

Core Prompting Principles

1. **Give Direction** – Be specific with intent
2. **Specify Format** – Use markdown, JSON, bullet points, tables
3. **Provide Examples** – One-shot or few-shot demonstrations
4. **Evaluate Quality** – Define criteria or ask the model to self-grade
5. **Divide Labor** – Break tasks into steps

Give Direction — Be Specific with Intent

Vague prompts confuse the model. Be direct and precise.

Bad Prompt	Better Prompt
"Tell me about climate change"	"Summarize the causes of climate change in 3 bullet points"
"Write code"	"Write a Python function to sort a list of numbers using bubble sort"

Specify the Output Format

Tell the model *how* to format the answer. Use markdown, JSON, or tables.

Examples:

◆ Markdown Format:

Create a list of pros and cons of remote work in markdown bullet points

Output:

****Pros****

- Flexible schedule
- No commute

****Cons****

- Isolation
- Home distractions

Specify the Output Format

- ◆ JSON Format:

Give me JSON data for a user with fields: name, age, city

```
{  
  "name": "Priya",  
  "age": 22,  
  "city": "Delhi"  
}
```

- ◆ Table Format:

Present the nutritional values of banana, apple, and orange in a table

Use One-Shot or Few-Shot Prompting

Show how you want it done.

- ◆ One-shot Prompt:

Example: Input: "I love tea" → Output: "J'aime le thé"

Translate: "I love pizza" →

- ◆ Few-shot Prompt:

Input: "Hello" → Output: "👋"

Input: "Thumbs up" → Output: "👍"

Input: "Fire" → Output:

🧠 Models learn patterns from examples even in a single prompt session.

Evaluate Quality – Ask for Grading or Reflection

You can ask the model to **evaluate** its own or another output.

- ◆ **Example Prompt:**

Evaluate the following summary for accuracy and completeness. Score from 1 to 5 and explain:

"Climate change is fake and not real."

Output:

Score: 1/5

Explanation: The statement is factually incorrect and lacks evidence.

- ◆ **Self-check Prompt:**

Re-read your answer and list 2 possible improvements.

Divide Labor – Break Tasks Into Steps

Large tasks confuse the model. Break it into steps.

Prompt Example:

Step 1: Summarize this article in 5 bullet points

Step 2: Write a tweet based on the summary

Step 3: Add 3 relevant hashtags

This avoids hallucinations and gets structured output.

Role Prompting – “Act As...”

Ask the model to play a role.

Act as a career coach.

I'm a fresh graduate in Computer Science. What career paths should I explore?



Other roles:

- Math tutor
- UX designer
- Code reviewer
- Personal trainer

Helps with tone, depth, and context

Chain-of-Thought (CoT) Prompting

Add “**Let’s think step by step**” to make the model explain reasoning.

Q: A bat and a ball cost \$1.10 together. The bat costs \$1 more than the ball.

How much does the ball cost?

Let’s think step by step.

Great for:

- Math problems
- Reasoning
- Problem-solving