



NOVABYTE AI SUCCESS SERIES

The AI Tool Directory

A curated shortlist of AI tools worth knowing — organised by what you actually want to do.

A few good tools per category beat a long list you never learn. Prices and features change often, so treat every figure here as a starting point and confirm the current details on each tool's official site.



CATEGORY

Writing & general assistants

The everyday workhorses. For most tasks in this book, one of these is all you need. Start here before reaching for anything specialist.

ChatGPT OpenAI

The broad all-rounder and common default.

COST

Free tier; Plus ~\$20/mo

WHEN TO REACH FOR IT

General drafting, summarising, and Q&A of every kind.

Claude Anthropic

Long documents and careful, natural writing.

COST

Free tier; Pro ~\$20/mo

WHEN TO REACH FOR IT

Reading- and writing-heavy work; editing your own text.

Gemini Google

Lives inside Gmail, Docs, and Drive.

COST

Free tier; ~\$20/mo

WHEN TO REACH FOR IT

When your day already runs on Google Workspace.

Perplexity Perplexity AI

Answers with sources attached.

COST

Free tier; Pro ~\$20/mo

WHEN TO REACH FOR IT

Quick fact-finding where you want to see the source.



CATEGORY

Academic research

Tools that search real academic databases, not just the open web. Useful for literature reviews (Chapters 12–13) — but a found paper still has to be read and verified by you.

Consensus Consensus

Searches papers and summarises what the evidence says.

COST

Free tier; paid plans

WHEN TO REACH FOR IT

Getting a fast read on what studies conclude on a question.

Elicit Elicit

Finds papers and pulls key details into a table.

COST

Free tier; paid plans

WHEN TO REACH FOR IT

Building a structured literature table from many papers.

SciSpace SciSpace

Explains papers and answers questions about them.

COST

Free tier; paid plans

WHEN TO REACH FOR IT

Understanding a dense paper you already have in hand.



CATEGORY

Coding

AI built into the way developers actually work — inside the editor, alongside the code.
The book names these for readers who write software; skip this page if you do not.

Cursor Anysphere

An AI-first code editor built on VS Code.

COST

Free tier; Pro ~\$20/mo

WHEN TO REACH FOR IT

Writing and editing code with AI in the editor itself.

Windsurf Codeium

An AI coding editor with an agentic assistant.

COST

Free tier; paid plans

WHEN TO REACH FOR IT

Larger multi-file changes guided by an AI agent.

GitHub Copilot GitHub / Microsoft

AI autocomplete inside popular editors.

COST

~\$10/mo; free for some

WHEN TO REACH FOR IT

Line-by-line suggestions inside your existing editor.



CATEGORY

Image generation

Text-to-image tools. Handy for illustrations, mockups, and social content — always check usage rights before publishing anything commercially.

Midjourney Midjourney

High-quality, stylised image generation.

COST

Paid, from ~\$10/mo

WHEN TO REACH FOR IT

Polished, artistic images where quality matters most.

Ideogram Ideogram

Strong at images that include legible text.

COST

Free tier; paid plans

WHEN TO REACH FOR IT

Posters, logos, and graphics that need readable words.

Leonardo Leonardo.Ai

Flexible generation with fine control and presets.

COST

Free tier; paid plans

WHEN TO REACH FOR IT

Iterating on a look with lots of control over the output.



CATEGORY

Video generation

Text- and image-to-video tools. The newest and fastest-moving category here, so confirm current limits and pricing before you commit to one.

Runway Runway

Established text- and image-to-video with editing tools.

COST

Free tier; paid plans

WHEN TO REACH FOR IT

Short clips plus a broader video-editing toolkit.

Kling Kuaishou

Realistic motion and longer generated clips.

COST

Free tier; paid plans

WHEN TO REACH FOR IT

Lifelike movement in short generated video.

Pika Pika

Fast, playful clip generation and effects.

COST

Free tier; paid plans

WHEN TO REACH FOR IT

Quick, fun social clips and creative effects.



BEFORE YOU COLLECT TOOLS

How to use this list

You do not need most of these. Nearly everything in *The AI Productivity Playbook* can be done inside one general assistant from the first category. Beginners who start with a single tool build skills roughly twice as fast as those who start with six.

Master one general assistant first. ChatGPT, Claude, or Gemini will handle the vast majority of your work.

Add a specialist only when a real need appears. Reach for a research, coding, image, or video tool when a specific task calls for it — not before.

Try the free tier before you pay. Almost every tool here has one. Confirm it does what you need on real work before committing to a subscription.

A note on accuracy. This directory is a snapshot, not a specification. New tools appear and prices shift constantly. Always verify current capabilities, limits, and cost on the official website before relying on any tool — and remember that whatever you use, checking its output stays on your side of the desk.