The art of the prompt

Discover the power of Copilot

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Getting Started

This guide is your quick path to **harnessing the power of Microsoft 365 Copilot,** your AI assistant built for work. Inside, you will discover **practical, high-impact prompts** to help transform your workflow, highlighting the unique features that set Microsoft 365 Copilot apart from other AI tools.

> **Explore prompts today to see how Microsoft 365 Copilot can work for you.**

1 Use **Work toggle** for prompts using your company's data and **Web toggle** for general internet-based questions.

2 **Evaluate the responses** using the ACRUE rubric to ensure quality.

3 **Share your favorite prompts and helpful tips** to support your team's success.

4 **Provide feedback** to your admin or through Copilot's tools to help improve your experience.
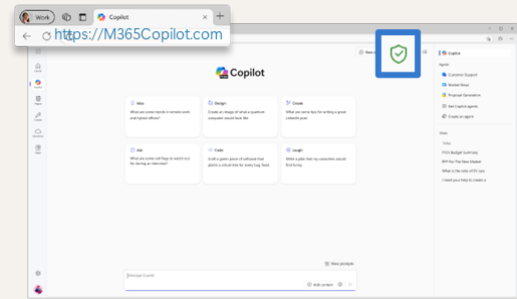
Always remember to:

- **Review and verify AI-generated responses.** Copilot uses Large Language Models (LLMs), advanced systems designed to predict and generate text. Occasionally, responses may contain inaccuracies due to the complex nature of LLMs. Always evaluate Copilot's output and cross-check with trusted sources as needed.

- **Using the same prompt multiple times may yield different responses.** LLMs rely on neural networks, which can introduce some variability. Even with identical prompts, responses might vary slightly each time.

- **Use Copilot responsibly, ethically, and legally.** Avoid employing Copilot for any activities that could harm yourself or others. For more information, see our responsible AI (Artificial Intelligence) principles and standards.

Microsoft 365 Copilot

Prompts to try for Microsoft 365 Copilot Chat

To get started, tap **Work toggle** in the Microsoft 365 Copilot app or visit https://www.M365copilot.com. Then, launch Copilot in your Microsoft 365 apps—on web or desktop—to access the full range of capabilities tailored to your prompt. **To unlock even more potential, Try GPT-5.**

⚠ Important: If you are not signed in with your work account, Enterprise Data Protection does not apply.

Scenario	Prompt
Get ready for the day	What are my top priorities today?
Settle meeting conflicts	Recommend how to resolve conflicts on my calendar for tomorrow.
Analyze time allocation	Look at the last 5 work days, identify all the meetings where I was working on [project], add up all the time I spent, breaking it down by how much time I spent with my manager and how much time I spent with my colleagues. Give me a recommendation on how I should better focus my time.
Organize your priorities	Identify all tasks or action items assigned to me in this week's emails, Teams chats, and meeting notes, and compile them into a checklist with due dates.
Prepare for customer meeting	Create a 360 overview of my customer for an upcoming meeting based on recent emails, meetings, status report, and purchase data along with recent company news. Share recommendations for the meeting and potential questions I should ask.
Develop an interview guide	Create an interview guide for a new Product Marketing role in my team. Draft interview questions in line with company values, my organizations charter, and the job description [upload Interview guide dataset]
Review manager requests	Summarize messages from my manager in the last [timeframe]. For quick reference, bold the title (subject line of emails or the chat/channel name), then follow it with a bulleted list of key points or action items from the content.
Improve professionally	Read through my recent emails and chats and provide a comprehensive analysis of my communication style by identifying my core values, strengths, weaknesses, skills, and areas where I can improve professionally
Create a job description	Build role-specific job descriptions and onboarding plans by analyzing internal performance reviews, department KPIs, and our company values
Focus search on specific files	What's the timeline and status of [project name where files are confidential]?
Identify experts	Help me identify colleagues with expertise in [topic]. Summarize their current role, key skills, and how their experience aligns with this topic

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Prompts to try with Researcher and Analyst agents

Use Research agent for the following prompts:	
Develop comprehensive research reports	Based on the internal meeting discussion on [topic], draft a comprehensive research report evaluating the ideas proposed. Incorporate relevant insights from web-based research on [topic] and solutions
Supercharge project management	Create an action item tracker based on all communication channels and other information you can find from the past 7 days. Split it into two categories - actions pending on me, sorted by urgency (and relevance) and actions that I have asked others to do, categorized by if they have a follow up or not, and how long has it been since my request. Recommend who I need to follow up with or send a reminder to.
Create a product launch campaign	Using our internal knowledge base, previous campaign data, and customer insights, create a full launch content package for new product update. Include a customer announcement email, blog post, LinkedIn and Twitter captions, internal team update and help center entry.
Research competitive landscape	Draft a comprehensive research report identifying gaps in the market based on internal discussions with stakeholders in sales, research and development, and support as well as competitive insights and sales data.
Summarize project progress	Draft a project update based on our last meeting in [/meeting] series. Include the KPIs vs. targets, major wins/losses, risks, and competitive moves. Add likely tough questions and suggested answers. Flag any big metric changes

Use Analyst agent for the following prompts:	
Analyze new markets	Help me understand the best market to launch a new [product or service] based on fastest growing markets in this [upload dataset]
Analyze sales performance	Identify our highest and lowest performing stores using [upload dataset]

Prompts to try for Microsoft 365 Copilot Chat in Microsoft 365 apps

Scenario	Copilot in...	Prompt
Schedule a meeting	Outlook	Help me schedule a meeting with [/name] this week
Summarize key discussions	Outlook	Write a recap email for my team based on the discussion in this email thread
Stay on top of meetings	Teams meeting	Summarize what's been discussed so far and list any open questions or unresolved items
Jumpstart an email based on a meeting	Teams meeting	Draft a follow-up email based on the action items from today's meeting [/meeting]
Create precise questions	Teams meeting	Create a list of follow-up questions from the [/meeting]
Recap action items	Teams meeting	Recap the meeting before I joined and list any action items where I was mentioned.
Draft a document	Word	Create an intro paragraph with [/file]
Visualize data	Excel	Share the top insights and trends of this data and create a visualization
Summarize data	Excel	a Pivot Table on a new sheet aggregating the following variables: [variable 1], [variable 2], [variable 3]
Collect data	Excel	Find public data about [topic].
Create speaker notes	PowerPoint	Create speaker notes for this slide. Write them in bullets and be sure to add context on our differentiation with this strategy document.

Free, secure Microsoft 365 Copilot Chat

⚠ Important: If you are not signed in with your work account, Enterprise Data Protection does not apply.

Prompts to try for Copilot Chat

To get started, tap **Web toggle** in the Microsoft 365 Copilot app or visit https://www.M365copilot.com.**To unlock even more potential in Copilot, Try GPT-5.**

Scenario	Prompt
Strategize next steps	Get me up to speed on the latest plans related to [project]. Help me think through what to do next.
Develop a project plan	Review the attached project plan and give me five substantive ways to make it better; include rationale for your responses and specific text to insert into the plan.
Prepare an executive report	Use the attached spreadsheet with customer feedback to create a polished executive report that helps upper management decide where to prioritize resources in our next cycle. [upload file]
Improve a document draft	We have a draft press release [document]. Find a couple of similar recent announcements on the web and then suggest how to make ours stand out
Gain subject-matter knowledge	Act as a financial compliance analyst, prepare a summary comparing the Dodd-Frank, Basel III, and MiFID II capital adequacy and reporting requirements for banks.
Visualize data quickly	Create a pie chart showing the market share of smartphones in the United States in 2024.
Understand the main point	Recap the findings of this research paper: [upload file]. Highlight the surprising or potentially controversial results, if they exist.
Stand out on socials	Craft an engaging LinkedIn post based on the content of [upload file].
Calculate the ROI	How much value will a $450,000 investment have after 5 years with an 8% return annually? Show your work.
Improve your writing	Rewrite my draft so it sounds more professional and less verbose [upload file].
Code faster	Write a python script to perform binary search.
Generate ideas	Suggest 10 compelling titles for this document: [upload file].
Compare files	Compare the latest [/file name] with its version from [Previous Date] . Summarize what changed, and include any relevant feedback mentioned in emails about those changes
Get writing recommendations	Analyze the text in the following and make suggestions on how to improve it: [insert text]
Visualize a scene	Create an image with the running sneaker standing upright in a modern studio setting. The scene has a clean, minimalist design and the background includes a setting of simple minimalist gradients. [add an image]

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Evaluation rubric

Use this ACRUE rubric as your guide to confidently compare AI tools. It breaks down each dimension with clear definitions and scoring tips, making it simple to evaluate Copilot alongside other solutions.
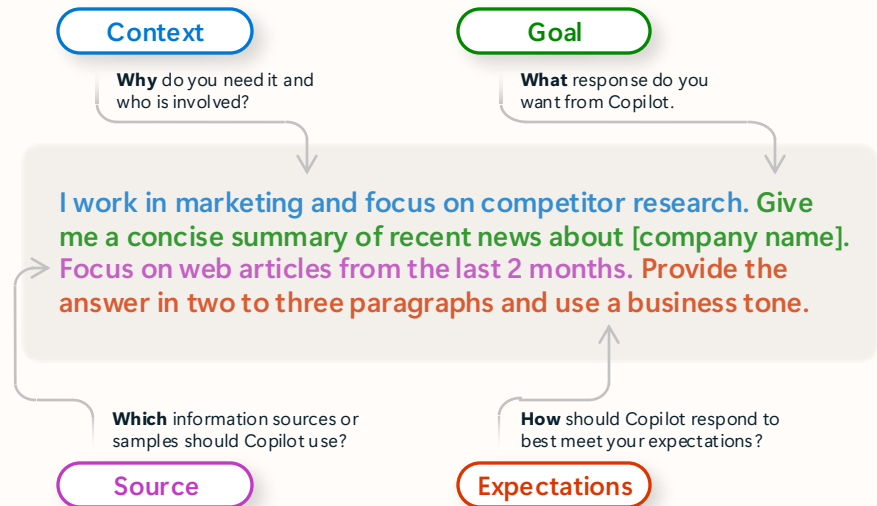
Evaluation Steps:

1. Begin by testing the sample prompts.
2. Examine and confirm the AI-generated answers. Check the sources and ensure the accuracy of your responses.
3. Try the test prompt on another AI chat platform.
4. Analyze the variations between the two responses across different aspects.
5. If you have feedback, use the thumbs up or down buttons, or inform your IT administrator.

Dimension	Definition	1 Very Poor	2 Poor	3 Acceptable	4 Good	5 Excellent	Microsoft 365 Copilot	Other
A - Accurate	Are the facts correct?	Contains clear factual errors	Mostly incorrect or misleading	Mostly correct with minor inaccuracies	Correct with minor nuance issues	Fully accurate and trustworthy		
C - Comprehensive	Does it cover all important points?	Misses major elements or is overly brief	Covers some points but lacks depth	Covers most relevant points	Covers nearly all key points with good depth	Thorough and complete		
R - Relevant	Is it on-topic and aligned with the prompt?	Off-topic or misinterprets the prompt	Partially relevant, some drift	Mostly relevant with slight drift	Clearly relevant with strong alignment	Directly addresses the prompt with precision		
U - Useful	Does it help the user achieve their goal?	Unhelpful or confusing	Somewhat helpful but unclear	Moderately helpful	Helpful and mostly actionable	Clearly actionable and insightful		
E - Exceptional	Is it better than expected or uniquely valuable?	Generic or uninspired	Slightly better than generic	Meets expectations	Adds value with clarity or creativity	Surpasses expectations with creativity or depth		

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Prompt guidance

Prompts are how you have a conversation with Copilot. Use plain, clear language and provide context like you would with an assistant—prompts are like instructions you provide to Copilot. For the best responses, focus on these four key elements when phrasing your Copilot prompts: **context**, **goal**, **source**, and **expectations**.

Context
Why do you need it and who is involved?

Goal
What response do you want from Copilot.

I work in marketing and focus on competitor research. Give me a concise summary of recent news about [company name]. Focus on web articles from the last 2 months. Provide the answer in two to three paragraphs and use a business tone.

Which information sources or samples should Copilot use?

Source

How should Copilot respond to best meet your expectations?

Expectations

Do's and don'ts

Most Copilot users generally receive the desired responses. However, as with any AI technology, there are occasions when the answer may not be what you expected. Artificial Intelligence is inherently unpredictable and does not always provide the anticipated outcomes. Get the most out of Copilot and avoid common pitfalls by learning what to do and what not to do when writing prompts:

Do's

✓ **Be clear and specific.**
Provide specific instructions to Copilot, such as topic, purpose, tone, and required length.

✓ **Keep it conversational.**
Give feedback to Copilot based on the quality of its responses to help the AI learn and match your preferences.

✓ **Give examples.**
Use clear and specific keywords or phrases when asking Copilot to write a piece of text for you. This helps it generate more relevant and creative copy.

✓ **Ask for feedback.**
Requesting feedback from Copilot helps it to understand your needs and preferences, and to provide you with more relevant, helpful responses.

✓ **Write legibly.**
Use correct punctuation, capitalization, and grammar when writing prompts, as this will help the AI produce better quality text and responses.

✓ **Check for accuracy.**
Occasionally, Copilot may make mistakes. Always check Copilot's responses for accuracy, grammar, and style, and watch out for irrelevant or inappropriate content.

✓ **Provide details.**
Provide Copilot with contextual details to help it generate more accurate, consistent responses. For example, the genre, characters, and plot to a story.

✓ **Be polite.**
Using kind and respectful language when chatting with Copilot helps foster collaboration and improves the AI's responsiveness and performance.

Don'ts

✗ **Be vague.**
When prompting Copilot, avoid using vague language, and be as clear as possible to receive better-quality responses.

✗ **Request inappropriate or unethical content.**
Copilot is not responsible for the content or the consequences of your writing. You should respect local laws, rules, and the rights of others.

✗ **Use slang, jargon, or informal language.**
This may cause Copilot to give low-quality, inappropriate or unprofessional responses.

✗ **Give conflicting instructions.**
Prompting Copilot to perform a task that includes multiple or conflicting pieces of information in the same request can confuse the AI and result in lower quality responses.

✗ **Interrupt or change topics abruptly.**
This could disrupt Copilot's writing process. Always close or finish a task before starting a new one. When starting a new task, write "New task."

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Tips for reasoning over longer documents

When using Copilot, think of it as having a conversation with a colleague. You wouldn't discuss a whole encyclopedia at once, right? Similarly, keep your document references concise and to the point for the best experience with Copilot.

Here are some ways that you can use longer documents with Copilot:

- **Break it down**: If you have a long document, consider splitting it into smaller documents and providing them to Copilot separately. This way, Copilot can handle each part effectively.

- **Summarize in parts**: For long reports or manuscripts, you can try summarizing them in chunks with Copilot. Today you can do that by copying/pasting chunks into separate documents and summarizing sections separately. This helps Copilot to give you more precise and relevant responses.

Discover and share Copilot prompts

Copilot Prompt Gallery helps you find prompting inspiration so you can take greater advantage of Copilot in your daily work.

- Explore the curated selection of Copilot prompts
- Save your favorite prompts
- Share your favorite prompts with colleagues
- Find prompting inspiration from others

Access the Prompt Gallery in Copilot Chat by selecting the box with star icon next to the prompt box. Here, you'll see suggested Copilot prompts and your saved prompts.