



OPENAI

ChatGPT

The all-rounder. The most common first stop.

Best for: Broad, general work of every kind. If you are unsure which assistant to open, this is a safe default.

■ What it is good at

- Broad general ability across almost any task
- Large ecosystem of add-ons and custom GPTs
- Strong voice and image support
- Widely used, so help and examples are everywhere

■ What to watch

- Free tier uses an older model than the paid plan
- Confident even when wrong — verify every fact

How to get it: chatgpt.com or the ChatGPT app. Free tier is genuinely useful; ChatGPT Plus is about \$20/month.

TRY THIS FIRST

“Explain what you can help me with, in plain English, as if I have never used an AI assistant before.”



ANTHROPIC

Claude

The writer's assistant. Careful with long documents.

Best for: Reading- and writing-heavy work: long reports, careful drafts, documents you need handled gracefully.

■ What it is good at

- Handles long documents without losing the thread
- Natural, careful writing style
- Often flags its own uncertainty
- Strong at editing and reorganising your text

■ What to watch

- Smaller add-on ecosystem than ChatGPT
- Still makes confident mistakes — verify names and numbers

How to get it: claude.ai or the Claude app. Free tier available; Claude Pro is about \$20/month.

TRY THIS FIRST

"Here is a long document. Summarise it into decisions, actions, and open questions, and tell me what is unclear."



GOOGLE

Gemini

Built into the Google world.

Best for: People whose day lives in Gmail, Google Docs, and Drive — it works inside those apps rather than beside them.

■ What it is good at

- Works directly inside Gmail, Docs, and Drive
- Good for drafting and summarising in Google Workspace
- Strong search-connected answers
- Handles text, image, and audio

■ What to watch

- Most useful if you already live in Google apps
- Confident errors happen here too — always check

How to get it: gemini.google.com, or inside Google Workspace. Free tier available; a paid plan is about \$20/month.

TRY THIS FIRST

"Draft a reply to this email in a warm, professional tone, keeping it under 120 words."



MICROSOFT

Copilot

The same idea, for the Microsoft world.

Best for: Anyone whose employer runs on Microsoft 365 — it appears inside Word, Excel, Outlook, and Teams.

■ What it is good at

- Lives inside Word, Excel, Outlook, and Teams
- Turns notes into documents without leaving the app
- Useful for spreadsheet formulas and email triage
- Ties into your existing Microsoft files

■ What to watch

- Most valuable if your workplace uses Microsoft 365
- Verify anything it pulls from your files before sending

How to get it: copilot.microsoft.com, or inside Microsoft 365 apps. Free tier available; paid plans vary by licence.

TRY THIS FIRST

“Turn these rough bullet points into a clear, professional email. Keep my meaning; fix the tone.”



PERPLEXITY AI

Perplexity

The research assistant. Answers with sources attached.

Best for: Questions where you need to see where the answer came from — research, fact-finding, and anything you must verify.

■ What it is good at

- Attaches sources to its answers
- Searches the live web, so answers can be current
- Good starting point for research and fact-checking
- Makes it easy to click through and confirm a claim

■ What to watch

- A source link proves a page exists, not that the summary is right
- Always open the source and confirm it says what is claimed

How to get it: perplexity.ai or the Perplexity app. Free tier available; Perplexity Pro is about \$20/month.

TRY THIS FIRST

"Summarise the current research on [topic], and give me a reliable source for each main point."



THE CORE SKILL FROM CHAPTER 3

The R-T-C-F Formula

Four parts turn a vague request into a useful answer.

Most disappointing AI answers are not the tool's fault — the request never said what a good answer looked like. Add these four parts and the reply sharpens immediately. You do not always need all four, but the more you supply, the closer the first draft lands.

R**Role — who it should be**

Tell the assistant who to be.

"You are a senior HR manager with 15 years of experience."

T**Task — what to do**

State exactly what you want done.

"Write a short email declining a meeting invitation."

C**Context — the background**

Give the background it needs.

"The meeting is next Tuesday. I have a scheduling conflict but want to stay involved in the project."

F**Format — how it should look**

Say how the answer should look.

"Keep it under 100 words, warm but professional, and offer to reschedule."

ALL FOUR TOGETHER

"You are a senior HR manager with 15 years of experience. Write a short email declining a meeting invitation. The meeting is next Tuesday; I have a conflict but want to stay involved in the project. Keep it under 100 words, warm but professional, and offer to reschedule."