THE 3-PROMPT SYSTEM

Stop Writing One Massive Prompt. Start Building in Layers.

THE PROBLEM

You write one giant prompt hoping it captures everything.

The result: AI gets confused, misses details, produces inconsistent garbage.

The fix: 3 focused prompts instead of 1 bloated one.

THE 3-PROMPT STRUCTURE

PROMPT 1: Establish the World

Define the environment, lighting, and mood. Nothing else.

Focus on:

- Time of day / lighting quality
- Color palette / atmosphere
- Setting / environment
- Overall mood

Example:

> "Create an environment shot: Early morning specialty coffee shop. Warm golden light streaming through large industrial windows. Muted earth tones - cream walls, exposed brick, worn wooden surfaces. Quiet, contemplative atmosphere before the rush. Wide shot, 35mm film grain, 16:9 ratio."

PROMPT 2: Add the Subject

Now place your subject into the established world.

Focus on:

- Main subject with specific details
- Action or pose
- Relationship to environment
- Key product/hero elements

Example:

> "In this same coffee shop environment: A barista's hands (weathered, capable) preparing pour-over coffee. Ceramic V60 dripper, slow pour from gooseneck kettle, steam rising. The hands and process are the focus, environment softly blurred behind. Same warm lighting, same 35mm aesthetic. Medium shot, 50mm lens, 4:5 ratio."

PROMPT 3: Refine Details

Micro-adjustments only. This is for polish.

Focus on:

- Specific texture details
- Lighting refinements
- Small environmental additions
- Final touches

Example:

> *"Refine this image: Add visible coffee drips on the wooden counter surface. Increase the steam visibility slightly. Add a subtle rim light on the kettle edge. Ensure the hands show realistic skin texture with natural imperfections. Keep everything else exactly as is."*

WHY THIS WORKS

1. Reduces AI Confusion

Single-focus prompts = clearer instructions = better output.

2. Builds Systematically

Each layer adds to a solid foundation.

3. Easier to Debug

Something wrong? You know which layer to fix.

4. Maintains Consistency

Environment stays stable while you adjust subjects.

5. Enables Variation

Same world, different subjects = cohesive brand.

PROMPT 1 TEMPLATES

For Product Photography

```
Create an environment: [Time/lighting quality] studio or setting. [Background type —
clean white, textured surface, lifestyle context]. [Lighting setup — soft diffused,
dramatic side light, natural window]. [Color temperature and mood]. [Any atmospheric
elements — shadows, reflections, texture].

Technical: [Wide/establishing], [camera specs], [ratio].
```

For Lifestyle/Brand

```
Create an environment: [Time of day] in [setting type]. [Lighting quality] creating
[mood]. [Color palette and overall feeling]. [Environmental details that tell story].
[Atmospheric elements].

Technical: [Shot type], [film/photo style], [ratio].
```

For Fashion/Editorial

```
Create an environment: [Location type] with [lighting style]. [Color treatment —
moody, bright, muted]. [Key set elements]. [Atmosphere — energy, stillness, tension].

Technical: [Editorial style], [camera specs], [ratio].
```

PROMPT 2 TEMPLATES

For Product

```
In this same environment: [Product description with specific details] positioned
[where/how]. [Interaction — hands, use, context]. [Key details to highlight —
material, texture, feature].

Keep: Same lighting, same color palette, same atmosphere.
Focus: [Product as hero / in context / in use].
Technical: [Shot type], [lens], [ratio].
```

For Lifestyle

```
In this same environment: [Person/hands description] [action/pose]. [Product
integration]. [Authentic moment details — expression, gesture, interaction].

Keep: Same lighting, same mood, same film aesthetic.
Focus: [The person / the moment / the product in use].
Technical: [Shot type], [lens], [ratio].
```

For Fashion

```
In this same environment: [Model description — pose, attitude, movement]. [Garment
details — material, color, fit]. [Interaction with space].

Keep: Same lighting, same color treatment, same energy.
Focus: [The garment / the attitude / the editorial story].
Technical: [Shot type], [lens], [ratio].
```

PROMPT 3 TEMPLATES

Detail Refinements

```
Refine this image:
– [Texture adjustment — add grain, increase detail, smooth area]
– [Lighting tweak — add rim light, soften shadows, increase contrast]
– [Environmental addition — specific prop, atmospheric element]
– [Subject polish — specific detail to enhance or fix]
```

```
Keep: Everything else exactly as is.
```

Common Refinement Commands

- "Add more visible grain/film texture"
- "Increase shadow depth on left side"
- "Add subtle [steam/dust particles/lens flare]"
- "Make the skin texture more realistic"
- "Soften the background further"
- "Add a warm color cast to the highlights"
- "Include [specific small detail]"
- "Reduce the [element] slightly"

EXAMPLE: FULL 3-PROMPT SEQUENCE

Brand: Artisan Candle Company

PROMPT 1 - The World:

> *"Create an environment: Late afternoon golden hour in a minimal ceramicist's studio. Warm directional light from large window on left, creating long soft shadows. Muted neutral palette - raw concrete, white walls, natural wood. Quiet, meditative atmosphere. Dust particles visible in light beams. Wide establishing shot, 35mm film aesthetic, 16:9 ratio."*

PROMPT 2 - The Subject:

> *"In this same studio environment: A hand-poured ceramic candle in matte cream glaze, positioned on weathered wooden work surface. Nearby: wooden wick trimmer, matches in small ceramic dish, subtle smoke wisps suggesting just-extinguished. The candle is the hero, environment provides context.*

> *Keep: Same golden light, same film aesthetic, same quiet mood. Technical: Product hero shot, 85mm lens, 4:5 ratio."*

PROMPT 3 - The Polish:

> *"Refine this image:*
>
> - *Add subtle texture to the candle's matte glaze surface*
> - *Increase the visibility of dust particles in the light beam behind*
> - *Add a faint reflection of the window light on the wooden surface*
> - *Ensure the smoke wisps are delicate and natural, not too prominent*
>
> *Keep: Everything else exactly as is."*

COMMON MISTAKES

Mistake 1: Skipping Prompt 1

Jumping straight to the subject without establishing the world. **Fix:** Always set the stage first.

Mistake 2: Over-Describing in Prompt 2

Trying to add too many elements at once. **Fix:** Focus only on the main subject and its relationship to the established world.

Mistake 3: Major Changes in Prompt 3

Trying to change core elements in the refinement stage. **Fix:** Only micro-adjustments. If something major is wrong, go back to Prompt 1 or 2.

Mistake 4: Not Referencing Previous Prompts

Each prompt should build on the last. **Fix:** Use phrases like "In this same environment" and "Keep: Same [elements]"

WORKFLOW

1. **Write Prompt 1** - Generate 3-5 environment options
2. **Pick best environment** - This is your foundation
3. **Write Prompt 2** - Add subject to chosen environment
4. **Generate variations** - Try different poses/products/moments
5. **Write Prompt 3** - Polish your favorite
6. **Final selection** - Pick the winner

This system is from LOOPWORKER. For more resources, follow @loopworker.