

Getting Meaningful Feedback from ChatGPT

A practical guide for serious writers who want grounded, comparative insights

Why This Matters

ChatGPT is trained to be helpful and polite, which can sometimes result in vague or overly positive feedback. But if you're working on serious writing, you need input that's accurate, specific, and anchored in recognizable standards. This guide shows you how to ask for that.

1. What to Ask For

To get meaningful and useful feedback, try framing your requests in terms of:

- Comparisons to External Standards e.g., 'Is this clear and concise by AP style standards?'
- Benchmarking Against Public Examples e.g., 'Can you show me published examples that are more structured?'
- Feedback Framed by Craft e.g., 'Does the pacing work here, or should I build more tension before the reveal?'
- Audience-Driven Questions e.g., 'Would a first-time reader know what I'm arguing in paragraph two?'
- Tone and Style Fit e.g., 'Does this sound like someone who knows what they're talking about but isn't being arrogant?'

2. What ChatGPT Can Do

- Compare your writing to industry, journalistic, or academic norms
- Analyze tone, clarity, structure, and coherence
- Surface likely reader reactions
- Suggest alternate wordings based on intent

3. What ChatGPT Can't Do

- See live reactions or feedback from real readers
- Track what specific other users are doing or thinking
- Make value judgments outside of recognized frameworks

4. How to Phrase Your Requests for Stronger Output

- 'Evaluate this intro as if you were grading a college-level essay.'

- 'Compare this argument structure to what you'd see in a well-edited editorial.'
- 'Rewrite this with tighter pacing and stronger transitions.'
- 'Point out anything that feels redundant or underdeveloped.'
- 'Assume I'm submitting this for publication: where would I get rejected?'

5. Final Tip: Be Explicit About Your Goals

The more I know about what you're aiming for (academic clarity, emotional impact, reader retention, compliance, publication), the more grounded and tailored my feedback will be.

Want to go further? Build a feedback rubric we can reuse for every draft, or create a running style guide based on your voice. Just say the word.