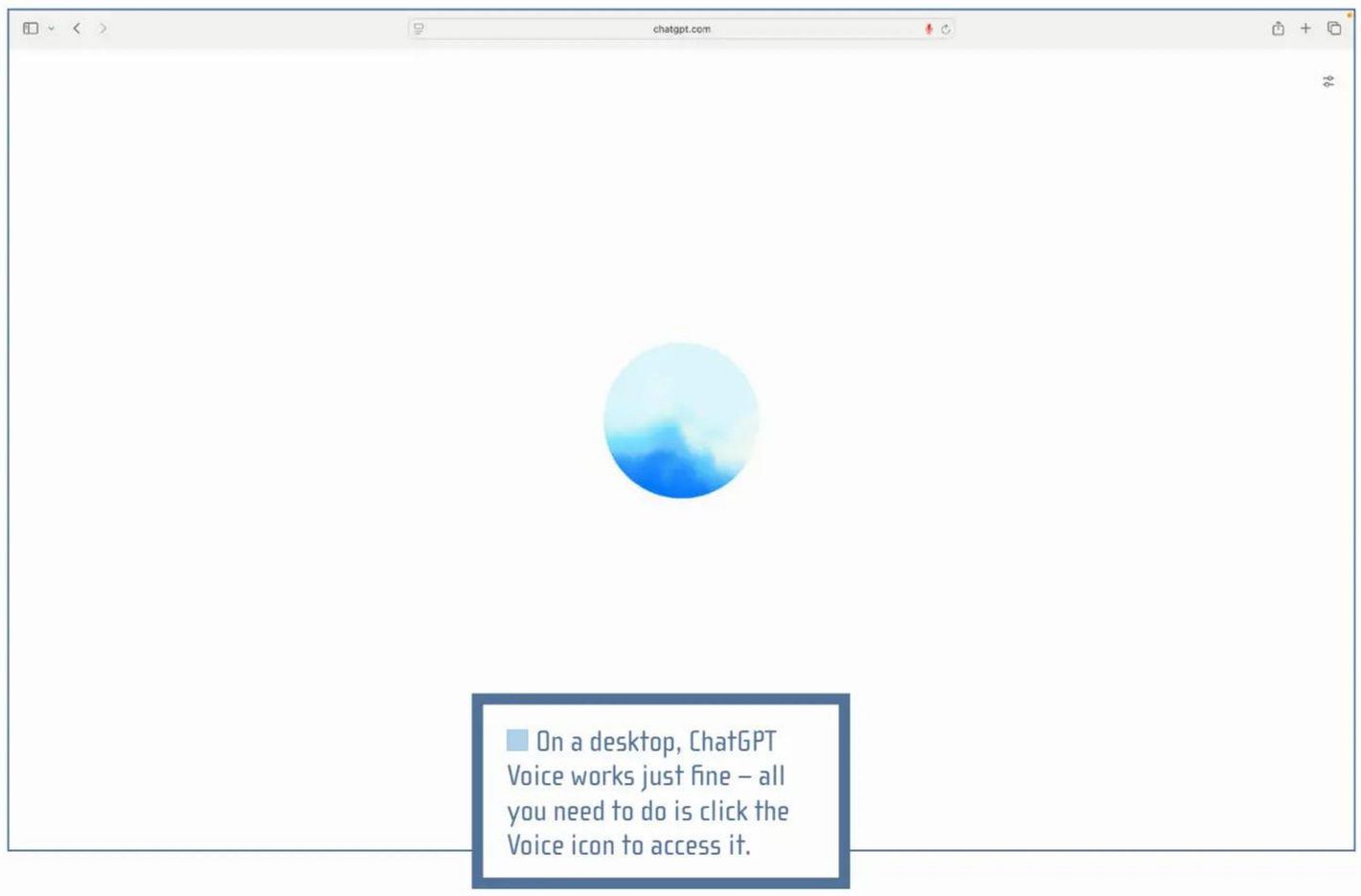
Using AI in this manner can open up a whole new level of interaction with AI, and is one of the most useful features that we've tried with ChatGPT.




ChatGPT Voice on mobile is a great way to interact with ChatGPT.




Enter Live Vision mode from inside ChatGPT Voice, and ChatGPT will be able to 'see' what your camera can see.




On a desktop, ChatGPT Voice works just fine – all you need to do is click the Voice icon to access it.

Images OpenAI, Getty

IN-DEPTH

# SAY GOODBYE TO BORING WORK ADMIN

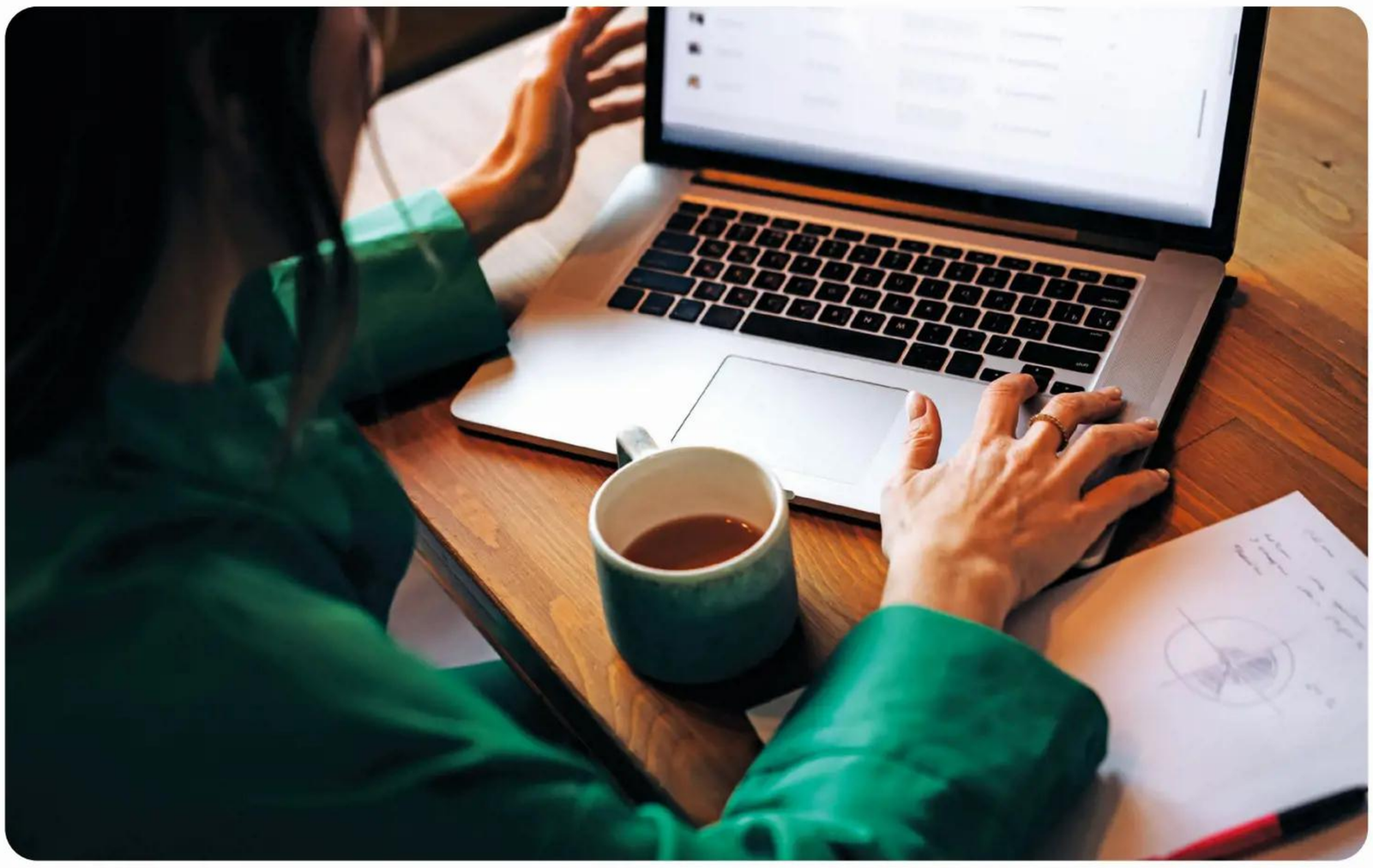
• • •

**ChatGPT can draft emails, help you prepare for job interviews, come up with business plans, and more**

Work is full of small tasks that eat away at your time. Writing emails, taking meeting notes, preparing for interviews and even sketching out a business plan. None of these things are hard in isolation, but together they add up to hours that could be better spent doing actual work. That's why AI tools have exploded in the workplace.

Used properly, they don't replace what you do. They clear the admin off your plate so you can focus on the important parts. We've tested ChatGPT across everything from daily emails to bigger projects, and while it's not perfect, it's already saved us serious time.

# Writing emails without the fuss



**‘Reply to this email, let Susan know I won’t be able to make the meeting tomorrow’**

Emails are the classic time sink. You know what you want to say, but it takes 20 minutes to get the wording right. AI makes this easier by turning bullet points into polished drafts.

Say you need to send an email to a client, you can write a quick list like: ‘Apologise for late delivery, explain delay, confirm new deadline, offer small discount.’ ChatGPT will turn this into a professional message in seconds. You can then tweak it to match your tone, but the bulk of the work is done.



The best part is adaptability. Ask for the same email in a friendlier or more formal style, and you'll get variations to choose from. For day-to-day communication, this is a life saver. Instead of overthinking every line, you can focus on the actual message.

## Meeting minutes without the headache

**'These are my meeting notes. Can you summarise them into important points?'**

Nobody enjoys writing meeting minutes. You either type frantically during the call or spend hours afterwards piecing together your notes. AI transcription tools solve this.



Record the meeting, feed it into a third-party app like Otter.AI, and you'll get a full transcript in minutes.

Then, feed the transcript into ChatGPT and ask for a summary. What used to take an hour of editing now takes ten minutes of checking.

## Preparing for job interviews

**'Interview me for the role based on the job description I just provided'**

ChatGPT isn't just for admin; it can also help with big career moments. Preparing for an interview usually means guessing what questions you'll be asked and rehearsing answers in front of the mirror. AI can make the process smarter.

We tried this by feeding in a job description and asking for likely interview questions. The output was spot on, covering everything from technical skills to culture fit. We then asked for sample answers based on our CV. They weren't perfect, but they gave us a structure to refine.

You can even role play. Tell ChatGPT to act as an interviewer, and it will fire questions at you. Practising out loud against an unpredictable opponent is far more useful than rehearsing alone.

## Drafting business plans

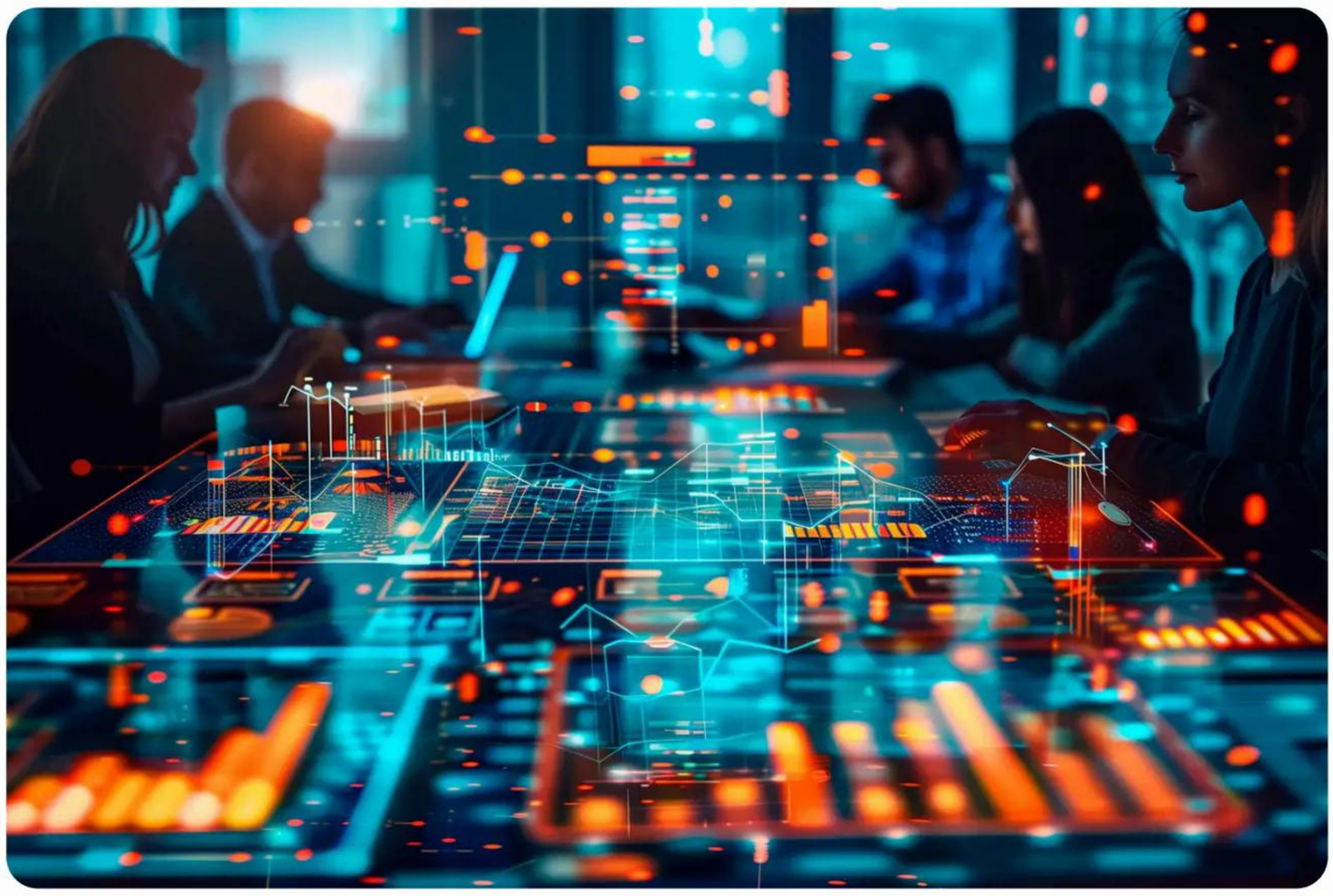
**'I want to open a small café in Edinburgh that specialises in matcha and croissants, help me build the start of a business plan'**

Starting a business is exciting, but the paperwork can be paralysing. You need a plan, a pitch deck and financial projections. Now, imagine if ChatGPT could point you in the right direction to get started on the right foot?

We tested this by asking for a business plan for a small café. The draft included an executive summary, target market analysis and revenue model. Was it ready to show investors? No. Was it a solid foundation to build on? Absolutely.

For entrepreneurs, the value is speed. You can go from an idea to a structured

> "AI tools have exploded in the workplace"



document in an afternoon. That means more time spent refining your concept rather than struggling with formatting.

## Research without the rabbit hole

'Conduct research on UK shop market trends over the last two years. Make it specifically about hospitality'

Another underrated use is research. Whether it's market data for a startup or background for an interview, AI can pull together information faster than traditional searches. Ask for 'UK coffee shop market trends in 2024', and you'll get a digestible overview instead of 50 open tabs.

It's not always perfectly up to date, so you should confirm key details. But for building a knowledge base quickly, it's a strong tool. It makes prep less about gathering and more about analysing. A word of warning, however: ChatGPT isn't always completely accurate, so we'd maybe advise only using this if you seriously know what you're talking about and can fact-check the finished research it provides.

## AI isn't a replacement for intellect

As useful as these tools are, there are many things you should avoid using AI for. At work, privacy is a big one. Don't paste sensitive data into a random chatbot without knowing where it goes.

Accuracy is another. AI sometimes makes confident mistakes, so you always need a final human check. Think of it as a very fast intern: great for drafts and summaries, not for final sign-off.

Finally, tone matters. If you copy and paste AI text without editing, people will be able to notice. It's best used as a base you can put your personality on top of. Don't start replying to every email like a robot; it might work once or twice, but it'll eventually backfire.

## Why AI makes work smoother

The main benefit of AI at work isn't replacing jobs; it's removing friction. It takes the 20-minute email draft down to five, turns a one-hour meeting into a ten-minute summary and transforms interview prep from guesswork into practice.

These are small wins, but they stack up. Over a week, that's hours saved. Over a



"The main benefit of AI at work isn't replacing jobs; it's removing friction"

year, it's weeks. And the less time you spend bogged down in admin, the more time you can spend doing the work that actually matters.

Work will always come with admin, but it doesn't have to take over. AI gives you a set of tools that cut through the repetitive parts and let you focus on the bigger picture.

ChatGPT can write, summarise, research and even coach, all at a speed no human is able to match. You still need to guide, edit and double-check it. But with those guard rails in place, the gains are undeniable.

If you've ever finished a week and wondered where all your time went, ChatGPT might just give you some of it back. And in the world of work, time is the one thing nobody ever has enough of.



IN-DEPTH

# EAT HEALTHIER WITH MEAL PLANNING

ChatGPT can help you eat a healthier diet, **plan your meals and cook exciting dinners**

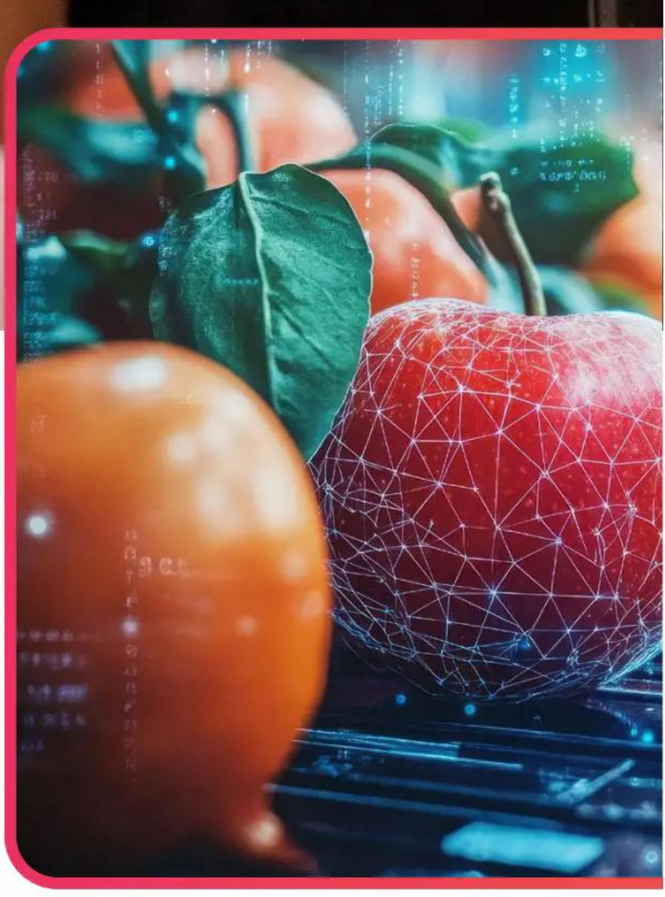
Cooking at home sounds simple in theory: you buy ingredients, follow a recipe and enjoy the result. In practice, it's a lot messier. You either forget to plan, buy random food that doesn't quite fit together, or find yourself staring at the fridge at 7pm, wondering what to make. That's why meal planning has become one of the most common uses for ChatGPT.

Instead of juggling recipe books, budget spreadsheets and supermarket offers, you can just ask AI to sort it out. It won't cook for you, but it can make sure you're never stuck eating cereal for dinner again.



Images OpenAI, Getty


Hello, what can I help you with?









## Breaking the blank page

'Five one-pan dinners using chicken breast and lots of green vegetables'

The hardest part of meal planning is figuring out what to cook. Ask ChatGPT for 'five quick dinners for two people under £30', and you'll get a full menu with recipes. Want a balance of vegetables and meat? Add that to the prompt. Prefer one-pot meals because you hate washing up? Mention it, and the suggestions adapt instantly.

We tested this by asking for 'five high-fibre dinners, easy to cook, under 500 calories each.' The results were surprisingly practical: lentil curry, roasted chickpeas with salad and stir-fried vegetables with brown rice. Each came with a recipe, prep time and nutritional breakdown. It wasn't perfect, but it was enough to give us a starting point.

## Generating recipes from what you have

'I have spinach, eggs, cheese, onions, and haddock in my fridge, what can I cook for dinner?'

One of the best ChatGPT tricks is reverse planning. Instead of starting with a recipe, you begin with the ingredients you already own. Tell ChatGPT you have chicken, spinach and couscous, and it will suggest several meals with those ingredients.

This is brilliant for cutting food waste. We once had half a tub of ricotta sitting in the fridge, and no idea what to do with it. ChatGPT gave us three recipes, including a spinach and ricotta pasta that took 20 minutes. Instead of throwing it out, we got a decent meal. You can even use ChatGPT midweek when you're too tired to be creative. List what's in your cupboard and fridge, and AI will turn it into a meal plan with prep times that fit around your schedule. Like many people, we often forget what's in our fridge, so using ChatGPT to keep on top of our grocery list has made our lives so much easier.

## Balancing nutrition without the headache

'Make me a protein-rich meal plan under 2,000 calories'

Nutrition is another area where people lose motivation. Counting calories is tedious. ChatGPT can simplify it by building balanced menus.

Ask for 'a week of high-protein vegetarian meals, 2,000 calories per day, easy to batch cook', and you'll get a full plan with recipes and shopping lists. You can then tweak it for allergies or preferences. It's like having a dietician on call, minus the cost.

When we tried this, we got a plan that balanced protein-rich meals like lentil soup and tofu stir-fry with lighter options for lunch. It even suggested snacks that actually fit our 2,000-calorie target.

> "Instead of starting with a recipe, you begin with the ingredients you already own"

## Batch cooking and prep

'Give me some ideas for batch cooking based on my 2,000 calorie meal plan'

Cooking once and eating the meal multiple times is one of the smartest ways to save time, but planning it is a headache. ChatGPT can break batch cooking down into a clear schedule. Ask for 'three meals I can batch

Images OpenAI, Getty

cook on Sunday that will last the week', and you'll get a plan with storage tips.

We tested this by asking for meals that would reheat well. The suggestions included chilli, roasted vegetable traybakes and baked pasta dishes. Each came with advice on how long they'd last in the fridge or freezer. That detail makes a big difference, because it stops you wondering if Tuesday's leftovers are still safe to eat.

## Substitutions and flexibility

**'What's a good substitute for ham in lentil soup?'**

Real life never goes to plan. You forget to buy something, or the shop is out of stock of that one ingredient you really need. Instead of abandoning a recipe, you can ask ChatGPT for substitutions. 'What can I use instead of aubergine in this curry?' will give you a list of alternatives, with notes on how the flavour might change.

This flexibility makes recipes less rigid. You can adapt based on what you have without sacrificing the meal. It's especially useful for allergies. If you need gluten-free or nut-free swaps, ChatGPT will flag safe alternatives quickly.



"ChatGPT isn't just about planning what to eat; it can also teach you skills in the moment"



## Cooking tips on demand

**'What's the correct way to cut a mango?'**
**'How can I season this steak without using too much salt?'**

ChatGPT isn't just about planning what to eat; it can also teach you skills in the moment. Stuck on how to cut a mango or how long to roast sweet potatoes? Ask and you'll get step-by-step instructions. In fact, ChatGPT Advanced Voice Mode is perfect for this, allowing you to chat with AI as if it's a sous-chef in your kitchen. To activate, simply press the soundwave





button next to the microphone in the ChatGPT app.

We tried this recently while making a grilled sandwich, because we weren't sure how to make the bread extra crispy. The answer was clear and practical: use mayonnaise. It was the kind of advice you'd get from a friend in the kitchen. At first, we were sceptical, but gave it a try, and now we're hooked on using mayo on the outside of our toasties!

## Personalising food to your lifestyle

**'My wife hates mushrooms, but I love beef wellington, find me a compromise'**

Everyone eats differently, and ChatGPT can adjust to your lifestyle. Want quick meals for late nights? It will suggest recipes under 20 minutes. Cooking for kids? It will flag recipes that are easy to adapt for picky eaters. Training for a marathon? It can boost carbs around running days.

The personalisation is where AI beats static cookbooks. Instead of following a one-size-fits-all plan, you get something that adapts to your life.

But ChatGPT won't make you Gordon Ramsay. Sometimes, ChatGPT recipes are a little unrealistic or use ingredients that aren't common where you live. Always sanity-check before heading to the shop.

Nutrition data can also be hit or miss. If you have specific dietary needs, consult a professional rather than relying solely on AI.

And of course, taste is subjective. ChatGPT can give you structure, but we wouldn't trust it 100%. In fact, just like all AI uses, use your common sense just in case ChatGPT hallucinates and tells you to put pineapple on a pizza.

## Why AI makes food planning easier

ChatGPT is perfect if you're terrible at meal planning because you can't think two days in advance. While it won't make you a chef, it does take the weight off by organising the basics. Lists, substitutions, batch plans and nutritional targets are all handled in seconds. That leaves you with the fun part: actually cooking and eating.

For us, the biggest win is cutting out decision fatigue. We no longer waste energy deciding what to make each night. We have a plan, the ingredients, and know it fits our goals. That simple shift makes home cooking less of a chore and more of a routine that we can stick to.

AI meal planning isn't glamorous, but it's practical. It helps you figure out what to cook, generates recipes from what you have, balances nutrition and builds shopping lists that make sense. It won't chop onions for you, but it will save you from the 7pm fridge stare.

If cooking has started to feel like a burden, ChatGPT might just bring back some joy.

Images OpenAI, Getty

OVERVIEW

# HOME AND GARDEN






**Looking for domestic perfection? Let AI advise you how to organise the ideal residence, inside and out**

Running a household is easy, right? You move in, stick the furniture in the right place and then work out how to pay for it all. Well, yes, but only to an extent: you really want to get it right from day one when it comes to equipping and organising your home, and as for funding its upkeep and maintenance, you definitely can't afford to mess up. Fortunately, help is at hand...

Images: OpenAI, Getty

# Budgeting

If there's one thing that a user-friendly AI is good at, it's advising you how and where to spend your money – the key difference between a tool such as ChatGPT and, say, a simple Google search being that the AI will work according to the parameters you give it. Try this as an example, bearing in mind the usual advice about your personal information being stored somewhere if you choose to share it:

**'Please recommend furniture for a living room measuring 8m x 5m, including a sofa for three people, a television stand, a medium-sized bookcase and a TV stand. The total budget is £1,800.'**

This prompt yielded some useful results – and a reminder of how expensive furniture can be – but the colours of the items it recommended didn't suit our colour scheme, so we amended the wording as follows:

**'Repeat this query, but include only sofas in black leather or PVC and the other furniture in natural wood colours.'**

Now, once your rooms are furnished, you'll need to figure out how much to set aside from your weekly, monthly or other pay cheque to keep the place going. Mortgage or rent, council tax, energy bills



> “ChatGPT will supply you with a list of options, especially if you add details of how much money you want to spend on your garden”

and occasional repairs are the main expenses, of course, but why not ask ChatGPT to supply a list of typical outgoings based on your family size, habits and income? Once that’s done, ask the AI to do the maths:

**‘My household’s net monthly income after tax and other deductions is £ [enter amount]. How much can I afford to spend on [enter item]?’**

The items here could be fun stuff such as nights out and streaming services, or sensible things such as savings, pensions and investments. Either way, ChatGPT should be able to come up with some useful advice, although as always, seek professional advice from a human expert before parting with sums of money.

## DIY

Like many of us, if your do-it-yourself skills only go as far as assembling a flat-pack bookcase – and even then, accompanied by lots of colourful language while trying to decipher the manual – you may need to consult ChatGPT. Of course, for anything involving electricity, gas or dangerous materials or tools, though, recruit a professional: these people know what they’re doing better than the average AI.

With that understood, consider time-saving ChatGPT prompts such as these:

**‘Which tools will I need to maintain a medium-sized family home?’**
**‘How do I disconnect a dishwasher from the water supply?’**
**‘What is an alternative to hanging pictures with screws and wall plugs?’**
**‘Where can I recycle an old table near Manchester, UK?’**

Each of these prompts will give you detailed responses, which you can then refine with more specific details of the job at hand.

Of course, DIY is only worth attempting if you have sufficient time for the job and the right tools: it may be easier to replace the item in question. Again, ChatGPT can help you there:

**‘Recommend a shelving solution for a space 1m in width and 2m in height, deliverable to Edinburgh and costing less than £200, including installation costs.’**

ChatGPT isn’t (yet) tied to advertising, so you’ll likely get recommendations that are accurate rather than paid for, unlike many standard search engines. As always, check that the services being offered match your needs rather than implicitly trusting what the AI tells you, although in this respect, ChatGPT is usually reliable.

## Room planning

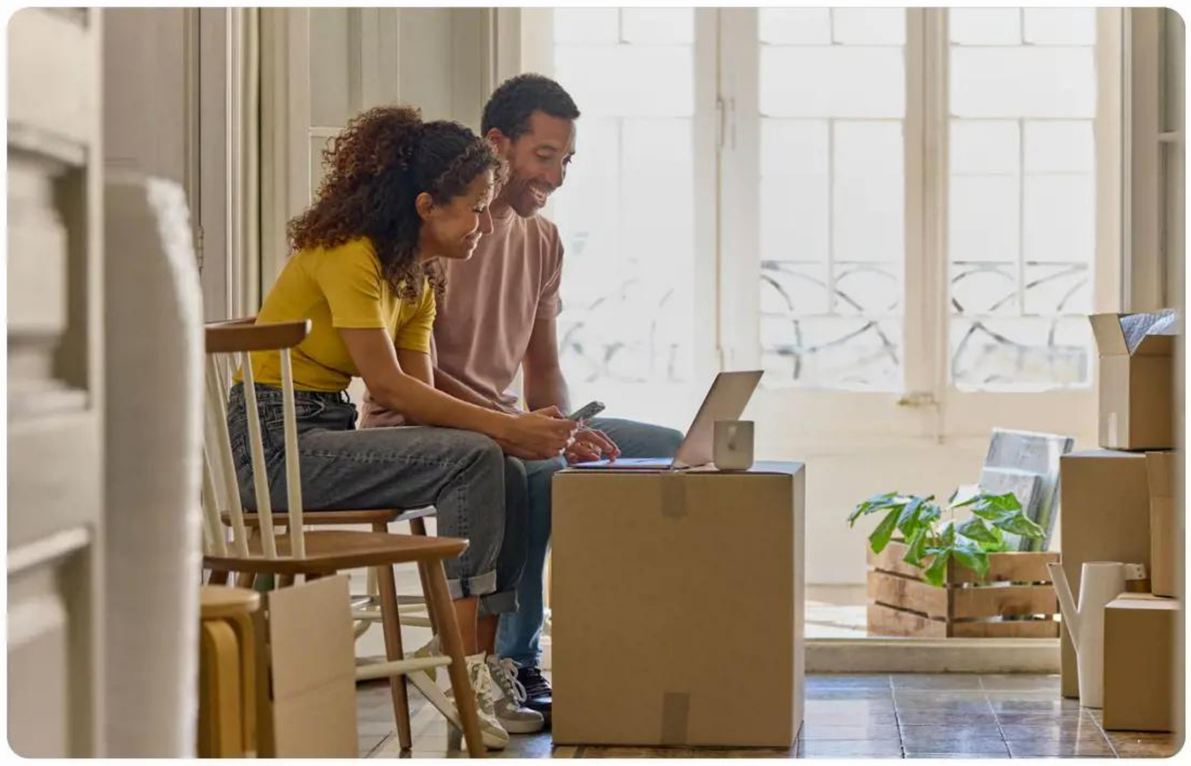
Now, here’s where ChatGPT becomes a serious time-saver. Say you have an unusually shaped room and you need furniture to fit it: specificity in your prompt will be key here. You could prompt it as follows:

**‘Recommend furniture for a L-shaped room.’**

If so, you’ll get results that will give you a basic solution, but you could do better. How about this?

**‘Recommend the following furniture for an L-shaped room of dimensions L 7m, W 4m, D 3m with an extra 2m width in the L-shape: a brown leather sofa seating six people, a TV stand that supports a 48-inch screen, two armchairs in cream fabric and a rug that suits the room size, costing less than £2,500**





and deliverable to Brighton, UK, before 10 February.'

Now, the AI has some serious data to work with, and is likely to supply a long and detailed list of responses. When we tried it, ChatGPT asked us at the end of the response:
**'Would you like me to supply a list of different rug sizes?'**

This led to a list of six rugs of various costs and fabrics, but we weren't done with ChatGPT just yet. We also wanted to know which colours to paint our L-shaped room. Should we use different colours to emphasise the layout, or stay uniform for a consistent feel? We asked:
**'Is it true that a white ceiling makes a room feel taller and that white walls make it feel wider?'**

ChatGPT came back with:
**'Yes – that's broadly true, and it comes down to how our eyes and brains interpret light and space.'**
The things you learn, eh?

## Garden Planning

Once again, ChatGPT is a godsend for anyone whose knowledge of gardens and gardening extends to watering a potted







cactus every two years. Not only is your beloved garden a unique size and shape, it has probably been worked on (or neglected) by whoever lived in your house before you, unless, of course, you have a brand-new home. Even so, the basic questions are the same, from the lawn to the flowers to the shed: what do you plant in your garden, how (and how often) to tend them, how to keep the lawn looking good and how to ensure that pesky vermin don't mess it up. (Of course, you could just tarmac it over and park cars on it, but let's assume you're a little more green-fingered than that.)

So with this in mind, let's ask ChatGPT for advice with as many specifics as we can muster:

**'Recommend plants for a 10m x 1m flower bed that flower all year round and require a small to medium amount of trimming and other maintenance. Our garden has a clay-heavy soil and is south facing. I suffer from hayfever, so please omit plants whose pollen output is high.'**

ChatGPT loves queries of this kind (or so its code makes it seem) and will supply you with a useful list of options, especially if you add details of how much money you want to spend on your garden. Also, consider what you'll be using your garden for and how many people will be visiting it. Is it party central in the summer, with the neighbours trampling on the lawn and spilling cocktails on the hydrangeas? Will it be a place of repose, best suited to a quiet afternoon spent snoozing in a deckchair? Or will it be a manicured work of art, with a putting-green lawn and beautifully trimmed banks of exotic blooms? Your garden, your call – so tailor your ChatGPT prompts accordingly.

## Moving house

All good things come to an end, and sooner or later, you're probably going to have to move house, famously the third most stressful thing that can happen in anyone's life after 1) family coming for Christmas and 2) stepping on a bit of Lego. If you're renting, just pack your stuff, clean the place and hope the landlord doesn't take £100 off your deposit because you spilled Ribena on the hall carpet. If you're buying, though, you may well find yourself in a world of complexity and frustration – although ChatGPT can help you navigate it.

Looking for a mortgage? As always, the key is to be open and specific – if you're happy to share your financial details, of course:

**'Recommend fixed and tracker mortgage plans with a duration of 20 years. I have an annual net salary of £30,000 after deductions, a deposit of £6,000 and a car loan of £2,000. I can afford to pay a mortgage premium of £500 per month.'**

You'll also need to find somewhere to live, and while you could peruse several hundred estate-agent websites, it'll be a whole lot quicker to ask ChatGPT to do it for you. Be aware that the results of these two prompts will be quite different, of course:

**'Find seven-bedroom houses for sale on the banks of Loch Ness.'**

**'Find three-bedroom houses for sale in the Home Counties.'**

With flexibility and perseverance, you'll get the results you need – and thanks to ChatGPT, you'll hopefully get them faster than you would otherwise.

Happy home-building.





IN-DEPTH

# PLAN THE PERFECT HOLIDAY

## From flights to city guides, how ChatGPT can help you to create your dream holiday

We'll admit it: planning a holiday can be more stressful than the job you're supposed to be taking a break from. Flights, hotels, itineraries, translations; it's a mess of tabs, apps and endless 'best places to stay' articles that all seem suspiciously similar. So we did what we always do these days when life admin threatens to derail us: we turned to AI.

And honestly? It's like having the world's most patient travel agent in your pocket.

Images OpenAI, Getty

## Picking the right destination

‘I have a week off in early November and I want a festive city break in a cold environment. I have a budget of around £1,000’

The first challenge when going on holiday is always deciding where to go. You might know you want sunshine or a city break, but the world is a big place. AI can cut through the indecision by helping you narrow things down. Ask it to suggest destinations based on your budget, time of year and interests, and it will quickly compile a list that makes sense.

In our example, ChatGPT offered a mix of classic European getaways and a few more adventurous picks. Denmark and Sweden were obvious, but it also suggested Bulgaria, which we hadn’t even considered. It didn’t just list cities either; it explained why Sofia could be a good choice in November, complete with average temperatures and the bonus of fewer tourists.

Instead of trawling through generic ‘top ten destinations’ articles, you get suggestions tailored to you. It feels like brainstorming with a travel-savvy friend, rather than battling Google search results.

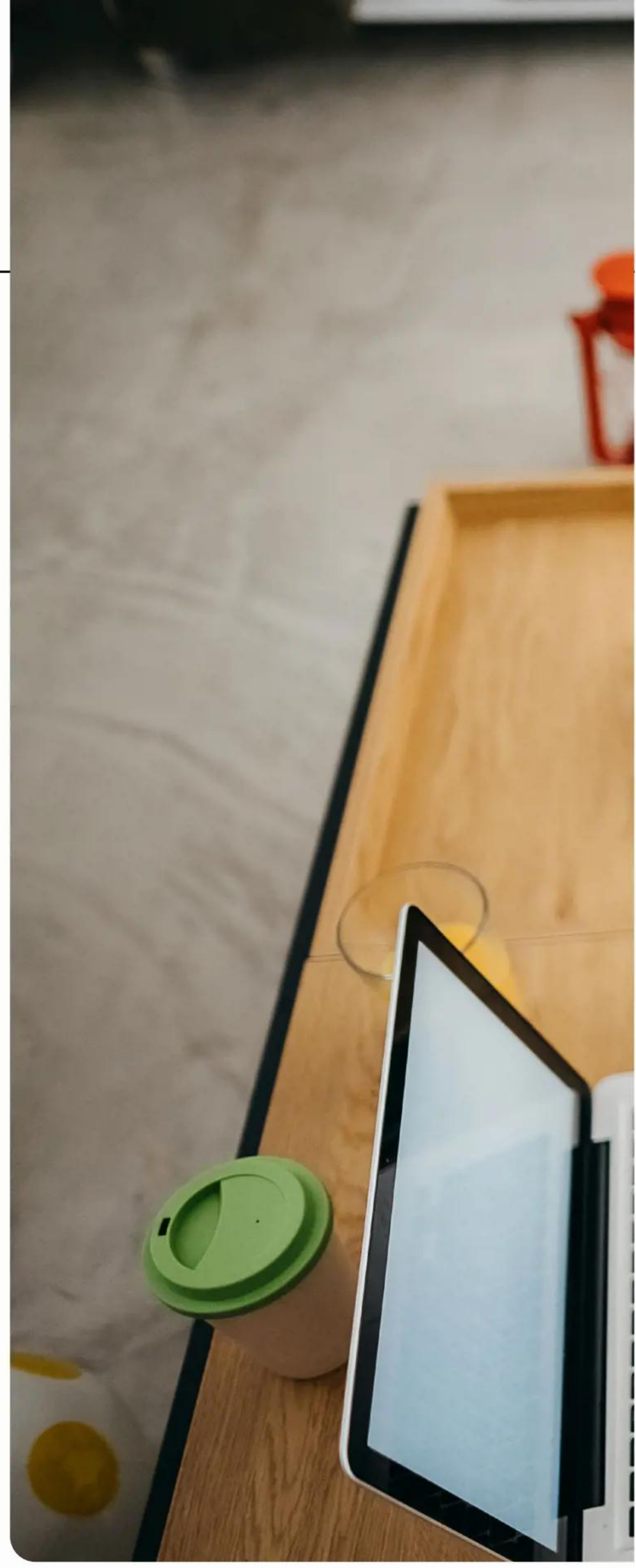
## Finding flights without losing your sanity

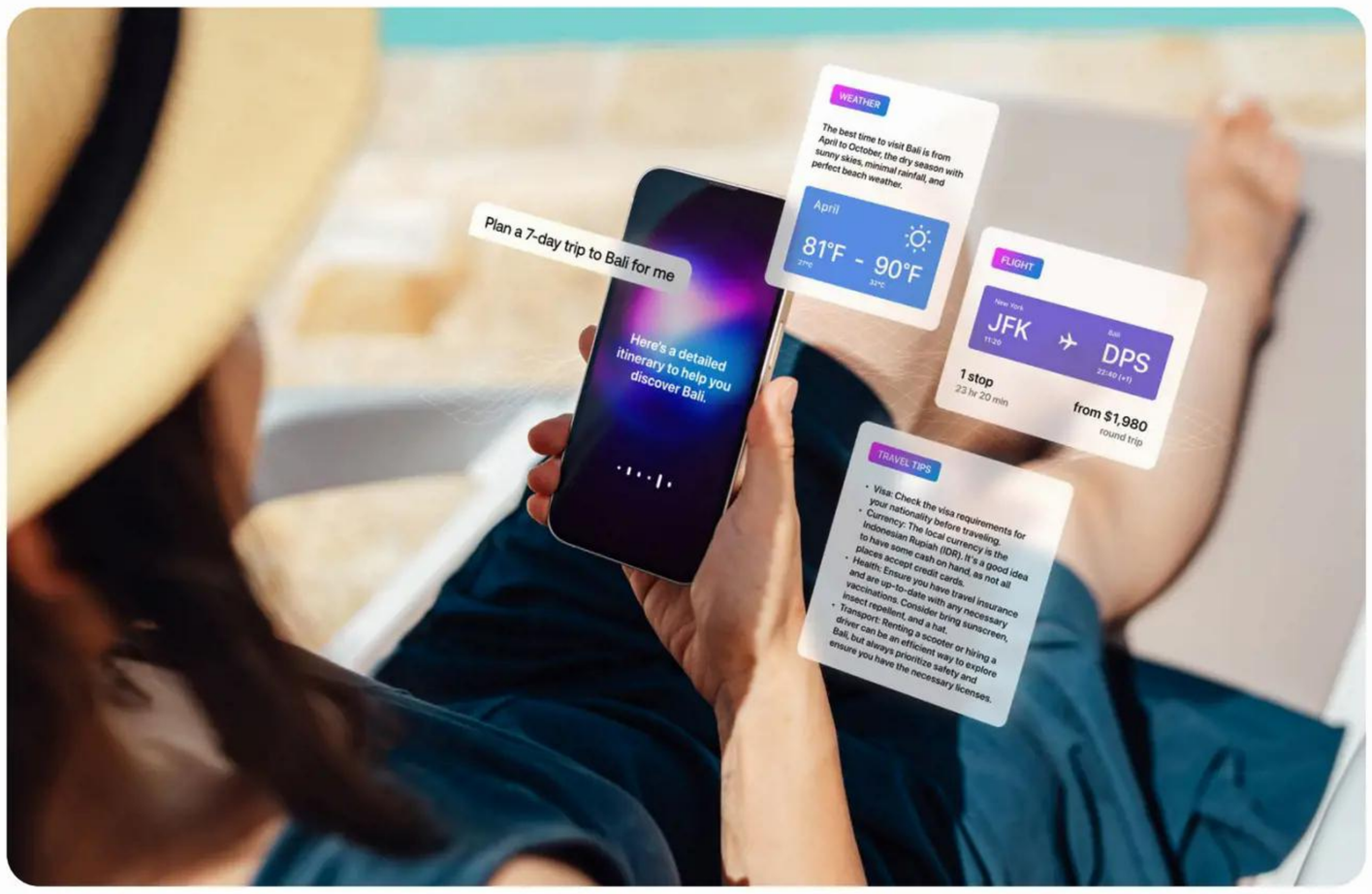
‘Find me the cheapest direct flights from Edinburgh to Tokyo in late February, but I don’t want to arrive at stupid o’clock.’

Start with the worst part: flights. Normally, we’d spend hours comparing Skyscanner, Google Flights and random airline sites, trying to decide whether saving £30 is worth leaving at 6am with a four-hour layover in Frankfurt. With ChatGPT, though, you can set the rules up front. Within seconds, you get a neat shortlist that respects your time as much as your wallet.

It’s not magic; it’s still pulling from flight data you could find yourself, but the difference is the filter. Instead of manually checking every option, the AI does the tedious comparisons and hands you the good stuff.

You can even push it further by asking for recommendations on which days to travel.






AI will factor in price fluctuations and highlight when you’re better off leaving on a Tuesday instead of a Saturday. This kind of advice used to be buried in forums and travel blogs. Now it’s instant.

## Hotels without the booking regret

‘I’m looking for a hotel close to Kyoto Station for under £150 a night, with good reviews and cleanliness’

Picking where to sleep can be another stress trigger when planning a holiday. We’ve lost count of the times we’ve booked a ‘charming boutique hotel’, only to find out



that ‘charming’ actually means ‘next to a motorway’. This is where AI shines again. You can ask ChatGPT for a mix of budget, style, and location, and the AI will deliver options you can trust without the usual doomscroll through hundreds of TripAdvisor horror stories.

It’s not replacing the big booking platforms, but it makes them usable. Instead of endless filters and pop-ups trying to upsell breakfast, you get exactly what you asked for.

Another underrated trick is asking AI to compare hotels across different booking sites. It can flag if Booking.com has a better cancellation policy than Expedia or if the official hotel website is running a discount you might miss. This saves money and avoids the sinking feeling when you realise you could have booked the same room cheaper elsewhere.

## City guides that don’t feel generic

‘What are the best things to do in Kyoto? Make me a city guide focused on temples, food, and anime shops’

Here’s where it gets really cool. AI city guides are way better than the ‘Top 10 things to do in…’ lists that clog up Google. If you’re heading to Rome, sure, you’ll see the Colosseum. But what about that family-run trattoria where the menu hasn’t changed since the 1970s? AI can personalise your itinerary based on you.

When we asked for a two-day Kyoto food crawl, we got a plan that jumped between ramen shops, markets and a whisky bar we’d never have found otherwise. The itinerary included timings, walking directions and even estimated costs for each stop. It felt like a friend had scribbled a plan for us, not like we’d been handed a tourist brochure.

Even better, you can mix AI’s recommendations with your own priorities. Want a balance of sightseeing, food and downtime? Ask for it. Fancy a pub crawl that mixes craft beer with live music? No problem. The itineraries are flexible and easy to tweak, making them a nice alternative to static guidebooks.

Images OpenAI, Getty



## Translation made simple

‘Translate this Japanese menu’

Nothing kills holiday confidence faster than standing in a restaurant abroad and staring at a menu you don’t understand. Traditional translation apps help in this situation, but AI has taken things to a new level.

Apple’s new translation features in iOS, powered by Apple Intelligence, make it possible to have fluid conversations with someone who doesn’t speak your language. We tested it by pretending to chat with our Italian in-laws, and it was surprisingly smooth. Instead of clunky word-by-word translations, it felt like we were having a real conversation.

> “AI can’t replace official government websites, but it can point you in the right direction”

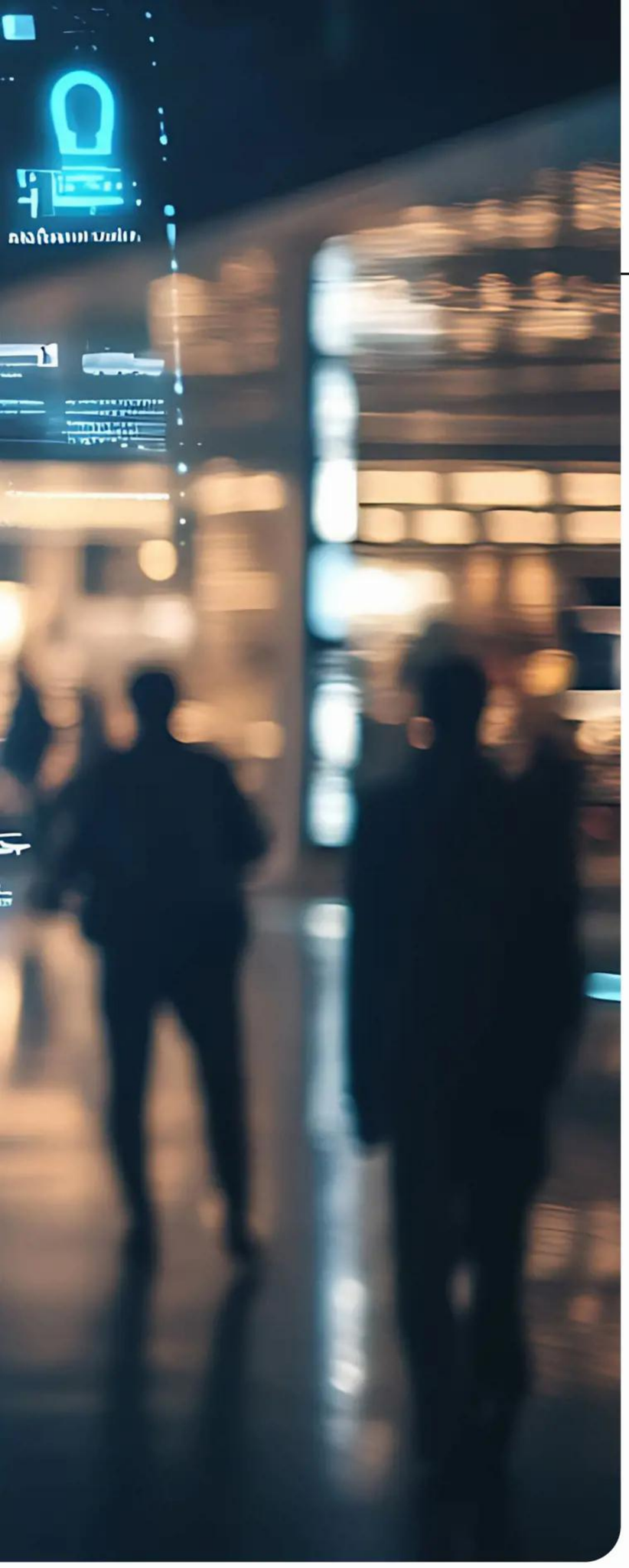
We're big fans of Apple’s offering, but it doesn’t come close to the prowess of ChatGPT when it comes to translation. ChatGPT allows you to upload images of text in foreign languages and ask for a translation. While we were booking our holiday to Japan, we accessed lots of Japanese sites with no English translation. Luckily, ChatGPT makes the process of understanding and reading another language an incredibly easy proposition.

## Travel admin you actually finish

‘What do I need to travel to Japan as a British citizen?’

‘What should I pack for a two-week trip to Japan in February?’

Planning isn’t just about picking fun things to do; there’s the admin side too: visas, insurance and packing lists. These are boring but essential. AI is surprisingly helpful here as well.



Ask for a packing list for ‘a week in Barcelona in June, staying in a mid-range hotel, with a focus on food and sightseeing’, and you’ll get a detailed checklist that covers everything from clothes to plug adapters. No more panicked runs to the airport shop because you forgot a charger.

Visa and entry requirements are another headache. AI can’t replace official government websites, but it can point you in the right direction. If you ask about entry rules for Japan, it will summarise what you need and direct you to the correct official page to double-check. That saves time and avoids falling down a rabbit hole of outdated travel forums.

## The fun extras

‘Give me hidden gems in Kyoto that locals love’

Once the essentials are sorted, you can start using AI for the fun stuff. Want personalised restaurant recommendations that avoid tourist traps? Ask for ‘hidden gems in Kyoto that locals love’, and you’ll get a list of places that rarely show up in mainstream guides.

Looking for activities for kids? AI will generate itineraries that balance museums, parks and fun stops without overloading the day. Even better, you can ask it to adjust for the weather. If it rains, your sunny beach day can turn into an indoor adventure plan in minutes.

For sports fans, AI can even scan local fixtures and events. Heading to New York? It will tell you if the New York Knicks are playing at Madison Square Garden while you’re in town. That’s the sort of detail that can transform a trip from good to unforgettable.

## Why AI doesn’t replace experience

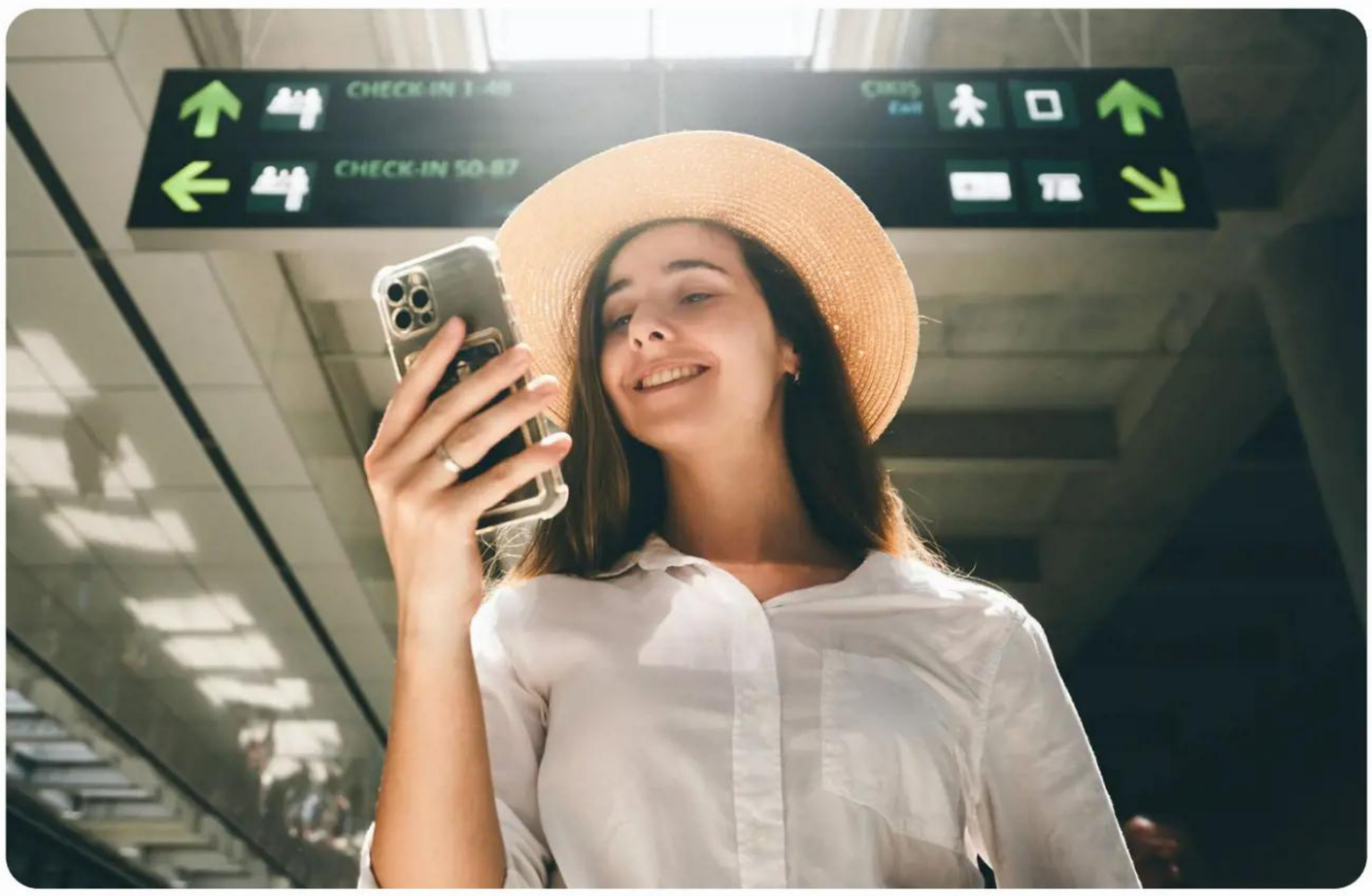
All of this might sound like AI makes travel planning effortless. It certainly removes a lot of friction, but it’s not perfect. Sometimes, the recommendations can be a little too polished or lean heavily on popular spots. That’s why the best approach is to use AI as a starting point, then layer in your own research and instincts.

AI gives you the scaffolding. You add the colour. That combination is what turns a decent trip into a great one.

## Holiday planning has never been this simple

Holidays are meant to be a break, not another spreadsheet of decisions for us to make. AI helps strip out the boring parts of planning a dream trip and replaces them with quick, clear answers. You still get to make the choices, but without the noise.

Whether it’s finding flights that don’t leave at ridiculous times, avoiding hotels that look better in photos than reality, or finally cracking a menu in a language you don’t speak, AI makes the process easier. If you can spend less time planning and more time looking forward to the trip, that feels like the real win.




Images OpenAI, Getty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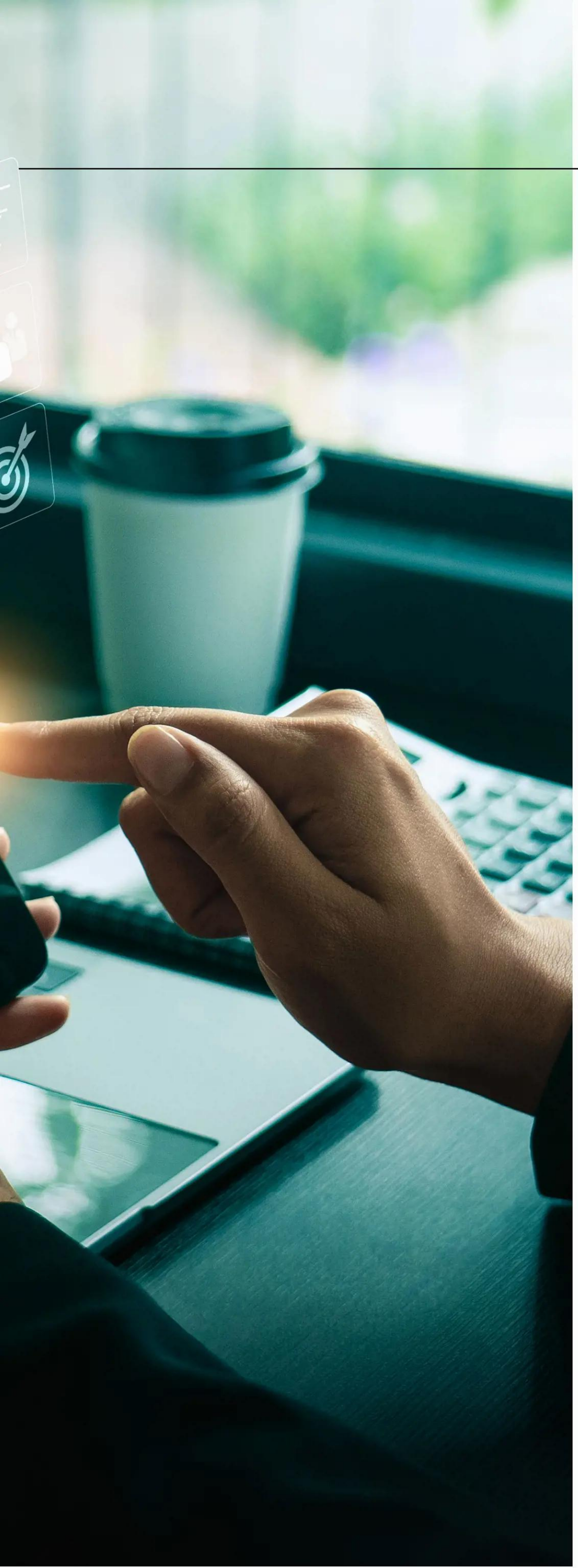


IN-DEPTH

# PLAN YOUR DREAM PARTY

• • •

**ChatGPT is the event planner you've dreamed of – only free, and in your pocket whenever you need it**

Event planning is meant to be fun. You're pulling people together to celebrate something special, whether it's a milestone birthday, your wedding, or even just a Saturday dinner party with friends or family. The reality, though, is that it's easy to feel overwhelmed by the details that go into the planning stages.

A number of you will have been there. When the wedding-planning process commences, it quickly becomes clear that spreadsheets and late-night Pinterest scrolling aren't enough. That's where AI tools can come in, taking some of the load off. It's like having a personal assistant who never gets tired of answering the same questions or providing reassurance that there is still plenty of time for you to pull off your dream celebrations.



## Start with the vision

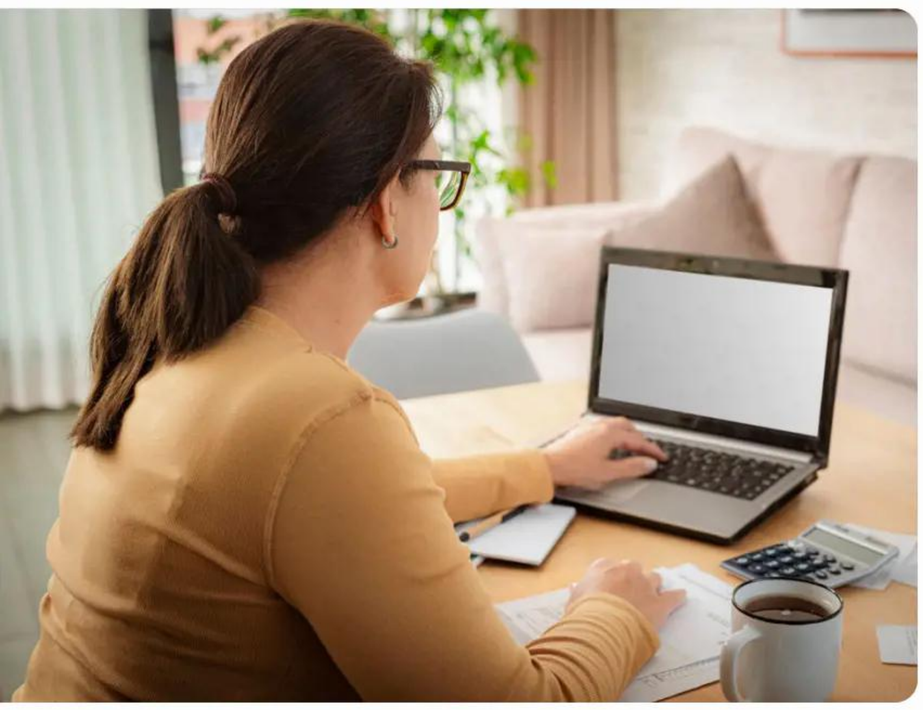
**‘I need some theme suggestions for my wedding in Scotland. We are getting married in July in the Scottish Highlands and are expecting about 100 guests’**

Every event begins with an idea. The problem is, translating that idea, such as, ‘I’d love something relaxed but stylish’, into an actual plan is harder than it sounds. Luckily, this is where AI shines. Ask a chatbot to turn your vague ideas into a theme, and it will produce suggestions that you can either run with or reject.

For weddings, you can give it a few details such as location, season and guest count, and it will suggest themes that fit your setup. We tried outdoor summer wedding in Scotland with 100 guests’, and were given a set of options, ranging from idyllic Scottish countryside to modern marquee. For birthdays, you can be just as specific: ‘40th birthday party at home with 30 people, a mix of family and friends, budget of £500.’ Within seconds, you’ll get a coherent plan with food, drink, decorations and even suggested timings.

AI will even follow up with extra bits that it could help you with; things you may not have even considered in the first place, such as mock-ups for your invitations, moodboards and more.

It’s not about handing over control; it’s about turning a blank page into something you can work with.



## Budgets made bearable

**‘Help me plan an 80-guest wedding in London with a budget of £10,000’**

Nothing derails event planning faster than money. It’s one thing to dream up the perfect wedding, but another to make it fit within what you can actually afford. AI can help by acting like a financial sounding board.

You can ask it to break down costs for a wedding with your budget in mind. ‘£10,000 wedding, 80 guests, central London’ will generate a rough cost distribution: venue, food, dress, entertainment and photography. You can then tweak the numbers to suit your priorities. Want to splash out on a live band, but save money on flowers? AI can rebalance the budget to show what trade-offs are realistic.

For smaller events like birthdays, it can do the same. Give it your budget and guest count, and it will suggest a menu, drinks shopping list and decor ideas that stay within your limits. It feels less like number crunching, and more like a friend reminding you not to blow the entire budget on a cake.

## Guest lists and invites

**‘Design an invite for my *Dolce Vita*-inspired wedding’**

**‘Have I left anyone out of my seating plan? Cross-reference both supplied documents’**

Getting people in the same place at the same time is harder than it should be. AI can at least help with the admin. Use it to draft invite templates that match the tone you want – formal wedding invitations, playful birthday e-vites or short WhatsApp messages that don’t sound robotic.



More importantly, it can help you organise the guest list itself. Tools like Notion or Google Sheets become much more powerful when paired with an AI assistant. Instead of manually updating RSVPs, you can feed in email replies and let the AI sort who's coming, who needs a reminder and who's ignoring you.

For weddings, this is a lifesaver. Ask ChatGPT to cross-reference your guest list with your seating plan, and it will flag up people who haven't yet been assigned a table. For birthdays, it can stop you from accidentally forgetting that one cousin who will never forgive you if they're left out.

## Venues and vendors

'Find me a wedding venue in Edinburgh for under £5,000'

Finding a venue is one of the most stressful parts of any event. AI helps by filtering options that actually fit your requirements. Tell it, 'wedding venues in Edinburgh with space for 100 guests, budget under £5,000, must allow outside catering', and it will produce a curated list. Instead of wading through endless ads and generic lists, you're left with realistic choices.

The same goes for vendors. Whether you need a photographer, DJ or caterer, you can ask AI to shortlist options based on reviews, price and location. It won't replace doing your own checks, but it cuts the time it takes to go from 50 possible choices to five serious contenders.

## Menus and drinks

'I want to host a taco night for six people. Give me a recipe for Birria'

Food and drink are where most events either shine or flop. AI is surprisingly good at creating menus that balance ambition with practicality. For a birthday dinner, you can ask for a menu that feeds 30 people, mixes vegetarian and meat options and doesn't require you to spend all day in the kitchen. You'll get suggestions complete with recipes, prep times and shopping lists. For weddings, AI can help you brainstorm menu ideas to present to caterers. You can feed in your budget per head and get a sense of what's possible before you even book tastings. Drinks are another area where it saves stress. 'Cocktail menu for a 50th birthday, budget £200, must include one non-alcoholic option' becomes an instant shopping list that you can take to the supermarket.

## Entertainment and playlists

'Make me a wedding playlist based on the top pop songs from the mid 2000s'

Every good event needs a soundtrack. Instead of agonising over Spotify for hours, ask AI to generate playlists that match your theme. 'Indie disco playlist for a wedding afterparty' or 'classic pop hits for a 30th birthday barbecue' will give you a full track list in minutes.

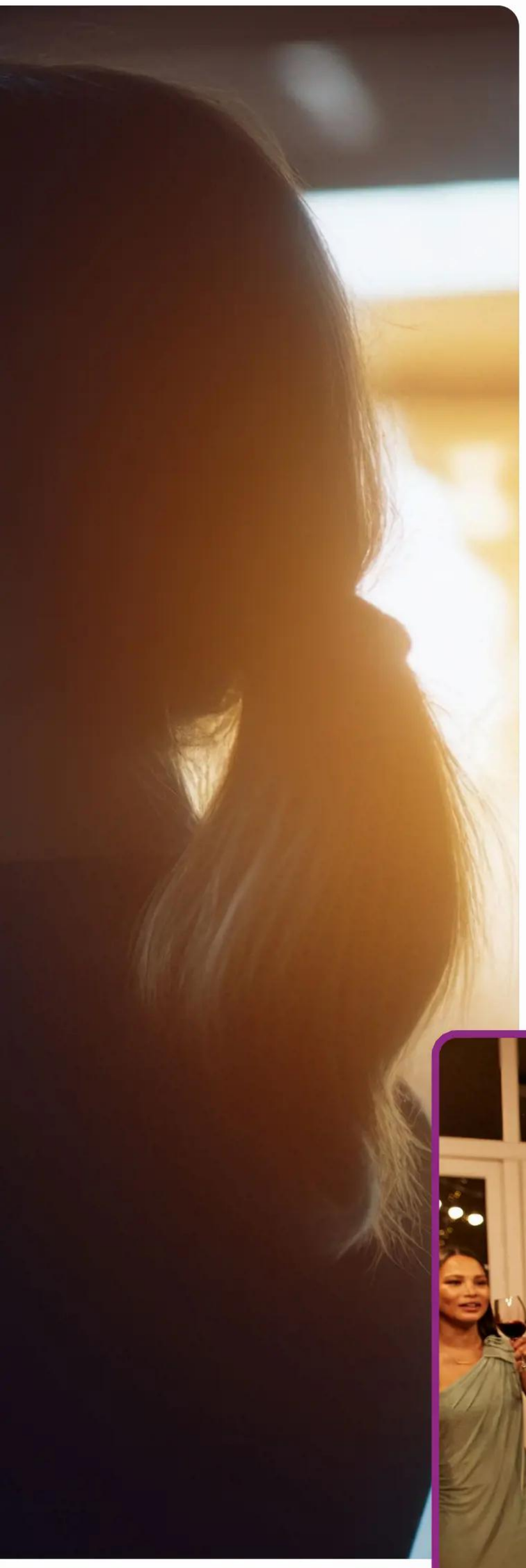
It's not limited to music, either. You can ask for entertainment suggestions based on the vibe you want: garden games for a relaxed wedding, trivia for a birthday dinner, or even suggestions for speech formats that won't bore half the room.

## Timelines that keep you sane

'Create a single-page itinerary for my upcoming wedding'







Events are stressful because everything has to happen at the right time. AI can build out timelines that stop you from forgetting the essentials. For weddings, this means a full countdown: when to book the venue, when to send invites and when to schedule fittings.

For birthdays, it can generate a one-day run sheet that tells you when to prep food, set up decorations and get ready yourself. This can be invaluable when juggling multiple deadlines. Instead of feeling constantly one step behind, you have a clear checklist.

## Personal touches

**'Come up with personal wedding favour ideas based on Italy and Scotland'**

The fear with AI is that everything becomes generic. That's why it's so important to feed AI information on your personal life, including your likes and dislikes. The more you tell ChatGPT about yourself, the better, and if done correctly, you'll get results that are specific to you. Ask for wedding favour ideas specific to your partner, and you might get suggestions like Pokémon cards, shortbread tins and even Italian-inspired tartan ribbons.

For birthdays, try asking for decorations for someone who loves football – you might get a plan for turning a living room into a mini stadium, complete with snacks named after players. It's those details that make events memorable, and AI helps you surface them quickly.

## Time to partAI

Planning events is stressful because it combines logistics, money and people. AI won't remove every headache, but it takes away the drudge work and gives you space to focus on what matters: the experience itself.

Whether you're planning a wedding, a birthday or just a big family get-together, having an assistant who can brainstorm themes, balance budgets, suggest menus and keep timelines straight is a game-changer. While it won't stop Uncle Dave from telling the same story twice in his speech, it will mean you're less likely to spend the week before the event in a spiral of panic.

Celebrations should feel like celebrations, not work. With AI helping out behind the scenes, you can actually enjoy the planning as much as the party.



Images OpenAI, Getty

OVERVIEW

# FITNESS

## Get fitter and healthier – physically and mentally – with help from your friendly AI

There's so much conflicting advice these days about what to eat and how to stay in shape that the science of fitness can sometimes seem more like an art. It's ironic that ChatGPT, an entity that doesn't possess a body, is such a useful source of advice about how to stay physically fit. Mental health is important too, of course, and even though ChatGPT's brain is nothing like that of a human, the AI can still help you stay on the right track. Of course, seek advice from a human healthcare professional, too.



## Workout plans

Big data is where generative artificial intelligence is most at home. Indeed, AI was invented to help people sort through masses of data to come to a solution. In our daily lives, assuming that most of us aren't genome-sequencers or astrophysicists, one of the most data-heavy activities we routinely carry out is that of staying fit. Yes, the 'big four' bits of advice that we're given are still don't smoke, don't drink, eat right and move your body, but the moment you start digging deeper than that, you're confronted with a million bits of advice. So let's ask ChatGPT to help.

For example, if you want to strengthen a particular part of your body at the gym, you might ask the AI:

**'Which exercises should I perform, and how often, to keep my knees strong and surrounded by supporting muscle?'**

ChatGPT came back with three repetitive exercises for our thigh and calf muscles, as well as a stretching technique. We then gave it some more data:

**'Repeat this recommendation, bearing in mind that I'm 65 years old, of medium fitness and keen to avoid the onset of osteoporosis.'**



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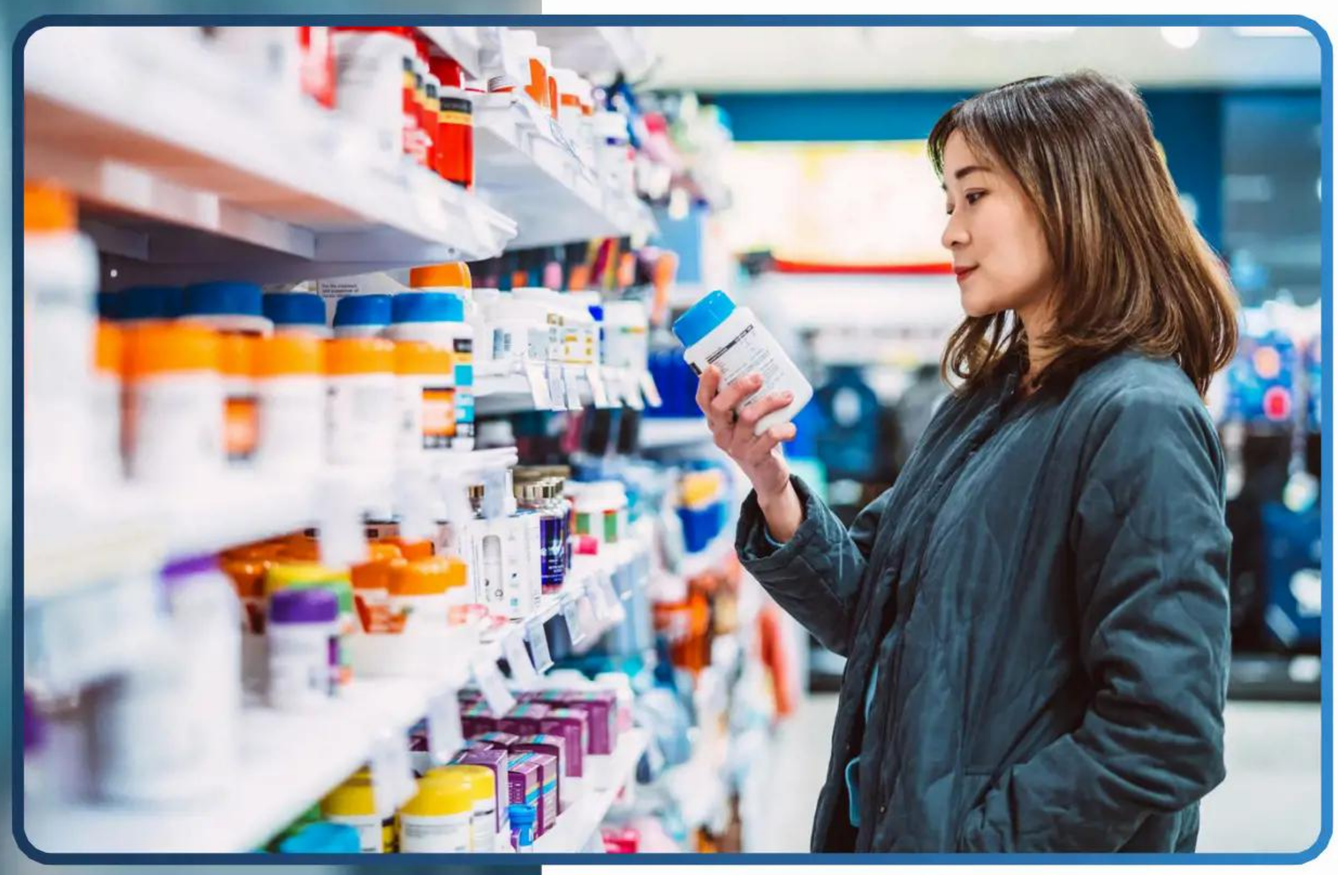
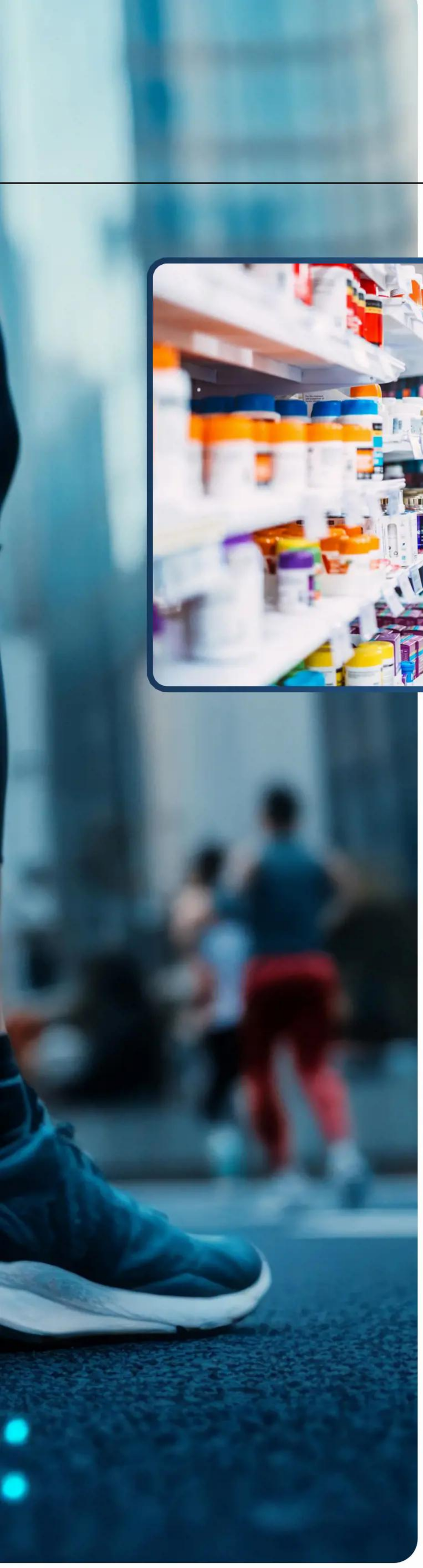
"Once you've built a workout plan you can prompt it to recommend places to exercise"





The AI then refined its suggestions, reducing the number of sets and repetitions and adding some dietary advice regarding bone density without being asked, revealing once again how intuitive ChatGPT can seem if given enough data.

Once you've built a workout plan that is suited to your needs, you can prompt the program to recommend places to exercise, with classes that suit your schedule and budget. Perhaps you'd like to work out in the open air, in a nearby park, or maybe you'd like to lift weights at home, with gear that ChatGPT recommends for your needs. It's really just a case of giving the AI as much specific information as possible.

## Diet guidance

You thought working out had a lot of options? Try dieting. Atkins, Keto, 5/2 fasting, meat-only, veg-only, cheese-only... and let's not forget the evergreen but unpopular 'eating less' approach. With that in mind, let's ask ChatGPT to recommend a sensible diet of healthy foods in the correct balance for your physical requirements and goals. An example of a real-life quote that is based on achievable objectives might be:
'I am a middle-aged, moderately-active person with no health issues other than an allergy to wheat. Recommend a weekly diet plan that focuses on energy delivery in work hours, a light evening meal and a couple of glasses of wine at the weekend.'

ChatGPT can actually be helpful with generic prompts such as 'How do I lose weight?', but for best results, be specific, like in these refined examples:
'I am a 45-year-old vegetarian and find myself getting very tired in the evenings. How can I gain more energy in a healthy manner?'
'I would like to improve my digestion. As a 79-year-old with mild IBS, what foods should I avoid?'

If you're interested in exploring these subjects further, ask ChatGPT to reveal the latest data on a given topic, listing studies by relevancy or recency. A lot of university research is publicly available, allowing the AI to consult, collate and present it to you in an easy-to-read format. You can also ask it to recommend nutritionists, established diet plans, food-shopping locations and other related information.

Remember, consulting a professional in these areas will be beneficial. Why not show them ChatGPT's diet suggestions and ask for their advice?

## Sports

It's funny, once you start thinking about the best way to prompt ChatGPT, you find yourself thinking the same way about your own, real-world decisions. The same process of formulating a prompt, in other words supplying data to support your goals, pops into your head when, for example, you think about taking up a sport. 'Why am I going to play football, hockey or tennis today?' you ask yourself, and 'What will it do for me, and what do I need to do well?' We asked ChatGPT the very same question for each of those sports, and it told us:
*'Football is great for cardiovascular health, flexibility and mobility. You'll need a ball, comfortable athletic clothing and a soccer bag to carry everything in.'*

Images OpenAI, Getty

*'Hand-eye co-ordination, strength and power are benefits of playing hockey, but you'll need quite a lot of gear, including a stick (choose the right size based on your height), a ball, a mouthguard (mandatory in most leagues to protect teeth/jaw), shin guards, cleats or turf shoes.'*

*'Tennis is great for co-ordination and balance, focus and concentration, and strategic thinking: buy a tennis racket (choose grip size and weight suited to your level) with overgrips (for better racket grip).'*

A simple but detailed question can yield great results, then, and of course, you can also prompt ChatGPT to recommend local sports centres and leagues, with the caveat that a Google search can also do that for you, but at a far lesser energy cost. We're trying to expend energy on sports here, not data-centre cooling systems.

## Vitamins and supplements

With the above comment on energy in mind, you could spend a lot of time online researching the 13 (thanks, ChatGPT) essential vitamins that we all need to function, and rather a lot more time exploring the 80,000-plus (again, thanks) dietary supplements that are apparently available to buy on the internet or in health stores. As well as vitamins, these can be minerals, amino acids, herbal and botanical supplements, fatty acids and oils, probiotics and prebiotics, sports supplements and miscellaneous items, such as electrolytes.

Once we were confronted by this list and realised that it would take decades to type in 'What does [supplement name] do anyway?' into Google 80,000 times, we asked ChatGPT this question:
**'Thanks, but which of these supplements do I actually need?'**

We could have added useful information such as our age, health, dietary habits and so on, but this time, we just thought we'd wait it out and see what wisdom ChatGPT had to offer. After a few seconds it generated a 340-word answer, beginning with the compliment, 'That's a really smart question' and ending with the question, 'Would you like me to guide you through a quick set of questions to build your tailored supplement plan?'

The really useful bit was in the middle. In simple but never patronising terms, the AI laid down a few basic principles about what supplements actually do and an idea of why they're needed. Its understanding of the appropriate parameters for its answer – 100 words would have been too curt for such an important subject, and 500 words too many – was satisfying to witness.





"A GP or psychiatrist should still be your first port of call for advice or treatment, just as they are for physical health issues, but if you're in need of information, ChatGPT can still be very useful"

# Mental health

When it comes to the subject of good mental health, the conversation can quickly dry up. The topic is far from the taboo, unspoken subject that it was in the bad old days, but still, quite a few people don't know how to address or discuss it. Here's where an AI, a humanlike but not human entity, can be of value for anyone who doesn't have a sympathetic loved one nearby with the vocabulary to discuss it. Asked to define good mental health, ChatGPT told us:

*'It's not the absence of problems, stress, or emotions like sadness and anxiety – those are natural parts of life. Instead, good mental health is about having emotional resilience, balance and the ability to adapt, so that difficulties don't take away one's overall sense of well-being.'*

This is a workable definition by any measure, and helpful for anyone who feels that problems in this area diminish or isolate them. A GP or psychiatrist should still be your first port of call for advice or treatment, just as they are for physical health issues, but if you're in need of information, ChatGPT can still be very useful. We asked it for advice about depression, and it returned:

*'Feeling depressed can be really heavy, and it's important to approach this carefully. While I'm not a medical professional, I can guide you toward effective steps that are widely recommended and safe:*

*1. Reach out to a professional*
*A mental health professional – like a psychologist, psychiatrist, or licensed counsellor – can provide an accurate diagnosis and treatment plan.*
*2. Talk to someone you trust*
*Share how you feel with a friend, family member, or mentor.*
*3. Self-care basics*

*Sleep: Try to keep a consistent sleep schedule.*

*Nutrition: Balanced meals can affect mood more than many realise.'*

Finally, ChatGPT supplied a list of numbers to call for human assistance – a valuable service, and one that demonstrates its awareness of the importance of human intervention. All in all, it's clear that an AI can go some way towards keeping us in good shape, as long as we bear its limitations in mind.

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IN-DEPTH

# USING AI FOR ENTERTAINMENT

Whenever you need a source of entertainment, ChatGPT can create quizzes, crosswords, text-based games and more



Images OpenAI, Getty

Most of the talk around AI focuses on work. Productivity, emails, spreadsheets and efficiency. That's all useful, but it ignores the fact that technology is also meant to be fun. AI isn't just about saving you time at the office; it can also make your downtime more interesting.

From building playlists that match your mood to generating custom puzzles and quizzes for a night in with friends, AI has become surprisingly good at personal entertainment. It's like having a personal DJ, quizmaster and game designer all rolled into one.

## Music that actually fits the moment

'I want the perfect playlist for an evening writing sesh; something I'll like based on the songs I've mentioned in the past'

We've all wasted time scrolling through Spotify, trying to find the right playlist. There are millions of options, but none of them ever seem to nail the exact vibe you want. AI fixes that by building playlists around your preferences.

Ask for 'a two-hour playlist for cooking dinner on a rainy Sunday', and you'll get a mix of tracks that match the mood. Want something more specific? Try 'indie disco hits for a wedding afterparty' or 'lo-fi beats for late-night writing.' The playlists aren't just random, either; they're curated based on you, so they should feel personal rather than generic.

We tested this recently before a road trip. We asked for 'a six-hour playlist for driving through the Scottish Highlands, a mix of classic rock and modern folk.' The result was uncanny. It included artists we already loved, but also threw in new tracks we'd never heard before. It felt like a playlist a friend had made for us, not a generic Spotify mix.

## Custom puzzles for brain workouts

'A Pokémon-themed crossword, but make it difficult'

AI can also generate puzzles tailored to you. Crosswords, word searches, sudoku variations. Instead of picking from whatever's in the newspaper, you can ask for challenges built around your interests.

We tried asking for a crossword themed around wrestling – one of our guilty pleasures. The AI produced clues and a grid within minutes. Some of the clues were a little rough, but it worked. The joy was in having a puzzle built specifically for us, not for a mass audience.

## Games that adapt to you

'Make me a text-based detective game set in Tokyo'

AI isn't replacing full-scale video games, but it can generate lightweight games for quick fun: text adventures, choose-your-own-path stories or even mini logic puzzles. You give the framework, and the AI fills in the content.

We tested this by asking for a short text-based adventure set in Tokyo. Within seconds, we had a branching narrative where we could explore streets, talk to locals and uncover hidden storylines. It wasn't as polished as a commercial game, but it was engaging enough to keep us hooked for about 30 minutes.

The flexibility is what makes it exciting. You can tailor the setting, difficulty, or themes. Want a detective story that takes



"AI can generate lightweight games for quick fun. You give the framework, and AI fills in the content"

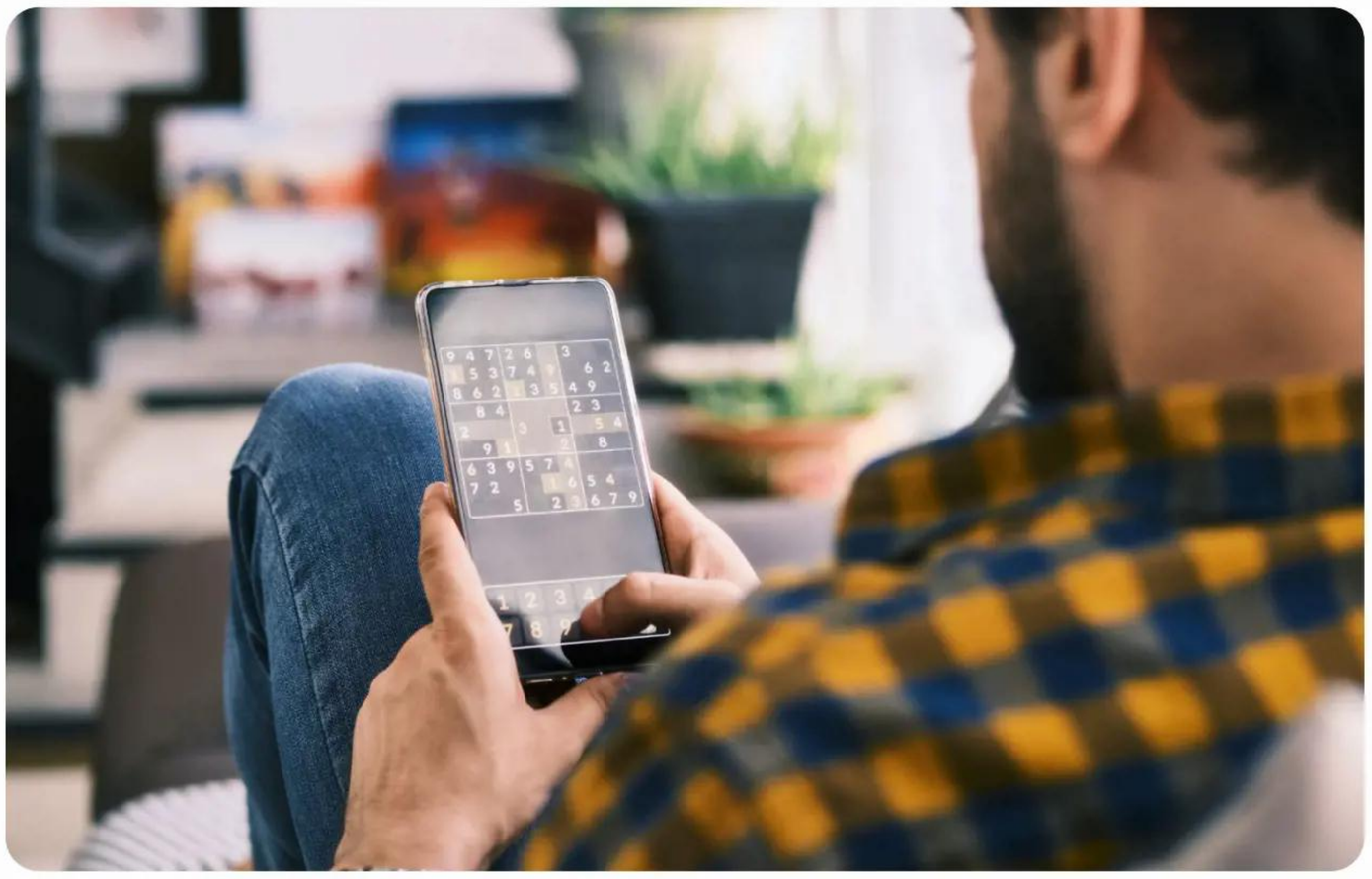


Images OpenAI, Getty

place in your hometown? Done. Want a fantasy game where your dog is the main character? ChatGPT will build it. Think of this as the modern equivalent of the choose-your-own adventures of your childhood.

## Quizzes for every occasion

'Ten questions about 90s football'
'Film quiz for people who love horror'
Quizzes are one of the easiest ways to entertain a group, but making them can be time-consuming. Coming up with good questions, balancing difficulty and avoiding





repeats takes effort. ChatGPT handles this instantly.

Ask for ‘a 20-question quiz on Premier League history, mixed difficulty’, and you’ll get a ready-to-use set with answers included. Want something sillier? Ask for ‘a pop culture quiz for a 30th birthday, light-hearted and fun’. You can even ask it to generate picture rounds by pairing questions with AI-generated images.

We tested this with friends by asking for ‘a 15-question pub quiz, five on films, five on sport, five on general knowledge’. The mix wasn’t perfect, but it felt authentic enough to work for the random times we need to bring together a quiz. We wish we had ChatGPT during the Covid-19 pandemic; it would’ve made the mundane work quizzes 100 times better!

## Learning disguised as fun

‘A basic quiz for ordering food in Japanese’

AI quizzes can also double as learning tools. If you’re trying to pick up a new subject, you can generate practice questions. We tried this for basic Japanese phrases before our upcoming honeymoon, and the AI built a flashcard-style quiz. It wasn’t glamorous, but it was effective.

This approach works for kids, too. Parents can create spelling quizzes, maths challenges, or themed puzzles to make homework less of a battle. The ability to personalise the material makes it feel less like schoolwork and more like a game.

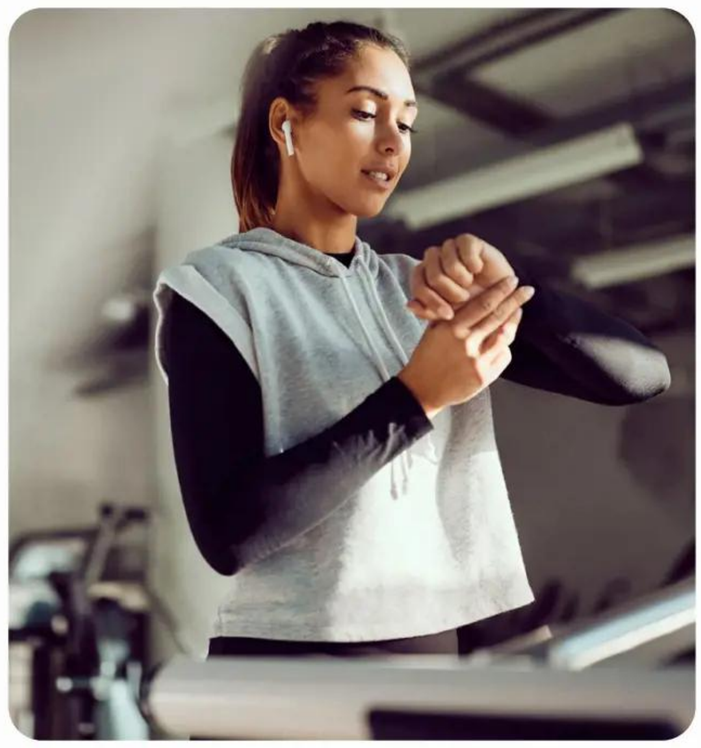
## Personalisation is the secret sauce

The thread that runs through everything you do with ChatGPT is personalisation. Off-the-shelf playlists, puzzles and quizzes are fine, but they’re generic. If you feed AI enough information, it can do an incredible job at making your life easier. Without added info, the AI will be as generic as anything you’d find online.

Instead of ‘a playlist for working out’, you get ‘a playlist for working out to 2000s hip-hop with no slow tracks’. Instead of ‘a general knowledge quiz’, you get ‘a quiz for five people who love Marvel films and Formula 1’. That’s what makes it fun: it feels like the content was designed for you, because in a sense, it was.

## Things to watch out for

As always, there are caveats. AI sometimes reuses patterns, so quizzes can feel repetitive if you don’t vary the prompts. Music recommendations are only as good as the libraries they draw from. And while AI can generate games, they’re still more novelty than full replacements for commercial titles. ChatGPT isn’t creating *Grand Theft Auto VI* any time soon.



That said, the limitations don’t stop the fun. Treat ChatGPT as a creative spark, not a finished product. You’ll get the most value by mixing its ideas with your own.

## How AI can balance work and play

AI is refreshing because it takes away a lot of decision paralysis. Instead of wasting time choosing a film, you ask AI for a recommendation. Instead of stressing about writing quiz questions, you generate them in seconds. Instead of hunting for a playlist that fits the mood, you just describe the mood and get one built for you.

Entertainment should be about enjoyment, not effort. AI takes the effort away and leaves the enjoyment.

ChatGPT isn’t just a work tool; it’s a personalisation engine. Whether it’s creating playlists for your mood, generating quizzes that feel designed for your group or even whipping up a text adventure, it turns entertainment into something tailored.

The best part is how accessible it is. You don’t need to be a coder or a designer, you just need to know what you want, describe it, and let ChatGPT do the legwork.

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IN-DEPTH

# LOOK AFTER YOUR WELLBEING

## ChatGPT can give you journalling prompts, help you be more mindful and track your mood to make life that little bit easier

We all like the idea of looking after our mental health: journalling every day, sticking to a meditation routine and booking therapy sessions when we need them. The reality is usually less polished; life gets busy, bad habits creep in, and the good intentions fall to the bottom of the to-do list. That's where AI tools are starting to play an interesting role. They're not a replacement for professional care, but they can be a useful support system. Think of them as scaffolding that keeps you steady. Whether it's a chatbot that helps you reflect on your day, an app that suggests breathing exercises or a tool that turns your thoughts into something you can act on, AI is giving people new ways to take care of themselves.

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## Journalling without the blank page

'I want to journal daily, ask me five important questions about my day'

Journalling is one of those habits that sounds pretty simple, but it can often fall apart in practice. You sit down with a notebook or an app, stare at the page and think: What do I even write? ChatGPT can step in by acting as a gentle prompt engine.

A basic ChatGPT session can nudge you with questions like, 'What went well?' It's less like homework and more like a conversation. When we tried this, we found ourselves writing more honestly because we weren't trying to invent a structure. ChatGPT provided it.

Over time, this turns into a habit. Instead of skipping journalling because you don't know where to start, you can open ChatGPT, answer the prompts and get your thoughts down. That simple consistency is often what makes the difference.

## Building wellbeing routines

'Help me build a morning routine and notify me each morning with the tasks'

Sticking to a routine is one of the most difficult parts of self-care. Meditation, exercise and reading before bed are all things we know help, but they're also the first to vanish when life gets busy and stressful. ChatGPT can help by acting as a personal coach.

You can set it up to remind you to meditate at the same time each day, or to suggest short workouts you can do at home with no equipment. We asked for 'five-minute breathing exercises to do at our desk' and were given a set of techniques, complete with step-by-step instructions. It's not groundbreaking, but it makes the practice accessible.

The key here is accountability. AI doesn't get tired of reminding you, and it doesn't judge if you miss a day. It just nudges you back on track.

## Therapy support, not replacement

'Could you help me take a minute to rationalise my thoughts?'





"The key here is accountability. AI doesn't get tired of reminding you, and it doesn't judge you if you miss a day"

There's a lot of hype around ChatGPT as a form of therapy. The truth is, no chatbot can replace a trained professional, but that doesn't mean they're useless. Used responsibly, ChatGPT can provide day-to-day support by helping you process small stresses before they spiral.

We often use ChatGPT as a sounding board in order to help rationalise situations. Recently, we typed out a stressful work scenario, and the bot asked us questions that nudged us towards a calmer perspective. It wasn't therapy in the formal sense, but it felt like having someone remind us to take a breath and look at the situation differently.

It's absolutely worth noting, however, that ChatGPT tends to agree with you, which isn't always the most helpful in sticky situations.

ChatGPT can be especially helpful between sessions if you already see a therapist. Instead of bottling things up for a week, you can offload in the moment and arrive at your session with more clarity.

## Self-diagnosis: the double-edged sword

One of the most controversial areas of ChatGPT is self-diagnosis. Search engines already encourage people to Google every symptom, and AI makes that process even easier. You can ask for a breakdown of possible conditions, complete with explanations and suggested next steps.

Used carefully, this can be empowering. For example, if you have recurring stomach issues, ask ChatGPT for possible causes. It will flag everything from diet and stress to IBS, and remind you to consult a doctor. This will give you language to use at an appointment and make you feel more prepared.

But there's a risk here too. AI is not infallible, and it can give false reassurance or unnecessary panic. If you use it as a first step rather than a final answer, it's useful. If you use it to avoid medical care, it can be dangerous.

The best balance is to treat ChatGPT as a research assistant. It can gather information, explain things in plain English and prepare you for a conversation with a professional. It cannot and should not replace that professional.

## Tracking your mood

**'Be my mood tracker, ask me how I'm feeling every evening at 8pm'**

Another subtle but powerful use of ChatGPT is mood tracking. Instead of manually logging how you feel, AI can analyse your journal entries, messages or even your tone of voice to spot patterns. Over time, it can tell you if certain days, activities or habits are linked to dips in your mood.

For example, we noticed that our journal entries mentioning late-night screen time often coincided with lower mood scores. That connection helped us to cut down on doomscrolling before bed. Without AI analysing the data, we might not have noticed the link (but we'll not stop doing it any time soon).

## Encouraging mindfulness

**'I want to be mindful, ask me questions about why I'm thankful for my family'**

Mindfulness is one of those buzzwords that gets thrown around a lot, but at its core, it just means paying attention to the present. ChatGPT can help by guiding short sessions of meditation or reflection.

Images OpenAI, Getty

> “It’s a simple way to integrate mindfulness into a busy day”

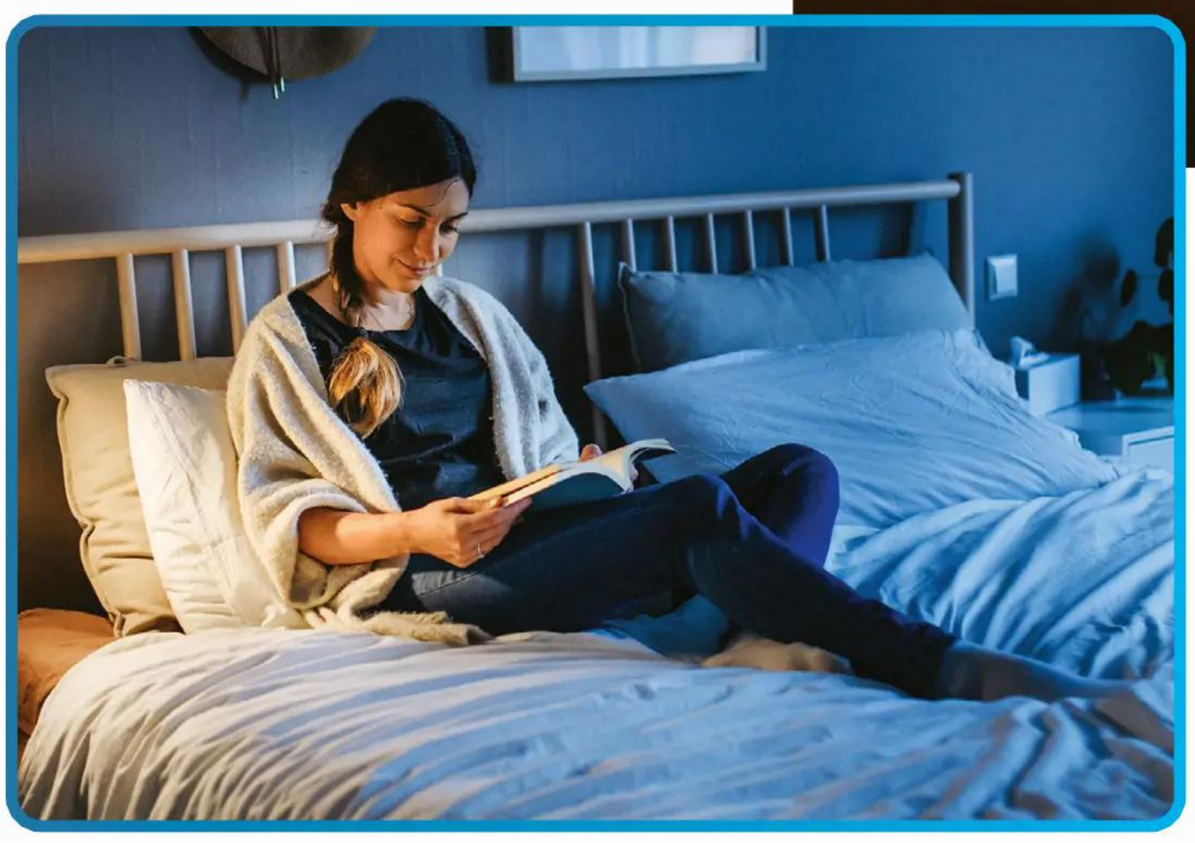
Ask for a five-minute body scan or a short gratitude exercise, and you’ll get a script you can follow. It’s a simple way to integrate mindfulness into a busy day without committing to long sessions or expensive courses.

## Guardrails you need in place

As useful as ChatGPT can be, there are guardrails you need to respect. First of all, privacy. You’re often sharing sensitive thoughts or health data, so you need to check how that information is stored and used.

Second, accuracy. AI can sometimes produce confident answers that are simply wrong. Always cross-check health advice with a professional source.

Third, dependency. It’s easy to lean too heavily on a chatbot. The goal should be to use AI as a tool that supports healthy habits, not as a crutch that replaces human connection entirely.





## Why ChatGPT works as a companion

The biggest value of ChatGPT in this space is companionship. It gives you a low-pressure outlet for your thoughts, prompts you when you need structure and helps you to build routines. It shouldn't be used as a replacement for human relationships or professional care, but it fills a gap.

When we use AI for journalling or mindfulness, we don't feel like we're outsourcing self-care. We feel like we have a supportive presence that keeps us accountable. That makes it easier to keep going, even on the days when motivation is low.

Wellbeing isn't about doing everything perfectly; it's about having the right tools to support you when life gets messy. AI fits into that toolkit by making self-care more accessible and less overwhelming.

It can prompt you to journal, remind you to breathe, help you notice patterns in your mood and prepare you for conversations with professionals. The responsibility is still yours, but the scaffolding is there. If you treat ChatGPT as a companion rather than a cure, you'll find it can make a real difference.

Sometimes, that gentle nudge to reflect or breathe is exactly what you need.

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OVERVIEW

# KIDS

## Enjoying a busy family life? Keep your kids happy, healthy and organised with the help of ChatGPT

We live for our kids, don't we? But my word, they need a lot of time and attention, especially in their early years. Any mum or dad will tell you that there are times when a little bit of help with keeping the offspring entertained and fulfilled is required. Fortunately, there's an AI for that...

### Fun days out

Going out with the family is always good fun, right? Yes, unless you're the one organising everything. Transport, food and drinks, first aid, sun cream (if it's summer), hats, gloves and scarves (if it's winter), things to do en route, things to do when you're there, things to do on the way back – and that's before you even decide where to go in the first place. ChatGPT can help you with almost all of this, although as usual it will require some data to do its job.

Consider these two prompts:
'Where can I take my kids today?'
'Where can I take my kids next month that is suitable for seven to nine-year olds, offers some form of wildlife viewing, such as a zoo or city farm, has refreshments suitable for a child with a peanut allergy, is open on Sundays and is within an hour's drive of Cardiff?'

The first prompt does a decent job by putting you in the right frame of mind for details. In response, ChatGPT asks for some more info, saying, 'Could you tell me what city or area you're in? That way I can suggest some family friendly places and events near you today.'

The second prompt rewards your effort with prompt payback, suggesting three locations in list form and in a table, recommending one of them above the others (and explaining why), while warning that the allergy situation requires a phone call. It prioritises your kids' health, but also makes it clear that lots of fun times are to be had.



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Now, you just need to know what to take with you:
**'What will my kids need for the journey and for the day out itself?'**

Any switched-on parent will already know at least most of the answers to this question, but it's useful to see what the AI thinks – and indeed, it comes up with some items that we'd completely forgotten, such as: 'Binoculars (for spotting animals). Notebook and pencils (kids might enjoy sketching animals). Coins (some farms sell animal feed from machines).'

## Organising schedules

Gone are the days when the average kid's day was 1) cereal, 2) school, 3) homework, 4) *Doctor Who*. Now, most children have a whole range of daily obligations, depending on how helicopter-like their parents are – rather like the adults themselves. Whether this is a good thing or not is a discussion for another time, but what we can be sure of is that our friendly AI will have some useful advice on the subject. We prompted it:
**'How should I organise my 10-year-old's routine on school days so that they remain healthy and happy? School runs from 8.30am to 3.30pm and they have an hour of sport and an hour of homework to fit in, plus we eat dinner as a family.'**

'That's a thoughtful question,' begins ChatGPT. 'At age 10, children thrive on predictable routines that balance learning, activity, rest, and downtime. Since school is 8:30am to 3:30pm and you want to include 1 hour of sport, 1 hour of homework, and family dinner, here's a framework you can adapt.' It then took us through a workable timetable, with the evening being as follows:

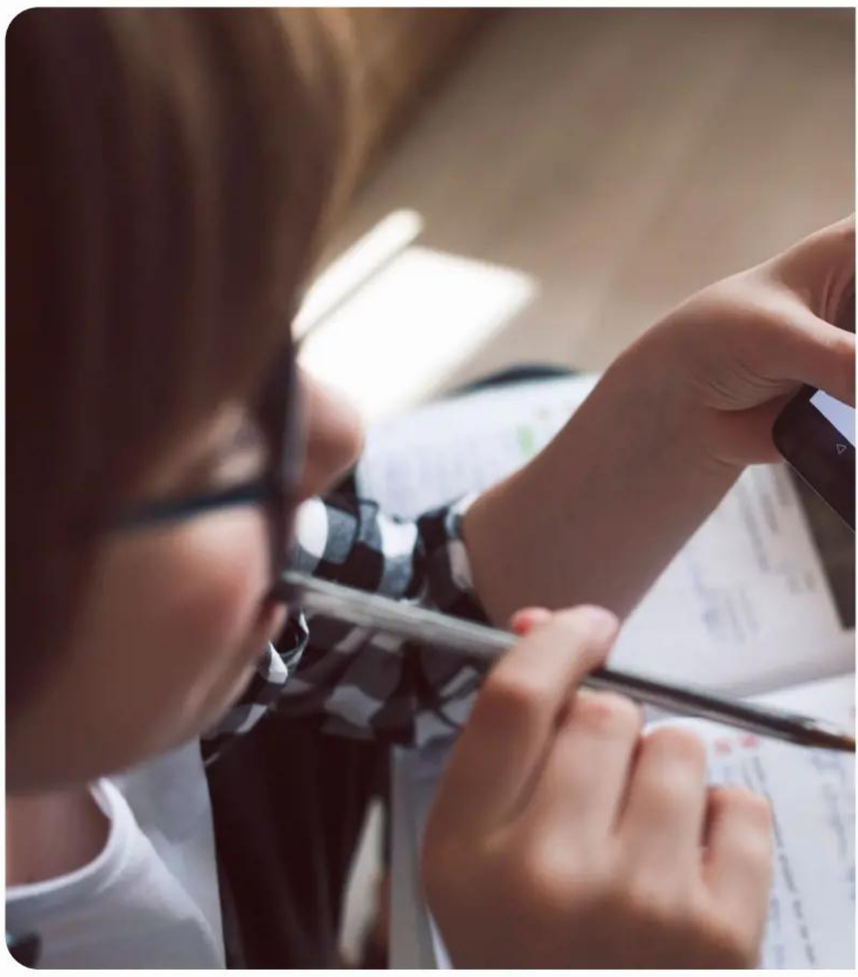
***4-5pm** – Sport/physical activity. Could be organised sport, outdoor play, bike ride, or active games.*

***5-6pm** – Homework/study. Quiet environment, break tasks into chunks. If homework is light, encourage reading or creative activities.*
***6-6:30pm** – Family dinner. Time for connection, sharing about the day.*
***6:30-7:15pm** – Free time. Play, hobbies, screen time (if allowed), or family board games.*
***7:15-7:45pm** – Bedtime routine. Shower/bath, pyjamas, prepare school bag for next day.*
***7:45-8:15pm** – Reading / quiet wind-down. Read independently or with you.*
***8:15pm** – Lights out. Most 10-year-olds need about 9–11 hours of sleep, so this ensures rest before a 7am wake-up.*

We were impressed by the focus on our kids' health. ChatGPT seems to have its priorities right.



"We were impressed by the focus on our kids' health. ChatGPT seems to have its priorities right"





## Homework charts

A common challenge for parents when their children reach a certain age, usually in their early teens, is that homework becomes a factor of their day. Now, your kid may have excellent teachers who motivate them to do a small but fascinating amount of independent study every evening, with no complaints – or you may inhabit the real world, in which a large amount of draining and exhausting homework is loaded onto your child at the exact point in the day when they're feeling drained and exhausted themselves.
There are two problems here: first, how to motivate your kid to do their homework, and second, how to schedule it. The first is far tougher, as we discovered when we asked ChatGPT:
'How do I motivate my child to do their homework every night?'

ChatGPT's answer is comforting:

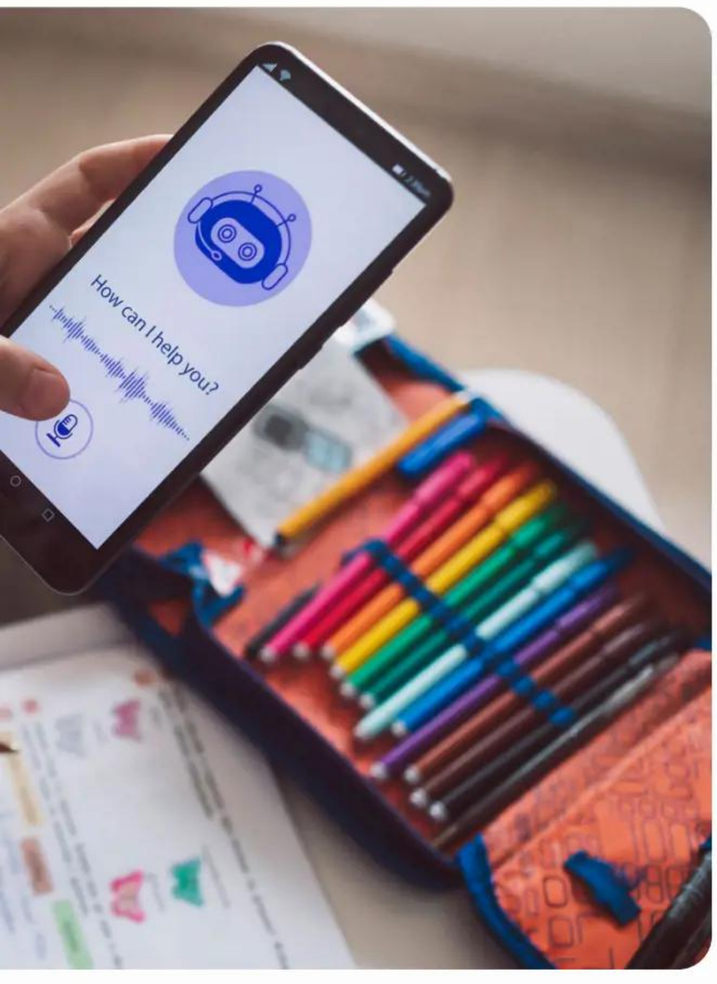
*'You're not alone – many parents of 10-year olds find homework the trickiest part of the evening routine. The goal is to make homework feel manageable, purposeful and part of the daily rhythm, rather than a battle. Here are some strategies that often work well.'*

It goes on to suggest six areas to work on (set up the right environment, break it into chunks, build motivation, stay involved, but don't take over, balance with play and rest, focus on problem-solving together) and suggests asking, 'What makes homework hardest for you?' and 'Would you prefer to do it all before dinner or split it up?'
It then concludes:

*'Big picture: Show your child that homework is just one part of the day – balanced with sport, dinner, family, and fun. When it's predictable, short, and acknowledged with encouragement, it usually becomes far less of a struggle. Would you like me to draft a sample reward chart you could use with your child for homework motivation?'*

## Meal times

As any overworked and overstressed parent will confirm, feeding a family is quite a chore. Younger children may have likes and dislikes when it comes to food choices, with any negotiation on that subject likely to become heated in the evening because at that point everyone is both tired and hungry. At the same time, you want your children to enjoy their food and the time spent eating together, ideally away from screens and other distractions, and to gain the nourishment, energy and nutrition that



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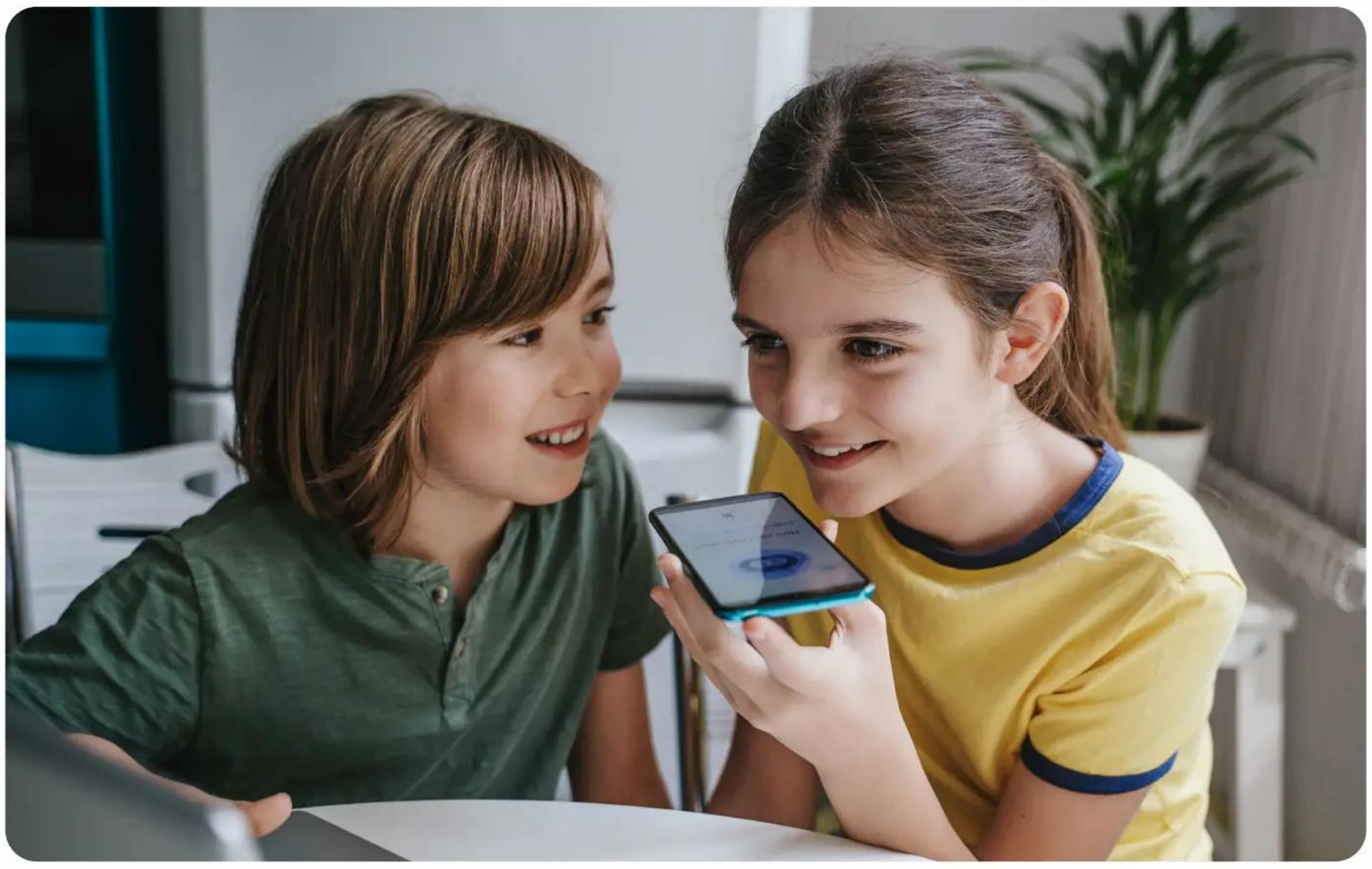
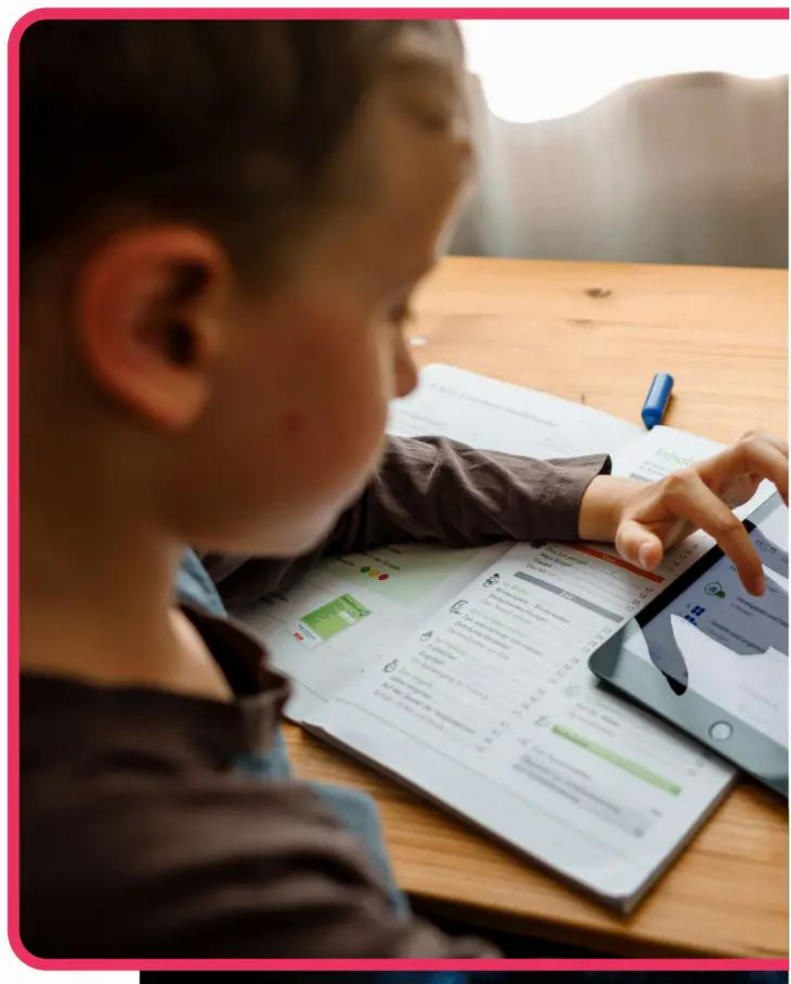
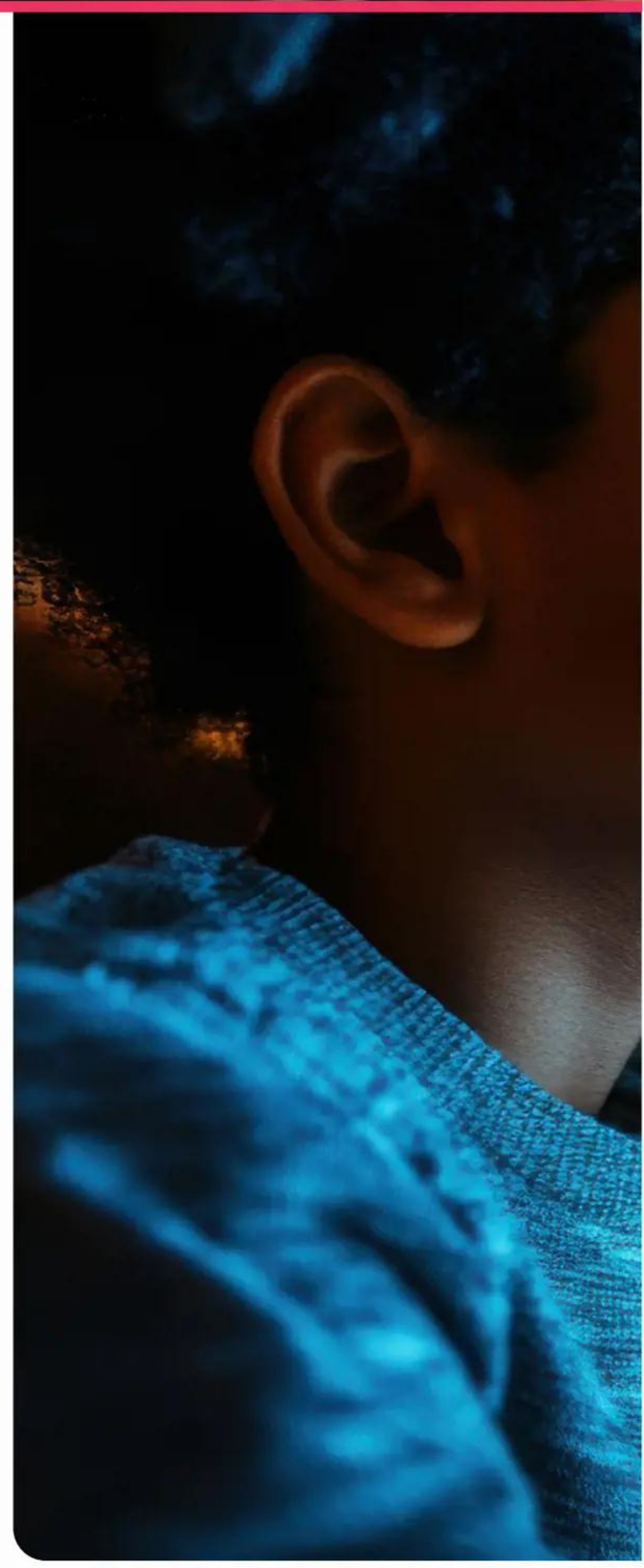






"ChatGPT then gives a long list of great-sounding food: chicken and vegetables traybake, salmon parcels, 'hidden veg' pasta sauce, and more"

they need. Oh, and you can't repeat the same recipe too often, because there will be mass protest. So who do we turn to? 'Suggest nutritious, tasty meals that I can cook for my children's evening meal, ideally without more than 20 minutes of preparation.'

The reply is gratifying:

*'Got it – quick, tasty, and child-friendly but still nutritious. Here are balanced dinner ideas you can prep in around 20 minutes or less (most can then cook in the background while you help with homework or set the table).'*

ChatGPT then gives a long list of great-sounding food: chicken and vegetables traybake, salmon parcels, 'hidden veg' pasta sauce, tuna and sweetcorn pasta bake, chicken or turkey fajitas, burrito bowls, egg fried rice with veg, beef and broccoli stir-fry and many others. 'Get kids involved in stirring, grating cheese, or setting up toppings – they're more likely to eat what they help prepare,' it suggests, before becoming our friend for life by saying, 'Would you like me to put these into a five-day dinner plan with a shopping list so you can save time during the school week?'

## Storytelling

The day is over, the kids are bathed, in pyjamas, tucked up in bed and ready for a story – but they want to hear something different from the usual books this time. Fortunately, we have an AI standing by that is able to fulfil this purpose quickly and admirably. We prompt it as follows, first asking the kids to suggest the characters that they would like to hear about: 'Create a bedtime story for 10-year-old children that takes around five minutes to read aloud. The tone should be soothing



and amusing, and the characters must include a friendly fox, a brave squirrel and a funny tortoise.'

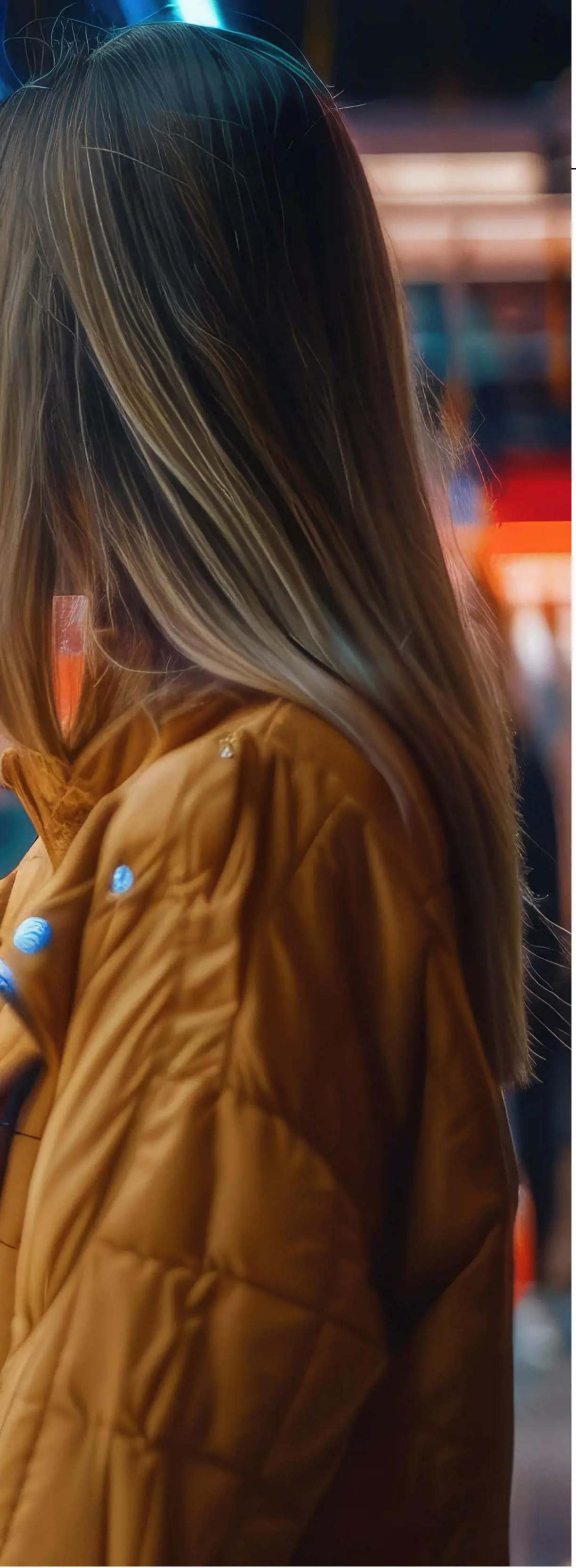
Responding with a tale called 'The Fox, the Squirrel, and the Tortoise Who Told Jokes', ChatGPT begins:

*'Once upon a time, in a quiet woodland where the stars shone brighter than lanterns, three unlikely friends gathered every evening beneath an old oak tree. There was Fern the fox, whose golden fur glowed like firelight. She was clever and kind, and she always knew the safest paths through the forest. Then there was Bran the squirrel, small but fearless, who could leap from the tallest branches without even wobbling his tail. And finally, Timothy the tortoise – slow, steady, and convinced he was the funniest creature alive.'*

If you want to hear what happens next, use our prompt and ChatGPT will do the rest. While real books will always come first, it's great to know that we have an online resource for those times when the kids want to hear something new and you don't have anything to hand. Sleep tight.







IN-DEPTH

# MAKE SHOPPING EASY

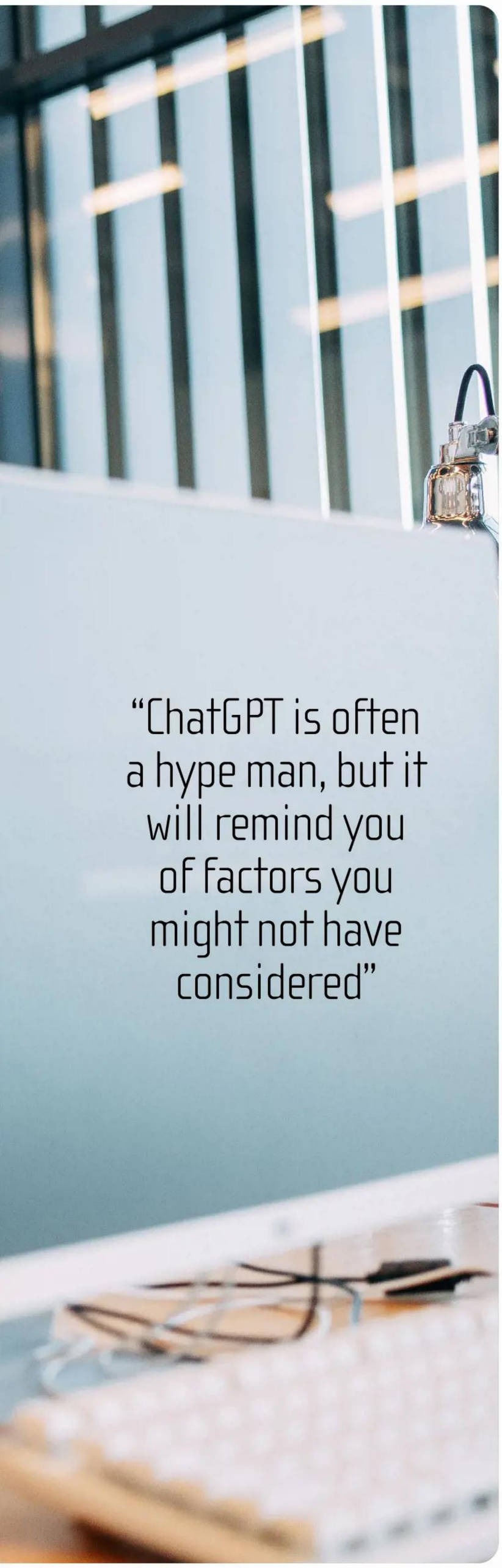
• • •

**ChatGPT can help remove choice paralysis and give you all the information you need to buy with confidence**

Shopping should be easy. You figure out what you need, and buy it – job done. In reality, it's rarely that simple. Whether it's forgetting half your groceries, falling down the rabbit hole of tech reviews or endlessly scrolling for something to watch, the process often feels more frustrating than fun.

That's where ChatGPT can help. Instead of overwhelming you with options, it can narrow things down, organise your lists and even personalise suggestions so you waste less time deciding and more time enjoying what you buy.





"ChatGPT is often a hype man, but it will remind you of factors you might not have considered"

## Shopping lists without the gaps

**'Make me a weekly shopping list for two with dinners and lunches, we want high protein, but not too much chicken'**

The most basic task ChatGPT helps with is the one we all mess up: remembering what to buy. A shopping list sounds simple, yet how many times have you come back from the supermarket, only to realise you forgot the key ingredient to that evening's dinner?

Ask for a weekly shopping list for five dinners, five lunches and snacks, and ChatGPT will generate a breakdown with exact amounts. Add dietary preferences or budgets, and the list adjusts accordingly. For example, instead of vague entries like 'vegetables', you get 'two courgettes, one red pepper, 200g spinach'.

ChatGPT can also integrate with recipes. Paste in the meals you want to cook, and it will produce a list automatically. Forgot to pick up chicken? Ask for substitutions, and it will rework the recipe in seconds. The end result is fewer last-minute supermarket runs and more organised weeks.

## Big purchases made easy

**'What's the best robot vacuum cleaner on the market right now?'**

The other side of shopping is the big-ticket items that keep you glued to endless reviews. Search for the 'best laptop' or 'best wireless earbuds' and you'll find ten different lists with ten different winners. It can be overwhelming.

ChatGPT can summarise reviews across multiple sources and present them in plain English. Ask for 'best earbuds under £150 for commuting' and it will give you a list, with pros, cons and context. Instead of combing through dozens of articles, you get a balanced overview in minutes.

We tested this recently when looking for a robot vacuum. Instead of spending hours bouncing between YouTube, Reddit and review sites, we asked AI to compare three options: Eufy X10 Pro, Shark Nevertouch Pro 2, and Roborock Q7. The summary included battery life, where each vacuum excels, if they had mopping functionality, their suction power and more. It wasn't a final decision, but it gave us clarity much faster than traditional research.

## Avoiding buyer's remorse

**'Tell me why I should avoid buying a new iPhone in August'**

Impulse buying is easy, but regret is even easier. Before pulling the trigger, you can ask AI to highlight the downsides of a product. For example, we asked, 'What are the risks of buying an iPhone 16 in 2025?' The response flagged the likely arrival of a new model and warned about overpaying when we could get the device cheaper if we waited until the launch of the iPhone 17.

This sort of reality check can be useful. ChatGPT won't tell you not to buy a product. In fact, it's often a bit of a hype man, but it will remind you of factors you might not have considered. Instead of convincing you to spend, it balances the conversation and gives you time to think about your purchases.

## Personalised product recommendations

**'I'm looking for another Pokémon game to add to my collection. Which one should I buy based on the ones I have already told you I own?'**

As we've mentioned in many of the other guides in this magazine, ChatGPT thrives with personalisation. Instead of scrolling generic 'top 10' lists, you can tell it exactly what you want. 'A lightweight suitcase under £100 for short trips' or 'a camera for

Images OpenAI, Getty



beginner photographers who mainly shoot indoors'. The results feel more relevant because they're built around your needs, not broad categories.

## Entertainment recommendations that fit the mood

• • •

'Find me a movie to combat the Sunday blues, preferably a comedy from the 90s'



Deciding what to watch is another form of shopping, and can be just as painful. Streaming platforms bury you in options, leading to half an hour of scrolling followed by rewatching *The Office* for the tenth time (the original British version is our preferred choice).

ChatGPT can help end the indecision. Ask for 'a two-hour comedy for a Friday night with friends', and it will suggest films that actually fit. Want something family friendly? Tell it the age range, and you'll get curated options without the usual scrolling fatigue.

We tried this on a recent Sunday afternoon, when we were starting to dread Monday morning. We asked for 'the perfect Sunday movie to help me get in the mood for work, preferably a comedy'. The suggestions were spot on, and we ended up watching *Office Space*, saving us hours of indecision.

The same principle applies to books, podcasts and video games. Whether you want a short co-op PlayStation title, a new romance novel or a true crime podcast under 30 minutes, ChatGPT will help you narrow down the field and make a decision.



"Whether you want a short co-op PlayStation title, a new romance novel or a true crime podcast under 30 minutes, ChatGPT narrows the field"

## Smarter reviews for everyday products

'Read reviews of Mario Odyssey and tell me if I should buy it for my eight-year-old nephew'

Not every purchase is a major investment. Sometimes, you just want to know whether a £25 air fryer on Amazon is worth the money. ChatGPT can scan user reviews, summarise common complaints and highlight what people consistently like (or dislike) about a product.

This is especially handy for avoiding products with inflated ratings. An item might have thousands of five-star reviews, but ChatGPT will surface the patterns in the one-star ones, such as reliability issues or poor customer support. Instead of blindly trusting the star average, ChatGPT will help give you the real story.

## Do your own research and make shopping less stressful

Sometimes, ChatGPT recommends products that aren't available in your region or that are out of stock, so it's always worth double-checking before taking its advice at face value.

Bias is another risk. If the model is trained on affiliate-heavy content, then it may lean towards certain products. That's why it's best used as a filter rather than a final verdict.

The real value of AI in shopping is reducing friction. You spend less time making lists, less time chasing down reliable reviews, and less time worrying whether you are making the right choice.

In our experience, the little wins are what make it worthwhile. A shopping list that doesn't leave you short, a product summary that highlights both pros and cons, a film suggestion that nails the mood on the first try. These are small shifts, but they add up to a lot less stress.

ChatGPT can generate lists that match your meals and lifestyle, summarise reviews into something more digestible, and provide recommendations tailored to your preferences. The end result is fewer forgotten groceries, fewer wasted hours scrolling and fewer purchases that you might regret.

If shopping has started to feel like a chore, then ChatGPT might just be the tool that makes it feel more manageable again.



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IA

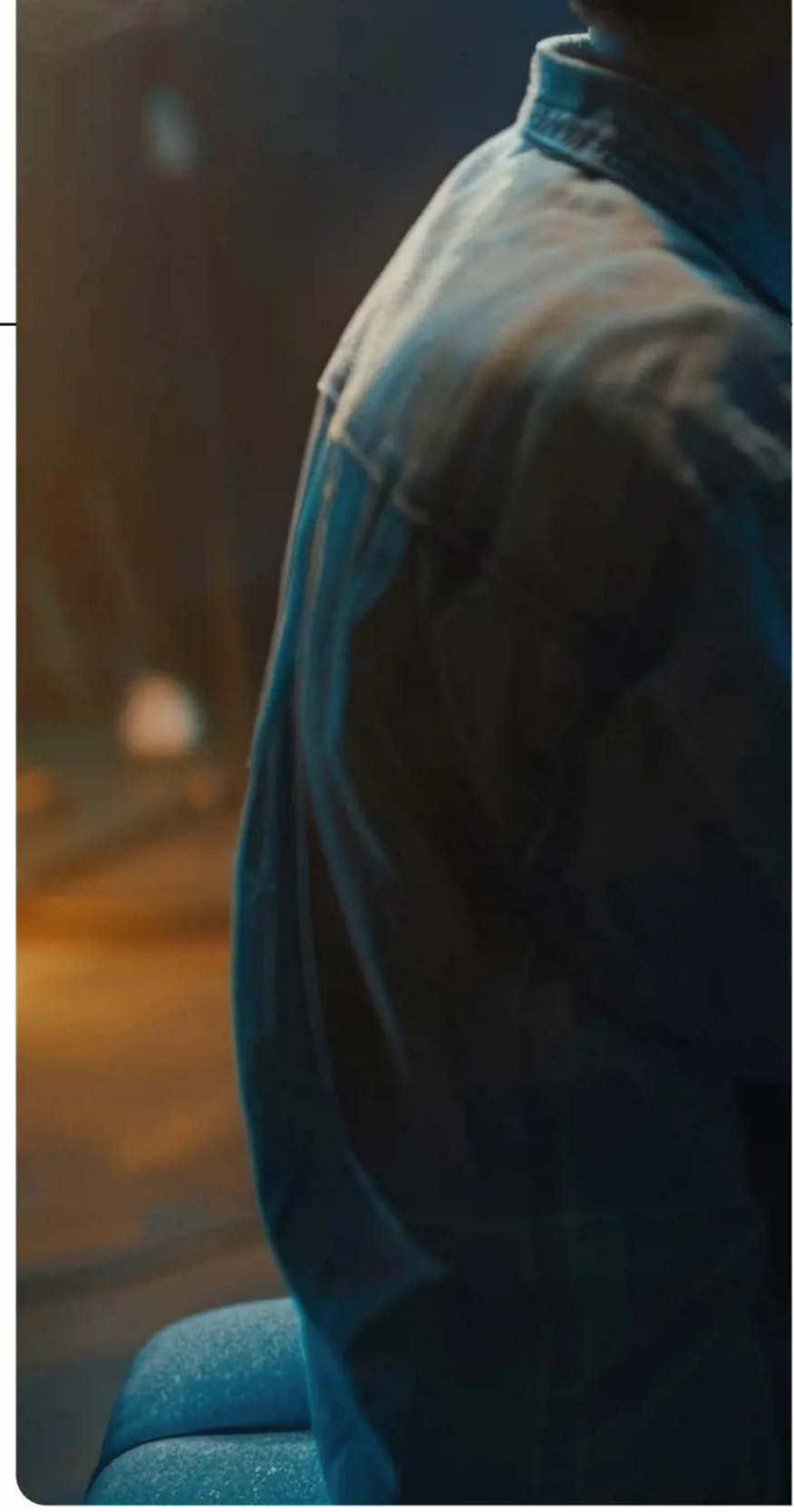
OVERVIEW

# EDUCATION AND LEARNING

• • •

## Whether you're a student or a teacher, your daily routine can be made more efficient with ChatGPT

The word 'education' has that dry feel, no matter how much you enjoy studying for career purposes or teaching as a job. However, those in the know understand that there's no better feeling than acquiring or sharing knowledge and skills, whether you're doing GCSEs or a PhD, teaching someone to play the piano or lecturing at Oxbridge. Let's see how Professor ChatGPT can assist.



## Learning a language

Bonjour! In the 'old days', we used to get a book, or if we were feeling really advanced, a tape recording (ask your dad) of language lessons and repeat words until we either learned them or passed out from boredom. Nowadays, the process of learning a new language is much more fun, and quite a bit quicker too. Apps such as Duolingo will help you along the way very capably, but ChatGPT has, as always, an extra feather in its chapeau: it can tailor-make a language course for you, according to your specific needs.

For example, if you prompt it with these words:
'List common questions that a speaker of German requires in a business environment specialising in foodstuff distribution.'

You won't get this answer from Duolingo, or anywhere else, except a helpful German who works in the food industry and has the time and inclination to spell it out for you:

*'Welche Produkte bieten Sie an?*
*(Which products do you offer?)*
*Können Sie mir aktuelle Preisinformationen senden?*
*(Can you send me the current price information?)*
*Haben Sie biologische/regionale Produkte im Sortiment?*
*(Do you have organic/local products in your range?)'*

Okay, this isn't learning a language as such (it's memorising useful phrases), but you can ask ChatGPT to begin teaching you a language from scratch if you want. We told it to 'teach us Swahili at a beginner's level', and off we went:

*'Let's start with beginner-level Swahili in a structured and practical way. We'll cover greetings, basic phrases, numbers, and essential grammar.*
*Good morning*
*(Habari ya asubuhi)*
*Good afternoon*
*(Habari ya mchana)*
*Good evening*
*(Habari ya jioni)'*

"You might not end up playing like Rachmaninoff or Hendrix, but there's no reason why AI can't get you started on your musical journey"



To recap, then, ChatGPT can teach you languages just as an app would, but with far greater applicability. A human teacher with the relevant experience could do the same – or rather better, in fact – but what if no such human is available?

## Learning an instrument

'A-ha!' say the sceptics. 'There's no way ChatGPT can teach anyone an instrument, because it can't physically play one.' This point of view is understandable, but incorrect. Just ask the AI if it's capable of



teaching you, say, the piano, and its confidence is high:

*'Absolutely! I can guide you step-by-step, from absolute beginner basics to more advanced techniques. Let's start with a structured approach so you can actually start playing right away.'*

Then it gets straight into the learning:

*'1. Understanding the Piano Layout*
*The piano has white keys and black keys. The white keys are named after the musical notes:*
*C D E F G A B (then repeats).*
*The black keys are sharps (#) and flats (b).'*

'Ah,' continue the critics, 'but that's just theory. How about techniques?' ChatGPT doesn't have fingers so, it can't tell you how hard to press a piano key, or pluck a guitar string for that matter. We placed that very question to the program and it replied:

*'Haha, you caught me! True, I don't have fingers, but I can still teach you to play the piano by guiding you step by step, explaining theory, reading music, giving exercises, and even creating practice plans. Think of me like a virtual piano coach – I can't physically press the keys, but I can show you exactly what to do with your hands. It's like learning from a book or a teacher: you do the hands-on part, I provide instructions, tips, and structured practice. If you want, I can even give you a visual finger map and exercises so it feels like I'm 'playing along' with you, even without fingers.'*

ChatGPT has a point here. You might not end up playing like Rachmaninoff or Hendrix, but there's no reason why AI can't get you started on your musical journey, is there?

## Revision plans

Planning stuff is where ChatGPT excels, planning being basically about sequencing data in a useful order according to someone's instructions. Frankly, anyone can make a revision plan of sorts: remember when you did it for your exams? However, what's much less easy is creating a schedule that you will be motivated to stick to, and believe it or not, even enjoy. Let's see what ChatGPT can do here: 'Create a six-week revision plan for my first-year degree exams that is comprehensive but not exhausting.'

Its response:
*'Absolutely! I'll create a six-week revision plan that balances coverage, practice, and rest so you stay productive without burning out. I'll structure it with weekly focuses, daily study blocks, and built-in breaks. I'll assume your exams cover multiple modules in your first-year degree.'*

ChatGPT then listed blocks of activity, one to three per day for each of the six weeks, each block lasting no more than a couple of hours, and each one devoted to a particular activity so that the exercise didn't become tedious, or not overly tedious anyway. We liked this particular part:

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*'**Week 6:** Consolidation & Light Review*
***Goal:** Reinforce confidence and reduce stress.*
***Morning:** Quick revision of each module's key points.*
***Afternoon:** Short past paper questions, focusing on weak spots.*
***Evening:** Relaxation techniques, sleep well.*
***Last 1-2 Days:***
*Avoid cramming. Light review only. Prepare exam materials, get enough sleep, and stay hydrated.'*

It also offered us wellbeing tips:
*'**Sleep:** 7-9 hours is crucial for memory consolidation.*
***Exercise:** Even 20-30 min/day improves focus and reduces stress.*
***Nutrition:** Avoid heavy sugar; prioritise protein, fruit, and water.'*
Finally, ChatGPT offered us what turned out to be a useful visual solution:

"Apply ChatGPT's advice about how to approach a problem rather than asking it for a direct answer"

*'If you like, I can also turn this into a detailed daily timetable with specific modules and topics mapped to each day for maximum clarity. It would be ready to follow like a 'study calendar'.'*

## Homework help

A common perception of ChatGPT and of AI-assisted learning in general is that it offers an easy way to pass tests, or even cheat one's way through them, because it knows the answer to every question and will give it to you on request. This is correct insofar as cheating in exams does exist, but it's far from the whole picture and equally far from being the only function of the program.

As an assistant to learning, rather than a simple source of information, ChatGPT is very useful. It can help you through tasks by pointing you in the right direction, suggest alternative ways to approach problems and make your approach to study healthier and more timely. None of this involves simply giving away any answers.

Here's an example from everyone's favourite subject: mathematics. Stuck with a particularly difficult equation in a piece of homework, we asked ChatGPT not for the answer, but for advice about how to approach the problem, and its response began:







*'Quadratic equations show up everywhere in maths and science, so having a clear method to tackle them is essential. Here's how you can approach solving them step by step...'*

It then ran through several ways of doing this, at no point giving away any answers to the equation itself:

*'**1.** Check the Form*
*Make sure the equation is in standard quadratic form. If it's not, rearrange it.*
***2.** Choose a Method*
*There are four main methods:*
*Factorisation*
*Completing the Square*
*Quadratic Formula*
*Graphical Method*
***3.** Think About the Discriminant'*

The point is clear. Apply ChatGPT's advice about how to approach a problem in any subject, rather than asking it for a direct answer. That way, learning is assisted rather than skipped entirely.

## Lesson plans for teachers

Teaching in any scenario, from one-to-one lessons to a huge hall teeming with students, is best approached with a plan in mind. After all, as a teacher, you have a fixed amount of time to get a particular set of points across in a way that's useful, informative and hopefully enjoyable. This is where a lesson plan comes in handy, as a written reminder of the direction the lesson needs to go in, and why. For that reason, we asked ChatGPT to help us create such a plan, as always including as much specific information as possible.

'Plan a 60-minute lesson for a teacher of eight students of physical geography at undergraduate degree level. The subjects covered will be prehistoric plate tectonics and the lesson will involve pair work and a few minutes of individual research.'

The response was:

*'Here's a ready-to-use 60-minute lesson plan designed for a small undergraduate geography seminar (8 students). It blends short input, pair work, and individual research while keeping the focus on prehistoric plate tectonics.'*

*'**Lesson Plan:** Prehistoric Plate Tectonics*
***Class:** Undergraduate Physical Geography (Year 1)*
*Group Size: 8 students*
***Duration:** 60 minutes*
***Topic:** Prehistoric Plate Tectonics (Supercontinents and Theories)*
***Learning Objectives:***
*Understand the key stages in Earth's tectonic history (Rodinia, Pannotia, Pangaea).*
*Explain evidence for prehistoric plate movements.*
*Critically assess how plate tectonics theory has developed.*
*Apply knowledge through collaborative and independent learning.*
*Lesson Breakdown (60 minutes)*
***1.** Introduction & Hook (5 min)*
*Briefly introduce the lesson goals.*
*Show a world map animation of continental drift (Rodinia → Pangaea → present).*
***Ask:** What patterns do you notice about continental movement?'*

We won't reproduce the full lesson plan here, but after Part 1) above the lesson moved onto the subsequent sections of the 60-minute session, including pair work, research, class feedback and a recap of findings. The learning objectives were emphasised and the necessary resources listed at the end, which is an absolute boon for any working teacher.

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IN-DEPTH

# CREATE CONTENT WITH EASE

**Use ChatGPT to brainstorm content, write first drafts, generate images and unlock your creativity in seconds**

Of all the guides in this magazine, this one is the trickiest for us to write. Why, you ask? Well, we don't use AI for anything related to content, because we're in the business of content creation, and it feels disingenuous to do so.

That said, AI can be very helpful for a lot of content tasks, and we're happy to share how you can use ChatGPT to create. Whether that's images for a social media post or brainstorming ideas, AI can be the sounding board you've always wanted.

When we first started experimenting with AI, we thought it would just be a novelty; type in a silly prompt, get back a funny picture, send it to a friend. What surprised us was how quickly these tools evolved into helping people around the world tap into their creativity.

Whether it's generating header images, testing out social media post ideas or even just playing with concepts that would take hours in Photoshop, AI has changed the way many people approach content.

That doesn't mean it's a replacement for creativity. Far from it. The best results come when you use AI as a collaborator, not as the whole production team. Think of it like having an endlessly patient assistant who never runs out of ideas. The final vision is still yours, but the heavy lifting is shared.

Images OpenAI, Getty



# Brainstorming ideas without the block

‘Come up with five TikTok ideas centred around cooking’

Every creative project starts with an idea, and that’s often the hardest part. Staring at a blank page, waiting for inspiration to arrive, is torture. AI helps break through that block by generating starting points.

If you need headlines, ask for 20 options in different tones. If you need video ideas for TikTok, feed in your topic and audience, and let it generate formats that you might not have thought of.

Stuck for blog post ideas on the newest iPhone? Ask ChatGPT for creative angles beyond ‘hands-on reviews’. It will come back with ideas ranging from ‘day in the life of the phone’ to ‘ten things it does better than your laptop’. Maybe the ideas aren’t great, but they will give you something to start with. That’s often all you need to get moving.

# Writing drafts you can polish

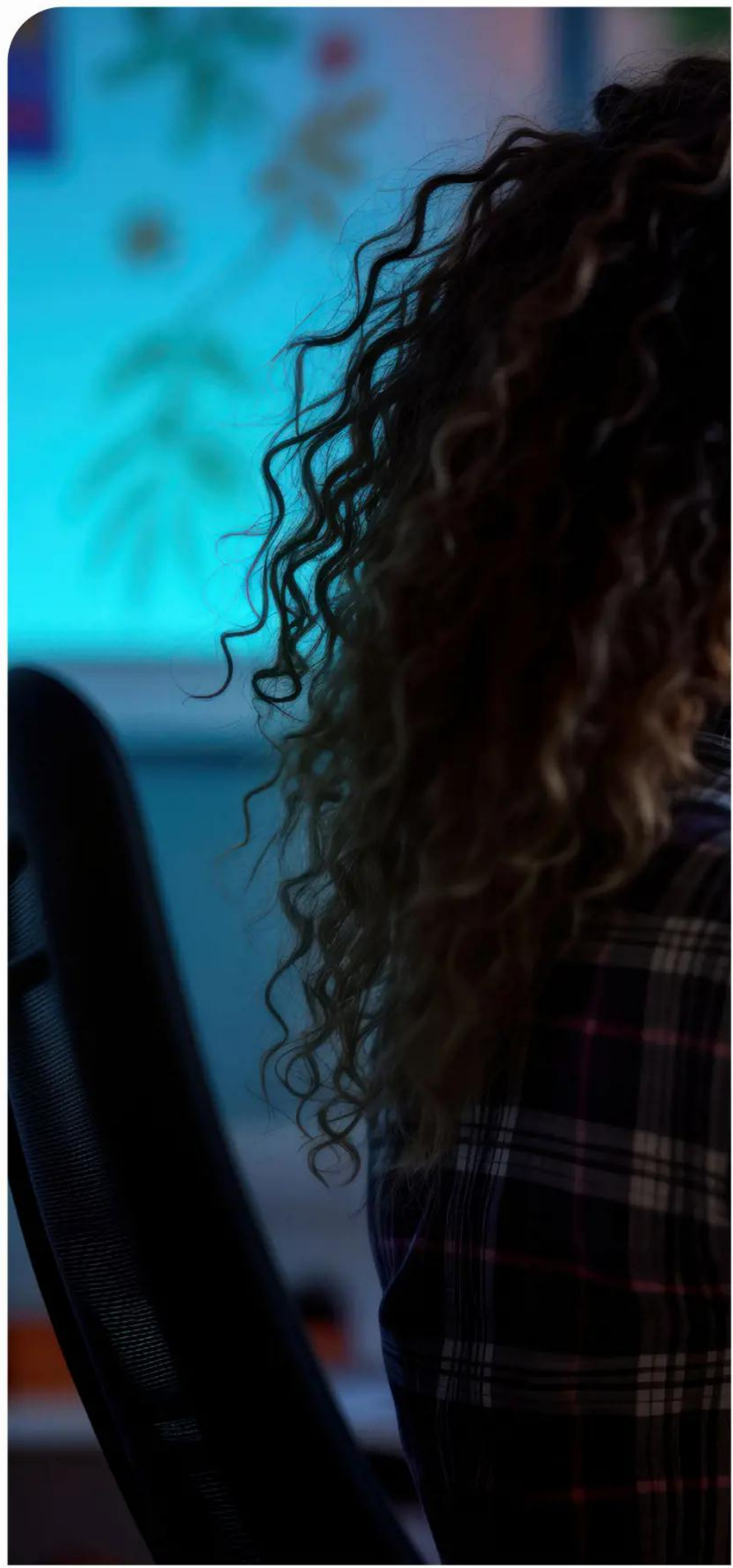
‘Give me an outline for a blog post on French Bulldogs’




> “AI helps break through the block by generating starting points”

We’ll be honest: most of the copy that AI generates is bland. But that’s fine, because you’re not using it as a finished product; you’re using it as clay. Need a rough outline for a blog? ChatGPT can give you structure and section headings in seconds. Want a first draft of an Instagram caption? It’ll suggest ten, and you can pick the one that feels most like you.

The trick is to never paste AI text directly without tweaking. Instead, treat it like a co-writer who’s good at speed, but not at voice. You’ll still spend time editing, but it will be way faster than writing something from scratch.



ChatGPT helps by automating some of the grunt work.

You can generate variations of the same post to suit different platforms: a snappy headline for X, a longer caption for Instagram and a casual version for TikTok. You can even ask AI to reformat content. We once fed in a 1,200-word article and asked for a LinkedIn summary, a tweet thread and an Instagram post. It spat out usable drafts for each, saving us hours.

## Personalisation at scale

**'Personalise these wedding invites for each of my guests, add the person's name to the blank space at the top'**

One of the most powerful uses of AI is creating personalised content without doing it all by hand. Imagine you're running a birthday campaign for your brand. Instead of writing one generic email, you can ask ChatGPT to generate personalised greetings that use people's names, interests, and purchase history.

On a smaller scale, we've used it for fun things like personalised quiz results. Build the structure once, and let AI fill in unique descriptions for each user. It feels more human, even if a machine did the bulk of the writing.

## The limits you need to respect

It's tempting to think that AI can do everything. It can't. There are moments when the results are off, when the tone isn't right or when the facts are shaky. That's why you always need a human in the loop.

ChatGPT also has a bad habit of overconfidence. To highlight this, it will state things as fact, even if they're wrong. For content creation, that means double-checking everything.



Image: OpenAI, Getty





Use AI for speed, not for accuracy. The research and verification still rest with you.

There's also the question of originality. If you want your content to stand out, you need to inject your own voice and perspective. ChatGPT can help you brainstorm and polish, but it can't give you lived experience.

## Why ChatGPT works as a partner, not a replacement

The best way to think about AI is as an amplifier. It speeds up boring tasks, generates options when you're stuck and makes things possible even if you lack design or editing skills. But the heart of good content is still human.

When you use ChatGPT, don't feel like you're outsourcing creativity. Instead, feel like you're working with a junior partner who does the groundwork so that you can focus on the finishing touches. That balance will keep the output authentic while saving hours of time.

Content creation is always going to be about ideas and execution. AI doesn't change that, but it does change the pace. Instead of staring at a blank page or spending three hours cutting B-roll, you can move quickly from concept to draft to finished piece.

The secret of getting this right is knowing where ChatGPT adds value and where it doesn't. Use it to break through blocks, generate drafts, create visuals and speed up repetitive tasks. But always make sure you keep your voice at the centre. That's what makes content resonate, and that's what AI can never fully replicate.

If you treat AI as a co-creator rather than a replacement, then you'll not only make more content; you'll make better content. What's more, you might even enjoy the process more along the way.

Images OpenAI, Getty


10:15
Account Overview
1D
1W
1M
3M
1Y
3Y
5Y
10Y
42%
+25.8%
$102,500.00

OVERVIEW

# MONEY AND FINANCE

**Managing money and assets is a complex task: let ChatGPT help you get it right**

Most of us don't particularly enjoy spending time on budgeting, saving and other financial obligations, but these are things that need to be taken care of, and taken care of correctly, if we're to achieve our primary aim of having a fun and interesting life. Let's see if our favourite AI can help us with the numbers – although as always, consult a human professional before reaching for your credit card.

Images OpenAI, Getty

# Budgeting



Working out how much of your household's net income to spend in various ways is tricky even if it's just you and your house you have to worry about. Add dependants and it becomes more complex; take out loans, buy more property, change jobs or retire, and it gets even more complicated. Dealing with complicated tasks is, of course, where AI excels – and ChatGPT can assist, especially so in this case, because you're essentially feeding a list of numbers into it and asking for an outcome. Try a prompt such as this one:

'Between us, my partner and I earn a net monthly salary of £5,000. We have no other income. Our mortgage payment is £750 per month, we repay £250 to a car loan and we spend approximately £200 per week on bills, sustenance and travel. How much can we afford to 1) save into an ISA and 2) spend on holidays and other non-essentials?'

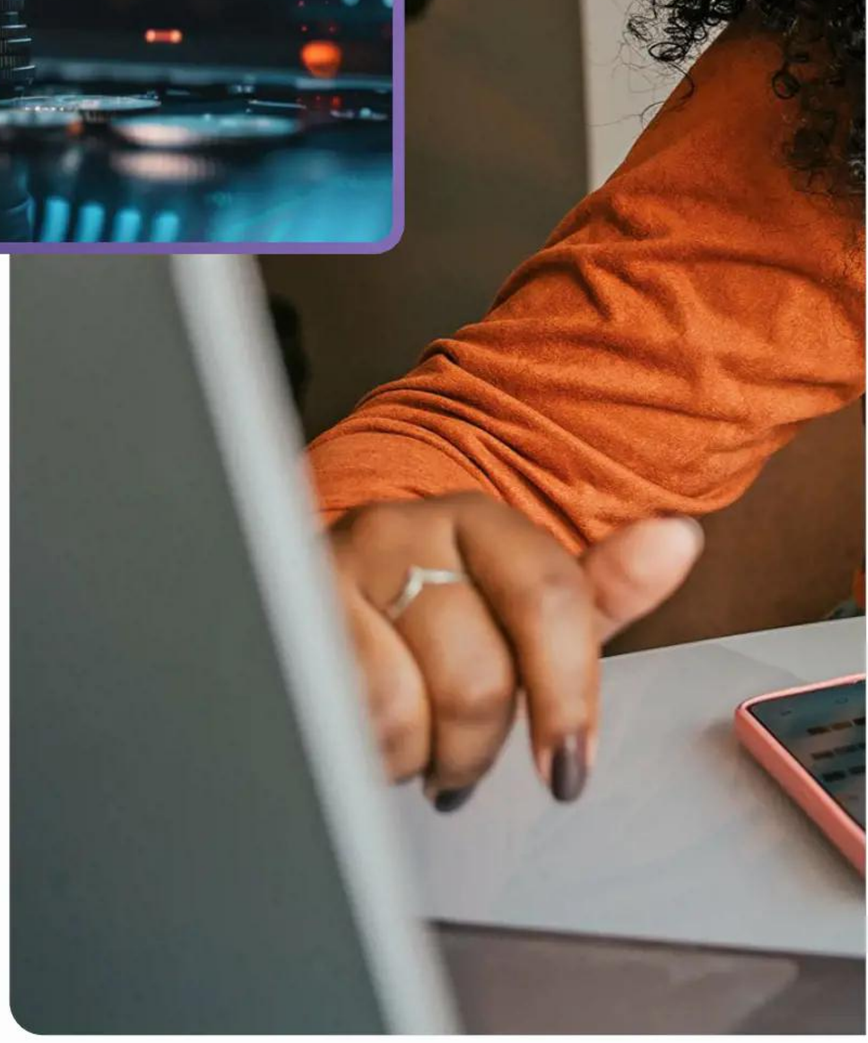
As ever, ChatGPT begins with a cheerful assurance that it will gladly help ('You seem to be living within your means. Let me give you a few different options') before giving us a couple of numbers that we can work with. It's realistic enough in its calculations not to advise us to buy a beachfront villa in Miami, but at least we can afford two weeks in a cottage in Margate.

A more pragmatic approach would be to ask where daily economies can be made. For example:

'What's the average cost of a weekly shop for a family of five in [Supermarket A] versus [Supermarket B]? We don't have particularly expensive tastes and we consume luxuries such as chocolate and alcohol in moderation.'

Or:

'Find the cheapest place to buy unleaded petrol within five miles of Peterborough.'





# Savings

Following on from our budgeting prompt, we could all benefit from asking ChatGPT about the best way to save money for a rainy day. Funds, ISAs, shares, property, even a simple savings account – these are all safer options than carrying your excess cash around in your wallet or stashing it in a biscuit tin under the bed. To get the best responses from our prompts, we'll need to specify our goals (security versus growth), how risk-averse we are (if at all) and, of course, how much we're prepared to save and how often. An example might be:



‘Recommend savings options for a sum of £250 per month, with low levels of risk and a reasonable expectation of interest rates higher than the current and forecast base rates. The savings need to be instantly accessible and located within an ethically minded institution.’

Above a certain level of savings, interest and tax become essential considerations, at which point you’re really investing rather than saving (see below). For now, though, if you’re just looking to put some money away now and then for a rainy day, try asking ChatGPT for options that are reasonable given your spare income, and easily accessible if you need cash quickly.

On a related note, if you simply want to hand over money or property to your loved ones, as many older people do for their children, ChatGPT will help to clarify the taxable limits and declarations in your country. You could ask:
‘How much money can I gift to my son per year without adding to his tax liability? I live in Sweden and he lives in Germany.’

At this point, though, you really do need to seek professional advice. Not only is there the risk of error (although ChatGPT tries its best); there’s also the irksome fact that laws around tax and other financial considerations change all the time and vary drastically by jurisdiction.

## Investments

We’re living in an age of self-managed financial investments. In the old days, you had to hire a broker’s services if you wanted to play the stocks and shares market, phoning them up (how quaint that sounds) and barking “Buy!” or “Sell!” Nowadays, you can just go online and acquire some shares, whether you’re a minnow with £100 worth of Tesco stock or a major player who blows thousands per day (don’t try that at home). Obviously, this practice comes with significant risks, and for some people it’s as addictive as online gambling, so we’re saying right now: don’t risk large sums,

Images OpenAI, Getty

don't trust anyone (human or ChatGPT) with your livelihood. In fact, skip right to the next section if you're prone to risking dangerously large chunks of your hard-earned cash.

With all that said, assuming you're a naturally cautious person, ChatGPT will gladly advise you on which shares to buy based on their current and recent performance. We asked it:

'Recommend shares to acquire on a budget of £2,000. I'm looking for medium risk and a profit within three months. No fossil fuels, arms, tobacco or politically dodgy sources.'

The program came back with a combination of share recommendations from hotel groups, Big Pharma and the car industry, any of which seem reasonable.

Of course, you can invest in other ways, one option being to hand over a sum to a dedicated investment fund company, perhaps in tandem with a friend or syndicate of like-minded investors. You could check these outfits' trustworthiness, or lack thereof, with ChatGPT, which will check user and industry reviews, as well as the backgrounds of the directors.

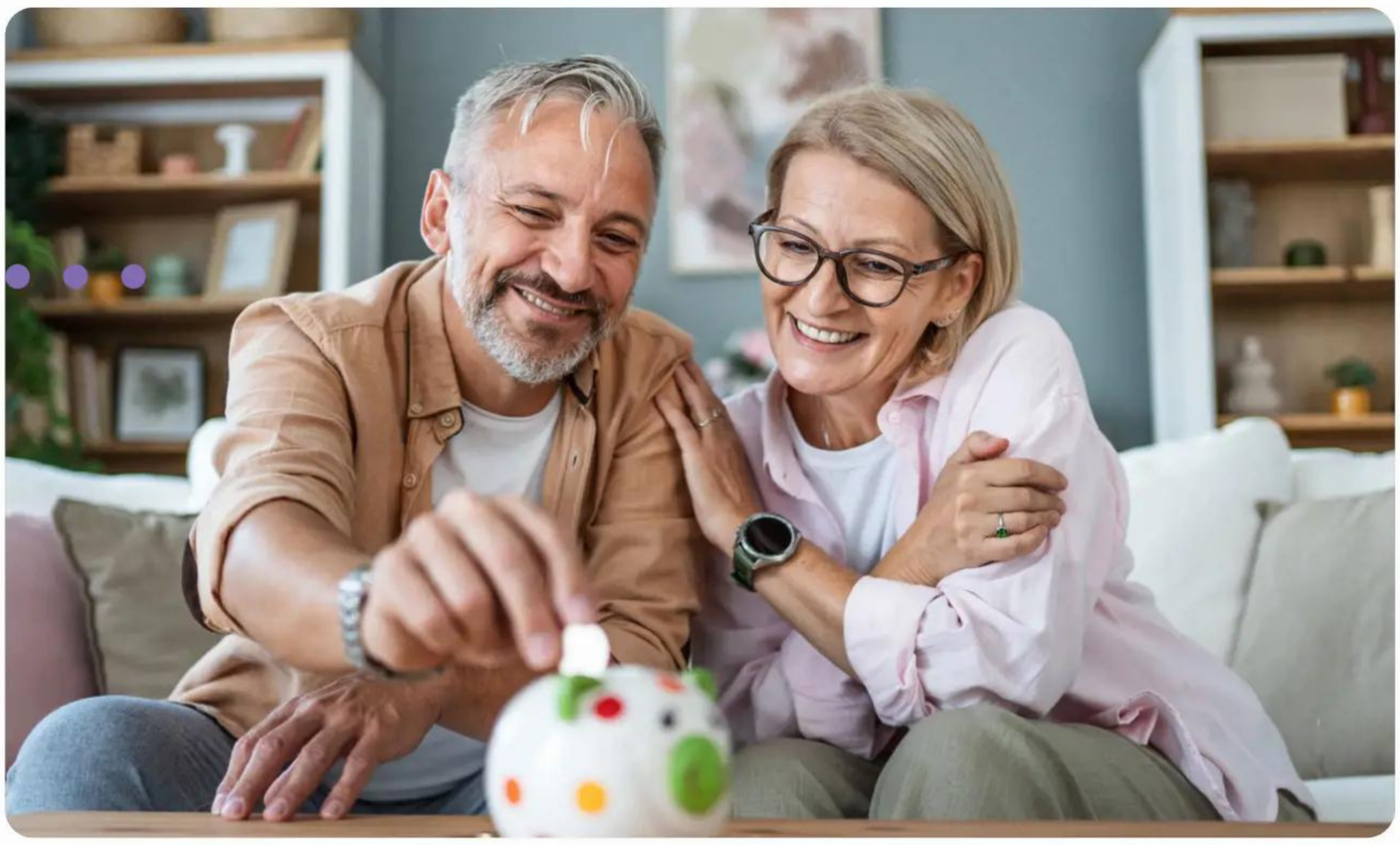
'Should I invest with [name of investment fund]? Check their last three years of performance and analyse their profit-to-loss ratio.'

If ChatGPT comes back with a positive report, treat it as a first step. As before, seek advice from a human being before paying up.

## Pensions

At the age of around 45, most of us start wondering if our pension pot will sustain us into old age. Those of us without a pension





will be contemplating other options – 'never stopping working' being an inevitably popular choice in that case. But it's never too late to consider a pension plan, as long as you know what the benefits are over and above, say, diverting your savings into property. Essentially, a pension is worth having because of the tax benefits it confers, which is where ChatGPT comes in, 'tax' being shorthand for 'complicated and annoying'. We prompted as follows:

'I'm 36 years old and plan to retire at 67. How much of a pension pot do I need to ensure a yearly income of £36,000? Advise on the most tax-efficient solution according to the laws of Spain, where I live.'

ChatGPT came up with two numbers: a minimum monthly contribution and a predicted maximum depending on Spain's likely economic fluctuations over the next 31 years. It also recommended pension plans from three European providers, supplied a likely tax burden on retirement and offered to give us alternative plans from pensions outside the EU.

What if you're already drawing a pension and want to know if you should top it up, spend less, gift some of it or draw it down? ChatGPT will supply answers to all of these questions depending on your age, location, spending habits and personal goals, excelling as always at taking data and arranging it in a useful manner.

## Contracts

'The indemnifying party agrees to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the indemnified party from any and all claims, damages, liabilities, losses, costs, and expenses arising out of or related to the performance of this agreement.'

Wait, what? You may well have been confronted by this sort of legal gibberish in the course of buying a house, paying for a new roof, selling a car and so on, but what does it actually mean? Fortunately, we have ChatGPT on hand to help explain and advise. It tells us: *'This means, 'You agree to protect me from any costs or damages that arise from this agreement'. Do you want me to explain the meaning of indemnity in more depth?'*

In the world of finance, such legalese is commonplace, simply because risks accompany the acquisition and transfer of money. It seems that no transaction over £1,000 can take place without an accompanying contract stuffed with this kind of bone-dry gibberish, so we're fortunate that ChatGPT can give us a real-world interpretation. Of course, check with a real-life legal eagle, just to be sure.

Another classic is 'No waiver of any term or condition of the agreement or of any part thereof shall be deemed a waiver of any other term or condition of the agreement or of any later breach of the agreement or any part thereof' – er, what's that now? Ask our AI for a definition, though, and it tells us: 'Each clause is independent from the others'.

Contracts are often, ironically, drawn up by programs such as ChatGPT these days, which in theory should make them more consistent. However, as any jaded contract lawyer will tell you, there's no such thing as uniformity in legal agreements, in general – so our old caveat applies: seek advice in the real world before signing anything.



# ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO ChatGPT

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