

AI ASSISTANT MATRIX

ChatGPT vs Claude vs Perplexity

A practical decision matrix for choosing the right AI assistant by job-to-be-done.



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Choose the tool by the job

Do not ask which AI assistant is universally 'best.' Ask what work you are trying to complete, what evidence matters and what constraints you have.

General creation & mixed work	Strong starting fit	Strong starting fit	Useful when creation begins from web research
Long-form analysis	Strong	Strong	Useful when external-source discovery matters
Web-first research with citations	Strong with search/research features	Strong where web/research features are available	Core product strength
Files & documents	Strong	Strong	Supported; research workflow remains the differentiator
Ongoing workspaces/projects	Projects organize chats, files and instructions	Project/workspace capabilities vary by plan	Spaces/research organization varies by plan
Coding / technical work	Strong	Strong, including agentic coding workflows	Useful for research-heavy technical discovery
Quick source discovery	Good	Good	Very strong starting fit

Important: capabilities, model names, plan limits and integrations change frequently. Use this matrix to choose a starting point, then test the same real task in the tools you actually have.

The 6-question decision matrix

1. What is the dominant job?	Creation, analysis, research, coding, extraction, planning or automation?
2. Do you need current web evidence?	If yes, prioritize a workflow with strong search and visible citations.
3. Are your source documents the center of the task?	Test how the assistant handles your real files, not a demo.
4. Do you need continuity across a project?	Compare workspace/project organization, file reuse and collaboration.
5. What tools must it connect to?	A brilliant model with the wrong integrations can be the wrong business choice.
6. What is the cost of an error?	High-impact work needs source checking, review gates and auditability regardless of model.

Run a fair 20-minute bake-off

- 1 Pick one real task you perform at least weekly.
- 2 Prepare one identical source pack and one identical prompt.
- 3 Run the task in all three tools without changing your evaluation criteria.
- 4 Score usefulness, accuracy, source quality, edit effort, speed and workflow fit.
- 5 Repeat with one harder example before choosing.
- 6 Choose the tool that reduces total work, not the one that produces the flashiest first draft.

Accuracy / faithfulness	25%	
Research / source quality	20%	
Edit effort	15%	
Workflow / integrations	15%	
Speed	10%	
Usability	10%	
Cost fit	5%	

Three reusable test prompts

CREATE	Using the supplied context, produce a one-page executive brief for [audience]. Separate facts from recommendations. List any assumptions that need verification.
ANALYZE	Analyze the attached material for [decision]. Identify the strongest evidence, contradictions, missing information and three questions I should answer before acting.
RESEARCH	Research [question]. Prioritize primary or authoritative sources. Cite each material claim, distinguish current facts from older context, and list unresolved uncertainty.

Current-product source notes

OpenAI documents ChatGPT capabilities including web research, file work and Projects. Anthropic describes Claude as supporting professional knowledge work, coding and tool-connected workflows. Perplexity positions Pro Search as source-led research that synthesizes web sources. Check official product documentation for current plan availability.

Reference URLs: <https://help.openai.com/en/articles/9260256-chatgpt-capabilities-overview> | <https://www.anthropic.com/> | <https://www.perplexity.ai/help-center/en/articles/10352903-what-is-pro-search>

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