Microsoft 365 Copilot:
The art and science of prompting

Prompts are how you ask Microsoft 365 Copilot to do something for you — like creating, summarizing, editing, or transforming. Think about prompting like having a conversation, using plain but clear language and providing context like you would with an assistant.

1. Tell Copilot what you need

There are many types of prompts you can use depending on what task you want done.

✓ **Learn** about projects and concepts:
"What is [Project X] and who are the key stakeholders working on it?"

✓ **Summarize** information:
"Write a session abstract of this [presentation]."

✓ **Edit** text:
"Check this product launch rationale for inconsistencies."

✓ **Create** engaging content:
"Create a value proposition for [Product X]."

✓ **Transform** documents:
"Transform this FAQ doc into a 10-slide onboarding guide."

✓ **Catch-up** on missed items:
"Provide a summary of the updates and action items on [Project X]."

2. Include the right prompt ingredients

To get the best response, it's important to focus on some of the key elements below when phrasing your Copilot prompts.

Goal
What response do you want from Copilot?

Context
Why do you need it and who is involved?

Generate 3-5 bullet points to prepare me for a meeting with Client X to discuss their "Phase 3+" brand campaign. Focus on Email and Teams chats since June. Please use simple language so I can get up to speed quickly.

Which information sources or samples should Copilot use?

How should Copilot respond to best meet your expectations?

Source

Expectations

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3. Keep the conversation going

Following up on your prompts help you collaborate with Copilot to gain more useful, tailored responses.

Generating content ideas
Lead with broader requests, then give specific details about the content.

Gaining insights
Ask for a summary of a specific file, then ask relevant questions to gain deeper insights.

Enabling insightful meetings
Request a meeting recap, then ask for more information about what you should know.

Translating languages
Ask Copilot to translate a sentence to one of the supported languages, then ask for more context or a regional dialect.

Storytelling assistance
Ask Copilot to write a story, then guide it by giving more specific, relevant details.

Solving technical problems
Present a technical problem, then narrow it down, or ask for step-by-step guidance.

Helpful hints to keep in mind

Know Copilot's limitations.
Copilot is limited to your current conversation, so give lots of details.

Be professional.
Using polite language improves Copilot's response.

Communicate clearly.
Pay attention to punctuation, grammar, and capitalization.

Use quotation marks.
This helps Copilot know what to write, modify, or replace for you.

Start fresh.
Avoid interrupting and type "new topic" when switching tasks.

Learn more about Microsoft 365 Copilot on our [support page](#).

Microsoft 365 Copilot

Prompt Ingredients

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> **Generate 3-5 bullet points** to prepare me for a meeting with Client X to discuss their "Phase 3+" brand campaign. **Focus on Email and Teams chats since June.** Please use simple language so I can get up to speed quickly.

Which information sources or samples should Copilot use?

Source

How should Copilot respond to best meet your expectations?

Expectations

Take note
When creating a prompt, think of it as if you were talking to a helpful coworker – no need to stress over order, formatting, or structure; just keep it conversational.

Microsoft 365 Copilot:
Prompting do's and don'ts

Get the most out of Copilot and avoid common pitfalls by learning **what to do** and **what not to do** when writing prompts.

Do's

Be clear and specific.
Provide specific instructions to Copilot, such as topic, purpose, tone, and required length.

Keep it conversational.
Give feedback to Copilot based on the quality of its responses to help the AI learn and match your preferences.

Give examples.
Use clear and specific keywords or phrases when asking Copilot to write a piece of text for you. This helps it generate more relevant and creative copy.

Ask for feedback.
Requesting feedback from Copilot helps it to understand your needs and preferences, and to provide you with more relevant, helpful responses.

Write legibly.
Use correct punctuation, capitalization, and grammar when writing prompts, as this will help the AI produce better quality text and responses.

Check for accuracy.
Occasionally, Copilot may make mistakes. Always check Copilot's responses for accuracy, grammar, and style, and watch out for irrelevant or inappropriate content.

Provide details.
Provide Copilot with contextual details to help it generate more accurate, consistent responses. For example, the genre, characters, and plot to a story.

Be polite.
Using kind and respectful language when chatting with Copilot helps foster collaboration and improves the AI's responsiveness and performance.

Don'ts

Be vague.
When prompting Copilot, avoid using vague language, and be as clear as possible to receive better-quality responses.

Request inappropriate or unethical content.
Copilot is not responsible for the content or the consequences of your writing. You should respect local laws, rules, and the rights of others.

Use slang, jargon, or informal language.
This may cause Copilot to give low-quality, inappropriate or unprofessional responses.

Give conflicting instructions.
Prompting Copilot to perform a task that includes multiple or conflicting pieces of information in the same request can confuse the AI and result in lower quality responses.

Interrupt or change topics abruptly.
This could disrupt Copilot's writing process. Always close or finish a task before starting a new one. When starting a new task, write "New task."