

THE AI PROMPTING PLAYBOOK

# Prompting *ChatGPT*

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ChatGPT is fast, friendly, and a little too eager to please. Aim it at a clear outcome instead of micromanaging the steps and it gets sharp in a hurry.

GPT-5.6 Instant

GPT-5.6 Thinking

GPT-5.6 Pro

Updated July 2026

01 · PICK YOUR MODEL

# One family. *Three speeds.*

GPT-5.6 rolled out in July 2026 and is now powering the model family — but the picker still works the same way: three speeds, auto-routed for you.



## GPT-5.6 Instant the default

### EVERYDAY

Fast and conversational — what most people get by default, free accounts included. Remembers past chats and handles the bulk of daily asks without breaking stride.



## GPT-5.6 Thinking reasoning

### WHEN IT MATTERS

Slows down to reason through harder problems — planning, analysis, tricky logic. The router escalates to it automatically, or you can pick it from the tools menu.



## GPT-5.6 Pro top tier

### HEAVY LIFTING

The most capable tier for the highest-stakes work, on paid plans. Reach for it when being right matters more than being fast.

**The rule:** let Instant handle everyday work. Switch to Thinking the moment the cost of a wrong answer goes up — a client deliverable, a real decision, anything you'll actually ship.

02 · HOW IT THINKS

# Give it the *destination*.

ChatGPT is great at filling gaps and bad at reading minds. These three truths keep it pointed the right way.

## 01 Outcome beats instructions

Don't script all 10 steps. Describe where you want to land — the goal, the constraints, and what 'done' looks like — and let it find the path. You'll get something better than your own recipe.

## 02 It's concise by default

Out of the box it keeps things short and a little generic. Want warmth, detail, or length? Ask for it. 'Give me the thorough version, write it warm' flips the switch.

## 03 Split the 'what' from the 'voice'

Keep the task and the tone in separate buckets. Spell out the job, then describe the voice on its own line. Mixing them is where bland, mushy answers come from.

### 03 · THE FRAMEWORK

# Build a context *sandwich*.

Outcome on top, the good stuff in the middle, guardrails on the bottom. Fill these in and ChatGPT stops guessing.

#### OUTCOME

What you want at the end. 'A cold email that books a call' — not 'write an email.'

#### CONTEXT

Who it's for, what they care about, any facts it can't know. Paste real details.

#### CONSTRAINTS

The limits. under 120 words, one CTA, no jargon, plain English.

#### DONE =

Define finished. 'I could send this with zero edits.' Gives it a target to hit.

#### RULES

Save ALWAYS / NEVER for true non-negotiables. Otherwise use 'if X, then Y.'

#### VERBOSITY

Say how long. two tight paragraphs or a one-line answer. It won't guess.

#### 👑 PRO MOVE

ChatGPT has a knowledge cutoff and doesn't know your private world. For anything current or personal, paste the facts or turn on search — and lean on memory so it remembers who you are next time.

04 · COPY / PASTE

# From generic to *'hit send.'*

✗ THROWAWAY

Write a sales email for my agency.

✦ DIALED IN

A goal, a busy skeptical reader, hard constraints, a 'done' bar, and 2 angles to choose from. (Built below.)

● CR8 · CHATGPT PROMPT

GOAL: A short cold email that books a 15-min discovery call with a local business owner.

CONTEXT: I run CR8, a content agency that does done-for-you content + social media. The reader is busy and a little skeptical of agencies.

CONSTRAINTS: Under 120 words. One clear CTA. No jargon, no "hope this finds you well." Warm but direct.

DONE = I could hit send with zero edits.

Give me 2 versions with different opening angles.

**The Reframe** REWRITE

Rewrite this so it actually achieves [outcome]. Keep my meaning, cut ~25%, and tell me the single biggest change you made.

**Decision Partner** THINK

Argue both sides of this decision, then make a call and name the one risk I should watch. Be honest, not diplomatic.

**The Memory Move** SETUP

Draft my content plan for the week. Use what you know about my brand, and flag any assumptions you're making.

05 · QUICK REFERENCE

# The *pre-flight* check.

## THE PRE-SEND CHECKLIST

- ✦ Did I give an outcome, not steps?
- ✦ Context + a source for facts?
- ✦ Real constraints set?
- ✦ Defined what 'done' means?
- ✦ Right mode (Instant vs Thinking)?
- ✦ Tone kept separate from task?
- ✦ Asked for the length I want?
- ✦ Turned on search if it's current?

## STOP DOING THIS

- ✗ Micro-scripting every step. Give the destination.
- ✗ Slapping ALWAYS/NEVER on everything. Save it.
- ✗ Expecting a long answer by default. Ask.
- ✗ Trusting it on current facts without search.

## 👑 ONE MORE THING

ChatGPT references your past chats and memory. Tell it once who you are and what you do — then stop re-introducing yourself every session.

## This is a taste. *CR8 is the vault.*

These Playbooks are a sample of what's inside CR8 Consistency — 500+ creator prompts, live AI + content classes weekly, and Atlanta Build Days. Founders rate is open now.

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Guide 02 of 3 in The AI Prompting Playbook · grab the Claude & Gemini editions too