

Your Chat Companion

Embrace Technology

A Simple Guide to Getting Help Through Chat



Cherry Crawford

Hello,

Maybe you've watched other people use chat assistants. Maybe someone has told you that they can write, plan, explain, organize, and answer questions. Maybe you've even tried one yourself and weren't sure what to ask.

You're in the right place.

You don't need to be a technology expert. You don't need to understand how these tools work behind the scenes. You just need to be willing to try.

I've spent much of my career working with engineering and systems, looking for ways to make complicated processes simpler and more reliable. When I started using chat tools, I realized that the same idea could apply to everyday life.

A chat assistant can help turn a complicated question into a manageable next step.

It can help you find the right words, understand something confusing, organize your thoughts, make a plan, learn something new, or simply explore a question you're curious about.

My goal with this book is simple:

To help you feel more comfortable, capable, and confident getting useful help through chat.

You don't have to learn everything today.

Start with one thing.

To your clarity,

Cherry Crawford
Founder, CareNav.Life

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Introduction	3
--------------	---

PART ONE

Chapter 1: Meet Your Chat Assistants	5
Chapter 2: How to Get There — Opening a Browser and Going to the Website	6
Chapter 3: Creating Your AI Account	7
Chapter 4: The Chat Box — How to Talk Like You're Texting a Friend	8
Chapter 5: What to Do When Something Goes Wrong	9

PART TWO

Chapter 6: Writing Letters, Emails, and Messages	11
Chapter 7: Understanding Confusing Letters and Documents	12
Chapter 8: Getting Simple Answers Without Digging Through Search Results	13
Chapter 9: Help with Recipes	14
Chapter 10: Planning Trips, Events, and Appointments	14
Chapter 11: Remembering and Organizing	15

PART THREE

Chapter 12: Understanding Medical Terms Your Doctor Used	16
Chapter 13: Preparing Questions to Ask Your Doctor	16
Chapter 14: Understanding Medicare, Insurance, and Benefits	17
Chapter 15: Talking Through a Big Decision	18
Chapter 16: Getting a Second Opinion — AI and Real Advice	18

PART FOUR

Chapter 17: Be Careful With Requests for Personal Information	19
Chapter 18: How to Spot an AI Scam	20
Chapter 19: What AI Gets Wrong — and How to Double-Check	21
Chapter 20: Your Privacy—What You Should Know Before You Share	22

PART FIVE

Chapter 21: Ask It Anything — Curiosity Has No Age Limit	23
Chapter 22: Help Writing Cards, Poems, and Messages for Loved Ones	24
Chapter 23: Learning Something New	25
Chapter 24: Preserving Your Life Stories	25

PART SIX

Chapter 25: How to Ask Better Questions	26
Chapter 26: When AI Says Something Wrong — How to Push Back	27
Chapter 27: Helping a Family Member or Friend Get Started	29
Chapter 28: What Is Coming Next — and Why You Do Not Need to Worry	30

QUICK REFERENCE & EXTRA HELP

Quick Reference Card — 10 Things to Try This Week	32
Troubleshooting — The 10 Most Common Problems and Fixes	33
A Note to Family Members	34
Thank You	35

Introduction

Welcome.

If you're a little nervous about trying this, take a breath. This book was written for you.

You don't need to be good with computers, and you don't need to understand how AI works behind the scenes to get useful help from it.

We'll walk through it one step at a time, in plain English.

AI — short for Artificial Intelligence — may sound like something from a science-fiction movie. But for everyday use, it can be surprisingly simple.

You can type a question, describe what you're trying to do, or ask for help with a task, and an AI assistant can respond. You can use it to help write a letter, understand a confusing document, plan a trip, organize a list, learn something new, or explore a question you've always wondered about.

Think of AI as a **tool you can talk to in ordinary language**. You don't need special computer skills or secret commands.

You can ask a question.

Read the answer.

Ask a follow-up.

And if the answer isn't right, you can say so and try again.

What This Book Is

This book is a friendly guide for everyday people who want to understand and use AI in their daily lives—whether you're completely new to AI or weren't sure what to do next.

What This Book Is Not

This book doesn't assume you already know anything about AI. We'll start with the basics and build from there.

What AI Actually Is

Artificial Intelligence is a computer program that has been trained to understand human language and respond helpfully. You type a question or a request, and it types back an answer — just like texting with a very knowledgeable friend.

AI is a tool, not a person, and it is not perfect. It can be extremely useful, but it can also make mistakes. Always double-check important information—especially anything involving your health, money, safety, or legal matters.

The One Thing to Always Remember

AI is a tool, not a person — and it is not perfect.

AI can be extremely useful, but it can also make mistakes. Sometimes it may give you information that sounds confident but isn't correct.

That's why you should double-check important information, especially anything involving your health, money, safety, legal matters, or important personal decisions. Think of AI as a helpful starting point — not always the final word.

You are still in charge.

That's a CareNav philosophy.

What Readers Are Saying

"I found it very helpful to make me feel confident to use, and to have a basic understanding of what it is—and what it isn't. I have used it three or four times already!!"

— Vicki

PART ONE

Getting Started Without the Confusion

Chapter 1: Meet Your Chat Assistants

You may have heard people talking about ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, or other AI assistants.

These are different AI tools made by different companies. They have many capabilities in common, but they can differ in features, tools, pricing, privacy settings, and the ways they work with information.

The good news is that you don't need to become an expert in all of them.

For this book, you only need to learn the basic skill of talking to an AI assistant.

ChatGPT

ChatGPT became widely known among everyday users after its public launch in 2022. You can use it for free at chatgpt.com.

Claude

Claude is made by a company called Anthropic. Many people find Claude especially good at explaining things clearly and having natural conversations. You can use it for free at claude.ai.

Gemini

Gemini is made by Google — the same company that makes the search engine you may already use. It is available at gemini.google.com. If you already have a Gmail account, you can log in with the same account.

Which One Should You Use?

Any of these can be a good place to begin. The available features and limits can change, so don't worry about choosing the 'perfect' one. If you already have a Google account, starting with Gemini might be easiest since you already have a login. Otherwise, Claude or ChatGPT are both excellent choices.

Good to know: Many AI assistants offer free ways to get started, although the available features and limits can change over time. You do not necessarily need a paid subscription to begin learning.

Try it: Look up one of these websites in your browser: claude.ai, chatgpt.com, or gemini.google.com. Just peek at the website — you do not need to sign up yet.

Chapter 2: How to Get There — Opening a Browser and Going to the Website

Before you can use a chat assistant, you need to get to it. This means opening a program on your computer called a "browser" and typing in an address.

What Is a Browser?

A browser is the program you use to look at websites on the internet. Common browsers include:

- Google Chrome — usually shown as a colorful circle icon
- Microsoft Edge — shown as a blue wave or "e" icon
- Safari — shown as a blue compass icon (on Apple computers and iPhones)
- Firefox — shown as an orange and purple icon

Any of these will work. Most computers already have at least one of them installed.

How to Open Your Browser

On a Windows computer: look for the browser icon on your desktop (the main screen) or in the Start menu at the bottom left corner. Click on it once to open it.

On a Mac: look for the browser icon in the Dock—that row of icons usually at the bottom of the screen. Click on it once.

On a tablet or phone: look for the browser app icon and tap it.

How to Go to a Website

Near the top of the browser, you'll see a long box called the address bar. This is where you type the address of the website you want to visit. For example, to visit Claude, click in that bar and type:

Type: *claude.ai*

Then press the Enter key on your keyboard (or tap Go on a phone). The website will load—usually within a few seconds.

Tip: If you accidentally typed something and the wrong page came up, just click in the address bar again, delete what is there, and type the correct address.

Try it: Open your browser and type *claude.ai* in the address bar. Press Enter and see what comes up.

Chapter 3: Creating Your AI Account

To use many AI assistants, you'll need to create an account. The exact steps vary by service, but the process is usually straightforward.

You may be asked for:

- An email address
- A password, or another sign-in method
- An email or phone verification

Important: Only create your account through the AI company's official website or official app.

Safety tip: Never share your password or verification code with someone who contacts you unexpectedly, even if they claim to work for the AI company. When in doubt, go directly to the company's official website rather than using a link or phone number someone sends you.

Forgot your password? Do not worry—every website has a "Forgot password" link. Click it, and they will send you an email to reset it.

Try it: Try creating a free account on claude.ai or chatgpt.com. If you get stuck on any step, ask a family member or friend to sit with you for just those few minutes.

Chapter 4: The Chat Box — How to Talk Like You're Texting a Friend

Once you have an account and are logged in, you will see the main screen. There will be a large white area, and at the bottom, a box where you can type your message. This is called the "chat box" or "prompt box."

This is where the conversation begins. You type your question or request, press Enter (or click the send button—usually a little arrow), and your chat assistant responds.

What Can You Type?

Almost anything! Your chat assistant understands normal, everyday language. You do not need special commands or technical words. Just type the way you would talk to a helpful person.

Here are some examples of things you could type right now:

Example: *Can you explain what Medicare Part B covers in simple terms?*

Example: *I need to write a thank you note to my neighbor who brought me soup when I was sick. Can you help?*

Example: *What is a good, easy recipe for chicken soup?*

Example: *My doctor mentioned I have high blood pressure. What does that mean, and what questions should I ask him?*

Notice how those are just normal sentences — the same way you would ask a knowledgeable friend. That is really all there is to it.

How to Send Your Message

After typing your message, you can either press the Enter key on your keyboard or click the small arrow button (or send button) next to the typing box.

Your chat assistant will start typing a response almost immediately. Sometimes the response comes out word by word — this is normal. It is not frozen; it is just writing.

Having a Back-and-Forth Conversation

One of the best things about a chat assistant is that you can keep the conversation going. After the AI responds, you can ask a follow-up question right in the same window. Within a conversation, the AI can usually use what you've already told it as context for the next messages.

Example: *If you asked about chicken soup and the AI gave you a recipe, you could then type: "That looks good but I am watching my sodium. Can you adjust it?" and it will update the recipe for you.*

Try it: Try typing this into the chat: **"Hello! I am new to using chat. What are three simple things you can help me with today?"** Then read the response and ask a follow-up question about anything that interests you.

Chapter 5: What to Do When Something Goes Wrong

Sometimes technology does not cooperate. Here is how to handle the most common problems you might run into.

"The page is not loading"

First, check that your internet connection is working by trying to open another website. If other websites work but the chat service does not, the service may be temporarily busy. Wait a few minutes and try again.

You can also try refreshing the page by pressing F5 on your keyboard or clicking the circular arrow icon at the top of your browser.

"I got an error message"

Error messages often look more alarming than they are. The most common one simply means the website is temporarily busy. Close the browser tab, reopen it, and try again.

"It stopped responding mid-answer"

This happens occasionally. You can type "Please continue" or "Keep going," and your chat assistant will pick up where it left off.

"I accidentally closed the window"

If you had a conversation going and accidentally closed it, go back to the website and look for a "History" or "Recent conversations" section on the left side of the screen. Your old conversations are usually saved there.

"I am not sure I said what I meant"

No problem at all! Just type again and clarify. You can say something like "Let me rephrase that" or "What I actually meant was..." and your chat assistant will respond to your new message.

Golden rule: There are no dumb questions and no mistakes you can make that will break anything. The worst that can happen is you get an unhelpful answer. Just rephrase and try again.

PART TWO

Everyday Things Your Chat Assistant Can Help You With

Chapter 6: Writing Letters, Emails, and Messages

One of the most practical uses of a chat assistant is helping you write things. Whether it is a complaint letter to a company, a kind note to a neighbor, a birthday message for a grandchild, or a formal email to a doctor's office, AI can help you find the right words.

You do not need to write perfectly. The AI can create a draft for you. You can then review it, make changes, and make sure it sounds like you.

How to Ask for Help with Writing

Simply describe what you want to say and who you are writing to. The more detail you give, the better the result.

Example: *"I need to write a letter to my insurance company. They denied a claim for a prescription my doctor ordered, and I want to appeal that decision. Can you write a firm but polite letter for me?"*

Example: *"Can you help me write a short birthday card message for my 8-year-old granddaughter? She loves horses."*

Example: *"I want to send an email to my neighbor thanking him for shoveling my driveway last week after the snowstorm."*

The chat assistant will write a draft for you. You can then copy it, make any small changes you like, and use it.

Tip: After the chat assistant writes something for you, you can ask it to make changes. For example: "Can you make it a little shorter?" or "Can you make it sound more formal?" or "Add a line about how much I appreciate their help."

Try it: Ask the chat assistant to write a short, friendly email to a neighbor or family member — maybe a thank-you note or a catch-up message. Read what it writes and notice how natural it sounds.

Chapter 7: Understanding Confusing Letters and Documents

Have you ever received a letter from Medicare, your insurance company, the IRS, your bank, or a doctor's office—and had absolutely no idea what it meant? You are not alone. These letters are often written in complicated language that even well-educated people find confusing.

AI is remarkably good at translating confusing official language into plain, simple English.

How to Do It

You can either type out the confusing part of the letter, or—if you are on a computer—copy and paste it. Then ask your chat assistant to explain it.

Example: *"I got a letter from Medicare that says my claim was denied because it was not considered medically necessary. Can you explain what this means and what my options are?"*

Example: *"My bank sent me a notice about changes to my account terms. Here is what it says: [paste the confusing paragraph]. Can you explain this in simple language?"*

Your chat assistant will read the text and explain it to you in straightforward, easy-to-understand language. You can then ask follow-up questions like "What should I do about this?" or "Is this something I need to worry about?"

Important: AI can explain what a document says, but for important legal or financial decisions, always talk to a real professional—a lawyer, financial advisor, or doctor. AI gives you a starting point, not a final answer.

Try it: Find a letter or notice you have been confused about. Type the confusing part into the AI and ask it to explain it in plain English.

Chapter 8: Getting Simple Answers Without Digging Through Search Results

If you have ever searched for something on Google and been overwhelmed by pages and pages of results—advertisements, irrelevant websites, and conflicting information—you will love how AI works differently.

With AI, you can ask a question in plain language and get an organized response. Some AI tools can also search the web and provide links or sources. Instead of sorting through a long list of search results yourself, the AI may help summarize what it finds and explain it in simpler language.

But remember: an organized answer isn't necessarily a correct answer. For anything important, check the sources and verify the information.

Example: *"What is the difference between a Roth IRA and a traditional IRA, in simple terms?"*

Example: *"Why does my left knee hurt more when the weather changes?"*

Example: *"What does it mean when a doctor says your sodium is low?"*

Example: *"Is it safe to take ibuprofen and acetaminophen at the same time?"*

Your chat assistant will give you a clear, organized answer. For medical or medication questions, it will usually remind you to check with your doctor—which is good advice.

Remember: AI answers are very helpful for understanding things and getting information, but for medical questions, always confirm with your own doctor, who knows your specific situation.

Try it: Think of something you have been curious about but never quite got around to looking up. Type into the chat as a question and see what you learn.

Chapter 9: Help with Recipes

Whether you are an experienced cook or just trying to get dinner on the table, a chat assistant can be a wonderful kitchen companion. It can suggest recipes, help you substitute ingredients you do not have, adjust recipes for dietary needs, and even help you figure out what to make with whatever is in your refrigerator.

Example: *"What can I make for dinner tonight? I have chicken, potatoes, and carrots."*

Example: *"I want to make my mother's pot roast recipe, but I do not have red wine. What can I use instead?"*

Example: *"Can you give me an easy recipe for banana bread that a beginner can make?"*

Example: *"I am diabetic and love desserts. Can you suggest some low-sugar dessert options?"*

Your chat assistant can often adjust a recipe for serving size, ingredient substitutions, or dietary preferences. Just ask.

Try it: Ask the AI: "What is a simple, comforting recipe I could make this week that does not take more than 45 minutes?" See what it suggests, then ask it to adjust something about the recipe.

Chapter 10: Planning Trips, Events, and Appointments

Planning anything — a trip to visit family, a birthday party, a medical procedure, or even just a busy week — involves a lot of moving parts. Your chat assistant can help you think through all of it.

Example: *"I am flying from Kansas City to Phoenix to visit my daughter in March. I have never booked a flight online before. Can you walk me through how to do it step by step?"*

Example: *"I need to plan a simple birthday dinner at a restaurant for my husband's 70th birthday. There will be 12 people. What should I think about and plan for?"*

Example: *"I have a knee replacement surgery scheduled. What should I prepare at home in advance to make recovery easier?"*

Your chat assistant can create checklists, suggest things you might not have thought of, and help you organize your thoughts into a clear plan.

Try it: Ask the AI to help you plan something coming up in your life — even something small like a dinner party or a weekend trip. Ask it to make you a simple checklist.

Chapter 11: Remembering and Organizing

Your chat assistant can be a wonderful organizational assistant. It can help you create shopping lists, to-do lists, and schedules—and help you think through what needs to happen and when.

Example: *"Can you make me a shopping list for a Thanksgiving dinner for 8 people?"*

Example: *"I need to get several things done before my son visits next month. Can you help me make a checklist and put them in a logical order?"*

Can you help me organize the medication information I already have into a simple weekly checklist? I take blood pressure medicine in the morning, a vitamin at lunch, and a cholesterol pill at night."

You can copy any list your chat assistant creates and paste it into a notes app, print it out, or simply read it off the screen.

Try it: Ask the AI to create a shopping list for a meal you want to cook this week, or a to-do list for something you need to get done.

PART THREE

Health, Family, and Big Decisions

Chapter 12: Understanding Medical Terms Your Doctor Used

Doctors often use medical words that sound frightening or confusing. You might leave an appointment feeling more worried than before simply because you did not understand what was said. Your chat assistant can help you look up and truly understand those terms.

Example: *"My doctor said I have atrial fibrillation. Can you explain what that is in plain English?"*

Example: *"My blood test showed my A1C is 6.8. What does that mean, and is that bad?"*

Example: *"My doctor mentioned I might have stenosis in my spine. Can you explain what that means in simple terms?"*

The AI will explain the term clearly, often including what it means for everyday life and what questions you might want to ask your doctor.

Important: AI gives you information and education. It does not replace your doctor. Use AI to understand what is happening, then have a better, more informed conversation with your doctor.

Try it: Think of a medical word you have heard recently and did not fully understand. Look it up by asking the AI to explain it in plain English.

Chapter 13: Preparing Questions to Ask Your Doctor

One of the most valuable things a chat assistant can do is help you prepare for a medical appointment. Many people leave the doctor's office and only then remember what they wanted to ask. AI can help you think of the right questions in advance.

Simply tell your chat assistant about your situation and ask what questions you should bring up.

Example: *"I have a follow-up appointment with my cardiologist next week about my heart medication. What questions should I ask?"*

Example: *"My doctor wants to put me on a new medication called metformin for diabetes. What questions should I ask before I start taking it?"*

Example: *"I have been having dizziness in the mornings for the past two weeks. What should I tell my doctor, and what might they want to know?"*

You can even ask your chat assistant to format the questions in a list so you can print them out and bring the list to your appointment.

Try it: Think of an upcoming doctor visit or a health concern. Ask your chat assistant: "What questions should I ask my doctor about [your concern]?" Print or write down the list and bring it to your next visit.

Chapter 14: Understanding Medicare, Insurance, and Benefits

Medicare, supplemental insurance, prescription drug plans, Social Security benefits — this paperwork can feel overwhelming. The good news is that a chat assistant can be very helpful for explaining how these programs work and helping you understand what you are reading.

Example: *"Can you explain the difference between Medicare Part A and Medicare Part B in simple terms?"*

Example: *"I received a Medicare Explanation of Benefits, and I do not understand why part of my bill was not covered. The letter says it was not medically necessary. What does that mean, and what can I do?"*

Example: *"What is a Medicare Advantage plan, and how is it different from original Medicare?"*

Example: *"I am turning 65 next year. What do I need to do to sign up for Medicare and when?"*

Remember: For decisions involving your actual coverage choices, it is worth speaking with a free Medicare counselor (available through your State Health Insurance Assistance Program, called SHIP) in addition to using AI to understand your options.

Try it: Ask your chat assistant one Medicare or insurance question that has been confusing you. See how clearly it explains the answer.

Chapter 15: Talking Through a Big Decision

Life is full of big decisions—whether to move closer to family, whether to sell the house, how to handle a difficult family situation, or whether to accept a medical treatment. A chat assistant can be a thoughtful sounding board.

AI will not make the decision for you—and you would not want it to. But it can help you think through the pros and cons, consider factors you might not have thought of, and organize your thoughts.

Example: *"I am thinking about moving from my house into a senior living community. I am not sure if I am ready. Can you help me think through the pros and cons?"*

Example: *"My doctor is recommending knee replacement surgery. I am nervous about it. What are the things I should consider in deciding whether to go ahead?"*

Example: *"My son wants me to move across the country to live near him but I have lived here my whole life and my friends are here. Can you help me think through this decision?"*

AI can help you lay out the considerations, but don't assume it is neutral or always correct. Use it as a thinking aid, and make the final decision using your own judgment and, when appropriate, advice from people you trust or qualified professionals.

Tip: You can share as much or as little detail as you are comfortable with. The more context you give, the more tailored and useful the response will be.

Try it: Is there a decision—big or small—that has been on your mind? Ask your chat assistant to help you think through it by listing the pros and cons.

Chapter 16: Getting a Second Opinion — AI and Real Advice

AI is a remarkable resource, but it is important to understand what it is—and what it is not.

AI is wonderful for: understanding information, explaining concepts, drafting documents, brainstorming ideas, answering general questions, and helping you think things through.

AI is not a substitute for: your doctor, your lawyer, your financial advisor, or your accountant. These professionals know your personal situation in ways AI cannot. They are accountable for their advice. They can be held responsible if something goes wrong.

Think of AI as a very capable tool that can offer information, explanations, ideas, and another way to look at a problem.”

It can be useful perspective—but it does not know your personal situation the way a doctor, lawyer, financial advisor, accountant, or someone who knows you personally does.

The right balance: Use AI to get smarter before your appointments. Ask it to explain things, help you prepare questions, and help you understand what you were told. Then take that understanding to your real advisors.

PART FOUR

Staying Safe

Chapter 17: Be Careful With Requests for Personal Information

Safety is very important when using anything online, including AI. Most everyday AI questions do not require you to provide highly sensitive personal information.

Be especially cautious if someone unexpectedly asks you for:

- Your Social Security number
- Your bank account or credit card numbers
- Your passwords
- Verification or security codes
- Money
- Medicare or insurance identification numbers

If an unexpected message, email, phone call, or pop-up asks for sensitive information or money while claiming to represent an AI company, stop and verify it through the company's official website.

You usually don't need to share sensitive personal information to ask your chat assistant a general question.

Safety rule: Real AI tools are like a library. You go to them to ask questions and get information. They do not reach out to you asking for personal details.

Be Careful With What You Share

While AI is generally safe to use for questions and writing help, use common sense about personal information. You do not need to share your full name, address, Social Security number, or financial details to get help with most questions.

For example, instead of typing "My Social Security number is 123-45-6789 and I want to know about my benefits," you can simply ask "Can you explain how Social Security retirement benefits are calculated?" and get the information you need without sharing personal details.

Chapter 18: How to Spot an AI Scam

Unfortunately, some dishonest people use AI to try to trick others. Here is what to watch out for.

Fake AI Websites

Scammers sometimes create fake websites that look like real AI tools but are designed to steal your information or charge you money. Always go to AI tools directly by typing the address in your browser (claude.ai, chatgpt.com, gemini.google.com) rather than clicking a link in an email or advertisement.

Phone Calls or Emails Claiming to Be from AI Companies

Be suspicious of unexpected calls or emails claiming to be from an AI company, especially if they ask you to provide passwords, verification codes, payment information, or remote access to your computer. Don't use the phone number or link they provide. Instead, contact the company through its official website.

"Grandparent Scams" Using AI Voices

A particularly cruel new scam involves using AI to fake the voice of a family member—often a grandchild—claiming to be in trouble and needing money urgently. If you ever get a call like this, hang up and call your family member directly on their regular number to verify it is really them.

Offers That Seem Too Good to Be True

If you see an advertisement for an AI tool that promises to make you rich, cure a disease, or do something unbelievable—it is not real. Stick to the well-known, trusted AI tools mentioned in this book.

When in doubt: Call a family member or trusted friend before giving any information or money to anyone you are not 100% sure about.

Chapter 19: What AI Gets Wrong — and How to Double-Check

AI can be very capable, but it is not perfect. Understanding its limitations helps you use it wisely.

AI Can Make Mistakes

Sometimes AI states something with great confidence that turns out to be incorrect. This is called a "hallucination" — a strange term that simply means the AI generated something that is not accurate. It can happen with specific dates, names, statistics, and facts.

This is why it is important never to take AI's word as absolute truth for important matters without checking.

How to Double-Check

For anything important — a medical fact, a legal matter, a financial decision, a news event — verify the information through a second source. This could be a trusted website, your doctor, or a professional you trust.

You can even ask the AI itself: "How confident are you about this?" or "Where could I verify this information?" A good AI tool will honestly acknowledge uncertainty and point you toward authoritative sources.

AI May Not Know What Is Happening Right Now

AI does not automatically know everything that is happening right now. Some AI tools can search the web or connect to current information, while others may rely partly on information available from their training or other connected sources.

For current news, recent laws, prices, schedules, medical guidance, or anything else that can change, check the date and source of the information.

Good habit: For any important fact, ask yourself: "Should I double-check this?" If it involves your health, money, safety, or an important decision—yes.

Chapter 20: Your Privacy—What You Should Know Before You Share

Many people wonder: Does my chat assistant remember what I told it? Does someone else see my conversations?

The answer depends on the AI service, the type of account you have, and the privacy and memory settings available to you. Different AI companies handle conversations and data differently, and those policies can change over time.

Within a Conversation

An AI assistant can usually use earlier messages in the same conversation as context for what you're asking next.

Between Conversations

Some AI services offer memory or other features that can carry information from one conversation to another. Others may handle conversations differently. Check the settings and privacy information for the particular AI service you're using.

The Practical Rule

Don't put highly sensitive information into an AI conversation unless you understand how that service handles it and you have a good reason to share it.

That includes passwords, Social Security numbers, financial account information, and other information you would not want exposed.

When possible, remove names, account numbers, addresses, and other identifying details before asking your chat assistant tool for help.

Think of privacy as part of using AI wisely: understand the tool you're using, check its settings, and share only what is necessary.

PART FIVE

Fun and Connection

Chapter 21: Ask It Anything — Curiosity Has No Age Limit

One of the great joys of AI is that you can finally get answers to all those things you have always wondered about but never looked up. There is no subject too obscure, no question too simple, and no curiosity too small.

Example: *"Why do cats purr? Is it only when they are happy?"*

Example: *"I have always wondered how airplanes stay in the air. Can you explain it simply?"*

Example: *"What actually happened in the Cuban Missile Crisis? I lived through it but never fully understood it."*

Example: *"Is it true that we only use 10% of our brains?"*

Your chat assistant can explain things at whatever level of detail you want. You can always ask for more: "Can you go deeper on that?" or "Can you give me an example?"

Try it: Ask your chat assistant something you have always been curious about. Do not filter yourself—just ask. See where the conversation goes.

Chapter 22: Help Writing Cards, Poems, and Messages for Loved Ones

Your chat assistant can help you find the words when you are not sure what to say—for a birthday, an anniversary, a sympathy card, a wedding toast, or any occasion.

You give your chat assistant some information about the person and the occasion, and it helps you craft something heartfelt and personal.

Example: *"My best friend of 40 years is turning 75. She loves gardening, has a wonderful sense of humor, and has been there for me through everything. Can you help me write a heartfelt message for her birthday card?"*

Example: *"My grandson just graduated from college. I want to write him a letter of congratulations that tells him how proud I am and shares some wisdom for his future. Can you help me get started?"*

Example: *"A neighbor I have known for 20 years just lost her husband. I want to write a sympathy note. I am not sure what to say."*

The chat assistant will write a draft, and then you can adjust it to sound more like you. You can say, "Can you make it a little funnier?" or "Can you add something about how she always had time for everyone?" and it will revise.

Try it: Think of someone in your life who deserves a kind word. Ask your chat assistant to help you write a message, card, or short letter for them.

Chapter 23: Learning Something New

Have you wanted to learn more about a hobby, a period of history, a place in the world, how something works, or a skill you never got around to? Your chat assistant is a wonderful teacher—endlessly patient, always available, and able to explain things at exactly your pace.

Example: *"I have always wanted to learn more about the Civil War. Can you give me a fascinating overview as if you were telling me a story?"*

Example: *"I want to start watercolor painting. I have never done it before. What do I need to buy, and how do I start?"*

Example: *"Can you teach me the basics of chess? I know how the pieces move, but I want to understand strategy better."*

Example: *"I would like to learn some basic Spanish phrases for a trip I am taking. Can you start teaching me in a fun, easy way?"*

You can go as deep as you like and come back to any topic anytime. Learning does not stop at any age — and a chat assistant makes it easier than ever to explore.

Try it: Pick one topic you have always wanted to know more about. Ask your chat assistant to teach you about it in a way that is easy and interesting to read.

Chapter 24: Preserving Your Life Stories

Every person carries a lifetime of experiences, memories, and wisdom. A chat assistant can help you capture those stories—to share with children, grandchildren, or simply to preserve for yourself.

You can tell your chat assistant your memories, and it can help you turn them into a story that sounds like you. Or it can ask you questions to help you remember and reflect.

Example: *"I grew up on a farm in Kansas in the 1950s. I want to write down some memories for my grandchildren. Can you ask me some questions to help me get started?"*

Example: *"I want to write about what it was like to immigrate to America from Poland in 1962. I have so many memories, but I do not know where to start."*

Example: *"I met my husband at a dance in 1968. Can you help me write the story of how we met?"*

Your chat assistant can help turn your spoken memories—which you type out roughly—into polished, readable stories that can be printed, emailed to family, or collected into a small personal memoir.

Gift idea: A collection of your life stories, written with AI help, is one of the most precious gifts you can give to the people who love you.

Try it: Start a memory project. Type one of your favorite life memories into the chat and ask it to help you write it as a short story. See how it comes to life on the page.

PART SIX

Growing Your Confidence

Chapter 25: How to Ask Better Questions

Here is a secret: the quality of the answer you get from AI depends a lot on how you ask the question. The good news is that asking better questions is easy once you know a few simple tricks.

A Simple Formula for Better Prompts

You don't need to learn complicated "prompt engineering." Just give your chat assistant these four things when they are useful:

1. **WHAT** you need
2. **WHO** or **WHAT** it's about
3. **HOW** you want the answer
4. **CONTEXT** that matters

For example:

"I need to write a letter to my insurance company. They denied a prescription my doctor ordered. I want to appeal the decision. Please make the letter firm but polite and keep it under 300 words."

That's a good prompt because you've told the AI what you need, provided context, and explained how you want the answer.

Be Specific

The more detail you give, the more useful the answer.

Less helpful: *"Tell me about diabetes."*

More helpful: *"My doctor just told me I have Type 2 diabetes. Can you explain in simple terms what that means for my daily life and what I should focus on first?"*

Give Context

Tell your chat assistant who you are and what you are trying to accomplish.

Less helpful: *"Write a letter about my medication."*

More helpful: *"I am a 72-year-old woman and I need to write a letter to my insurance company appealing a denial for my blood pressure medication. Can you write a firm, polite letter for me?"*

Ask for the Format You Want

You can tell the AI how you want the answer presented.

- "Can you make me a numbered list?"
- "Can you explain it as if you were talking to someone who knows nothing about this topic?"
- "Can you keep it short — just the main points?"
- "Can you write it in a way I could print out and bring to my doctor?"

Remember: You can always follow up. If the first answer is not quite right, just say so: "That is helpful, but can you focus more on..." or "Can you simplify that?"

Try it: Take a question you asked your chat assistant earlier in this book and try asking it again with more detail and context. Notice how the answer changes.

Chapter 26: When AI Says Something Wrong — How to Push Back

AI makes mistakes. When it does, you are completely allowed to push back—and you should.

If you know something is wrong, say so directly:

Example: *"I do not think that is right. My doctor told me the opposite. Can you reconsider?"*

Example: *"That does not match what I read in my Medicare letter. Are you sure about that?"*

Example: *"I think you may have made an error in that calculation. Can you check it?"*

Your chat assistant may acknowledge the mistake, revise its answer, or explain why it gave the original response. But don't assume that a revised answer is automatically correct. For anything important, verify the information using a reliable source or qualified professional.

You can also ask: "What information are you basing this on?" or "Where could I verify this?"

Good news: Pushing back on AI is not rude. It is exactly what you should do. The best interactions happen when you are an active, questioning participant.

Chapter 27: Helping a Family Member or Friend Get Started

If this book has been helpful to you, you might want to help someone else get started with AI—a friend, a sibling, a neighbor who has heard about it but does not know where to begin.

The Best Way to Help

Sit with them. Do not just explain—do it together, side by side, on the computer. Let them type the first message. Be patient and encouraging.

Start with something personal to them. If your friend loves gardening, have them ask their chat assistant a gardening question. If your neighbor has been confused by a Medicare letter, help them ask their chat assistant about that. Seeing a genuinely useful answer to something they actually care about is the best way for anyone to get excited about a new tool.

What Not to Do

Do not take over and do it for them. The goal is for them to feel capable, not to be impressed by you. Let them type. Let them make mistakes. Celebrate when it works.

Good opening line to try with them: *"Type this: Hello, I am trying AI for the first time. Can you suggest three things a person my age might find useful?"*

Try it: Think of one person in your life who might benefit from using a chat assistant. Offer to spend 30 minutes with them exploring it together.

Chapter 28: What Is Coming Next — and Why You Do Not Need to Worry

AI is developing quickly. New features, new tools, and improvements are coming out constantly. If you hear about new developments and feel a little overwhelmed, that is completely understandable.

Here is the reassuring truth: the fundamental skill you have built in this book will not become outdated. The basics remain the same—you type what you want or need, you get a helpful response, you use your judgment, and you verify anything important. That simple foundation applies to whatever AI tools come next.

You do not need to keep up with every new development. You just need to be comfortable with the tools that are useful to you right now. As things change, you'll mostly see additions—new tools and new capabilities—not replacements that make what you already know obsolete.

Technology should work for you, not the other way around. You have already done the hard part: you were willing to try. That curiosity and willingness to learn is the only thing that was ever required.

Final thought: You have done something many people never take the time to do: you were willing to try something new. Now go see what your new chat companion can help you do.

Here are some words you might come across when using AI or talking to people about it, explained in plain language.

AI (Artificial Intelligence)

A computer program that has been trained to understand and respond to human language. It can answer questions, write text, help plan things, and much more.

Browser

The program you use to view websites on the internet. Common browsers include Chrome, Edge, Safari, and Firefox.

Chat box / Prompt box

The rectangle at the bottom of an AI screen where you type your questions or requests.

Claude

An AI assistant made by a company called Anthropic. Available at claude.ai.

ChatGPT

An AI assistant made by a company called OpenAI. Available at chatgpt.com.

Gemini

An AI assistant made by Google. Available at gemini.google.com.

Hallucination

When AI confidently states something that is incorrect. It is not lying—it is making an error. This is why you should double-check important facts.

Knowledge cutoff

A date that may indicate the point after which information was not included in an AI model's training. Some AI tools can also use search or other connected sources to access more current information.

Prompt

The message or question you type to the AI. Your prompt is the instruction that tells the AI what you want.

Refresh

Reloading a web page. You can do this by pressing F5 on your keyboard or clicking the circular arrow near the address bar.

Address bar

The long rectangle at the top of your browser where you type a website address (like claude.ai) to go directly to a site.

Quick Reference Card — 10 Things to Try This Week

If you are not sure where to start, here are ten simple things to try. Pick any one that interests you.

1. Ask your chat assistant to explain a medical term your doctor used recently
2. Ask your chat assistant to write a short, kind note to someone you appreciate
3. Ask your chat assistant for a simple recipe using ingredients you already have
4. Ask your chat assistant to explain your Medicare Explanation of Benefits
5. Ask your chat assistant something you have always been curious about
6. Ask your chat assistant to make a shopping list for a meal you want to cook
7. Ask your chat assistant to help you prepare questions for an upcoming appointment
8. Ask your chat assistant to tell you an interesting story from history
9. Ask your chat assistant to help you write a memory from your life as a short story
10. Just say hello and ask what your chat assistant can help you with today

Troubleshooting — The 10 Most Common Problems and Fixes

Problem: The page will not load

Fix: Check your internet connection by trying another website. If the internet works, wait a few minutes and try again. The service may be temporarily busy.

Problem: I got an error message

Fix: Close the tab and reopen the website. Most errors are temporary.

Problem: Your chat assistant stopped writing mid-sentence

Fix: Type "Please continue" and press Enter. It will pick up where it left off.

Problem: I accidentally closed the window

Fix: Go back to the website and look for a conversation history on the left side of the screen. Your conversation may be saved there.

Problem: The answer was not helpful

Fix: Rephrase your question with more detail. Add context about who you are and exactly what you need.

Problem: The text is too small to read

Fix: Hold the Ctrl key (or Cmd on Mac) and press the + key to zoom in on the page.

Problem: I cannot remember my password

Fix: Click the "Forgot password" link on the login page. They will send you an email to reset it.

Problem: Someone called claiming to be from the AI company

Fix: Hang up and don't provide information or remote access. If you think the call might be legitimate, contact the company through its official website using the contact information you find yourself.

Problem: The chat assistant said something I know is wrong

Fix: Tell it directly: "I think that is incorrect." Ask it to reconsider. For anything important, verify the information elsewhere.

A Note to Family Members

Here are a few things that will help them succeed:

If you have shared this book with a parent, grandparent, friend, spouse, coworker, neighbor, or anyone else who is new to AI—thank you. You may have given them something that can genuinely make everyday life a little easier.

Let Them Be in the Driver's Seat

The biggest barrier for many beginners is simply getting started. Sitting with them for 30 minutes to create an account and send the first message makes an enormous difference. Once they have done it once with someone they trust, they can do it alone.

Sit With Them the First Time

Resist the urge to take over. Let them type. Let them make mistakes. Your job is to encourage, not to demonstrate. Their confidence matters more than doing it correctly.

Start With Their Interests

The best first question is one about something they actually care about — their health condition, a recipe they love, a historical period that fascinates them, a letter they need to write. When a chat assistant is immediately useful for something real, the connection is made.

Normalize the Mistakes

Tell them: "This thing sometimes gets it wrong. That is normal. You just tell it and it will fix it." Removing the fear of doing it wrong is one of the most helpful things you can do.

Keep Checking In

A quick phone call — "Did you try asking your chat assistant anything this week? What happened?" — goes a long way. People learn faster when they know someone is interested in how they are doing.

The person you gave this book to has more wisdom, patience, and curiosity than they probably give themselves credit for. They just needed someone to show them the door. You did that. That matters.

— *End of Book* —
Thank You

