



10 Tech Tips for Getting Started with AI



King Farm Community
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Welcome!

I'm excited to speak with you about the world of AI and suggest a ways to use it.

No prior experience is needed- just an open mind to learn and explore.

Already dabbling? Great! There's plenty more to learn!




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Artificial Intelligence (AI)

When you hear people talk about "artificial intelligence"- what comes to mind?




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Negative perceptions of AI

Some people think it's:

- Too complicated to learn
- Time-consuming to figure out
- Another tech burden
- A source of errors and frustration
- Loaded with privacy, bias and safety concerns
- Not helpful for your situation
- Harmful to the environment- uses too much energy and water




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Positive Perceptions of AI

After our time together I hope you'll think of genAI as:

- A thinking partner for getting unstuck
- A tool to spark creativity and fresh ideas
- A resource to saves time and boost productivity
- A tutor to enhance learning and understanding
- A solution that contributes more benefits than harm
- A way to overcome some disabilities



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It's nice to meet you! A bit about me:

- Founder of [Innovative Speech Therapy](#) (1993)
- Love learning about emerging technologies
- Live in Montgomery County, MD- just outside of Washington, DC
- Grew up in Buffalo, NY- went to college and grad school at Northwestern University
- 4 grown kids and 3 grandchildren
- Speech-language pathologist
- Assistive Technology Specialist
- Immersed in eldercare- my mom lives in Ingleside at King Farm
- It makes my day to help others improve life with tech!



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Want a copy of the slides?

bit.ly/ai-with-joan-march-2026



We already use AI in our daily lives

- **Typing help** with predictive text and autocorrect
- **Maps** with traffic predictions and smart rerouting
- **Personalized recommendations** for shows, music, videos
- **Voice features** like dictation and live captions
- **Email tools** for spam filtering and smart replies



Images, other than screenshots, in this presentation were created with either Canva or AI

So what's new?

What's new is that **we can now talk to it directly** using tools like **ChatGPT** or **Google Gemini**—instead of it working behind the scenes.

Most now offer "multi-modal understanding!" It's a game changer!

Chatbots can "understand" an image, writing and spoken words!

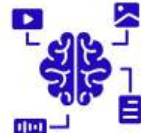
Just like spellcheck or GPS, it's helpful most of the time—but you're still in the driver's seat and **always need to check for accuracy.**"



LLM- Large Language Model- Generative AI

Generative AI...

- Answer questions
- Provide information
- Help with a variety of tasks
- Teach new content
- Act as a brainstorming partner
- Create and "understand" images and other content



What is generative AI?

https://youtu.be/wE_XS5TYa7s?si=HhMwPRNinZPOu

Getting started with AI





#1 Select a Chatbot- "Thought partner"

Most popular generative AI tools

- ChatGPT- <https://chatgpt.com>- Click "sign up" in top right
- Gemini (Google)- <https://gemini.google.com/> - Use your Google account
- Claude (Anthropic)- <https://claude.ai/> Sign up with email
- Perplexity- <https://www.perplexity.ai/> - no account required for basic features
- Copilot (Microsoft)- <https://copilot.microsoft.com/> Use microsoft account
- Duck.ai - <https://duck.ai> (more private but limited in what it can do)
- Grok- I don't use it or teach it- Elon Musk



Which chatbot will you explore?

- Download the app on your phone or use in your computer browser
- Create an account if needed
- Start with the free version



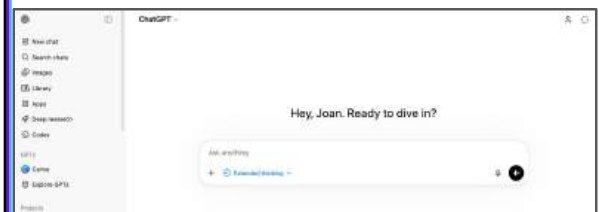
#2 Explore what's possible

Be a detective! Learn the language of tech

Don't be afraid to click to see what you can do!



ChatGPT - on computer



Gemini on computer

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ChatGPT - on iPhone

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Gemini 3- Mobile

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Gemini on iPhone - Click to find more options

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Duck.ai

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[Duck.ai](https://duck.ai) on mobile

Start with the DuckDuckGo Browser app and then use its chat

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#3 Maximize Your Privacy

Don't share sensitive information

- Personal Info
 - Full name
 - Address
 - Social Security info
 - Phone info
- Passwords and logins
- Financial Info
 - Bank info
 - Credit card info
- Personal Medical info



ChatGPT Privacy Settings

Open Settings

- Click your **profile picture or initials** (bottom-left on desktop, top-right on mobile)
- Select **Settings**
- **Data Controls**- **turn off improve the model for everyone**



Explore [Duck.ai](https://duck.ai) for maximizing privacy

- Go to [Duck.ai](https://duck.ai) or duckduckgo.com/chat
- It's browser based- no dedicated mobile app
- On mobile, download the Duck Duck Go browser app
- Pick a model- you'll have options like GPT-4o mini. The paid option offers more choices.
- Start chatting in the chat box
- Chats are stored locally (on devices- not in the cloud)



Gemini

1. Either go to gemini.google.com on your computer or download / open the Gemini app on mobile
2. Sign in with your Google account (Gmail)
3. If you don't have a Google account, create one
4. Accept the terms



How Gemini is different

Gemini is now integrated into Google apps and the Chrome browser

The free version by default will share your info to train it's AI - you can't opt out of model training .

The only way to prevent this is to go to settings in app or if online, go to <https://myactivity.google.com/product/gemini>.

1. Turn off "Gemini apps activity"
2. Disable "personal intelligence"
3. Doing this will also turn off it's memory for conversations



Paid Google accounts are more private

Feature	Free Gemini (Personal)	Workspace / Education (Paid/Managed)
Model Training	Yes. Google may use your chats to train and improve its AI models.	No. Your data is never used to train Google's global AI models.
Human Review	Yes. Anonymized snippets may be read by human reviewers to improve the system.	No. Your interactions are not reviewed by humans at Google.
Data "Walled Garden"	No. Your data is part of the general consumer pool.	Yes. Your data stays within your organization's "domain" and cannot leak to other companies.
Visual Indicator	None.	A Shield icon appears in the chat box to confirm Enterprise protections.



#4 AI to support challenges

AI as Assistive technology

AI can be a powerful equalizer — helping people do things that might otherwise be difficult or impossible.

What is assistive technology? Any device, app, or feature that helps someone do what they couldn't easily do without it — like glasses, hearing aids, or spell-check.



AI can help with many types of challenges

Vision impairments- AI reads text aloud and describes photos and images out loud

Speech disabilities - AI types what you say and speaks for those who have difficulty talking

Memory challenges - AI reminds, summarizes, and recaps conversations or instructions

Reading & writing - AI reads aloud, writes on your behalf, and corrects spelling and grammar

Cognitive support- AI simplifies complex information and breaks tasks into manageable steps

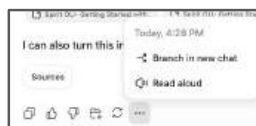
Mobility & hearing - AI responds to voice commands and generates live captions for those with hearing loss

A few chatbot accessibility features

Speech to text/ dictation - They all have a microphone for typing

Read aloud- most offer it or you can use the features of your device

Conversation mode- both you and the chatbot speak- ChatGPT and Gemini live



ChatGPT and Gemini Live Conversation Mode

- You speak, and ChatGPT listens
- It responds back with a spoken voice
- It feels more like a conversation
- You can ask follow-up questions naturally
- Helpful if typing is hard or tiring
- It will provide a transcript at the end



Having trouble reading a document?

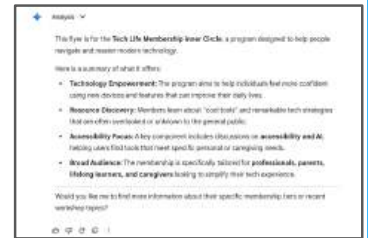
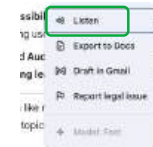
No worries!

Snap a picture on mobile and then select it for your chatbot to "read" and explain it to you or summarize the content



Gemini's response re photo of flyer

It's possible to "listen" to response on mobile and computer



Need help with time management or reducing stress?

- Too much to do and too little time? AI can help!
- Try using the microphone to tell AI all the things on your mind that you have to do. It helps if you can specify when they have to get done by so it can help you prioritize.
- At the end say- "please help me create a realistic schedule for this week/ day- to help me get things done! Ask me one question at a time to create the best solution possible."



Anxious or overwhelmed

"I find myself getting very anxious when I am in social situations.

Please act as an expert therapist and help me figure out some effective self-help techniques so I don't avoid social situations. I've had a lot of therapy and do not currently have access to professional help.

Please provide a highly concise response. Use short sections that focus on only one main idea at a time."



#5 Chatting with the Chatbot / Prompts

Interacting with chatbot

Add text by typing or speaking using the microphone



Prompts

- Practice providing “prompts” and going back and forth in a “conversation” to get desired info.
- Be specific
- The more context you give, the more useful the response
- Tell the AI what role to play
- Don't like the answer? Provide feedback

Getting Better Answers

- The more specific you are, the better the responses will be
- Include relevant details
- Ask follow up questions
- Give the chatbot a role and tell it what type of output you desire



Pay attention to the AI model you are using

- Newer models are often more accurate
- Free versions usually provide limited access to higher AI models



#6 Ideas to try

Not sure how to get started?

Ask AI!

“ I'm new to using generative AI.
How can you help me?”



Feel stuck or need inspiration? AI may be able to help!

- Creating recipes
- Understanding written documents
- Planning an event
- Learning new medical information
- Figuring out how to do something new
- Trying to be more organized and efficient
- Writing a poem
- Creating an image or infographic
- Studying for a test
- Redecorating a room
- Translating text
- Learn to play bridge
- Researching information

Planning a trip

"I've always wanted to go to visit some of the National Parks out West in the US. Act as an expert travel agent. Please help me decide where to go and what to do. I have one week available. Ask me questions one at a time to help me plan my time away."



Trip planning

- Ask for destination ideas, simple itineraries, packing lists, or things to do.
- Specify what you most enjoy doing when travelling
- Tell the chatbot if you have accessibility needs, special concerns
- Try telling the chatbot "act as an expert travel agent."
- Ask it to "ask me one question at a time to guide this conversation"



Medical

"I just saw blood work that said my HDL Cholesterol is 47 and my A1C is 5.9%"

What does this mean in plain English?

What are good questions to ask my doctor?"



Using GenAI for medical info

- Use for understanding, not diagnosis
- Provide general context, not private details
- Ask for plain-language explanations
- Summarize long notes or instructions
- Double-check with doctors and trusted sources
- Prepare questions for medical appointments



Cooking

"You are a professional chef. I have chicken breasts, broccoli and lemon. Please create a simple and delicious recipe for 6 adults."



Meal preparation

- Include dietary needs and constraints
- Specify time, budget, and skill level
- Ask for quick, simple meals
- Adapt recipes to your real life
- Double-check ingredients and instructions



Brainstorming gift ideas

"I'm looking for a non-physical gift for a couple who loves **travel and cooking**. They live in **Chicago**. Brainstorm 4 experience-based gift ideas or subscription services that they can enjoy together."

"I want to find a gift for my **7-year-old grandson** who is currently obsessed with **dinosaurs and building things**. I want something that is **educational** but doesn't feel like schoolwork. Also, suggest one **'experience' gift** we can do together to create a memory. My budget is **\$50**."



Get technology support and guidance

"How can I have my Microsoft Word document read aloud to me by my computer?"

(either give it lots of info in the prompt, or ask it to ask you questions one at a time to help formulate a reliable response)



Organize and Preserve Family Stories

- Ask AI to interview you
- It can help you structure your life if you want to create a book
- It can rewrite what you say- just check it



Potential prompt for life interview

"Please interview me to help me tell my life story.

Ask **one question at a time**, in a warm, friendly way. Start with my early life, then relationships (including how I met my spouse), family, work, meaningful moments, fun stories, and lessons learned. Wait for my answer before asking the next question. Do **not** rewrite or summarize yet — just collect my words."

After a few responses or when the entire interview is finished:

Please rewrite everything I shared into an engaging, easy-to-read story. Do **not** change my meaning, facts, or voice. Organize it into short sections, as if I'm telling these stories to my family.

Writing

"Help me write a retirement speech to my coworkers ..."

"Help me write a poem that rhymes about ..."

"Help me write an outline to compare and contrast arguments about use of AI in the classroom with high school students"



#7

Use your phone's camera and images with genAI

Add or take a picture of your ingredients!

"I'd like to make a delicious simple meal with these ingredients. What do you suggest?"

"Create a recipe with these ingredients and barley for a delicious soup for a cold day"



Summary of page in magazine



More tech help

"What is this and how can I start using it?"



Get help understanding complex documents

"Explain this report as if I have no background knowledge."

"List the 5 most important points I should remember."

"Please write a 400 word summary without the jargon."



Decorating

"Please create an image to show me what this room would look like if I painted it dark green."



My sunroom painted green- and with a modern couch



Images (in left column on computer)

I uploaded an image and turned it into a doodle style



Ideas for using the camera to upload images

- Reading and simplifying medical or insurance paperwork (cover up personal info)
- Translating menus, signs, or mail
- Identifying objects, devices, or plants
- Summarizing long letters or instructions
- Asking follow-up questions about what you're seeing



#8
To get better responses

Sycophant

Do you know what this means?



ChatGPT and other genAI tools are overly agreeable

- Tends to mirror your tone
- Tries to be polite and supportive
- Feels encouraging, not intimidating
- Lowers anxiety for beginners
- Supports brainstorming and confidence
- Keeps people engaged and talking



An overly agreeable helper can be a problem

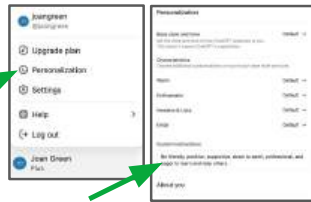
- May reinforce incorrect assumptions
- Doesn't always challenge errors
- Can reduce critical thinking
- Sounds confident even when wrong
- Users may over-trust responses



Personalize your account

Click on your name (bottom left on computer) > personalization

- Characteristics
- Custom instructions
- About you
- Occupation
- Memory



Custom instructions

You may want to consider adding something like this:

“Be supportive, but don’t just agree with me.

If something may be inaccurate, explain why in plain language.

Help me think through options and risks.”

Temporary Chat

Want to make sure your interaction won't show up when searching chats or influence future conversations? Try a temporary chat.



“Please ask clarifying questions before beginning”

“what is a better way to say this with a prompt to get better results- Please be honest with me with your feedback, and provide constructive suggestions rather than be overly complimentary.”

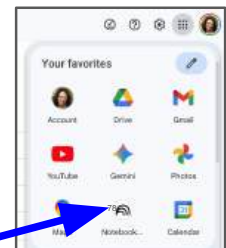


#9 NotebookLM

Google's NotebookLM

Free: NotebookLM app

<https://notebooklm.google.com/>



NotebookLM: Joan's Top Pick for learning

- **Grounded in uploaded content only** - does not pull from the internet; reduces "hallucinations"
- **Powerful Studio tools** generate audio and video overviews, slide decks, infographics, and mind maps, and reports to support different ways to learn the information.
- Flashcards, quizzes and the ability to chat about the content support an **active learning approach**



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With all AI output.. Think about...

How can I critically analyze my way through the ideas it gives me?" - even taking those ideas into another model and asking for more feedback and reflection.

Beware of bias and hallucinations!

Ask for citations if looking for factual information.

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#10 Keep learning!

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Let's keep the learning going...

I offer a membership, a few online courses and 1:1 collaborative tech brainstorming.

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Tech Life Inner Circle Membership

<https://learn.innovativespeech.com/inner-circle>

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Free Private Facebook Group - IST Tech Savvy Solutions



Let's help each other. Everyone is welcome to join!! Just answer a few questions

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ISTTechSavvySolutions/>

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Let's stay in touch!

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