

# 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?"
- ✓ **Edit text:**  
"Check this product launch rationale for inconsistencies."
- ✓ **Transform documents:**  
"Transform this FAQ doc into a 10-slide onboarding guide."
- ✓ **Summarize information:**  
"Write a session abstract of this [presentation]."
- ✓ **Create engaging content:**  
"Create a value proposition for [Product X]."
- ✓ **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?

#### Source

How should Copilot respond to best meet your expectations?

#### 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](#).



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### 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."