

AI PROMPTING CHEAT SHEET

Quick reference for writing effective architectural prompts.

THE ARCHITECTURE PROMPT FORMULA

Subject / Building Type + Style + Materials + Lighting + Camera / View + Atmosphere / Mood + Technical Specs

ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

Contemporary / Modern · Mid-Century Modern · Scandinavian Minimalist · Mediterranean · Craftsman · Industrial · Farmhouse · Japanese / Zen

LIGHTING CONDITIONS

- Golden hour** — Warm, directional, long shadows
- Overcast** — Even, gentle, no harsh shadows
- Direct sunlight** — High contrast, strong shadows
- Twilight / Blue hour** — Cool ambient, interior glow
- Warm ambient** — Cozy interior atmosphere

ATMOSPHERE / MOOD

Warm and inviting · Clean and minimal · Moody and dramatic · Light and airy · Cozy and intimate

CAMERA ANGLES

- Eye-level** — How a person sees the space
- Bird's eye / Aerial** — Site context, landscape
- Worm's eye** — Emphasizes verticality, drama
- Front elevation** — Clean, architectural style
- 3/4 perspective** — Classic rendering angle
- Interior looking out** — Frames views, inside/outside

MATERIALS — BE SPECIFIC

INSTEAD OF "wood floor"	USE "Warm oak wide-plank flooring"
INSTEAD OF "marble"	USE "Honed Carrara marble counter-tops"
INSTEAD OF "black windows"	USE "Blackened steel window frames"
INSTEAD OF "concrete"	USE "Board-formed concrete walls"
INSTEAD OF "wood siding"	USE "Natural cedar cladding with silver-grey patina"

EXAMPLE PROMPT

COMPLETE PROMPT

"A two-story contemporary beach house with floor-to-ceiling glazing and white stucco exterior. Natural oak decking wraps around the front facade. Shot at golden hour with warm side lighting. Eye-level perspective from the garden looking at the main entrance. Lush coastal landscaping with ornamental grasses. Photorealistic render, 16:9 aspect ratio."

PROMPT ANATOMY

Subject

Two-story contemporary beach house

Style

Contemporary, floor-to-ceiling glazing

Materials

White stucco, natural oak decking

Lighting

Golden hour, warm side lighting

Camera

Eye-level from garden, looking at entrance

Atmosphere

Lush coastal landscaping, ornamental grasses

Technical

Photorealistic render, 16:9 aspect ratio

COMMON MISTAKES

Too vague

Be specific about type, style, materials, and context

Contradictory

Choose one direction – you can generate variations after

No context

Include site, landscaping, sky, and time of day

No scale

Add people, furniture, or objects for proportion

Over-prompting

Start with big moves, refine with follow-up prompts

PRO TIPS

Iterate, Don't Overload

Start with big moves (form, style, mood) and refine in follow-up prompts. Multiple rounds beat one massive prompt.

Use Your Course Vocabulary

Material names, lighting terms, and spatial concepts from Modules 2-5 are exactly the language AI tools respond to best.

Save What Works

When you get a good result, save the exact prompt. Small variations on proven prompts beat starting from scratch.