

# How to write effective Copilot prompts



It's important to remember that Copilot serves as a powerful tool to be leveraged rather than a plug-and-play solution. In the context of prompts, the adage, "rubbish in, rubbish out" are words to live by. To generate desired outputs, focus on crafting well-structured prompts.



## Be specific and give context

Generic prompts like "write an estimation" will produce generic results. What kind of estimation do you want? For what sector? How detailed should it be? Adding this type of context and being specific, clear, and concise will help generate more useful outputs.



## Explain how you want the output to be presented

Copilot can produce many different types of outputs, including code, reports, summaries, notes, PowerPoint presentations, images, statistics, and more. Being precise about the type of output you need will produce better results. After describing what you want, try adding "Present this in the form of..." and your preferred output. Or start your prompt with "Create a [format of output] about X/that contains..." for example.



## Use "do" and "don't"

If there are specific things you want included, or avoided, add these in as part of the prompt. For example, "Write a short report on this dataset. Do not include information from before 2019."



## Use examples

If there are published examples of sentences, paragraphs, or even longer articles that you'd like your output to look like, this gives the AI a reference point to create more accurate results. However, it's very important not to infringe on copyright. Don't upload copyrighted works and ask the AI to rewrite or reproduce it or create a substantially similar work.



## Build on previous prompts

You don't have to get everything you need into your first prompt. Try starting with a basic question and adding to it over several prompts. Changing the wording or tone, or adding more context and specificity to your request will guide the AI towards the output you're looking for.



### Correct mistakes and give feedback

Chat with Copilot as if it's a colleague or teammate and you're working on a project together — it's not a command-line. You can tell it which parts of the output were useful, and which parts could be improved. If you notice it got something wrong, tell it so it can correct its mistake.



### Let Copilot tell you what it needs

Still stuck on how to create a good prompt? Ask Copilot to help by creating one for you. Start with a basic idea of what you want and then ask it to expand on it for you, like "What should I ask you to help me write a blog post about AI in Hitachi?". And simply adding "Tell me what else you need to complete this" at the end of any prompt can help you fill any gaps and it will help Copilot produce better outputs.



### Check Copilot is using accurate data

Copilot is built upon Large Language Models (LLMs), that are advanced tools designed to predict and generate text. Occasionally, Copilot responses can include incorrect content, due to the vast and diverse nature of LLMs. Check Copilot's responses and compare with trusted sources if you aren't sure about the output being correct.



### Using the same prompt multiple times can result in different responses

Copilot is built upon neural networks, which introduces some unpredictability. Even when using the same input prompt multiple times, you can get slightly different results each time.



### Use Copilot in a respectful, ethical, and lawful manner

Avoid using Copilot for any purpose that might cause harm to yourself or others. Make sure you adhere to Microsoft's **responsible AI (Artificial Intelligence) principles and standards**.



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