# AI Assistants for Everyday Life

A beginner-friendly guide with ready-to-copy prompts

A large-print guide for adults 55+

SeniorAffair.com

# Start Here

AI chat assistants, such as ChatGPT, Claude and Gemini, are tools you can type or speak to in plain English. They can explain, draft, summarize, brainstorm and answer questions. You don’t need to know any technology. You only need to know how to ask.

This guide shows you how to ask well, with ready-to-use examples you can copy. It also shows you how to stay safe, because these tools are helpful but not perfect.

### Three safety rules

- **Don’t share private numbers.** Never type your Social Security number, Medicare number, bank account, card numbers or passwords.
- **Double-check what matters.** AI can be wrong, and sounds confident when it is. Check health, money and legal answers with a professional or an official source.
- **You stay in charge.** Treat the answer as a draft or a starting point, never the final word.

# The Secret: Say Who and What

The most useful trick is to tell the assistant what role to play and what you need. This is often called “role prompting.” It works like asking a question of the right person.

| Weak | Better |
|---|---|
| Help me write a letter. | You are a friendly writing helper. Help me write a short, polite letter to my neighbor about the noise from the construction next door. Keep it kind and under 120 words. |
| Explain this bill. | Explain this medical bill in plain English as if you were a patient advocate. List the questions I should ask the billing office. (I removed my personal numbers.) |
| Plan a trip. | You are an experienced travel planner for people who walk slowly and prefer quiet places. Suggest a relaxed 4-day itinerary for two in Charleston with plenty of rest breaks. |

## A simple formula

### Role + Task + Details + Style

- **Role:** You are a patient tutor.
- **Task:** Explain how Medicare Part D works.
- **Details:** I am new to Medicare and have two prescriptions.
- **Style:** Use simple words and short paragraphs.

# Prompts You Can Copy

Replace the words in brackets with your own details.

## Everyday help

- “Explain [topic] to me as if I am smart but new to it. Use plain English and short sentences.”
- “Write a kind thank-you note to [person] for [reason]. Keep it warm and under 80 words.”
- “Make a weekly dinner plan for one person, with simple recipes and a grocery list. I like [foods] and can’t eat [foods].”
- “Help me make a packing list for a [number]-day trip to [place] in [month].”
- “Rewrite this email so it sounds friendly and clear: [paste text].”

## Understanding paperwork

- “I received this letter. Explain in plain English what it is asking me to do. [Paste the text, with personal numbers removed.]”
- “What questions should I ask my insurance company about this notice?”
- “Make a checklist of the documents I should gather to apply for [program].”

## Learning and hobbies

- “You are a patient teacher. Teach me the basics of [hobby] in five easy steps.”
- “Suggest three free ways to learn [skill] at home.”
- “Quiz me gently on [topic], one question at a time.”

## Connecting with family

- “Give me ten conversation starters for a call with my grandchild who is [age].”
- “Help me write down a family story so I can share it. I will tell you the story and you turn it into a short page.”

# Ask for a Second Opinion

One of the best uses of AI is not to produce an answer, but to check your thinking. After you have a draft or a plan, ask the assistant to look for problems.

### Second-opinion prompts

- “Here is my plan: [plan]. What might I be missing?”
- “What are the strongest arguments against this idea?”
- “What questions should I ask a professional before I decide?”
- “Check this for anything confusing, unclear or too pushy.”

A second opinion from an AI is still only a prompt for your own judgment. For anything important, check with a person you trust.

# Staying Safe and Smart

- Use an official app or the company's official website to open an assistant, and be careful of lookalike sites.
- Remember that the answer might be out of date. Ask, "How current is this, and how can I verify it?"
- If an answer sounds too good, too urgent or too certain, double-check it.
- Be wary of anyone who tells you to use AI to move money, buy gift cards or send passwords.
- If something is not working, say so. You can type: "That wasn't what I meant. Try again, more simply."

## Your first week

[ ] Ask one everyday question

[ ] Ask for help writing one message

[ ] Try the "second opinion" prompt on a plan of yours

[ ] Ask the assistant to explain something you have always wondered about

[ ] Write down which prompt worked best

**My favorite prompts to reuse:**

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