

Prompting Best Practices by OpenAI



1) Write clear instructions

Provide as much detail as you can

→ E.g., "Write a TypeScript function to efficiently calculate the Fibonacci sequence. Comment the code liberally to explain what each piece does and why it's written that way."

Give ChatGPT a persona

→ E.g., "Act as a world-class marketing strategist."

Label your input

→ E.g., "Details: [insert details]
Tone: [insert tone words]"

Walk through instructions step-by-step

→ E.g., "Step 1: First, calculate the sum of all...
Step 2: Then, output a table with the sums..."

Provide examples

→ E.g., "Input: pork, beef, asparagus
Output: meat, meat, vegetable"

2) Provide reference text

- You can paste in a lot of reference material directly into ChatGPT
- e.g., previous social posts (to mimic voice), reports (to extract info) or industry notes (to write marketing content that resonates)
- Just clearly label what you are inputting vs. what you are asking ChatGPT to do

3) Split complex tasks into smaller subtasks

ChatGPT does better if you feed it small, well-scoped questions

→ Bad: "Determine if this person is eligible for our program."

→ Good: "Is this person over the age of 65?"
"Is this person living in the US?" "If answer is yes to both, the person is eligible."

4) Give GPTs time to "think"

i.e., have it plan and reflect on its answers

→ "First, think step-by-step and outline your plan to solve the problem."

→ "Are there any other references that you did not include?"

→ "First, write the pseudocode for your solution"

5) Use external tools

1. Use embeddings to more efficiently pull in outside information
2. Let the model write code and call APIs to do work

6) Test changes systematically

For "serious" prompts, keep a list of questions/good answers that you can test any new prompt versions against.

This might also be useful to test across models and versions.