Prompt Engineering Cheat Sheet

Prompt Types

- Zero-shot: Ask a question directly (e.g., 'Translate to Spanish: Hello')

- Few-shot: Provide examples (e.g., 'English: Hello -> Spanish: Hola')

- Chain-of-thought: Encourage step-by-step reasoning

- Role prompting: Assign a persona (e.g., 'You are a legal expert...')

- Instructional: Give clear instructions (e.g., 'Summarize in 3 bullets')

- Format-constrained: Specify the output format (e.g., JSON, list)

Best Practices

- Be specific and unambiguous

- Use delimiters for long inputs (e.g., triple quotes)

- Separate instructions from content

- Decompose complex tasks into steps

- Guide the output format explicitly

Advanced Techniques

- Self-consistency: Sample multiple outputs and choose the best

- Prompt chaining: Break down tasks across multiple prompts

- Retrieval-augmented: Add external facts to ground the model

- Meta-prompts: Ask the model to improve or critique its output

Tools & Tips

- Use OpenAI Playground to tweak temperature and sampling

- Use logging tools like PromptLayer for tracking

- Combine prompts with APIs for dynamic use

- Use role + context + task templates for consistency