

Pathway: Starting from Scratch

Your Profile

You're new to AI — or at least new to using it intentionally. Maybe you've played around with ChatGPT or Claude a few times, but you don't yet have a clear sense of what AI is good at, where it falls short, or how to make it genuinely useful in your work.

That's a perfectly good place to start. In fact, it's a great one — you don't have any bad habits to unlearn.

Recommended Sequence

1. Start with [The Fact-Check Habit](#) — This is the single most important skill in AI fluency: learning to verify what AI tells you. It's quick, eye-opening, and you'll use it every time you work with AI from now on.
2. Then [The Signal in the Noise](#) — Learn to pull useful information out of verbose AI responses. This makes every future AI interaction more productive.
3. Then [The Reusable Prompt](#) — Turn something you do regularly into a prompt template. This is where AI starts saving you real time.
4. Then branch out: [The Stolen Technique](#) — Try borrowing a technique from a different field. This exercise expands how you think about AI's possibilities.
5. Stretch: [Your First AI Team Meeting](#) — Once you're comfortable with the basics, try working with AI in multiple roles. This is a glimpse of where AI is heading.

Common Pitfalls

- **Trying to learn everything at once.** There's a lot of AI content out there and it can feel like you need to absorb all of it. You don't. One exercise per week is enough. Depth beats breadth, especially at the beginning.
- **Comparing yourself to power users.** People who've been using AI tools for years had their own slow start. Your pace is fine. The fact that you're being intentional about learning puts you ahead of most people who just use AI casually.
- **Dismissing AI too quickly when it gives a bad answer.** Early on, you might conclude "AI isn't useful" after a disappointing response. Before you give up, try rephrasing your

prompt or giving AI more context. The difference between a bad prompt and a good one is often just a few extra sentences.

- **Skipping the reflection.** It's tempting to rush through the exercises and move on. But the moment you pause to ask "what did I actually learn here?" is where the real skill development happens.

What Leveling Up Looks Like

- You can explain to someone else what AI is good at and where it tends to fail
- You have a personal habit of verifying AI output before trusting it
- You've built at least one prompt template that you actually reuse in your work
- You feel confident enough to try an Intermediate exercise
- When someone asks "can AI do X?", you can give a thoughtful, nuanced answer instead of a yes or no

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