# Unlocking AI: A Practical Guide to Affordable Tools for Everyday Use

Artificial intelligence is rapidly transforming from a futuristic concept into a tangible tool for everyday life. Powerful AI capabilities are no longer confined to large corporations or individuals with substantial budgets. Instead, a new generation of AI applications offers personal assistance, creative collaboration, and enhanced learning opportunities for everyone. This report aims to navigate the landscape of accessible and affordable AI tools, specifically focusing on ChatGPT, NotebookLM, Gemini, Claude, and Perplexity AI. It will explore how individuals can harness these platforms, particularly their free or sub-$20 per month offerings, for simple yet remarkably effective applications, including specialized features like 'Projects,' 'Gems,' and 'Spaces' designed to streamline personal tasks and workflows. The very nature of seeking such practical guidance indicates a significant shift: users are moving beyond mere curiosity about AI and are now looking for concrete ways to integrate these tools into their daily routines for tangible benefits, demanding value and utility.

## Meet Your AI Assistants: An Overview

Before delving into detailed analyses, it is helpful to have a brief introduction to each AI assistant. This overview provides a quick mental map of the tools discussed:

* **ChatGPT (OpenAI):** A versatile partner for conversation, creation, and coding, known for its strong natural language understanding and generation capabilities.1
* **NotebookLM (Google):** An AI-powered research and writing assistant designed to work intimately with user-uploaded documents, offering summaries, answers, and insights grounded in the provided sources.3
* **Gemini (Google):** A multimodal AI capable of understanding and combining information from text, images, audio, video, and code, deeply integrated into Google's ecosystem of products.5
* **Claude (Anthropic):** An AI assistant recognized for its focus on safety, helpfulness, and its capacity to handle large amounts of text (long context windows), making it adept at complex reasoning and summarization tasks.6
* **Perplexity AI (Perplexity):** An AI-powered answer engine that provides direct, cited answers to questions by searching the web in real-time, aiming for accuracy and transparency.8

While many of these tools can be described as "general-purpose" AI, they are increasingly developing specialized strengths or features. For instance, NotebookLM is clearly tailored for document-based research 3, and Perplexity AI functions primarily as an advanced search and answer tool.8 Even the more broadly conversational AIs like ChatGPT, Gemini, and Claude exhibit different areas of emphasis, such as Claude's "Constitutional AI" approach to safety 10 or Gemini's multimodal capabilities.5 This emerging specialization suggests that individuals might find value in using a combination of these tools, selecting the best one for each specific task rather than relying on a single AI for all needs. The development of features like NotebookLM for documents or Perplexity Spaces for organized research is a direct outcome of users requiring more than a generic chat interface for complex or ongoing projects.

## Deep Dive: AI Tools Under $20/Month for Individuals

This section provides a comprehensive look at each AI tool, focusing on its capabilities, affordable pricing tiers for individuals, and practical use cases.

### 3.1. ChatGPT: The Versatile Conversationalist

ChatGPT has become a household name due to its remarkable ability to engage in human-like conversations and perform a wide array of language-based tasks.

* Core Capabilities:  
  ChatGPT excels in understanding natural language and generating various forms of text, from drafting emails and essays to writing code and creative stories.1 It can answer questions, explain complex concepts in simple terms, summarize lengthy texts, translate languages, and even assist with problem-solving that requires logical reasoning.1 For users on paid plans, and increasingly on the free tier, ChatGPT offers built-in tools such as web browsing (Search) for up-to-date information, Deep Research for multi-step research tasks, image generation with DALL·E 3, the ability to upload and analyze files (like PDFs and documents), data analysis capabilities for spreadsheets and CSVs, a voice mode for hands-free interaction, Canvas for collaborative writing and editing, Memory to recall user preferences across conversations, Projects for organizing work, and Scheduled Tasks for automating future actions.1  
  Notably, the free tier of ChatGPT now provides access to the powerful GPT-4o model, along with web search, data analysis, file and image uploads, the ability to use custom GPTs from the GPT Store, and image creation capabilities.11 However, these features on the free tier come with usage limitations, particularly for the more advanced GPT-4o model and specialized tools.11 This broad accessibility of a high-caliber model on a free platform represents a significant democratization of advanced AI, allowing individuals to experience sophisticated AI assistance without any financial commitment.
* **Pricing:**
  + **Free Tier:** Offers access to GPT-4o (with message limits that reset, often within a five-hour window, after which users can continue with GPT-4o mini or upgrade), web search, data analysis, file uploads, image generation, voice mode, and the use of custom GPTs.11
  + **ChatGPT Plus ($20/month):** This plan provides higher usage limits for GPT-4o, access to the even more capable GPT-4 model, the ability to create and use Projects, create tasks, build and share custom GPTs, and opportunities to test new features, which have included limited access to the Sora video generation model and a research preview of Operator.2
  + Team and Enterprise plans exist but are priced per user and typically exceed the individual $20/month budget.13
* **Simple & Effective Use Cases for Individuals (Sub-$20 Focus):**
  + **Learning & Understanding:** Explaining complex academic concepts, generating practice questions, getting assistance with homework assignments, or simply learning about new topics.2 For example, a student could ask ChatGPT to explain quantum physics in simple terms or to create a quiz on World War II.
  + **Writing Assistance:** Drafting professional emails, composing blog posts, creating engaging social media updates, writing creative fiction or scripts, and proofreading or editing existing text for grammar and style.1
  + **Productivity & Planning:** Generating to-do lists, outlining project plans, planning personal activities like a 'mental health day,' summarizing meeting notes, or brainstorming business ideas.2
  + **Coding Help:** Writing snippets of code in various programming languages, debugging existing code, understanding complex algorithms, or learning new APIs.2
  + **Creative Ideation:** Brainstorming ideas for art projects, hobbies, gift suggestions, or content creation for a personal blog or YouTube channel.1
* Spotlight: ChatGPT Projects  
  ChatGPT Projects offer a way to organize related chats, files, and custom instructions under a single, shared objective.1 This feature is particularly useful for managing multi-session workflows, collaborative efforts (though current Projects are for individual use), or long-running research topics.1 For an individual, this could mean creating a Project for a research paper, where all uploaded source materials, notes, drafts, and related AI conversations are kept in one place. Another example is using a Project to learn a new programming language, organizing code snippets, tutorial notes, and AI-assisted debugging sessions.  
  The primary benefit of Projects is that they help maintain context over extended periods and across multiple interactions. LLMs can sometimes "forget" earlier parts of a conversation or specific instructions if a chat becomes too long or if the user switches between different tasks. Projects address this by creating a dedicated workspace where uploaded files and custom instructions provide persistent context for all conversations within that Project.18 This is more than just a folder system; it's about creating an intelligent environment that remembers the specific nuances of an ongoing task, leading to more relevant and efficient AI assistance.17

### 3.2. NotebookLM: Your AI-Powered Research Partner

NotebookLM, from Google, is specifically engineered as an AI-powered research and writing assistant, designed to help users make the most of their own information by interacting deeply with uploaded documents.3

* Core Capabilities:  
  NotebookLM's central function is to work with user-provided source materials. It supports a wide array of document types, including Google Drive files (Docs, Slides, Sheets), PDFs, plain text files, copied text, web URLs, transcripts from YouTube videos, and even uploaded audio files (MP3, WAV), which it transcribes for analysis.4 Once sources are uploaded, NotebookLM can summarize them, find correlations between different documents, and make the content interactive. A key feature is its ability to generate answers that are explicitly grounded in the uploaded sources, providing inline citations that link back to the exact passage in the source material.3 This direct grounding in user-provided documents significantly mitigates the risk of the AI generating fabricated information, a common concern with other LLMs. By constraining responses to the uploaded material, NotebookLM builds trust and becomes a more reliable tool for tasks where factual accuracy based on specific documents is critical, such as academic research or analyzing detailed reports.  
  Other notable features include "Audio Overviews," which generate podcast-style audio summaries of documents, complete with an interactive mode allowing users to ask clarifying questions of the AI "hosts".4 It can also generate study guides, facilitate note-taking, and process multimodal inputs.4 The combination of these features, especially the ability to process diverse inputs and generate outputs in various formats (text summaries, study guides, interactive audio), makes NotebookLM a uniquely versatile companion for learning and research, catering to different preferences and learning styles.
* **Pricing:**
  + **Free Tier:** Offers highly generous access to all core features. Users can create up to 100 notebooks, with each notebook supporting up to 50 sources, and each source containing up to 500,000 words. The free plan allows for 50 questions per day and 3 Audio Overviews per day.3
  + **NotebookLM Plus (available through the Google One AI Premium plan at $19.99/month):** This tier increases the limits by fivefold (e.g., 500 notebooks, 250 sources per notebook, 250 questions per day, 15 Audio Overviews per day). It also unlocks custom response styles, controls for output length, and notebook analytics.3 The Google One AI Premium plan also includes Gemini Advanced and 2TB of Google cloud storage, offering substantial value.
* **Simple & Effective Use Cases for Individuals (Sub-$20 Focus):**
  + **Research Synthesis:** Uploading multiple research papers, articles, or personal notes on a topic to have NotebookLM synthesize the information, extract key arguments, identify counter-arguments, and find connections between different sources.4
  + **Study Aid:** Creating interactive study guides from textbook chapters, lecture notes, or academic papers. Students can ask clarifying questions about complex concepts and use Audio Overviews to review material while commuting or exercising.4
  + **Content Creation Support:** Organizing research materials for writing blog posts, articles, or preparing presentations. NotebookLM can help structure content and ensure arguments are well-supported by the source material.4
  + **Personal Knowledge Management:** Analyzing a collection of personal writings (journals, notes) over several years to identify recurring themes, track the evolution of ideas, or distill key concepts.22
  + **Meeting/Lecture Analysis:** Uploading transcripts or audio recordings of meetings or lectures to generate summaries, extract key takeaways, and identify action items.4

### 3.3. Gemini: Google's Multimodal AI

Gemini is Google's family of AI models and an ecosystem designed to bring AI capabilities into various Google products and services. It stands out for its native multimodality, meaning it can reason seamlessly across text, images, audio, video, and code.5

* Core Capabilities:  
  Gemini's capabilities are experienced in several ways. It powers AI Overviews in Google Search, provides "Help me write" assistance in Gmail and Docs, "Help me design" in Slides, "Help me organize" in Sheets, and can even "Take notes for me" in Google Meet.5 This deep integration within the Google Workspace suite provides a significant advantage for users already embedded in Google's ecosystem, allowing for AI assistance directly within familiar applications, thereby reducing context switching and streamlining workflows for tasks like email drafting or document creation.  
  There is also a chat interface (gemini.google.com and mobile apps) where users can interact with Gemini for tasks like brainstorming, creative writing, productivity assistance, coding help, and interview preparation.5 Gemini Advanced, the premium tier, offers access to Google's most capable AI models, such as Gemini 2.5 Pro (currently experimental), for tackling more complex projects.24 Advanced features include Deep Research for synthesizing information from numerous sources, the ability to upload and process large files (up to 1,500 pages of text or 30,000 lines of code), video generation with Veo 2, and data analysis capabilities with Google Sheets, CSV, and Excel files.24
* **Pricing:**
  + **Free Tier (Gemini):** Provides access to a capable Gemini model (e.g., Gemini 1.5 Flash) for conversational AI, image generation, text summarization, coding assistance, and more.25 It also integrates with many Google Assistant features for voice commands and personal assistance.27
  + **Gemini Advanced ($19.99/month, part of the Google One AI Premium plan):** This plan includes access to Google's most powerful AI models (like 2.5 Pro), enhanced Gemini capabilities within Gmail, Docs, and other Workspace apps, 2TB of Google cloud storage, and access to NotebookLM Plus.19
  + Google Workspace also offers Gemini Business and Enterprise add-ons, but these are typically priced per user per month and are generally above the $20 threshold for an individual, often requiring a base Workspace subscription.28
* **Simple & Effective Use Cases for Individuals (Sub-$20 Focus):**
  + **Enhanced Productivity within Google Ecosystem:** Drafting emails in Gmail, creating and refining documents in Google Docs, organizing and analyzing data in Google Sheets, or designing presentations in Google Slides with AI-powered suggestions and generation.5
  + **Creative Content Generation:** Brainstorming ideas for projects, writing social media captions, drafting blog posts, generating images for personal use, or even creating short videos (with Gemini Advanced).24
  + **Learning & Problem Solving:** Getting explanations for complex topics, debugging code, preparing for job interviews by practicing answers, or translating text.5
  + **Personal Assistant Tasks:** Using voice commands via Google Assistant integration to set reminders, manage shopping lists, get weather updates, find directions, or play music.27
  + **Research & Summarization:** Utilizing the Deep Research feature in Gemini Advanced to gather and synthesize information from a wide range of online sources for personal projects or learning.24
* Spotlight: Gemini Gems  
  Gemini Gems are customized versions of Gemini that users can create to handle repetitive tasks or to get deep expertise in specific areas.30 This feature represents a significant step towards truly personalized AI assistants. Users can define a Gem by providing specific instructions covering its persona (e.g., "You are a friendly travel planner"), task (e.g., "Help me create detailed itineraries"), context (e.g., "Focus on budget travel and historical sites"), and desired output format (e.g., "Provide daily plans in a bulleted list").31  
  Examples of personal Gems could include a "Recipe Generator" that suggests meals based on available ingredients, a "Coding Explainer" that breaks down complex code in simple terms, a "Fitness Coach" Gem for workout ideas, a "Socratic Tutor" Gem to aid learning a new subject through questioning 31, or a "Personalized Writing Style Coach" Gem.31 Gems help save time by pre-defining goals and guidelines, making Gemini more efficient for specific, recurring needs. This moves beyond simple prompting to the creation of reusable, customized AI personas. Furthermore, these Gems can be used within Google Workspace Flows to automate more complex, multi-step processes, hinting at a future where personalized AI agents can manage sophisticated workflows.23

### 3.4. Claude: The Thoughtful and Ethical AI

Claude, developed by Anthropic, is an AI assistant known for its strong performance in complex cognitive tasks, its large context window, and its foundational design emphasizing safety and reliability.7

* Core Capabilities:  
  Claude excels at tasks requiring sophisticated reasoning, mathematical problem-solving, coding assistance, and fluency in multiple languages.7 A significant differentiator for Claude is its large context window, typically 200,000 tokens, which translates to being able to process and remember information from roughly 150,000 words or over 500 pages of material.7 This makes Claude particularly adept at tasks involving long documents, such as summarizing books, analyzing extensive reports, or maintaining coherence in lengthy, complex conversations. Many real-world individual tasks, like dissecting a detailed research paper or reviewing a manuscript, benefit greatly from this ability to handle vast amounts of text without losing track of earlier details.  
  Claude also possesses vision capabilities, allowing it to transcribe and analyze static images, including handwritten notes, charts, graphs, and photographs.7 Certain Claude models, like Claude 3.7 Sonnet, feature an "extended thinking" mode, where the AI can be instructed to perform step-by-step reasoning before providing an answer, offering users more transparency into its thought process.7 This feature, along with an adjustable "thinking budget" that allows users to control the computational resources (and thus, potentially cost for API users) allocated to reasoning, can enhance user trust and understanding. Anthropic emphasizes Claude's development around "Constitutional AI," a method that trains the model to adhere to a set of ethical principles, aiming for responses that are safe, honest, and harmless.10
* **Pricing:**
  + **Free Tier:** Allows users to chat with Claude via the web interface (claude.ai) and mobile apps (iOS and Android). It can generate code, visualize data, write and edit content, and analyze text and images.35 However, the free tier is subject to daily message limits that can vary based on current demand, and the context window size might also fluctuate.34
  + **Claude Pro ($20/month, or $17/month if billed annually at $200 upfront):** This plan offers significantly more usage than the free tier (described as 5x or more for some models/tasks), access to Claude Projects for organizing chats and documents, the ability to choose from different Claude models via a model selector (e.g., Haiku for speed, Sonnet for balance, Opus for power, though Opus access might be more limited or tiered), access to extended thinking capabilities for complex work, web search functionality, and the ability to connect Google Workspace for interacting with emails, calendar, and documents.34
  + Claude Max (from $100/month), Team ($30/user/month, min 5 users), and Enterprise plans are also available but fall outside the individual sub-$20 scope.35
* **Simple & Effective Use Cases for Individuals (Sub-$20 Focus):**
  + **Deep Document Analysis & Summarization:** Leveraging the large context window to upload and summarize lengthy books, research papers, legal documents, or financial reports, extracting key insights and performing Q&A on the content.7
  + **Complex Question Answering and Problem Solving:** Tackling challenging questions or problems that require nuanced reasoning, critical analysis, and the synthesis of complex information.7
  + **Creative and Collaborative Writing:** Assisting with drafting long-form content like essays, articles, or book chapters, brainstorming ideas, and generating various creative text formats.10
  + **Coding Assistance:** Generating, debugging, and explaining complex code across various programming languages; understanding the architecture of existing codebases.7
  + **Learning and Explanation:** Obtaining detailed explanations on intricate topics, using the "extended thinking" feature to understand the AI's reasoning process for better clarity and learning.7
* Spotlight: Claude Projects  
  Available on paid plans like Claude Pro, Projects enable users to create self-contained workspaces. Each Project can have its own dedicated chat history and a unique knowledge base composed of uploaded documents and custom instructions.38 This allows for highly focused and context-aware conversations with Claude. For example, an individual could create a Project for analyzing a specific set of historical documents, uploading all relevant texts and setting instructions for Claude to focus on particular themes or figures. Another use case could be developing a detailed business plan, with all market research, financial projections, and drafts stored and referenced within the Project.39  
  Claude Projects support various file types for its knowledge base, including PDF, DOCX, CSV, and TXT, with an overall limit of 200K tokens for the project knowledge.39 This feature enhances productivity by allowing users to build up a specific context for Claude to work with over time, ensuring that interactions remain relevant and grounded in the project's specific materials and goals.39

### 3.5. Perplexity AI: The Insightful Answer Engine

Perplexity AI positions itself as an "answer engine" rather than just a chatbot. Its primary function is to provide direct, accurate, and well-sourced answers to user queries by searching the internet in real-time and synthesizing information from various sources.8

* Core Capabilities:  
  Perplexity AI utilizes advanced large language models (such as OpenAI's GPT models and Anthropic's Claude models, among others) to understand the intent and context of user questions.8 It then scours the web, including news articles, academic papers, blogs, and other online resources, to gather relevant information.8 A key distinguishing feature is its commitment to transparency: answers are accompanied by citations and links to the original sources, allowing users to easily verify the information and explore topics further.8 This emphasis on cited sources directly addresses the common concern of AI "hallucinations" (providing incorrect information) and builds user trust, making it a more reliable tool for research and fact-finding.  
  The platform offers different search modes: "Quick Search" for fast, straightforward answers and "Pro Search" for more in-depth, conversational exploration that may involve follow-up questions from the AI to refine the search and provide more tailored responses.8 Users can also upload files to get insights from their own documents, use voice search on mobile apps, and browse in incognito mode for privacy.8 Perplexity allows users to organize their research into "Spaces" and can even help create shareable articles based on research with a feature called "Perplexity Pages".8 Additionally, "Focus" modes enable users to narrow their search to specific domains like Academic papers, YouTube videos, Reddit discussions, or computational knowledge from WolframAlpha.43
* **Pricing:**
  + **Free Tier (Standard):** Offers unlimited Quick Searches and a limited number of Pro Searches per day (this limit has been cited as 5 per day 8 or 3 per day 45 – users should verify current limits). It provides access to a standard AI model for responses. Users can upload a few files (e.g., 3 total) and organize queries into Collections or Spaces, with limitations on collaborators per Space (e.g., 5) and items (links and files) per Space (e.g., 5 total).8
  + **Perplexity Pro ($20/month):** Significantly increases the number of Pro Searches (e.g., 300+ per day) and grants access to a selection of more advanced AI models, including options like GPT-4.1, Claude 3.7 Sonnet, Google's Gemini 2.5 Pro, Sonar Large (Perplexity's in-house model), Grok 3 Beta, and OpenAI's o4-mini.42 Pro users also get unlimited file uploads (with higher limits per Space, e.g., up to 10 links and 50 files), image generation capabilities, and $5 per month in API credits.44
  + An Enterprise Pro plan is also available for teams.45
* **Simple & Effective Use Cases for Individuals (Sub-$20 Focus):**
  + **Quick Fact-Checking & Learning:** Obtaining fast, reliable, and sourced answers to everyday questions, or learning about new topics with the ability to verify information through provided citations.8
  + **In-Depth Research:** Using Pro Search (even the limited daily free ones) and Focus Modes (e.g., "Academic") to conduct research for personal projects, academic assignments, or professional development, with access to peer-reviewed sources.8
  + **Staying Updated on Current Events:** Tracking real-time information on news, sports scores, election results, or weather forecasts, as Perplexity searches the web live.8
  + **Content Summarization:** Quickly summarizing online articles and webpages to grasp key points without reading the full text.46
  + **Product Research & Comparison Shopping:** Finding information about products, comparing features, and looking for the best prices.46
* Spotlight: Perplexity AI Spaces  
  Perplexity AI Spaces provide a way for users to organize their research threads (conversations) and related files by specific topics or projects.47 This feature allows individuals to create tailored knowledge hubs that can combine information from web searches with their own uploaded documents and links.47 For instance, a student researching "Climate Change Impacts" could create a Space, upload relevant academic papers and reports, add links to key websites, and then ask questions within that Space. Perplexity would then draw answers from both the uploaded files and targeted web searches, all within the context of that Space.8  
  Users can set custom instructions for an entire Space, which will apply to all threads within it, helping to maintain focus and consistency in the AI's responses.43 Spaces help keep research organized, facilitate focused querying within a defined context, and improve the management of complex or ongoing personal research projects.49 This ability to create mini, curated search environments by blending personal knowledge with targeted web intelligence is a powerful step towards personalized information retrieval.

## Comparative Snapshot: Choosing Your AI Ally

Navigating the growing landscape of AI tools can be daunting. To simplify the decision-making process for individuals seeking affordable and effective AI assistance, the following table provides a comparative overview. It highlights key features, pricing for individual-friendly plans (free or under $20/month), and ideal use cases. This condensed format allows for a quick assessment of which tool might best align with specific needs and budgets.

**Table 1: AI Tool Feature and Pricing Comparison (Individual Focus, <$20/Month)**

| **Feature Category** | **ChatGPT (OpenAI)** | **NotebookLM (Google)** | **Gemini (Google)** | **Claude (Anthropic)** | **Perplexity AI** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Developer** | OpenAI | Google | Google | Anthropic | Perplexity |
| **Free Tier Highlights** | GPT-4o (limited), web search, data analysis, file/image upload, custom GPTs use 11 | 100 notebooks, 50 sources/notebook, 50 questions/day, 3 Audio Overviews/day, all core features 3 | Capable Gemini model (e.g., 1.5 Flash), chat, image generation, Google Assistant integration 25 | Chat, code/data/text/image analysis. Daily message limits & context window vary by demand 34 | Unlimited Quick Searches, 5 Pro Searches/day, standard AI model, limited file uploads & Spaces use 8 |
| **Paid Plan (<$20/mo)** | ChatGPT Plus | NotebookLM Plus (via Google One AI Premium) | Gemini Advanced (via Google One AI Premium) | Claude Pro | Perplexity Pro |
| **Price (Paid Plan)** | $20/month 13 | $19.99/month (includes Gemini Advanced, 2TB storage) 3 | $19.99/month (includes NotebookLM Plus, 2TB storage) 19 | $20/month (or $17/mo annually) 35 | $20/month 44 |
| **Key Features (Paid)** | Higher GPT-4o/GPT-4 limits, Projects, custom GPT creation, test new features 2 | 5x higher limits, custom response styles, output controls, analytics 3 | Most capable models (e.g., 2.5 Pro), Gemini in Gmail/Docs, Deep Research, video gen, data analysis 24 | More usage, Projects, model selector, extended thinking, web search, Google Workspace connection 35 | 300+ Pro Searches/day, advanced AI models (GPT-4, Claude etc.), unlimited file uploads, image gen 42 |
| **USP for Individuals** | Versatile conversational AI, cutting-edge models, broad capabilities. | Deep document analysis, source-grounded research, multimodal learning aid. | Seamless Google ecosystem integration, strong multimodal input/output, personalized "Gems." | Large context window for long documents, strong reasoning, ethical framework, "extended thinking." | Fast, accurate, cited answers from real-time web search; answer engine. |
| **Ideal Individual Uses** | Writing, coding, learning, brainstorming, general productivity. 1 | Academic research, study, content prep, personal knowledge management. 4 | Productivity in Google apps, creative content, coding, personal assistant tasks. 5 | Analyzing long texts, complex problem-solving, creative writing, coding. 7 | Fact-checking, learning, current events, in-depth sourced research. 8 |
| **Spotlight Feature** | **Projects:** Organize chats, files, custom instructions for ongoing work. 17 | **Audio Overviews:** Interactive podcast-style summaries of documents. 4 | **Gems:** Customizable AI personas for specific, repetitive tasks. 30 | **Projects:** Workspaces with dedicated knowledge bases and custom instructions. 38 | **Spaces:** Organize research by topic with files, links, and custom instructions. 47 |

This table is highly valuable as it condenses extensive information into an easily scannable format, directly addressing the need to compare options under $20 and identify relevant use cases. For an individual pressed for time, this table can be a critical decision-making aid, allowing for rapid side-by-side comparison of each tool's value proposition.

**Guidance on Selection:**

Choosing the right AI ally, or allies, depends heavily on an individual's primary needs and how they intend to use AI:

* For a **versatile conversationalist** capable of a wide array of tasks including writing, coding, brainstorming, and general problem-solving, with access to cutting-edge models, **ChatGPT Plus** is a strong contender. Its free tier is also very capable for many tasks.11
* If the main requirement is **in-depth research, comprehensive document analysis, and assistance with studying**, where answers are grounded in provided sources, **NotebookLM** is an excellent choice. Its free tier is generous, and NotebookLM Plus (via Google One AI Premium) offers enhanced limits and features.3
* For individuals heavily invested in the **Google ecosystem** (Gmail, Docs, Sheets, etc.) who desire AI seamlessly integrated into their daily applications, along with powerful multimodal capabilities, **Gemini Advanced** (via Google One AI Premium) is ideal. The free Gemini version also offers significant utility.5
* When the task involves processing **very long documents, requires nuanced reasoning for complex questions, or if an ethical AI framework and transparent thinking processes are prioritized**, **Claude Pro** stands out due to its large context window and features like "extended thinking".7 Its free tier offers a good introduction.
* If the primary goal is to get **fast, accurate, and well-sourced answers from the web**, functioning like a supercharged and conversational search engine, **Perplexity AI** is the tool of choice. The free tier is useful for quick lookups, while Perplexity Pro unlocks more advanced models and search capabilities.8

It is also worth considering that the free tiers of these tools are often robust enough for many individual needs. Experimenting with a combination of free offerings can be a highly effective strategy for those on a very tight budget.

The emergence of features like "Projects" in ChatGPT and Claude, "Spaces" in Perplexity AI, the very concept of a "Notebook" in NotebookLM, and customizable "Gems" in Gemini all point to a significant evolution in AI interaction. These "contextual containers" address a common user pain point: the limitations of single-shot queries or chat sessions for complex, ongoing work. Users needed ways to organize related information, maintain context over time, upload relevant documents, and set persistent instructions. This user demand has driven the development of these features, suggesting that the future of personal AI assistance lies in creating such persistent, personalized, and project-specific AI environments.

Furthermore, the lines between AI chatbots and search engines are visibly blurring. Perplexity AI explicitly defines itself as an "answer engine" 8, while tools like ChatGPT and Gemini are increasingly integrating real-time web search capabilities.1 This convergence is driven by the user expectation that AI should have access to up-to-date information. Traditional LLMs trained on static datasets quickly become outdated. The fusion of conversational AI with real-time search and proper sourcing indicates a trend towards tools that offer both engaging interaction and reliable, current information.

## Practical How-To Guides for Key Features

This section provides step-by-step instructions for using some of the standout features of these AI tools, enabling individuals to quickly get started with practical applications.

### 5.1. Creating and Using ChatGPT Projects for Personal Task Management/Learning

ChatGPT Projects provide a structured way to manage tasks and learning endeavors by grouping relevant chats, files, and instructions.17

**Steps:**

1. **Create a New Project:**
   * On the ChatGPT web interface (or Windows app), find the "+" button next to "Project" (often in the top-right or sidebar). Click it.52
   * Name your project descriptively, e.g., "History Paper Research" or "Weekly Fitness Plan".52
   * Click "Create Project."
2. **Set Custom Instructions:**
   * Once the project is created, click "Add instructions" on the Project page.52
   * **For Task Management:** Instruct ChatGPT on task handling, e.g., "Break down large tasks into smaller steps," "Format to-do lists with checkboxes and due dates," or "Adopt an encouraging tone".52
   * **For Learning:** Guide ChatGPT's teaching style, e.g., "Explain complex concepts in simple terms using analogies," "Act as a tutor and ask clarifying questions," or "Suggest further reading on this topic".52
   * Click "Save." These instructions apply only to this project and override general custom instructions.52
3. **Add Files:**
   * Click "Add files" on the Project page.52
   * Drag and drop files or browse to upload. For task management, this could be meeting notes or project briefs. For learning, upload research papers, lecture notes, or articles.18
   * Be mindful of file upload limits. Uploaded files provide context only within this project.52
4. **Move Existing Chats (Optional):**
   * If relevant past conversations exist, go to your chat history.
   * Click the three dots ("...") next to the chat name and select "Add to project".52
   * Choose the destination project. The chat will then adopt the project's context (files and instructions).
5. **Using Your Project:**
   * Start new conversations within the project. ChatGPT will use the uploaded files and custom instructions to inform its responses.52
   * Ask for task breakdowns, summaries of uploaded files, explanations of concepts, etc..18
   * Example: For a "Novel Writing" Project, upload character sketches and plot outlines. Custom instruction: "Maintain a consistent tone for character X. Help me brainstorm plot developments." Prompt: "Based on my outline, suggest three challenges for my protagonist in Chapter 5."
6. **Managing Your Project:**
   * **Delete Files:** Click "Add files," find the file, and click the "x" next to it.52
   * **Remove Conversations:** Click the three dots by the conversation title and select "Remove".52
   * **Delete Project:** Click the three dots by the Project name and select "Delete project." This is permanent.52

### 5.2. Leveraging NotebookLM for Research (e.g., summarizing articles, creating argument lists)

NotebookLM is designed for deep interaction with your documents, making it ideal for research tasks like summarizing articles and extracting key arguments.20

**Steps:**

1. **Create a Notebook and Upload Sources:**
   * Go to notebooklm.google.com.
   * Click "+ Add Source" in the left panel.20
   * Upload your articles. Supported formats include Google Drive files, PDFs, text files, copied text, web URLs, and YouTube video transcripts.4 For this use case, focus on articles (PDFs, URLs, or copied text). Click "Insert."
2. **Interact with the AI for Summaries and Arguments:**
   * NotebookLM provides an automatic summary of all sources.20
   * In the chat box at the bottom, ask specific questions:
     + "Summarize the main arguments in these three articles about [your specific topic]."
     + "Identify the key arguments for [a specific stance] and the main counter-arguments discussed in these sources regarding [your specific topic]."
   * NotebookLM will respond with answers grounded in your sources, including inline citations. Click citations to go directly to the relevant passage in the original document.4
3. **Use the Studio Panel for Structured Output:**
   * The Studio panel (usually on the right) helps create structured outputs.20
   * Prompt in the Studio panel: "Based on the three uploaded articles, create a bulleted list of the key arguments in favor of [your specific topic] and a separate bulleted list of the main counter-arguments."
   * Alternatively, you can ask for a "briefing document" or generate a "study guide" which will highlight key concepts and questions from your sources.4
4. **Review and Refine:**
   * Carefully review the generated summaries and lists.
   * Use the citations to verify accuracy and context.4
   * Refine your prompts or ask follow-up questions for more detail or different formatting. For example: "Expand on the first counter-argument, citing specific evidence from the sources."
5. **Utilize Audio Overviews (Optional):**
   * For a different way to engage with your research, click "Generate" and select "Audio Overview" for a source.4
   * Listen to the podcast-style summary. Use the "Interactive mode" to ask the AI hosts clarifying questions in real-time.4

Example: For researching "The Ethics of AI in Art," upload three philosophical papers. Ask NotebookLM: "Summarize each paper's stance on AI-generated art." Then: "Create a table comparing the main ethical concerns raised in these papers, with citations."

### 5.3. Creating and Using Custom Gemini Gems (e.g., Socratic tutor, writing coach)

Gemini Gems allow users to create personalized versions of Gemini tailored for specific tasks by providing custom instructions.30

**Steps:**

1. **Access Gem Manager:**
   * Go to gemini.google.com.
   * At the bottom left, click the "Gem manager" icon (looks like a multifaceted gem).31
   * Click "New Gem."
2. **Name Your Gem:**
   * Choose a descriptive name, e.g., "Physics Socratic Tutor" or "Concise Writing Coach".31
3. **Write Effective Instructions:**
   * This is key. Provide details for Persona, Task, Context, and Format.31
   * **Persona (Role):**
     + *Socratic Tutor:* "You are a Socratic tutor for. Your goal is to help me learn by asking guiding questions, not giving direct answers. Encourage critical thinking."
     + *Writing Coach:* "You are my personalized writing style coach. Analyze my writing for [e.g., clarity, conciseness, adherence to AP style]."
   * **Task (What to do):**
     + *Socratic Tutor:* "When I present a concept, ask questions to help me understand it better. Start broad, then get specific. Make me explain my reasoning."
     + *Writing Coach:* "When I provide text, identify areas for improvement based on [chosen style]. Offer specific examples and explain your suggestions."
   * **Context (Background):**
     + *Socratic Tutor:* "We are learning. Assume basic understanding. My goal is deeper comprehension."
     + *Writing Coach:* "I am writing a for. Maintain context across the conversation."
   * **Format (Output Structure):**
     + *Socratic Tutor:* "Ask one question at a time. Use encouraging language."
     + *Writing Coach:* "Provide feedback in bullet points. For each, show the original phrase, the suggested revision, and a brief rationale." 31
   * Enter these instructions into the provided box.
4. **Preview and Save:**
   * Use the preview window on the right to test your Gem with a sample prompt.31
   * Refine instructions if needed.
   * **Crucially, click "Save."** Previewing does not save the Gem.31
5. **Upload Files (If Applicable):**
   * After saving, or while using the Gem, you can add files for more context.31 Click "Add files" (paperclip icon).
   * Upload from your device or Google Drive. This is useful for a writing coach (upload a draft) or a tutor (upload study materials).31
6. **Using Your Gem:**
   * Select your custom Gem from the Gem manager.
   * Interact with it. Gemini will now respond according to your Gem's specific instructions.
   * Example: For a "Healthy Recipe Gem" (Persona: "Nutrition-focused chef"; Task: "Suggest healthy recipes based on ingredients I have"; Context: "Low-carb, quick meals"; Format: "List ingredients, then step-by-step instructions"). Prompt: "I have chicken breast, broccoli, and quinoa. Suggest a recipe."

### 5.4. Setting Up and Using Claude Projects for Research/Content Analysis

Claude Projects, available on paid plans, create dedicated workspaces with their own knowledge bases and custom instructions, ideal for focused research or content analysis.38

**Steps:**

1. **Create a Project:**
   * Navigate to the "projects section" in your Claude account (hover left for menu).40
   * Click "Create Project."
   * Provide a name (e.g., "Market Trend Analysis") and an optional description (Claude doesn't use the description for context).40
2. **Manage Project Knowledge (Upload Documents):**
   * The project knowledge base is on the right side of the project page.40
   * Click "Add Content".40
   * Upload relevant files: PDFs, DOCX, CSVs, TXT, HTML, etc..39 Max file size is 30MB per file, but the total project knowledge is limited to 200K tokens (approx. 500 pages).39 Clean and select files carefully to stay within this limit.39
   * Claude processes this content to use as context for all chats within this project.40
3. **Set Custom Instructions:**
   * In the project knowledge base section, click "Set project instructions".40
   * Define how Claude should behave in this project. For research: "Focus on identifying biases in the provided texts." For content analysis: "Analyze for sentiment and recurring themes. Summarize findings in a formal tone.".39
   * These instructions apply to all chats within the project.
4. **Initiate Chats within the Project:**
   * Start new conversations from the project page or select the project when starting a new chat from the main Claude interface.39
   * Claude will automatically use the project's uploaded knowledge and custom instructions.39
   * **Important Note:** While project knowledge and instructions are persistent, Claude does not automatically reference the content of *previous chat conversations* within the same project unless that chat content has been explicitly saved or summarized into the project knowledge base.39
5. **Referencing Project Knowledge:**
   * Prompt Claude to use the uploaded information. Example: "Based on the uploaded 'Survey\_Results.csv', what are the top 3 customer complaints?" Claude will reference the file.39
   * If Claude generates a valuable insight or summary in a chat, consider adding it to the project knowledge (e.g., by copying and pasting into a new text file and uploading, or if a direct "add to knowledge" feature exists) for future reference in other chats within that project.39

Example: For a "Literary Analysis Project" on a specific novel, upload the novel's text (if it fits the token limit, or key chapters) and critical essays. Custom instruction: "Analyze the development of the main character, citing examples from the novel and the provided essays."

### 5.5. Organizing Research with Perplexity AI Spaces

Perplexity AI Spaces help organize research by topic, allowing users to group threads, files, and custom instructions into dedicated workspaces.47

**Steps:**

1. **Create a Space:**
   * **Web:** Click the "Spaces" tab, then "Create a Space".51
   * **Mobile App:** Tap "Library" icon -> "Spaces" sub-tab -> "+" icon.51
2. **Configure Your Space:**
   * **Title:** Unique name reflecting the research topic (e.g., "Renewable Energy Technologies").51
   * **Description:** Detailed purpose of the Space.51
   * **AI Model (Paid Users):** Select a preferred AI model for this Space.51
   * **Custom Instructions (AI Prompt):** Add a prompt that applies to all threads in this Space. For research: "Focus on peer-reviewed sources published in the last 5 years. Summarize findings concisely.".43
3. **Add Files/Links as Sources to the Space:**
   * Within the Space, find the "Files" section or tab.51
   * Click the "+" icon to upload documents (PDFs, etc.) from your device.51
   * You can also add relevant web links that Perplexity should consider as part of the Space's knowledge base.
4. **Start and Manage Threads within the Space:**
   * Open the Space. Use the prompt box to ask questions or start research threads.51
   * **Choose Search Sources for Each Thread:** Before submitting a query in a thread, click the "Sources" button (replaces "Focus" in Spaces).51 Select:
     + **Space Files:** Uses only your uploaded files for answers.
     + **Web:** Searches only online sources.
     + **Web + Space Files:** Combines both for comprehensive results. This is often best for research.
   * Each query starts a new thread within the Space, keeping different lines of inquiry organized.43
5. **Querying within the Space:**
   * Ask specific questions related to your research topic.
   * Example: In the "Renewable Energy Technologies" Space (with uploaded papers on solar and wind), prompt: "Compare the efficiency of solar vs. wind power based on my uploaded files and recent web data." Ensure "Web + Space Files" is selected as the source.
   * Perplexity will use the Space's custom instructions and chosen sources to generate cited answers.

Example: For a "Personal Finance Learning" Space, upload articles on budgeting and investing. Custom instruction: "Explain concepts in simple terms for a beginner. Avoid jargon." Start a thread: "Explain 'dollar-cost averaging' using my uploaded 'Investing\_Basics.pdf' and simple web examples."

## Maximizing Your AI Investment: Tips and Tricks

To truly benefit from these AI tools, especially when working with free tiers or budget-friendly paid plans, certain strategies can enhance effectiveness and ensure responsible usage.

* Getting the Most Out of Free Tiers:  
  Many of the discussed AI tools offer surprisingly robust free tiers. For instance, ChatGPT's free access to GPT-4o, albeit with usage limits, provides a taste of a very powerful model.11 NotebookLM's free plan is also very generous, offering extensive features for document analysis.3 To maximize these, users should be mindful of any stated limitations, such as the number of daily queries (e.g., Perplexity's Pro Search limits on the free plan 44) or message caps. It is advisable to prioritize more complex or critical queries for features that have tighter limits, using less restricted capabilities for simpler tasks. Exploring all available functionalities on free tiers is recommended, as many are sufficient for a wide range of individual needs.
* Effective Prompting Strategies:  
  The quality of output from any AI model is heavily dependent on the quality of the input prompt. This means that learning to communicate effectively with AI is becoming an essential skill. To craft effective prompts:
  + **Be Specific and Clear:** Vague prompts lead to vague answers. Clearly articulate the desired outcome.18
  + **Provide Context:** Include relevant background information – the who, what, when, where, why, and how of the request.18
  + **Define Persona, Format, and Tone:** Instruct the AI on the role it should adopt (e.g., "act as a historian"), the desired output format (e.g., "provide a bulleted list"), and the appropriate tone (e.g., "formal," "casual").31
  + **Use Examples:** If possible, provide an example of the desired output style or content.54
  + **Iterate and Refine:** Treat prompting as a conversational process. If the first response isn't perfect, refine the prompt, ask follow-up questions, or request modifications.
* Understanding Limitations and Ethical Considerations:  
  Despite their advancements, AI tools are not infallible. They can make mistakes, misinterpret queries, or "hallucinate" – generate plausible but incorrect or nonsensical information.25 Therefore, critical evaluation of AI-generated content is paramount, especially when dealing with factual information.
  + **Fact-Check:** Always double-check important information, particularly if the AI does not provide clear sources (a strength of Perplexity AI and NotebookLM is their citation feature 4). Some users have even found it necessary to explicitly instruct tools like ChatGPT to rely only on specific, trusted documentation to improve accuracy for technical tasks.55
  + **Data Privacy:** Be aware of how each platform handles user data. Review the privacy policies and understand whether conversations are used for model training. Utilize privacy-enhancing features where available, such as ChatGPT's temporary chat mode, which doesn't save history or use it for training.12 Avoid inputting highly sensitive personal or confidential information into these platforms.
  + **Bias Awareness:** AI models are trained on vast datasets, which may contain societal biases. Be mindful that these biases can be reflected in AI outputs.

The consistent need for human oversight, careful prompting, and critical evaluation underscores that these AI tools are powerful assistants, not autonomous oracles. Individuals who understand these nuances and actively engage in a "human-in-the-loop" approach will achieve far better and more reliable results, avoiding potential pitfalls associated with unverified AI-generated content.

## The Future is Collaborative: Final Thoughts

The AI tools discussed in this report, available at free or sub-$20 per month price points, offer remarkable capabilities that can significantly enhance productivity, learning, creativity, and research for individuals. From drafting documents and debugging code with ChatGPT to conducting in-depth, source-grounded research with NotebookLM, leveraging Google's ecosystem with Gemini, analyzing extensive texts with Claude, or obtaining quick, cited answers with Perplexity AI, the potential for personal empowerment is immense.

A clear trend emerging is the move towards more personalized, context-aware, and organized AI interactions. Features like Projects (ChatGPT, Claude), Gems (Gemini), and Spaces (Perplexity AI) are not merely organizational tools; they represent a shift towards creating persistent AI environments that can maintain context and adapt to specific, ongoing user needs. This evolution addresses earlier limitations of AI chat, making these tools more effective partners for complex or long-term endeavors.

The world of artificial intelligence is evolving at an astonishing pace. New models, features, and even entirely new tools are appearing regularly. Therefore, continuous learning and experimentation are key. Individuals are encouraged to explore the free tiers of various platforms, try different prompting techniques, and discover which combination of tools and features best suits their unique workflows and personal goals.

As these AI assistants become increasingly integrated into daily digital life, a foundational level of AI literacy – understanding their capabilities, limitations, ethical implications, and how to interact with them effectively through prompting – is becoming an emerging necessity. Guides like this aim to support that literacy, empowering users not just to use current tools but to adapt and thrive as AI technology continues its rapid advancement. The journey with AI is a collaborative one, where informed users can unlock incredible potential.

#### Works cited

1. ChatGPT Capabilities Overview - OpenAI Help Center, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://help.openai.com/en/articles/9260256-chatgpt-capabilities-overview>
2. ChatGPT - OpenAI, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://openai.com/chatgpt/overview/>
3. An inside look at Google's AI-powered NotebookLM - Zapier, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://zapier.com/blog/google-ai-notebook-notebooklm/>
4. A Complete How-To Guide to NotebookLM - Learn Prompting, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://learnprompting.org/blog/notebooklm-guide>
5. The Gemini ecosystem - Google AI, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://ai.google/get-started/gemini-ecosystem/>
6. www.cnet.com, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://www.cnet.com/tech/services-and-software/what-is-claude-everything-to-know-about-anthropics-ai-tool/#:~:text=Claude%20could%20perform%20tasks%20such,manage%20files%20on%20users'%20computers.>
7. Anthropic's Claude in Amazon Bedrock - AWS, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://aws.amazon.com/bedrock/anthropic/>
8. What is Perplexity AI? A Smarter Way to Search - DigitalOcean, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://www.digitalocean.com/resources/articles/what-is-perplexity-ai>
9. How does Perplexity work? | Perplexity Help Center, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://www.perplexity.ai/help-center/en/articles/10352895-how-does-perplexity-work>
10. What is Claude used for? - Tactiq, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://tactiq.io/learn/what-is-claude-used-for>
11. Using ChatGPT's Free Tier - FAQ - OpenAI Help Center, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://help.openai.com/en/articles/9275245-using-chatgpt-s-free-tier-faq>
12. How to use ChatGPT: A beginner's guide to the most popular AI chatbot - ZDNet, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://www.zdnet.com/article/how-to-use-chatgpt-a-beginners-guide-to-the-most-popular-ai-chatbot/>
13. Pricing - ChatGPT - OpenAI, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://openai.com/chatgpt/pricing/>
14. ChatGPT Enterprise Pricing, Features and Limitations - Exploding Topics, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://explodingtopics.com/blog/chatgpt-enterprise>
15. 50 ChatGPT Use Cases with Real Life Examples in 2025 - Research AIMultiple, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://research.aimultiple.com/chatgpt-use-cases/>
16. How to Use ChatGPT: The Full Guide for Beginners - CareerFoundry, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://careerfoundry.com/en/blog/digital-marketing/how-to-use-chatgpt/>
17. help.openai.com, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://help.openai.com/en/articles/10169521-using-projects-in-chatgpt#:~:text=Projects%20provide%20a%20new%20way,just%20to%20keep%20things%20tidy.>
18. ChatGPT Projects – Secret ways to use o1 and GPTs and a quick ..., accessed May 11, 2025, <https://www.youreverydayai.com/chatgpt-projects-secret-ways-to-use-o1-and-gpts-and-a-quick-review/>
19. Google One AI Premium Plan and Features, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://one.google.com/about/ai-premium/>
20. Get started with NotebookLM and NotebookLM Plus - NotebookLM ..., accessed May 11, 2025, <https://support.google.com/notebooklm/answer/15724458?hl=en>
21. NotebookLM Plus is now available in the Google One AI Premium subscription., accessed May 11, 2025, <https://blog.google/feed/notebooklm-google-one/>
22. Use Cases : r/notebooklm - Reddit, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://www.reddit.com/r/notebooklm/comments/1jpn49a/use_cases/>
23. Announcing the latest AI capabilities in Google Workspace with Gemini, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://workspace.google.com/blog/product-announcements/new-ai-drives-business-results>
24. Gemini Advanced - get access to Google's most capable AI models with Gemini 2.0, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://gemini.google/advanced/>
25. ‎What Gemini Apps can do and other frequently asked questions, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://gemini.google.com/faq>
26. A Complete How-To Guide to Google Gemini - Learn Prompting, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://learnprompting.org/blog/guide-google-gemini>
27. Introducing Gemini, your new personal AI assistant, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://gemini.google/assistant/>
28. Compare Gemini for Google Workspace add-ons - Business / Enterprise, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://support.google.com/a/answer/14700766?hl=en-NZ>
29. Gemini Advanced Use Cases - Colorado TechU - Google Sites, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://sites.google.com/a/state.co.us/techu/google-workspace/gemini-advanced/use-cases>
30. support.google.com, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://support.google.com/gemini/answer/15236321?hl=en#:~:text=Gems%20are%20customized%20versions%20of,and%20Gemini%20mobile%20app%20prompts.>
31. Tips for creating custom Gems - Gemini Apps Help - Google Help, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://support.google.com/gemini/answer/15235603?hl=en>
32. Meet Claude - Anthropic, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://www.anthropic.com/claude>
33. Intro to Claude - Anthropic API, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://docs.anthropic.com/en/docs/intro-to-claude>
34. Claude Free vs Pro: Which Plan Shall You Pick in 2025? - Apidog, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://apidog.com/blog/claude-free-vs-pro/>
35. Pricing - Anthropic, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://www.anthropic.com/pricing>
36. Privacy-first AI that helps you create in confidence. - Claude, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://claude.ai/login>
37. Claude AI: Free vs Pro – Choosing the Right Claude Plan for Your Needs [2025 UPDATE], accessed May 11, 2025, <https://claudeaihub.com/claude-ai-free-vs-pro/>
38. support.anthropic.com, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://support.anthropic.com/en/articles/9517075-what-are-projects#:~:text=Projects%20allow%20users%20on%20paid,have%20focused%20chats%20with%20Claude.>
39. Claude Projects: My Experience After Months of Daily Use - Fresh ..., accessed May 11, 2025, <https://freshvanroot.com/blog/how-to-use-claude-projects/>
40. What are Projects? | Anthropic Help Center - Anthropic Support, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://support.anthropic.com/en/articles/9517075-what-are-projects>
41. Getting started with Perplexity, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://www.perplexity.ai/hub/blog/getting-started-with-perplexity>
42. What advanced AI models are included in a Perplexity Pro subscription?, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://www.perplexity.ai/help-center/en/articles/10354919-what-advanced-ai-models-are-included-in-a-perplexity-pro-subscription>
43. A Complete How-To Guide to Perplexity AI - Learn Prompting, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://learnprompting.org/blog/guide-perplexity>
44. Perplexity Pricing: Is It Worth It in 2025? | Team-GPT, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://team-gpt.com/blog/perplexity-pricing/>
45. Perplexity Enterprise Pro Pricing | Get Started Today, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://www.perplexity.ai/enterprise/pricing>
46. 14 Perplexity AI Use Cases - Learn Prompting, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://learnprompting.org/blog/perplexity_use_cases>
47. www.perplexity.ai, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://www.perplexity.ai/hub/faq/what-are-spaces#:~:text=Spaces%20allow%20you%20to%20organize,web%20and%20personal%20file%20searches.>
48. Getting Started with Perplexity, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://www.perplexity.ai/hub/getting-started>
49. How are you using Perplexity Spaces for your benefit? : r/perplexity\_ai - Reddit, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://www.reddit.com/r/perplexity_ai/comments/1j8kgjz/how_are_you_using_perplexity_spaces_for_your/>
50. How are you using Perplexity Spaces for your benefit? : r/perplexity\_ai, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://www.reddit.com/r/perplexity_ai/comments/1j8kgjz/how_are_you_using_perplexity_spaces_for_your_benefit/>
51. Perplexity spaces explained in depth with examples - AI Respo, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://airespo.com/resources/perplexity-spaces-explained-in-depth/>
52. Using Projects in ChatGPT | OpenAI Help Center, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://help.openai.com/en/articles/10169521-using-projects-in-chatgpt>
53. How can I create and manage Projects? | Anthropic Help Center, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://support.anthropic.com/en/articles/9519177-how-can-i-create-and-manage-projects>
54. How to Use ChatGPT For Beginners - Simplilearn.com, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://www.simplilearn.com/tutorials/chatgpt-tutorial/chatgpt-for-beginners>
55. Don't use ChatGPT, just use the official documentation : r/Fedora - Reddit, accessed May 11, 2025, <https://www.reddit.com/r/Fedora/comments/1je9uy5/dont_use_chatgpt_just_use_the_official/>