

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

Camera

Eye-level from garden, looking at entrance

Style

Contemporary, floor-to-ceiling glazing

Atmosphere

Lush coastal landscaping, ornamental grasses

Materials

White stucco, natural oak decking

Technical

Photorealistic render, 16:9 aspect ratio

Lighting

Golden hour, warm side lighting

COMMON MISTAKES TO AVOID

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 the big picture (form, style, mood) and refine details in follow-up prompts. Multiple rounds produce better results than one massive prompt.

Use Your Course Vocabulary

The material names, lighting terms, and spatial concepts from Modules 2–5 are exactly the language AI tools respond to best. Your coursework is your prompting toolkit.

Save What Works

When you get a good result, save the exact prompt. Small variations on proven prompts are more reliable than starting from scratch each time.

