



11

FREE GUIDE

Learn AI in 30 days: 15 minutes a day

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INSIDE

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The plan

1. Make a free ChatGPT or Claude account today and do Day 1 below. It takes about 15 minutes.
2. Do one lesson a day for 30 days, each on a real job from your business, and tick it off in the tracker in section 5.
3. By Day 30 you'll have saved instructions, a project folder, one small automation and your own list of prompts that work for you.

Try this now: Day 1, your first real conversation

Goal: make an account and get one useful answer about your own business.

On a computer, open your browser and go to **chatgpt.com** or **claude.ai**. On a phone, get the **ChatGPT** app (made by OpenAI) or the **Claude** app (made by Anthropic) from the App Store or Google Play. There are look-alike apps from other makers, so check the name underneath. Both have a free plan you can start with your email.

Now copy this, change the brackets, and send it:

COPY THIS

I run [type of business] in [city] with [number] staff. The job I like least every week is [for example: answering the same customer questions, writing quotes, chasing invoices]. Ask me three short questions about how I do that job now. Then suggest two small ways you could help me with it this week, in plain words.

What good looks like: it asks about your actual situation before giving advice, and its two ideas are small enough to try tomorrow.

Check: did one of its questions make you think? Don't delete the chat. Your old chats sit in the sidebar (on a phone, tap the menu button at the top left), and you'll come back to this one on Day 7.

1. Start here if you're new: Week 1, the basics

Thirty lessons, one a day, about 15 minutes each. You don't need to be good with computers.

ChatGPT and Claude are AI assistants. You type or say a message, and a few seconds later it writes back. It's a bit like texting a well-read helper. ChatGPT is made by OpenAI, Claude by Anthropic. Pick one and stick with it for the month; every lesson works in both. If you can't decide, the [ChatGPT and Claude guide](#) compares them.

It gets things wrong. It only knows your business if you tell it, and it can be wrong while sounding completely sure of itself. It'll invent a date, a price or a rule that sounds right. So you read everything before you use it. That habit matters more than anything else in here, and Day 5 is about it.

It only writes words on your screen for almost every lesson. You decide what to copy and where it goes. Days 26 and 27 are the exceptions, and they say what they do.

Keep private details out. Before you paste anything about a customer or a staff member, take out names, addresses, phone numbers, health details and account numbers. Write "Customer A" instead. Day 6 explains why.

Free plans have a limit. Send a lot of messages in a few hours and it will tell you you've hit your limit. Nothing's broken. Wait, and it resets. The message usually says when.

How each lesson works. A goal, a prompt to copy, what a good result looks like, and a one-line check. Use a real task from your own week wherever you can. Practice examples teach you the buttons and not much else.

Miss a day? Carry on where you stopped. It's thirty lessons, not thirty dates.

Want the whole team learning together? The [AI team in 30 days guide](#) is the team version. This one is for you.

Words you'll see

Word	What it means
Prompt	The message you type or say to the assistant.
Chat	One conversation. A new topic gets a new chat.
[Brackets]	The parts of a prompt you replace with your own details.
Context	The background you give it: who you are, who the reader is, what happened.
Custom instructions	A box in the settings where you describe yourself once, so every new chat knows it.
Memory	Facts the assistant saves from your chats on its own. You can view, edit and delete them.

Word	What it means
Project	A folder with its own instructions and files. Chats started inside it already know that material.
Thinking	A setting that makes it work through a problem before answering. Slower, often better for hard questions.
Scheduled task	A prompt ChatGPT runs by itself at a time you choose, then sends you the result.
Agent	A mode where the assistant carries out steps for you, such as using a website, and asks before anything important.
Hallucination	When it states something false as if it were true.

Day 2: fix the answer by talking to it

Goal: learn that the first answer is a draft, and you improve it by saying what's wrong.

Pick an email you need to write this week. Send this:

COPY THIS

Write a short email to [who] about [what]. The main point is [one sentence].

Then, in the same chat, reply to its answer three times with short fixes, such as:

COPY THIS

Shorter. Friendlier. Take out the second paragraph.

We don't do Sundays. Fix that line.

What good looks like: by the third fix it sounds close to how you'd write it.

Check: you stayed in the same chat. It remembers the whole conversation, so talk to it the way you'd talk to a person.

Day 3: use your voice

Goal: get an answer without typing, for when you're driving or on site.

Both phone apps have a voice mode. Look for the sound-wave button next to the message box, tap it, and talk. It answers out loud. (Claude also has voice mode on its website and desktop app, though it's built for the phone.) Say something like:

COPY THIS

I'm thinking about [a decision, for example: hiring a second person for the front desk]. Ask me questions one at a time to help me think it through. When I say "done", sum up what I decided in five lines.

What good looks like: a real back-and-forth, and a short written summary at the end.

Check: find the summary in the chat afterwards. Voice chats are saved like typed ones.

Day 4: use a photo

Goal: turn something on paper into something you can use.

In the app, tap the plus or paperclip button next to the message box and take a photo of a handwritten list or a whiteboard. Then send:

COPY THIS

Type this up neatly as a list. Mark any word you couldn't read with [?].

What good looks like: a clean typed list, with the unclear words marked instead of guessed.

Check: compare it with the paper, word by word. Handwriting is where it guesses most.

Day 5: catch it being wrong

Goal: build the checking habit.

Ask it something about your own trade that you already know the answer to:

COPY THIS

[A question from your line of work that you know well, for example: what's the usual process for a [job type] in [province]?]

Then, in the same chat:

COPY THIS

Which parts of that answer are you least sure about? Which facts should I check with an official source, and which source?

What good looks like: it owns up to the shaky parts and points you somewhere real to check, like a government page or the body that sets the rules for your trade.

Check: find one thing in the first answer that's wrong, out of date, or too vague for your province. There's usually one. That's why you read everything, and why anything about law, tax, health or safety gets checked at the source.

Day 6: keep private things private

Goal: know what never gets pasted, and switch off training if you want to.

On personal plans, your chats may be used to improve future versions of the tool unless you turn that off. In ChatGPT, look in **Settings** under **Data controls**. In Claude, look in **Settings** under **Privacy**. Decide whether you want it on or off.

Then practise taking names out. Paste a real customer email with the details already removed, and send:

COPY THIS

Here is a customer email with personal details removed: [paste]. Check it for anything that could still identify the person (names, addresses, phone numbers, account numbers, unusual details). List what I should remove before sharing it anywhere.

What good looks like: it spots something you missed, often a street name or a job reference number.

Check: the rule is "Customer A", never the real name. Canadian privacy law (PIPEDA federally, and BC's PIPA for most BC businesses) expects you to protect the personal information you hold. For anything sensitive, ask a privacy professional.

Day 7: one job, start to finish

Goal: use it on one real task from beginning to end, with everything from this week.

Go back to your Day 1 chat and send:

COPY THIS

Let's do the first of the two ideas you suggested. Walk me through it step by step. Ask me for anything you need, one question at a time.

What good looks like: you end up with something finished, such as a reply you'd otherwise have written yourself.

Check: write down how long it took, next to how long it usually takes. You'll need that on Day 30.

2. Week 2: better answers

Most weak answers come from short prompts. This week is about what to add so the answer is usable the first time you read it.

Day 8: give it context

Goal: see what a bit of background does.

Ask the same thing twice, in two new chats. First the short way:

COPY THIS

Write a reply to a customer asking for a discount.

Then the full way:

COPY THIS

I run [business]. A customer who has used us for [how long] asked for [what discount] on [what]. We don't usually discount because [reason], but I'd like to keep them. Write a reply that says no to the discount, offers [something you can do instead], and keeps it warm. Under 100 words. Sign as [name].

What good looks like: the second answer could only be about your business. The first could be about anyone's.

Check: look at what you added: who you are, who they are, what happened, what you want, how long. Put that in every prompt from now on.

Day 9: show it an example

Goal: get your own voice back instead of the assistant's.

Find two emails or posts you wrote and liked. Take out any names. Send:

COPY THIS

Here are two things I wrote that sound like me: [paste both]. Describe my writing style in five short points. Then use that style to write [something you need this week].

What good looks like: the five points sound like you, and the new piece needs fewer changes than usual.

Check: save the five points. They go into your custom instructions on Day 22.

Day 10: ask for the format you want

Goal: get answers in a shape you can use straight away.

Pick something you need to compare this week. Send:

COPY THIS

Compare [option A] and [option B] for [my situation]. Give me a table with these columns: [for example: cost to check, time to set up, risk, what I'd need]. Under the table, one line saying which you'd pick and why.

Other formats worth trying: "as a checklist", or "as a text message under 160 characters".

What good looks like: you can copy it straight into an email or a document.

Check: if you asked for a length or a format, it kept to it. If it didn't, tell it.

Day 11: let it ask you questions first

Goal: stop writing long prompts yourself for complicated jobs.

Pick something you've been putting off, like a job ad. Send:

COPY THIS

I need to write [the thing]. Before you write anything, ask me the questions you need answered, one at a time. When you have enough, write it.

What good looks like: it asks about things you'd have forgotten to mention, and the draft uses your answers.

Check: remember this one for whenever you don't know where to start.

Day 12: when to let it think longer

Goal: know when to use the slower, more careful setting.

Both tools can think before they answer. In Claude, look in the menu by the message box for a thinking or effort setting. In ChatGPT, look for a **Think** or **Thinking** option in the message box or the model menu (what you get depends on your plan). Try a hard question both ways:

COPY THIS

Here are my rough numbers for last quarter: [paste, with no customer names]. What changed compared with the quarter before, and what are some possible reasons? Show your working.

What good looks like: the slower answer catches something the quick one missed, or explains itself better.

Check: quick for everyday writing, thinking for numbers and decisions. Check any maths against your own figures.

Day 13: ask it to pick holes

Goal: use it as a second opinion, not only a writer.

Take something you've already written, like last week's ad. Send:

COPY THIS

Here's something I wrote: [paste]. Read it as [the person who'll receive it, for example: a customer comparing three quotes]. What's unclear, what might put them off, and what questions would they still have? Be blunt. Don't rewrite it.

What good looks like: at least one point you agree with and hadn't spotted.

Check: make the changes yourself. You're the author; it's the reader.

Day 14: your all-purpose template

Goal: have one prompt you can fill in for any job.

Copy this into a note on your phone or computer:

COPY THIS

I run [business]. I need [what you want written or worked out]. It's for [who will read it] who [what they know or care about]. Background: [what happened, what's true, what you've already promised]. Make it [length, format, tone]. Don't [anything to avoid: promising dates, mentioning prices, sounding like a lawyer]. If you need something I haven't told you, ask me first.

Use it today on one real job.

What good looks like: a usable answer first time, or after one small fix.

Check: you'll notice it's everything from this week in six lines.

3. Week 3: real work

Every lesson this week is a job you already do. Use real material, with private details taken out.

Day 15: clear the inbox

Goal: get through the emails you've been avoiding.

Pick the three emails you least want to answer. For each, remove names and send:

COPY THIS

Here's an email I need to answer: [paste]. Tell me in one line what they actually want. Then draft a reply that [what you want to say: yes, no, not yet, here's the plan]. Under 120 words, in my usual style.

What good looks like: three stuck replies sent today.

Check: read each reply for promises. A draft can easily agree to a date or a refund you never offered.

Day 16: write a procedure

Goal: turn something only you know into something anyone on the team can follow.

Pick one task that stops when you're away: opening up, closing out the till, booking a job, onboarding a customer. Talk it through in voice mode, or type rough notes, then send:

COPY THIS

Here are my rough notes on how we [task]: [paste or speak]. Turn this into a numbered step-by-step procedure a new staff member could follow on their first day. Mark any step where my notes are unclear with [ask the owner].

What good looks like: a one-page procedure with the gaps marked.

Check: hand it to someone who doesn't usually do the task and watch them try. Fix the steps where they stall.

Day 17: summarize a long document

Goal: read a long document in five minutes and know what matters.

Attach a supplier agreement, a policy or a long report using the plus or paperclip button. Pick one you're comfortable sharing, such as a supplier's standard terms, or turn training off first (Day 6). Send:

COPY THIS

Summarize this document in plain words in under 200 words. Then list every date, deadline, notice period, fee and penalty in a table, with the page or section it comes from.

What good looks like: a short summary and a table you can check against the pages.

Check: look up two items from the table in the actual document. For anything you'll sign, have a professional read it too.

Day 18: work with a spreadsheet

Goal: get answers from your numbers without building formulas yourself.

Attach a spreadsheet or a CSV export (sales, jobs, hours) with customer names removed or replaced. Send:

COPY THIS

Here's a spreadsheet of [what it is] for [period]. What are the biggest changes compared with the start of the period? Show them in a small table, and tell me which columns you used.

Then ask:

COPY THIS

Which formula would I use in my own spreadsheet to calculate [one of those numbers]?

What good looks like: a short list of real changes, and a formula you can paste into your own file.

Check: work out one total by hand. It's usually right on simple sums and sometimes wrong on messy sheets.

Day 19: research with sources

Goal: get an answer you can trace back to where it came from.

Both tools can search the web. Ask something you actually need to know this month:

COPY THIS

Search the web for [question, for example: the current rules for [something in your trade] in [province]]. Give me a short answer and a link for every fact. Prefer government and official sources. Tell me the date each source was last updated if you can see it.

What good looks like: a short answer with links you can click.

Check: open at least two links and make sure they say what it claims. If a link is dead or says something else, drop that fact.

Day 20: meeting notes into actions

Goal: leave every meeting with a list of who does what.

After your next meeting or phone call, type or say your rough notes, with names swapped for roles, and send:

COPY THIS

Here are my rough notes from a meeting about [topic]: [paste]. Write: 1) what was decided, 2) a list of actions with who does each one and by when, 3) anything left open. Don't add actions that aren't in my notes.

What good looks like: a short note you could send to everyone who was there.

Check: that last line of the prompt is doing real work. Make sure it didn't invent a task or a deadline nobody agreed to.

Day 21: a cover note for a quote

Goal: send a quote the customer understands without calling you.

Take a quote you're sending this week, with the customer's name taken out. Fill in your Day 14 template, or send:

COPY THIS

Here's a quote I'm about to send: [paste]. Write a short cover email in plain words: what's included, what isn't, how long the quote is good for, and what they do next to go ahead. Use only what's in the quote. Under 150 words.

What good looks like: someone who has never hired you could read it and know what they're getting.

Check: every number and date in the email matches the quote exactly. Watch for a rounded figure or a warranty you don't offer.

4. Week 4: your own system

This week you stop retyping your background, and you try the two features that act on their own.

Day 22: save your custom instructions

Goal: tell it about your business once, so every new chat already knows.

In ChatGPT, click your name or picture, then **Settings**, then **Personalization**, and find **Custom instructions**. In Claude, click your name, then **Settings**, and find the box for your personal preferences. Paste this, fill it in, and save:

COPY THIS

I run [business name], a [type of business] in [city] with [number] staff. We do [services]. We don't do [things people ask for that we don't offer]. Our customers are mostly [who]. How I write: [paste your five style points from Day 9]. Canadian spelling. Never invent facts, prices, dates or promises. If you need something I haven't given you, put it in [brackets] or ask me.

What good looks like: in a new chat, "Write a two-line reply to a customer asking what we do" gets a correct answer with no extra background.

Check: if it gets something wrong, fix the instructions, not the chat.

Day 23: check what it remembers

Goal: see what the assistant has saved about you, and clean it up.

Both tools can keep facts from your chats (what's available depends on your plan). In ChatGPT, look in **Settings** under **Personalization** for **Memory**. In Claude, look in **Settings** under **Memory**. Or just ask:

COPY THIS

What do you remember about me and my business? List it.

What good looks like: a list you recognize.

Check: delete anything wrong, out of date, or private. You can edit or delete what memory keeps, but it decides what to save. Custom instructions are the part you write yourself, so the important things go

there.

Day 24: make your first project

Goal: a folder for one part of the business, with its own rules.

Both ChatGPT and Claude offer projects on their free plans, with limits (Claude's free plan allows a small number of projects, and ChatGPT's limits files per project). In the sidebar, find **Projects** and start a new one. Name it for one area, such as "Customer replies". In the project's instructions box, paste:

COPY THIS

In this project, you help me reply to customers. Use only the facts in this project's files and my instructions. If the answer isn't in them, say so and tell me what's missing. Keep replies under 120 words.

What good looks like: a named project in your sidebar, with instructions saved.

Check: from now on, open the project first and start that kind of chat from inside it.

Day 25: give the project its facts

Goal: answers based on your real documents, not guesses.

Add two or three files to the project: your service list, your hours and policies, a few replies you were proud of (names removed). Put a date in each file name, such as "Services, Sept 2026". Then, inside the project, ask a real customer question from this week:

COPY THIS

A customer asked: [question]. Draft a reply.

What good looks like: the reply uses your actual policy wording, and says so when the files don't cover it.

Check: ask something the files don't answer. It should say it doesn't know. If it makes something up, tighten the instructions.

Day 26: one small automation

Goal: have it do something on a schedule without you asking each time.

ChatGPT has **scheduled tasks**. You say what you want and when, and it runs the prompt at that time and sends you the result as a notification. The free plan allows a few active tasks, at most once a day

each. Type this in a normal chat; ChatGPT should offer to save it as a task, and if it doesn't, look for Tasks or Scheduled in the sidebar:

COPY THIS

Every weekday at 7:30am, give me a short plan for the day. Ask me nothing; just remind me to check [your daily jobs, for example: new enquiries and today's bookings] and give me one small tip for using AI at work that I can try today.

You can see and change your tasks in the **Scheduled** section, and pick push or email notifications in the settings. If you use Claude, set a phone reminder that opens your saved prompt.

What good looks like: a message shows up tomorrow morning without you doing anything.

Check: it can only remind and write. It won't email customers or change your calendar. For automations that act for you, like texting a customer back, read [your first automation](#).

Day 27: one agent task

Goal: watch it carry out steps for you, and see where you stay in charge.

ChatGPT agent is on paid plans. Start it from the tools menu, or type /agent in the message box, and describe the task. It uses a browser of its own, asks you to confirm before important actions, and you can take over at any point, for example to type a password yourself. Pick something safe and read-only:

COPY THIS

Find three suppliers of [something you buy] that deliver to [your city]. For each, give me the website, whether they list prices publicly, and their delivery area. Don't sign up, log in or buy anything.

On a free plan, send the same prompt as a normal chat; it can search the web for the list.

What good looks like: a short list you can check, gathered while you did something else.

Check: don't let it pay, sign or send anything for you yet. Open each website yourself before acting on what it found. There's more in [the agents kit](#).

Day 28: start your prompt library

Goal: keep the prompts that worked so you never write them again.

Make one document called "Prompts that work". Copy in every prompt from this month that you used more than once, each with a line on when to use it. Then send:

COPY THIS

Here are prompts I've used this month: [paste]. Tidy each one into a reusable template with [brackets] for the parts that change, and give each a short name. Keep my wording where it works.

What good looks like: one page of named, fill-in prompts you can find in ten seconds.

Check: keep it somewhere you'll actually see it. The [30 prompts guide](#) has more to add.

Day 29: teach one person

Goal: find out what you really know by explaining it.

Show a staff member or someone at home Day 1 and Day 8. Then ask the assistant:

COPY THIS

I'm going to show someone who has never used AI how to start. Write a one-page handout: what it is, a few things to try first, and the rules (read everything, never paste private details, check facts). Plain words, no jargon.

What good looks like: a handout you'd be happy to print.

Check: watch them try it, and fix the handout where they get stuck.

Day 30: your check and what's next

Goal: see what stuck, and pick what to learn next.

Go through the Day 30 checklist in section 5. Then send:

COPY THIS

Over the last 30 days I learned to [list what you now do]. The jobs it helps with most are [list], and they save me about [rough time a week; start from your Day 7 note]. Suggest a simple routine I can follow on Monday mornings. Then tell me the next two things I should learn or set up, and what I should stop doing because it isn't worth it.

What good looks like: a Monday routine you'd actually follow, and two next steps that fit your business.

Check: you use it for at least one real job a day without thinking about it.

5. Your 30-day tracker

Print this or copy it into your notes. Tick each day once you've done it on a real task.

- ☐ Day 1: first real conversation
- ☐ Day 2: fix the answer by talking to it
- ☐ Day 3: voice mode
- ☐ Day 4: a photo
- ☐ Day 5: catch it being wrong
- ☐ Day 6: privacy settings and taking names out
- ☐ Day 7: one job, start to finish
- ☐ Day 8: context
- ☐ Day 9: your style from examples
- ☐ Day 10: the format you want
- ☐ Day 11: let it ask questions first
- ☐ Day 12: thinking settings
- ☐ Day 13: pick holes in your work
- ☐ Day 14: your all-purpose template
- ☐ Day 15: clear the inbox
- ☐ Day 16: write a procedure
- ☐ Day 17: summarize a long document
- ☐ Day 18: a spreadsheet
- ☐ Day 19: research with sources
- ☐ Day 20: meeting notes into actions
- ☐ Day 21: a cover note for a quote
- ☐ Day 22: custom instructions
- ☐ Day 23: memory check
- ☐ Day 24: first project
- ☐ Day 25: files in the project
- ☐ Day 26: one scheduled task
- ☐ Day 27: one agent task
- ☐ Day 28: your prompt library
- ☐ Day 29: teach one person
- ☐ Day 30: the check and what's next

The Day 30 checklist

- ☐ I use AI for at least one real job every day
- ☐ I read every answer before I use it, and check facts, dates and prices against the real thing
- ☐ I never paste names, addresses, health details or account numbers
- ☐ My custom instructions describe my business and how I write
- ☐ I've checked what its memory holds and deleted anything wrong
- ☐ I have at least one project with my own files in it
- ☐ Something arrives on a schedule without me asking
- ☐ I have a "Prompts that work" document
- ☐ I've shown at least one other person how to start

6. Quick reference

When it goes wrong

What happened	Do this
The answer is generic	Add context: who you are, who it's for, what happened. Or use your Day 14 template.
It made something up	Tell it what's true in the same chat, then add the real fact to your custom instructions or project files.
A long chat is losing track	Ask for a short summary, start a new chat, and paste the summary in.
It says you've hit a limit	Wait for it to reset, or come back later. The message usually says when.
It refuses a normal request	Say who you are and why you need it. If it still won't, rephrase or ask for the part it can help with.

The short version

- A good prompt says who you are, who it's for, what happened, what you want, and how long.
- Stuck on how to start? "Ask me the questions you need, one at a time, then write it."
- Take names out. Write "Customer A".
- Read everything before it leaves the building.

- Rolling this out to staff? Read AI team in 30 days.