



Cursor Riyadh Meetup

January 2026

DAL | دال

Thanks to Our Partner



Mozn

Hosting Partner

Tonight's Talk

AI Tools Landscape & Shipping Workflows

Part 1: AI Tools Landscape

- Chatbots & Research Tools
- App Builders
- Terminal Agents
- IDE Assistants

Part 2: Shipping Workflows

- Key Technical Concepts
- Vibe Coding vs Vibe Engineering
- My Personal Workflow
- Best Practices & Tips

Agenda



Introduction



AI Tools Landscape & Shipping Workflows



Q&A + Networking

The Man Who Named It

Andrej Karpathy

Andrej Karpathy

Former Director of AI at Tesla • Co-founder of OpenAI

"Programming is evolving into vibe coding, where developers use natural language to express intent, and AI generates the underlying code."

What to Expect

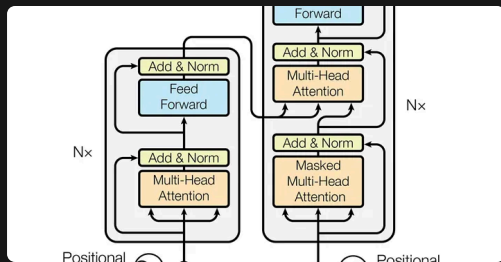
This Talk IS

- Overview of AI tools landscape
- Practical workflow tips
- When to use (and not use) AI
- Real examples and statistics

This Talk IS NOT

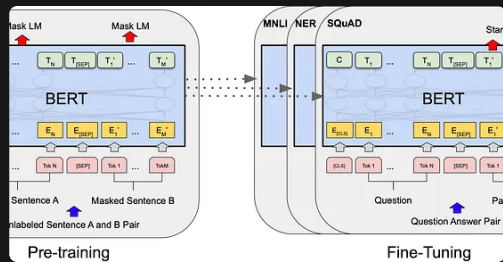
- A coding tutorial
- Replacement for learning fundamentals
- Promotion of any specific tool
- Magic solution to all problems

Required Reading for Tonight



Attention Is All You Need

Vaswani et al. (2017)



BERT: Pre-training Transformers

Devlin et al. (2018)



GPT-3 Paper

Language Models are Few-Shot

Brown et al. (GPT-3, 2020)

Just kidding! Let's learn by building.



Mazen Alotaibi

AI Staff Engineer at deep.sa

Senior ML Engineer at Malaa Technologies

Cursor Ambassador • **Member of DAL** | دال

Accelerating technology and AI development in Saudi Arabia

ma7.dev | @ma7dev

deepعمق.sa

Malaa



CURSOR

RIYADH

Cursor Community in Saudi Arabia

Our Mission

- Building the largest AI developer community in Saudi Arabia
- Monthly workshops and meetups
- Hands-on learning experiences
- Connecting developers across the Kingdom

Active Chapters

- **Riyadh** - Capital Chapter
- **Khobar** - Eastern Province
- **More cities coming!**
- Visit cursor-sa.org

What is Cursor?

Anysphere (parent company)

- **\$29.3B** valuation (Nov 2025)
- **\$1B+** ARR
- **\$2.3B** Series D funding
- Fastest-growing AI startup in history

Cursor (the product)

- AI-native code editor
- Built on VS Code foundation
- ~1B lines of code generated daily



Our Journey So Far



Multiple Meetups

Riyadh & Khobar chapters active

100+

Growing Community

Developers from all backgrounds



Big Plans Ahead

2026 is going to be huge!

2026 Plans

6

Meetups & Workshops

Topics

Latest Cursor features, AI tools, and best practices

Goal

Share the latest and greatest with the community

2026 Hackathons

4 Hackathons

8h

Hacking Time

Pure building & coding

2h

Demo Session

Show your work to judges



Winners Announced

Prizes & recognition

Partnering with Local Startups & Organizations

Supporting the Saudi tech ecosystem together

Let's Begin

AI Tools Landscape & Shipping Workflows

From vibe coding to repeatable shipping habits

Part 1

AI Tools Landscape – navigating the chaos

Part 2

Key Concepts – tokens, context, RAG, MCP

Part 3

Shipping Workflows – vibe engineering in action

Part 4

My Personal Setup – what I actually use daily

My AI Journey Timeline

From ChatGPT to Opus 4.5 – how my workflow evolved

Dec 2022

ChatGPT

Mind blown, copy-paste
workflow

Jul 2023

Perplexity

Research with citations

Oct 2024

Cursor

Context-aware IDE

Nov 2024

MCPs

External tool integration

My AI Journey Timeline (cont.)

Jan 2025

DeepSeek-R1

Reasoning models emerge

Feb 2025

Sonnet 3.7

Better agents & extended
thinking

Oct 2025

Cursor 2.0 & Composer-1

Multi-file agents

Nov 2025

GPT-5.2 + Opus 4

Peak coding capability

Each milestone 2-3x'd my productivity – compounding effect is real

The AI Tools Explosion

What it feels like trying to keep up...

ChatGPT

Claude

Gemini

Cursor

Copilot

Windsurf

Replit

v0

Lovable

Cline

Codex

Claude Code

Devin

Bolt

Perplexity

Tabnine

Codeium

Aider

Continue

Base44

Antigravity

Gemini CLI

"Even the inventor of vibe coding (Karpathy) feels overwhelmed by all the AI-driven changes"

My Mental Model

How I organize the chaos into 4 categories



Chatbots

ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini,
Perplexity

Research & ideation



App Builders

Replit, Lovable, v0

Quick prototypes



Terminal Agents

Codex, Claude Code, Gemini CLI

Autonomous tasks



IDE Assistants

Cursor, Windsurf, Cline

Daily development

Each category has a different use case – let's explore them

Part 1: The AI Tools Landscape

2025-2026 brought an explosion of AI-powered development tools



Chatbots

ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini



App Builders

Lovable, Replit, v0



Terminal Agents

Codex, Claude Code



IDE Assistants

Cursor, Windsurf, Cline

Let's explore each category in depth...

Category 1: Chatbots & Research



General purpose AI assistants for research, ideation, and problem understanding

ChatGPT



OpenAI ChatGPT

- **Best for:** Brainstorming & general coding
- **Strength:** 400K context, low hallucination
- **Models:** GPT-5.2 (Instant/Thinking/Pro)
- **Price:** Free tier + \$20/mo Plus + \$200/mo Pro

Claude



Anthropic Claude

- **Best for:** Long documents & complex code
- **Strength:** 200K context (1M beta), extended thinking
- **Models:** Sonnet 4, Opus 4 (May 2025)
- **Price:** Free tier + \$20/mo Pro

Gemini



Google Gemini

- **Best for:** Multimodal + live audio/video
- **Strength:** Up to 2M context, native multimodal
- **Models:** Gemini 2.5 Pro/Flash/Live
- **Price:** Free tier + \$20/mo Advanced

Perplexity



Perplexity AI

- **Best for:** Research with citations
- **Strength:** Real-time web search
- **Bonus:** Sources & citations
- **Price:** Free tier + \$20/mo Pro

Chatbots Summary



ChatGPT

GPT-5.2, 400K context



Claude

Opus 4, 1M context (beta)



Gemini

2.5 Pro, 2M context



Perplexity

Research & citations

Use these for research, ideation, and problem understanding

Category 2: App Builders



Generate full applications from natural language – perfect for MVPs and hackathons

Replit



Replit Agent

- **Best for:** Full-stack apps
- **Strength:** Instant deploy + hosting
- **Limit:** Vendor lock-in
- **Price:** Free tier + \$25/mo Pro

Lovable



Lovable

- **Best for:** Beautiful UI prototypes
- **Strength:** Stunning defaults
- **Limit:** Complex backend logic
- **Price:** Free tier + \$20/mo Pro

v0 by Vercel



v0 by Vercel

- **Best for:** React components
- **Strength:** shadcn/ui + Tailwind
- **Limit:** Vercel ecosystem focus
- **Price:** Free tier + \$20/mo Pro

App Builders Summary



Replit

Full-stack + hosting



Lovable

Beautiful UI fast



v0

React components

Great for MVPs and hackathons – consider long-term maintenance

Category 3: Terminal Agents



CLI-based AI agents that run autonomously – perfect for batch operations and CI/CD

OpenAI Codex



OpenAI Codex

- **Type:** Sandboxed agent
- **Best for:** Batch refactoring
- **Flow:** Define task → Execute in sandbox
- **Price:** ChatGPT Pro (\$200/mo)

Claude Code



Claude Code

- **Type:** CLI agent in terminal
- **Best for:** Multi-file tasks, 30+ hour workflows
- **Flow:** Deep codebase context with Opus 4
- **Price:** Claude Pro (\$20/mo) or Max (\$100/mo)

Gemini CLI



Gemini CLI

- **Type:** MCP-enabled agent
- **Best for:** Orchestration flows
- **Flow:** Plan → Implement → Verify
- **Price:** Free (Google account)

Terminal Agents Summary



Codex

Sandboxed batch ops



Claude Code

Deep context CLI



Gemini CLI

Free MCP agent

Great for batch operations, migrations, and CI/CD automation

Category 4: IDE Assistants



AI-powered code editors with deep codebase understanding –
your daily driver

Cursor



Cursor

- **Base:** VS Code fork
- **Best for:** Multi-file edits & agent mode
- **Features:** Composer, Tab, Agent, MCP, Bugbot
- **Price:** Free + \$20 Pro + \$60 Pro+ + \$200 Ultra

Windsurf



Windsurf (Codeium)

- **Base:** Codeium's IDE
- **Best for:** Cascade agent flows
- **Features:** AI Flows, Supercomplete
- **Price:** Free tier + \$15/mo Pro

Cline



Cline

- **Base:** VS Code extension
- **Best for:** BYOK (bring your own keys)
- **Features:** Open source, flexible
- **Price:** Free + your API costs

IDE Assistants Summary



Cursor

Best all-around choice



Windsurf

Great free tier



Cline

Open source freedom

IDE assistants provide deep codebase understanding – pick one and master it

Key Terms: Tokens

Tokens

Units of text that AI models process

Examples

"Hello world" = 2 tokens

"function getData()" = ~4 tokens

1 token \approx 4 characters

Why It Matters

- 💰 Pricing is per token (input + output)
- 📏 Context windows measured in tokens
- ⚡ More tokens = slower + more expensive

Key Terms: Context

Context

Everything the AI "sees" when generating a response

Context = System Prompt + Retrieved Info + Chat History + Your Message

The AI has no memory between sessions – everything it knows must be in the context

Golden Rule: Better context = better output

Context Structure in AI

What AI Actually Sees

System Prompt

Instructions, rules, persona (e.g., .cursor/rules)

Retrieved Context

RAG results: @codebase search, @docs, @web

Conversation

Previous messages in the chat

User Prompt

Your current request



Too much context = confusion + cost. Be selective!

Key Terms: RAG

RAG

Retrieval-Augmented Generation

Give AI relevant context before it answers your question

Instead of hoping the AI "knows" about your codebase, you search for relevant info and include it in the context

How RAG Works

1. Query

"How does auth work?"



2. Search

Find relevant code/docs



3. Generate

Answer with context

RAG in Cursor

@ Symbols for Context

@codebase

Search your entire project semantically

@file / @folder

Include specific files or directories

@docs

Search library documentation

@web

Search the internet for latest info

Pro tip: Use @codebase when you're not sure where code is, @file when you know exactly

The Problem: Connecting AI to External Tools

How do we connect AI to the real world?



Databases



Web APIs



File Systems

Before: Every AI app needed custom integrations for each tool

Key Terms: MCP

MCP

Model Context Protocol

USB for AI – one standard to connect AI to any tool

Created by Anthropic, donated to Agentic AI Foundation for open governance

97M+ monthly SDK downloads

Fastest adopted protocol in AI history

10,000+ active MCP servers

From dev tools to Fortune 500

Popular MCP Servers



Browser

Control browsers, scrape pages



Perplexity

Web search with citations



Context7

Live library documentation



Mobile

Control iOS/Android devices



GitHub

Repos, PRs, issues



Slack

Messages, channels



Notion

Pages, databases



Postgres

Database queries

Adopted by: OpenAI, Anthropic, Google, Microsoft, AWS – now governed by Agentic AI Foundation

Key Terms: Agents

AI Agents

AI that can take actions, not just chat

Chatbot

Gives you text responses to copy

Agent

Edits files, runs commands, browses web, uses tools

2026 agents: Cursor Agent, Claude Code, Codex, Gemini CLI, Devin

Recommendations by Role



Different tools for different needs – let's match you with the right stack

Recommendations: Executives



Turn Ideas into Visual POCs

Tools

Replit, Lovable, v0

Goal

Better communicate vision through working prototypes

Skip the "imagine this..." – show a working demo in hours

Recommendations: Non-Technical



Ship Internal Tools Without Coding

Tools

Base44, v0, simple setups

Goal

Simple products: dashboards, forms, internal tools

Natural language to working app – no code required

Recommendations: Technical



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10x Speed with Quality

Tools

Cursor + CLI agents + complex workflows

Goal

Production-grade products at startup speed

"AI is an Iron Man suit – it augments, doesn't replace" – Andrej Karpathy

It's Easier to Edit Than Write

Writing from Scratch

- Blank page paralysis
- Many decisions at once
- Hard to get started

Editing AI Output

- Something to react to
- Spot mistakes easily
- Fast iteration

AI excels at iteration, not perfection.

Start rough, refine together.

Tips & Best Practices



Lessons learned from building with AI every day

AI is a Tool

"A bad carpenter blames the tools"

Bad Usage

Copy-paste without understanding. Accept everything blindly.

Good Usage

Understand output. Review critically. Iterate purposefully.

MIT Study: Experienced devs expected AI to make them 24% faster...

...but were actually **19% slower** initially.

Lesson: Learn the tool before expecting results.

What is Vibe Coding?

"Vibe Coding"

A term coined by Andrej Karpathy in February 2025

"You fully give in to the vibes, embrace exponentials, and forget that the code even exists."

Workflow: Describe what you want → AI generates code → Accept/iterate

The Problem with Pure Vibe Coding

Issues When Taken Too Far



Spaghetti Code

No architecture, just whatever AI generates



No Standards

Inconsistent patterns across files



Hidden Bugs

AI hallucinates, you don't review



Technical Debt

Fast now, painful later

Result: Works for prototypes, breaks in production

The Solution: Vibe Engineering

Keep the Speed, Add the Structure

Same AI tools, better process

Research → Plan → Implement → Review

✓ Understand before building

✓ Plan the architecture

✓ Review AI output critically

✓ Iterate with intention

Vibe Coding vs Vibe Engineering

Vibe Coding

Prompt → Code

- "Just make it work"
- Accept any AI suggestion
- No code review
- Hope it doesn't break

⚠ **Great for prototypes only**

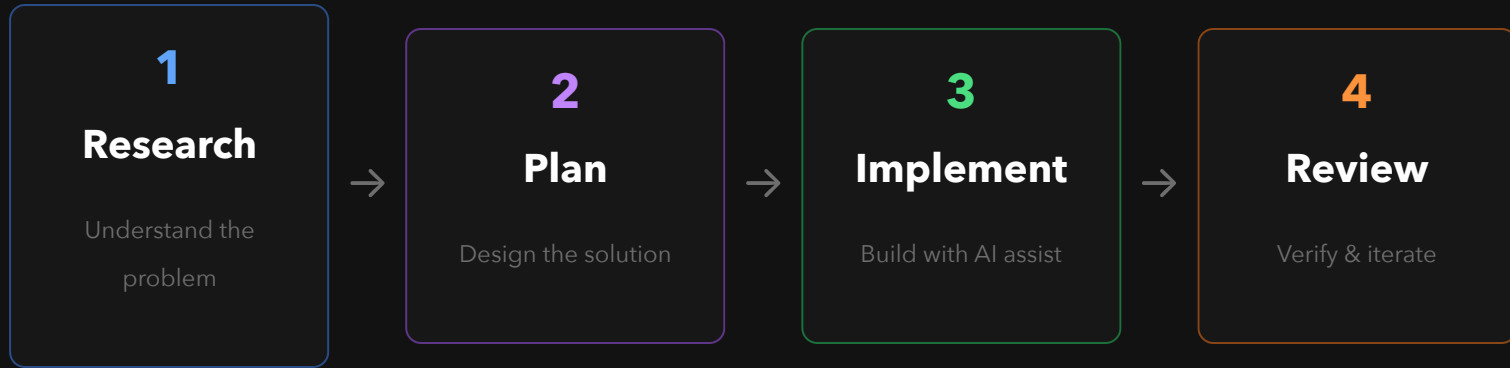
Vibe Engineering

Research → Plan → Build → Review

- Understand the problem first
- Plan before building
- Review AI output critically
- Iterate and improve

✅ **Production ready**

The Vibe Engineering Workflow



The goal: Ship fast **AND** maintain quality

"AI Makes Us Dumb"

Common Criticism

"AI coding tools will make developers forget how to code!"

We've Seen This Before: Calculators

1986: The Panic

Teachers picketed in South Carolina:

"Turn them OFF until upper grades!"

Fear: "Students won't learn real math"

The Reality

Calculators enabled:

Space exploration, complex engineering, scientific
breakthroughs

Focus shifted to understanding, not calculation

Three Counterpoints



1. The Calculator Reaction

Every tool faced the same criticism. Calculators didn't kill math – they freed mathematicians for harder problems.



2. Review, Don't Blindly Accept

AI forces you to review more code than you write. Reading and reviewing is how you learn!



3. Internet vs Encyclopedia

Google didn't make us dumber – it changed what we need to memorize. AI changes what we code manually.

Tools don't replace thinking – they change what we think about

The Debugging Revolution

Where AI shines brightest

Debugging used to take hours of context-switching. Now it's a conversation.

My Workflow: Research Phase



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Perple

Research

ChatGPT

- Brainstorming ideas
- Understanding the problem
- Exploring approaches

Perplexity

- Finding documentation
- Best practices research
- Latest library versions

My Workflow: Plan Phase



Plan

Cursor Chat

- Architecture decisions
- File structure planning
- API design discussions

Implementation Plan

- Break down into tasks
- Define acceptance criteria
- Identify dependencies

My Workflow: Implementation Phase



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Implementation

Cursor Composer

- Multi-file development
- Inline edits with Cmd+K
- Context-aware suggestions

Codex

- Batch automated changes
- Large refactoring tasks
- Sandboxed execution

My Workflow: Review Phase



Review

Cursor Agent

- Code review assistance
- Bug detection
- Optimization suggestions

Manual Review

- Verify AI-generated code
- Check edge cases
- Ensure best practices

AI is a junior dev - you're the senior. Always review!

Cursor Features You Need

Cmd+K Inline Edit

Select code → Describe change → Apply

@ Mentions

@file, @folder, @codebase, @web for context

Composer

Multi-file edits with full project context

Agent Mode

Autonomous task completion with tool use

.cursor/rules

Project-specific AI instructions

MCP Integration

Connect to external tools and APIs

When to Use AI Tools

Use AI For

- Boilerplate & repetitive code
- Learning new technologies
- Debugging & error messages
- First drafts & prototypes
- Refactoring & cleanup
- Documentation & comments

Be Careful With

- Security-critical code (review heavily)
- When you don't understand output
- As replacement for learning fundamentals
- Complex business logic (without review)
- Performance-critical paths
- Anything you can't verify

Rule of thumb: If you couldn't write it yourself, don't trust AI to write it for you

Q&A + Networking



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Questions?

Ask about AI tools, workflows, Cursor, or anything else!

Stick around after for networking and more discussions

Next Steps & Resources



Try Cursor

Download and start your free trial at cursor.com



Join Community

cursor-sa.org for events, Discord for discussions

docs

Learn More

docs.cursor.com for guides and documentation

26

2026 Events

6 meetups + 4 hackathons coming soon!

One More Thing...



This Entire Presentation

Was created using Cursor

~3h

Total time

80+

Slides

Agent

Mode + MCP

Research via Perplexity MCP • Real-time updates • Slidev markdown

Thank You!

Special Thanks

DAL | دال - Community Organizer

Mozn - Hosting Partner

Let's Connect & Build Together

@ma7dev

Follow for AI development insights and Cursor updates

Visit cursor-sa.org for future events

