



# Microsoft Copilot Pro

Step

by

Step

Lisa Crosbie



PRACTICE FILES

FREE SAMPLE CHAPTER |





# Microsoft Copilot Pro Step by Step

Lisa Crosbie

## Microsoft Copilot Pro Step by Step

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For Dad, who sparked my interest in tech from the start. You loved a good “how to” book, and you would have been the first person with a copy in your hand, asking me a million questions.

# About the author



**Lisa Crosbie** is a highly respected expert in Microsoft business applications, with a focus on leveraging Copilot and low-code solutions to transform how businesses operate. A five-time Microsoft Most Valuable Professional and Microsoft Certified Trainer, Lisa is known for her ability to break down complex technologies into easy-to-understand concepts, making them accessible and enjoyable for everyone.

Lisa's extensive experience and enthusiasm for technology have made her a sought-after speaker at international conferences and a trusted educator through her popular YouTube channel. She is passionate about empowering beginners to take their first steps with tools like Copilot, helping them build confidence and skills from the ground up. Lisa is also focused on staying at the cutting edge of technology, regularly sharing insights on the latest advancements in Copilot and Power Platform and educating the community on how to leverage these technologies to solve real-world challenges.

Lisa lives in Melbourne, Australia, with her husband, two daughters, one dog, two guinea pigs, and three fish. She is a long-time reader and first-time author.

# Introduction

Copilot Pro is a Microsoft Copilot subscription for individuals who want to work with generative AI in Microsoft 365 applications and get access to premium experiences for creating content. Copilot Pro works alongside you as a virtual assistant embedded in Excel, Outlook, Word, PowerPoint, and OneNote, helping you generate a first draft, edit or rewrite for different purposes, summarize, understand, and analyze your content in spreadsheets, emails, documents, presentations, and notes. It also helps you brainstorm and develop new ideas, generate images, kickstart creative projects, and get answers to your questions across web, mobile, and Windows experiences.

## Who this book is for

*Copilot Pro Step by Step* and other books in the Step by Step series are designed for beginning to intermediate computer users. This book introduces you to the fundamentals of generative AI and Microsoft Copilot, providing hands-on skills and techniques to enable you to use these tools effectively. The examples shown in the book cover both home and business scenarios. Copilot Pro is ideal for power users, small business owners, home office workers, freelancers, creators, consultants, students, researchers, programmers, hobbyists, community leaders, or anyone looking to enhance their productivity and creativity with generative AI. The skills you learn in this book are also applicable to Copilot for Microsoft 365, although this book does not cover the additional apps and features that are exclusive to the Copilot for Microsoft 365 license.

## The Step by Step approach

This book is divided into three parts. Part 1 explores core concepts of Microsoft Copilot, generative AI, and effective prompting techniques. Part 2 covers the Copilot Pro experiences for web and mobile. Part 3 demonstrates how to use Copilot Pro inside the Microsoft 365 applications, with a chapter dedicated to each

application: Excel, Outlook, Word, PowerPoint, and OneNote. This structure allows readers who are new to generative AI to learn the basic concepts and skills, while readers who are familiar with prompting and other generative AI experiences can focus on material in the specific apps that are of most interest to them.

At the end of each chapter, you will find a series of practice tasks that you can complete on your own by using the skills taught in the chapter. Generative AI is creative by nature, so even as you work through the tasks, you will discover new possibilities depending on your context and prompts.

## Features and conventions

This book has been designed to lead you step-by-step through all the tasks you're likely to want to perform with Copilot Pro. The topics are all self-contained, so you can start at the beginning and work your way through all the chapters or reference them independently. The following features of this book will help you locate specific information:

- **Detailed table of contents** Browse the listing of the topics, sections, and sidebars within each chapter.
- **Chapter thumb tabs and running heads** Identify the pages of each chapter by the thumb tabs on the book pages' open fore edge. Find a specific chapter by number or title by looking at the running heads at the top of even-numbered (verso) pages.
- **Topic-specific running heads** Within a chapter, quickly locate the topic you want by looking at the running heads at the top of odd-numbered (recto) pages.
- **Practice tasks page tabs** Easily locate the practice tasks at the end of each chapter by looking for the full-page stripe on the book's fore edge.
- **Detailed index** Look up coverage of specific tasks and features in the index at the back of the book.

You can save time when reading this book by understanding how the Step by Step series provides procedural instructions and auxiliary information and identifies on-screen and physical elements that you interact with. The following table lists content formatting conventions used in this book.

Convention	Meaning
<b>TIP</b>	This reader aid provides a helpful hint or shortcut to simplify a task.
<b>IMPORTANT</b>	This reader aid alerts you to a common problem or provides information necessary to successfully complete a procedure.
<b>SEE ALSO</b>	This reader aid directs you to more information about a topic in this book or elsewhere.
1. Numbered steps 2. 3.	Numbered steps guide you through generic procedures in each topic and hands-on practice tasks at the end of each chapter.
■ Bulleted lists	Bulleted lists indicate single-step procedures and sets of multiple alternative procedures.
<b>Interface objects</b>	In procedures and practice tasks, semibold black text indicates on-screen elements that you should select (click or tap).
<b>User input</b>	Light semibold formatting identifies specific information that you should enter when completing procedures or practice tasks.
<b>Ctrl+P</b>	A plus sign between two keys indicates that you must select those keys at the same time. For example, “press Ctrl+P” directs you to hold down the Ctrl key while you press the P key.
<i>Emphasis and URLs</i>	In expository text, italic formatting identifies web addresses and words or phrases we want to emphasize.

## Download the practice files

Before you can complete the exercises in this book, you need to download the book’s practice files to your computer. For access to these practice files, and other resources, visit [MicrosoftPressStore.com/register](https://MicrosoftPressStore.com/register), sign in or create a new account, and register ISBN 9780135369425 by December 31, 2027.



**IMPORTANT** Copilot Pro is a paid subscription and is not available from this website. You will need to purchase a Copilot Pro license before using this book.

The following table lists the practice files for this book.

Chapter	File
Chapter 3: Copilot on the Web	Corporate Catering Practice Task.docx Contoso Ltd Digital Transformation.pdf
Chapter 5: Copilot in Excel	Packaging Inventory.xlsx
Chapter 9: Copilot in OneNote	Catering Notes.onepkg

## Important note about changes to Copilot

Generative AI tools, including Copilot Pro, are evolving at a rapid pace that is unlike anything we have experienced before. As the technology evolves, Microsoft is constantly innovating to take advantage of the latest capabilities, which means that Copilot user interfaces can look and function differently from one week to the next. As a result, there may be some differences between the steps and screenshots in this book, and what's currently deployed, although the core principles and concepts remain the same. Working with this cutting-edge technology is an exciting journey, and I encourage you to embrace the growth mindset that will help you adopt these tools and the nature of constant change that goes with that.

We will do our best to keep this content up to date in subsequent editions of the book. You can also find updates and links to the latest resources on the Microsoft Copilot Pro homepage at [copilot.cloud.microsoft/en-us/copilot-pro](https://copilot.cloud.microsoft/en-us/copilot-pro) or on Lisa's YouTube channel at [youtube.com/lisacrobbie](https://youtube.com/lisacrobbie).

## Get support and give feedback

The following sections provide information about getting help with this book and contacting us to provide feedback or report errors.

### Errata

We've made every effort to ensure the accuracy of this book and its companion content. Any errors that have been reported since this book was published are listed at:

[MicrosoftPressStore.com/CopilotSBS/errata](https://MicrosoftPressStore.com/CopilotSBS/errata)

If you discover an error that is not already listed, please submit it to us at the same page.

For additional book support and information, please visit  
*MicrosoftPressStore.com/Support*.

Please note that product support for Microsoft software and hardware is not offered through the previous addresses. For help with Microsoft software or hardware, visit *support.microsoft.com*.

## Stay in touch

Let's keep the conversation going! We're on X/Twitter at: *twitter.com/MicrosoftPress*

# Writing effective prompts for Copilot

## 2

The most important skill to master when working with Copilot is writing effective prompts. Any instruction or request that you give to Copilot is a prompt. Prompts can be simple instructions with a single response, or they can include context, source content, examples, and details of the desired output format. Prompting can also be more than just a single request and response. Understanding how to refine and iterate your prompts will enable you to have a conversation with Copilot that will give you much better results. In this chapter, you will learn how to write prompts to help you work effectively with Copilot with both text and images, using the main elements of prompting. You will understand different prompting techniques and the scenarios in which you can use them. You will also learn how to use Copilot Lab to find suggested prompts to help you get started.

### In this chapter

- Understand prompts and responses
- Discover and use suggested prompts with Copilot Lab
- Use the elements of effective prompts
- Write prompts to generate images
- Use more advanced prompting techniques

### Practice files

No practice files are necessary to complete the practice tasks in this chapter.

## Understand prompts and responses

Prompts and responses are the fundamental components of the interactions you will have with Copilot.

### How generative AI works

When you chat with Copilot or ask Copilot to do something for you, it uses a large language model (LLM) to process your prompt and provide a natural language response. A large language model is a type of AI designed to process and generate text. It has been trained on huge datasets to understand how language patterns work and is able to process your request and generate a response by predicting what comes next using these language patterns. Copilot uses the LLM to write text, provide responses, and carry on a conversation in the context of what you've requested. Copilot doesn't actually understand what you are asking, or what it is saying in response, and it doesn't have any thoughts, opinions, or feelings. It is simply using the patterns it has learned from the training data to predict the most likely words or sentences to generate a response.

Generative AI is creative by design, making different predictions each time you provide a prompt. This means it won't always generate the same answers, even when you use the same prompt. The more specific you are with your prompt, the more likely you are to get a similar, or even the same response each time. If you ask Copilot to generate content on a narrow or specialized topic, such as "Explain how to fold a paper crane," you will get almost the same content each time. If you ask Copilot for a well-established fact that doesn't change, such as "What is the capital of France?" you will also get a consistent answer. If you work with more general or creative prompting, such as "Write an outline for a detective story," the generated responses will be very different each time.

Generative AI has a "temperature" control that determines the scale of how predictable or creative the response will be. Lower temperatures mean the response will closely follow predictable, learned patterns, whereas higher temperatures encourage more creativity and innovation in the response. When you use Copilot on the web and mobile experiences, you can choose whether you want Copilot to respond in a way that is more precise, more balanced, or more creative. Using the more precise option will give you more factual and consistent responses, whereas the more creative option can be more likely to fabricate information, known as *hallucinations*. The more creative option, however, will give you better results when you want to use language in a creative way, such as writing a poem or thinking about a question or problem in different ways.



**SEE ALSO** You will learn how to use these options with Copilot on the web in Chapter 3, "Copilot on the web."

Generative AI is by nature creative, even at a low temperature or using the more precise option. It is therefore important to expect that as you use Copilot to generate drafts or rewrite content, that can yield a different response even if you use the same prompt. If you get an answer you like, make sure to accept or save it, or copy and paste it into a document or notes for future use. This creative aspect also means that if you don't like the response to your prompt, one thing you can try is submitting the same prompt again to regenerate a different version of the response. In most cases, however, learning how to write better prompts and refine your instructions through a conversation with Copilot will be the way to get the best results.

This chapter teaches you the skills you need to write effective prompts in a range of different scenarios with Copilot.

## The best use cases for Copilot

One of the biggest challenges with adopting Copilot is learning to think differently and understanding how and where generative AI can provide value to enhance your creativity and productivity. When you first start using Copilot, you are likely to get some disappointing or unexpected results. It is important not to give up. Think about Copilot as your virtual assistant and consider when and how to use Copilot in the same way you would if you were delegating a task to a junior assistant.

The easiest way to get started is to think about how Copilot can free up your time. Think about tasks that take up a lot of your time, or tasks that are tedious, which don't need the full power of your knowledge or creativity to complete. For instance, you could ask Copilot to help you put together a meeting agenda based on your notes.

Copilot can also help you rewrite or repurpose your work, where you have already done the thinking or creative work. This can include turning a document into a presentation, rewriting it for a different audience, or writing an executive summary.

You can go beyond productivity tasks with Copilot, using it to help you solve problems or brainstorm new ideas. You can also reverse the pattern of the conversation, asking Copilot to ask you the questions to help you think differently, or to challenge your assumptions on a topic.

## Prompting in the web experience vs. app experience

With Copilot Pro, you can chat with Copilot on the web and in mobile apps, as well as in Microsoft 365 applications. These experiences provide you with different ways to work with Copilot.

When working with Copilot in the web or mobile experiences, you can have a more free-form conversation. This is a great place to start with idea generation, problem solving, or brainstorming. This is also the best place to work if you want to have a conversation with Copilot in which you go back and forth and refine your ideas and requests, or to use more advanced prompting techniques covered later in this chapter, such as the persona pattern. Copilot on the web or mobile is also the best place to generate images.



**SEE ALSO** You will learn more about how to use Copilot on the web in Chapter 3.

Think about Copilot in the Microsoft 365 applications as a series of “specialist” assistants that are designed to help you with the kinds of work you do in each application. For instance, Copilot in Word is very good at helping you draft and rewrite documents, whereas Copilot in OneNote is great at identifying action points and creating to-do lists and summaries from your unstructured notes.

When you work with Copilot in the Microsoft 365 applications, the prompts you write will mostly fall into one of these task areas:

- *Create* prompts ask Copilot to create a first draft of something for you, like a document, paragraph, meeting agenda, presentation, column, or email.
- *Edit* prompts ask Copilot to rewrite your content in different ways, changing the length, tone, or purpose, including giving you variations to choose from. Edit prompts can also help with organizing your presentations and applying conditional formatting to your spreadsheets.
- *Ask* prompts help you find specific information, coach you to create better content, or answer questions about your content or related topics.
- *Understand* prompts help you summarize your content, find insights, and extract to-do lists or key points.



**SEE ALSO** You will learn how to use each of these types of task prompts in Excel, Outlook, Word, PowerPoint, and OneNote in Chapters 5–9 of this book.

You can get the most out of Copilot Pro by using the web and application experiences together. For instance, you can start by brainstorming and working through a new idea in Copilot on the web, and then use the output of that as a prompt to draft a new document in Word. You can even ask Copilot on the web to help you write or improve your prompts.

## Discover and use suggested prompts with Copilot Lab

The best way to get started with learning how to write effective prompts for Copilot is to use Copilot Lab. Copilot Lab provides suggested prompts for all the Copilot experiences, arranged in categories, making it easy to browse through the options to discover new ideas and save prompts to use later. Copilot Lab is available on the web, where you will find prompts for all the apps in a single place. You can also get to Copilot Lab from the menu in each of the Microsoft 365 applications, which is the best way to discover suggested prompts in the context of the app you are using.

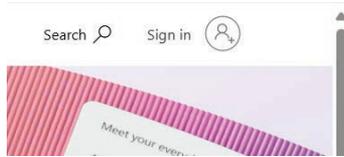
### Copilot Lab on the web

The full Copilot Lab experience on the web provides you with suggested prompts to use, as well as other advice, tips, and learning resources for prompting with Copilot. This is a great resource to explore further.

#### To use Copilot Lab on the web

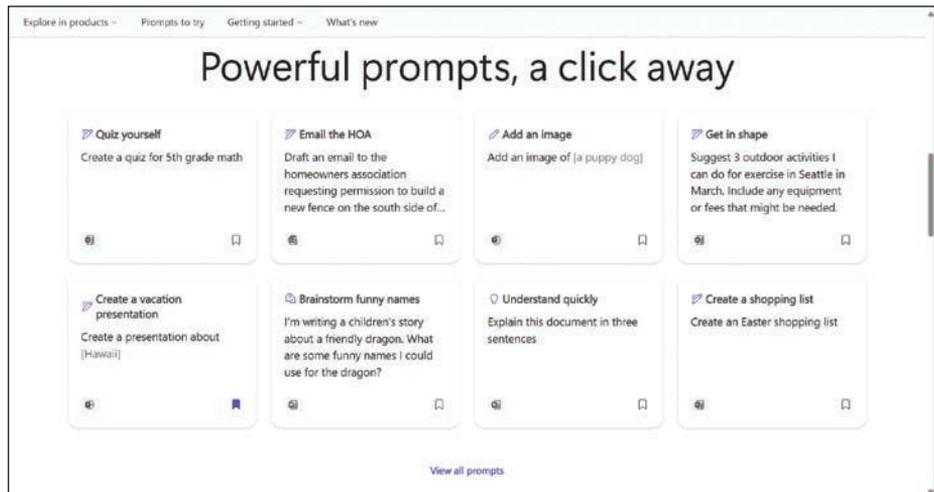
1. Navigate to the Copilot Lab home page: <https://copilot.cloud.microsoft/en-US/prompts>.

2. Select the **Sign in** icon at the top right of the window, and sign in using the Microsoft account you used to sign up for Copilot Pro.



*Sign in to Copilot Lab using your Microsoft account.*

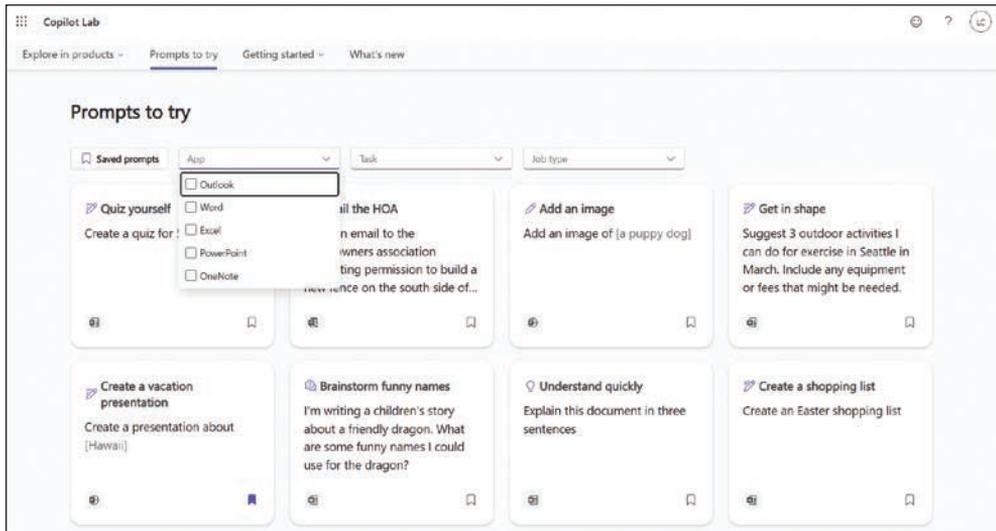
3. Scroll down to the suggested prompts.
4. Select **View all prompts**.



*Scroll down to the list of suggested prompts and select View all prompts.*

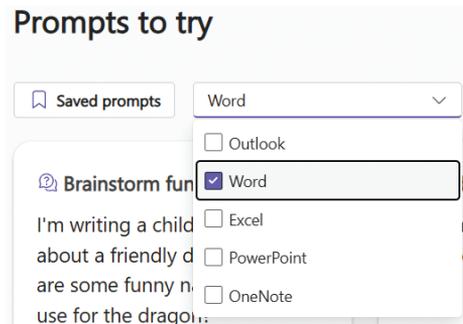
You can browse prompts by app, task, job type, or a combination of these by using the dropdown menus near the top of the page.

Start by selecting the **App** menu to view the options. You will see the apps for which Copilot is available with your Copilot Pro License: Outlook, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and OneNote.



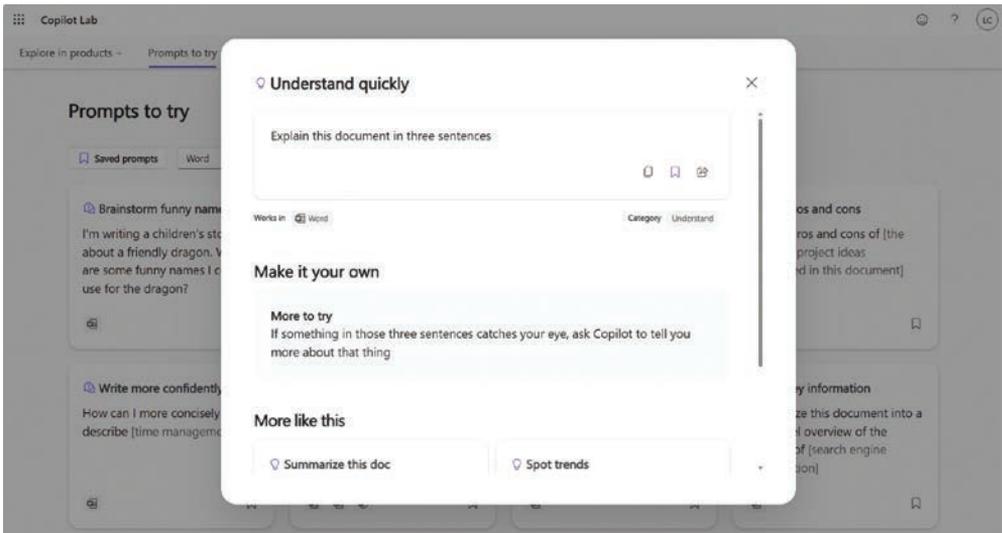
Use the dropdown menu to browse prompts by app.

Select the app or apps you want to explore.



Check the box for the app for which you want to explore Copilot prompts.

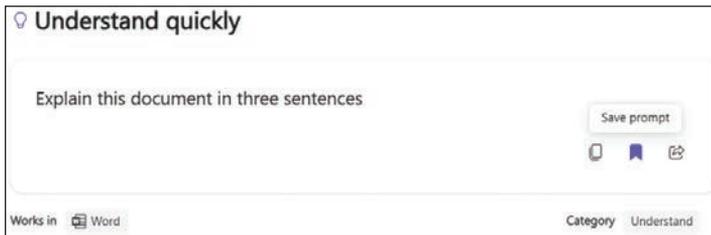
When you find a prompt that looks interesting, select it to open it and view more information. You will find information about how to make changes to make it work for your context, as well as other suggested prompts that are similar to the one you've chosen.



The suggested prompt also includes suggestions for how to make the prompt your own and other similar prompts you can explore.

### To save a prompt to use later

1. Select the **ribbon** icon on your open prompt.
2. Wait for the **Prompt saved** message to appear.
3. Close the selected prompt.

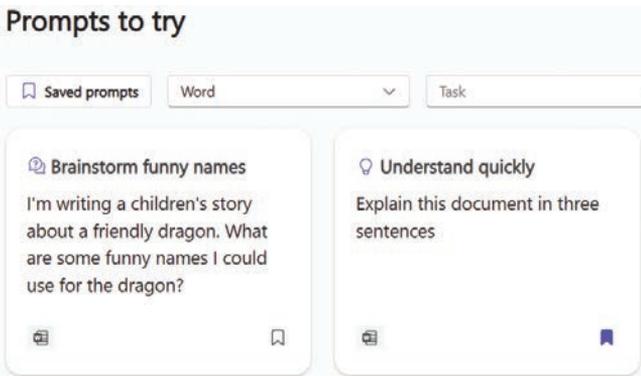


Select the ribbon icon to save the prompt.



You will see a message confirming that your prompt has been saved.

You will see that your prompt now has the ribbon icon highlighted in the main dashboard.



You can see which prompts you've saved by the ribbon icon status on the card.



**TIP** You can also select the ribbon icon in the main dashboard of prompts without needing to open it.



**TIP** To remove a prompt from your Saved prompts list, select the ribbon icon again to deselect it.

You can also browse Copilot Lab to find prompts that fit into each of the five main task categories you learned about earlier: Create, Edit, Ask, Catch up, and Understand.

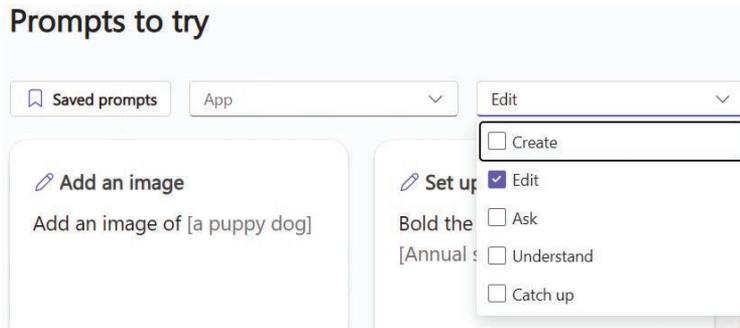
### To browse prompts by tasks and job type

1. Clear your selection from the **App** menu from the previous steps.



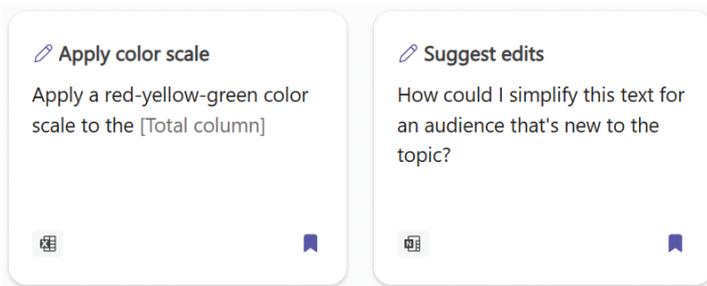
Clear your selection in the App menu to view prompts for all apps.

2. Open the **Task** menu and select **Edit**.



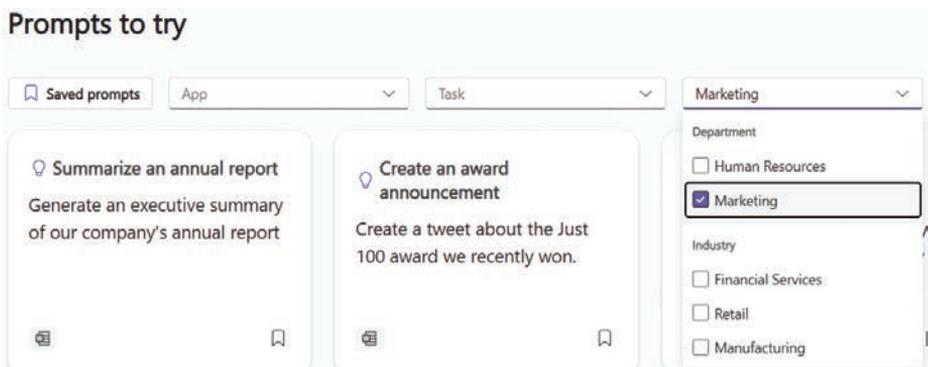
Expand the Task menu and select Edit.

3. You will see the list of **Edit** prompts. Save some of them as favorites.



Save some of the suggested prompts by selecting the ribbon icon on each card.

4. Repeat the previous steps to browse prompts by job type.



Expand the Job type menu and select the Marketing option.

- Browse and save some more prompts from this selection.

 **TIP** You can use these menus together to narrow your selection by multiple factors—for instance, all Marketing ideas in PowerPoint. You can also choose more than one option from each list.

2

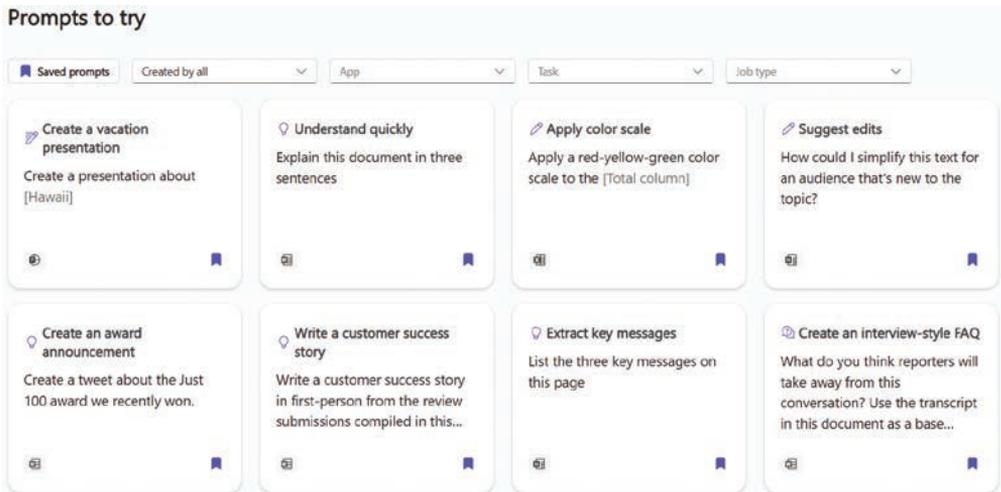
**Prompts to try**

Saved prompts    App     Task     Marketing

<p> <b>Summarize an annual report</b> Generate an executive summary of our company's annual report</p> <p> </p>	<p> <b>Create an award announcement</b> Create a tweet about the Just 100 award we recently won.</p> <p> </p>	<p> <b>Write a customer success story</b> Write a customer success story in first-person from the review submissions compiled in this...</p> <p> </p>
<p> <b>Create a knowledge base portal</b> Create a list of articles and documents for employees. Include information about...</p> <p> </p>	<p> <b>Extract key messages</b> List the three key messages on this page</p> <p> </p>	<p> <b>Create an interview-style FAQ</b> What do you think reporters will take away from this conversation? Use the transcript in this document as a base...</p> <p> </p>

*Browse the suggested prompts for marketing and select the ribbon icons to save some of them.*

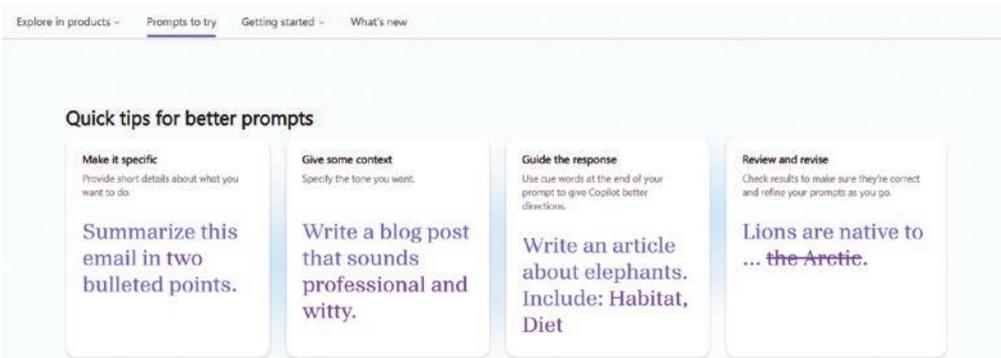
To view your saved prompts in Copilot Lab, select the **Saved prompts** button at the top left of the dashboard.



Select the **Saved prompts** button to view all your saved prompts.

 **TIP** You can use the dropdown menus on your saved prompts to filter by app, task, or job type.

Scroll down below the main suggested prompts area in Copilot Lab to find some quick tips for better prompts.



You will find more tips for prompting further down the Copilot Lab page.

## Copilot Lab from the app experiences

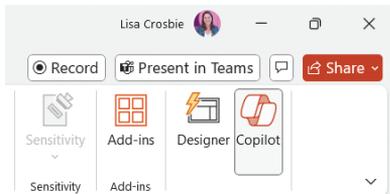
You can also access Copilot Lab in each of the Microsoft 365 app experiences, to quickly get suggested prompts for that app. Any prompts you have saved in the main Copilot Lab experience will also show up as saved prompts in these apps, making them quick and easy for you to find and use.

### To use Copilot Lab inside the Microsoft 365 apps

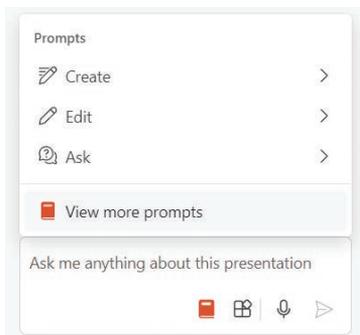
1. Open the Copilot pane from the right end of the Home ribbon in the app.
2. Select the **book** icon in the prompt area at the bottom of the Copilot pane.
3. Select **View more prompts**.
4. This will launch Copilot Lab as a window.



**TIP** The images here show the experience in PowerPoint, but you will find that the experience of navigating to Copilot Lab is the same in each app.



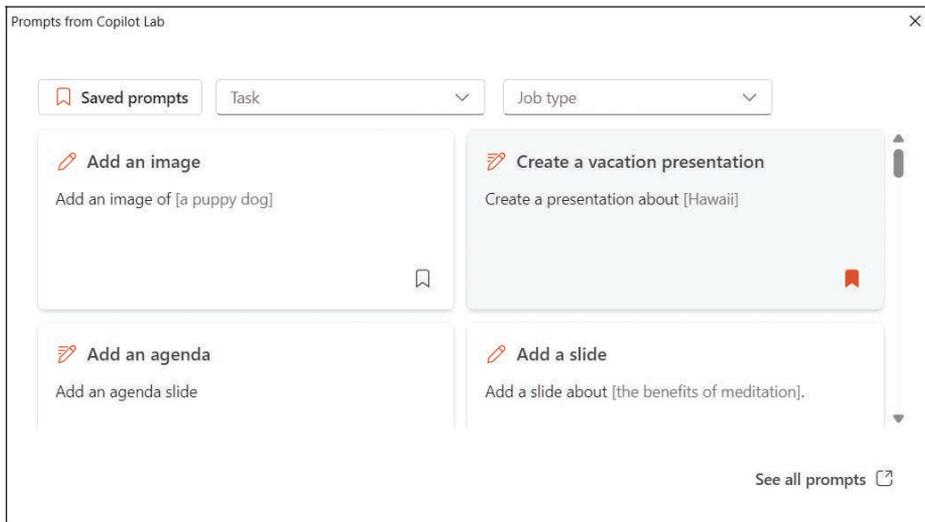
*Open the Copilot pane in PowerPoint by selecting the icon at the right end of the Home ribbon.*



*Select the book icon in the prompt area and then select View more prompts to open Copilot Lab.*

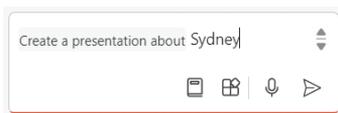
### To use a prompt from Copilot Lab

1. Select the **Saved prompts** button to view your saved prompts or use the **Task** or **Job type** menus as shown in the previous section to browse prompts for the app you are using.
2. Select the prompt you want to use.
3. This will close the Copilot Lab window.
4. Your prompt will appear in the prompt area.



Select the prompt you want to use.

Any part of the prompt that was in square brackets will be removed. You should complete the prompt with your own instruction.



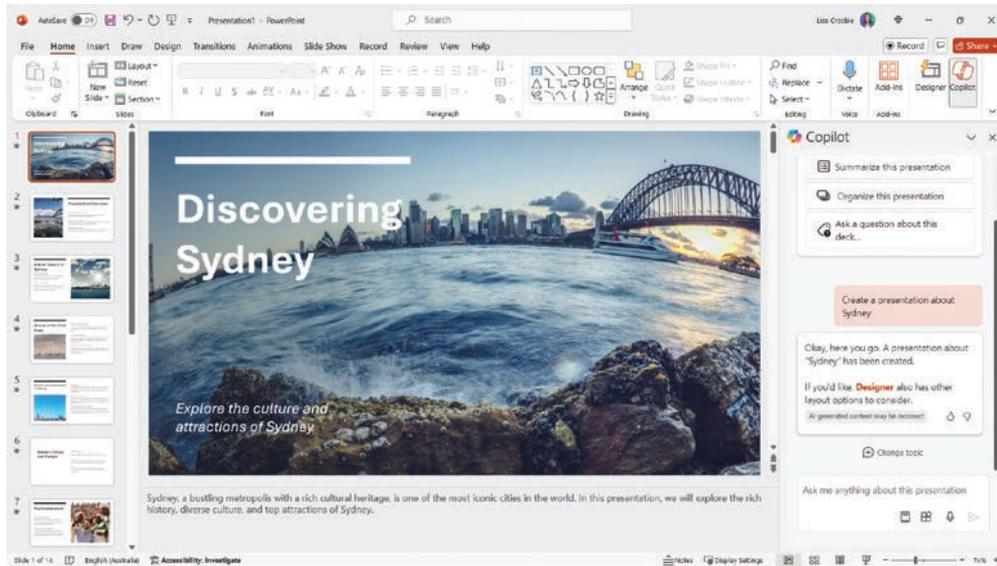
Complete the prompt with your own request.

In this example, this prompt in PowerPoint creates a presentation with images, content, and speaker notes.



**SEE ALSO** You will find detailed step-by-step instructions for using Copilot Lab in OneNote in Chapter 9, "Copilot in OneNote."

2



*Copilot generates a presentation based on your prompt.*

## Use the elements of effective prompts

A prompt can be a very simple instruction, such as "Write a blog post about the benefits of remote work," or it can be a much longer prompt including specific detail about the context and desired output, along with examples of what you want to include or create. Sometimes a simple instruction will be enough to generate what you need, but other times you will find that providing Copilot with more detail and more information will give you a better result.

In this section, you will learn the four main elements you can use to write effective prompts and how each element affects the response you get from Copilot.

The elements of effective prompting for Copilot are:

- Goal
- Context
- Source
- Expectations

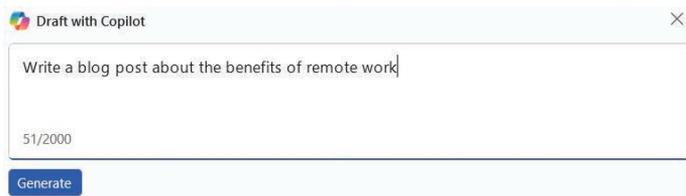
You will learn how to use these elements through a series of examples using different Copilot Pro experiences. This section shows prompts and responses in Copilot on the web and Copilot in Word, to help you understand the different prompting scenarios and examples in context.



**SEE ALSO** This chapter focuses only on prompting skills and techniques. You will find detailed step-by-step instructions on how to use Copilot on the web in Chapter 3, and Copilot in Word in Chapter 7.

## Goal

When you first write a prompt, you are likely to provide Copilot with a simple statement or instruction telling it what you want to do. Usually, this simple instruction is a goal. For example, “Write a blog post about the benefits of remote work.”



*You can provide a simple prompt with a goal.*

This type of prompt will produce a very general response. This can work well if you don't have something specific in mind or if you are using Copilot to help you brainstorm ideas or understand more about a topic to help you get started, but you are not likely to get what you want from Copilot with a simple general prompt like this. The results will usually feel very generic and not likely aligned with what you had in mind.

Return to the idea that prompting Copilot is like delegating a task to an assistant. If you gave this instruction to an assistant exactly as it is typed here, what might you expect? Most likely you'd get a very general blog post on the topic, covering the most

widely acknowledged benefits. If you were in a workplace where the assistant also had additional context, they might apply that; but in this case, Copilot doesn't have anything else to work with. It only has this very general instruction with no context.

The result is a well-structured, easy-to-read, but very generic blog post.

## Why Remote Work Rocks: The Ultimate Guide to Working from Anywhere

Discover the benefits of remote work for yourself, your team, and your business.

### Introduction

Remote work is not a new concept, but it has gained popularity in recent years due to the advances in technology, the changing expectations of employees, and the global pandemic. Remote work is the ability to work from anywhere, whether it's your home, a coworking space, a coffee shop, or a different country. Remote work offers many benefits for both workers and employers, such as increased productivity, flexibility, diversity, and cost savings. In this blog post, we will explore some of the main benefits of remote work and how you can make the most of it.

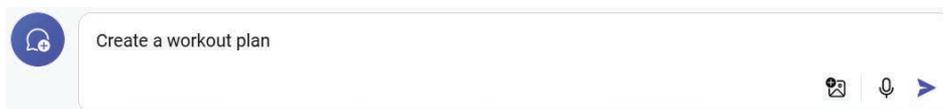
### Benefit #1: Productivity

*Copilot responds by writing a blog post on the topic as requested.*

If your request is very specific, you may get a satisfactory result from a simple prompt like this, whereas if it is a request that can be broadly interpreted in different ways, the result will be less predictable. Compare the following two examples:

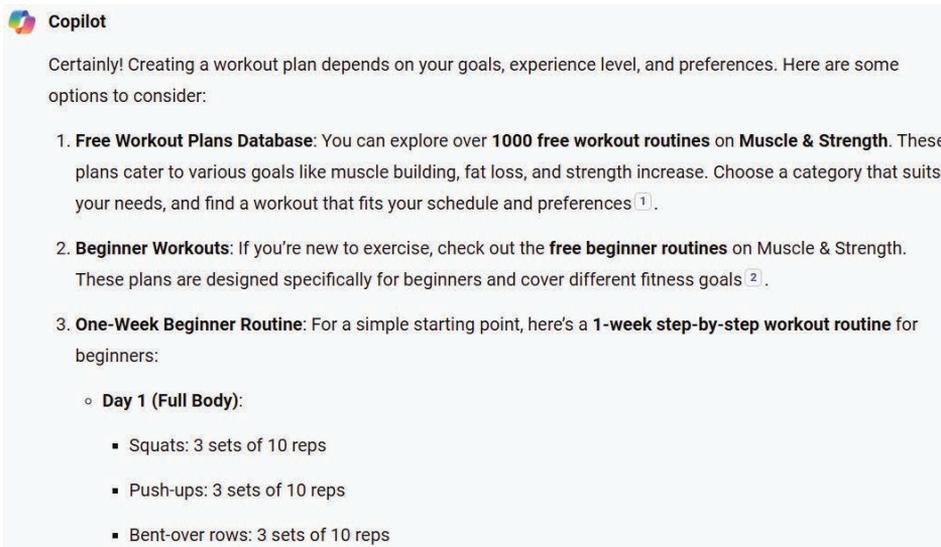
*Example 1: A simple prompt with a broad goal.*

The prompt "Create a workout plan" is very broad. Imagine approaching your assistant and asking them to do this. There is no information here about who the plan is for or what you want to achieve. You would be unlikely to get a great result from asking them to do this with no context or expertise.



*A simple prompt with a broad goal and no detail.*

As expected, Copilot returns a very general response to the prompt. It starts by saying “it depends” and then proceeds to offer some general advice and links to resources. This is not likely to be particularly useful.



**Copilot**

Certainly! Creating a workout plan depends on your goals, experience level, and preferences. Here are some options to consider:

1. **Free Workout Plans Database:** You can explore over **1000 free workout routines** on **Muscle & Strength**. These plans cater to various goals like muscle building, fat loss, and strength increase. Choose a category that suits your needs, and find a workout that fits your schedule and preferences [1](#).
2. **Beginner Workouts:** If you're new to exercise, check out the **free beginner routines** on Muscle & Strength. These plans are designed specifically for beginners and cover different fitness goals [2](#).
3. **One-Week Beginner Routine:** For a simple starting point, here's a **1-week step-by-step workout routine** for beginners:
  - **Day 1 (Full Body):**
    - Squats: 3 sets of 10 reps
    - Push-ups: 3 sets of 10 reps
    - Bent-over rows: 3 sets of 10 reps

*Copilot responds with a general workout plan.*

### *Example 2: A simple prompt with a specific goal*

In this example, the prompt is also very simple, “Create a recipe for vegan gingerbread,” but the request is very specific. Gingerbread is made up of largely the same ingredients, and there are a limited number of ways to make it vegan.



 Create a recipe for vegan gingerbread   

*A simple prompt with a specific goal.*

In this case, the Copilot response is specific and well aligned to the instruction. This is likely to be a satisfactory output without needing any additional context or information in the prompt.

 **TIP** This prompt also describes the expected output using the word “recipe,” which has a much more specific and standard format than a “blog post.” You will learn more about including expectations in your prompts later in this section.

**Copilot**

Certainly! Here's a delightful recipe for **Vegan Gingerbread Cookies** that you can enjoy during the holiday season:

### **Vegan Gingerbread Cookies**

#### **Ingredients:**

- 1/4 cup vegan butter (56g)
- 1/2 cup light brown sugar (100g)
- 1/3 cup unsulphured molasses (100g)
- 1 flax egg (1 Tbsp ground flaxseed meal + 3 Tbsp hot water)
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 cups all-purpose flour (250g)
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons ground ginger

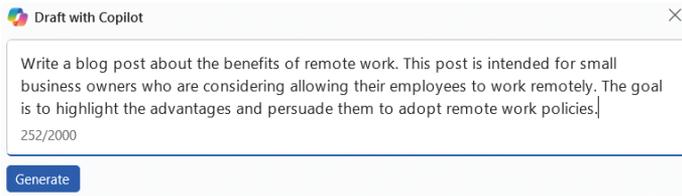
*Copilot provides a recipe in response to the prompt.*

## Context

One of the most impactful things you can do to improve the responses you get from Copilot is to add context to your prompt. This helps Copilot understand the “why” behind your instruction and any other detail about what else you had in mind when you came up with the task. Think about how you would delegate this task to an assistant. You would likely start by positioning the request with information about why you wanted it done and what it will be used for.

You can add context to your prompt by describing the purpose, the intended audience, or how it will be used. Providing context completely changes the result you will get from Copilot from something generic to something that more specifically aligns with your goal.

Compare the following prompt with the simple instruction used in the previous step, where you asked Copilot to write a blog post about the benefits of remote work. This prompt now describes the intended audience (“small business owners”) and goes a step further to provide even more specific detail about the mindset of the audience (“who are considering allowing their employees to work remotely”). It also describes the “why” behind the goal – “to highlight the advantages and persuade them to adopt remote work policies.”



*A prompt that includes both a goal and context.*

This prompt gives Copilot a lot more to work with, and the result is very different from what you get with a general prompt without all this context. Context matters because it helps Copilot give much more tailored results. The resulting blog post is now written specifically for this audience and purpose. The heading, subheading, content, tone, and explanation of the benefits are different, and the result is much more tailored and less generic.

# Why Remote Work is Good for Your Business

Discover the benefits of allowing your employees to work from anywhere

## Introduction

Remote work is a trend that is reshaping the way businesses operate. More and more companies are allowing their employees to work from anywhere, whether it's from home, a coworking space, or a coffee shop. But what are the benefits of remote work for your business? How can you make it work for your team and your customers? In this blog post, we will explore the advantages of remote work and give you some tips on how to implement it successfully.

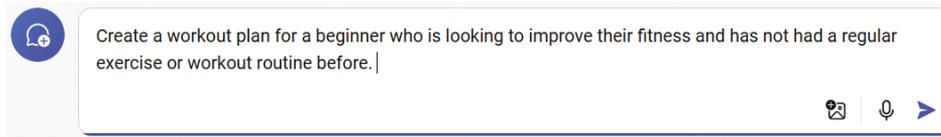
## Benefits of Remote Work

Remote work can offer many benefits for your business, such as:

- **Increased productivity:** Studies have shown that remote workers are more

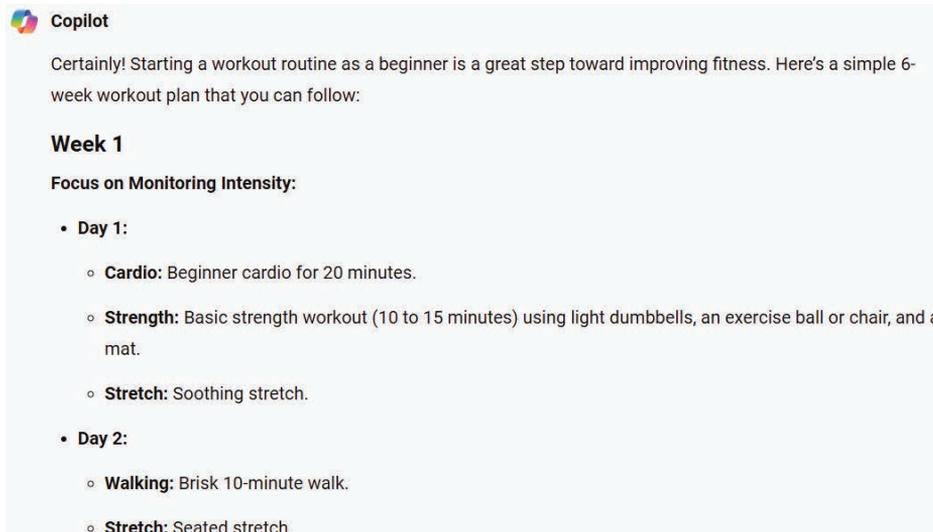
*Copilot responds with a blog post that is aligned to the context in the prompt.*

You can provide a lot of detail in your context or use a simple statement. In the example where we asked Copilot to create a workout plan, adding the context about who the plan is for makes a huge difference to the relevance and usefulness of the response.



*A prompt that provides a goal and the context.*

Now that Copilot knows the workout plan is for a beginner looking to improve their fitness, the result is much more specific, and likely something that you could put into action, rather than the generic advice it provided from the broad prompt.



*Copilot responds with a tailored workout plan based on the context.*

Compare the following result when you give Copilot the same basic instruction with a completely different context.



*A prompt that provides a goal and a different context.*

As you would expect, the response is different and aligned to the context provided.



**Copilot**

Certainly! Improving mobility is essential, especially as we age. Here's a gentle and effective 4-week mobility-focused workout plan for a 60-year-old woman:

**Week 1: Gentle Movement**

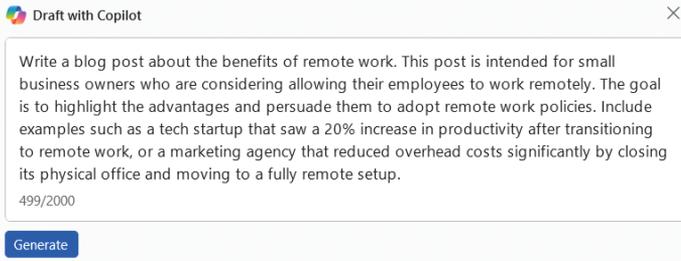
- 1. Walking:** Start with a 10-minute daily walk. Gradually increase the duration as you feel comfortable.
- 2. Seated Leg Lifts:**
  - Sit on a chair with your back straight.
  - Lift one leg at a time, extending it forward.
  - Do 10 reps per leg.
- 3. Arm Circles:**
  - Stand or sit comfortably.
  - Extend your arms to the sides.
  - Make small circles forward and then backward.

*Copilot responds with a tailored workout plan based on the context.*

## Source

You can refine your prompt and the output by providing Copilot with source material to work with. Source material can include additional information or examples in the prompt; content already in your documents, notes, or presentations; or content from the web.

Let's return to the blog post about remote work and develop the prompt further to include examples. Imagine again that you are briefing your assistant on the blog post you want. You have provided the goal and the context of the intended audience, but you also have in mind some specific facts or examples that you want to make sure are included. When you delegate that task, you provide that information at the same time. The prompt now includes details of two example scenarios that illustrate the benefits of remote work for small businesses.



*A prompt that includes a goal, context, and examples*

The response from Copilot includes the requested examples in the text.

## Benefits of Remote Work

Remote work can offer many benefits for your business, such as:

- **Increased productivity:** Remote workers tend to be more focused, motivated, and self-directed than office workers. They can also avoid distractions, interruptions, and commuting stress that can affect their performance. A study by Stanford University found that remote workers were 13% more productive than their office counterparts. Another example is a tech startup that saw a 20% increase in productivity after transitioning to remote work.
- **Reduced costs:** Remote work can help you save money on office rent, utilities, equipment, travel, and other expenses associated with maintaining a physical workspace. You can also access a wider pool of talent and hire workers from different locations and time zones, which can lower your labor costs and increase your diversity. A marketing agency that reduced overhead costs significantly by closing its physical office and moving to a fully remote setup is an example of how remote work can help you cut costs.
- **Improved employee satisfaction and retention:** Remote work can improve your employees' work-life balance, flexibility, autonomy, and well-being. Remote workers can choose their preferred work environment, schedule, and pace, and have more time for their personal and family needs. Remote work can also

*Copilot responds with a blog post that includes the requested examples from the prompt.*

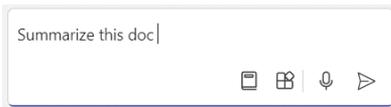
Copilot uses a large language model to generate the response, as described earlier in this chapter, which means it doesn't understand what it is generating. Copilot is using the large language model and the training data to create content by predicting likely words and sentences. That means sometimes the response includes content that looks true but isn't. This is known as "hallucination." In this response, the cited Stanford University study sounds plausible, but it doesn't actually exist. Copilot is a very effective assistant, but like working with any assistant, you should always check the work it does before relying on it. The more you use web plug-ins or other content in your prompt, the less likely you will find hallucinations in the response.



**IMPORTANT** Always make sure to fact check the output from Copilot. Generative AI can sometimes “hallucinate,” generating content that reads as if it is true when it may not be.

Copilot Pro allows you to use the content of your documents as a source to create new content in some of the Microsoft 365 app experiences.

When you use Copilot in Word, PowerPoint, and OneNote, you can use a simple prompt to summarize the content. In the prompt “Summarize this doc” in Copilot in Word, the phrase “this doc” instructs Copilot that the document is the source you want it to use.



*The prompt “Summarize this doc” refers to the document as the source.*

Copilot works with the source provided and responds with a summary of the content in your document.



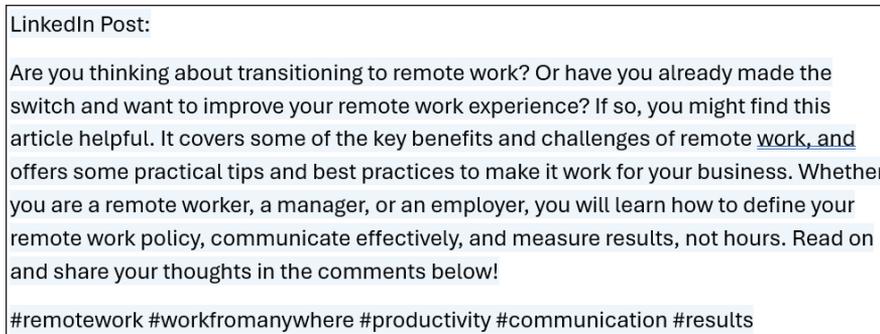
*Copilot summarizes the document.*

You can also write prompts to ask Copilot to rewrite or draft new content using the content in your document or notes as a source by using a phrase such as “based on this doc” in your prompt.



*You can ask Copilot to generate new content based on the content in your document.*

Copilot generates a social media post suitable for LinkedIn, using the content of your document as the source.



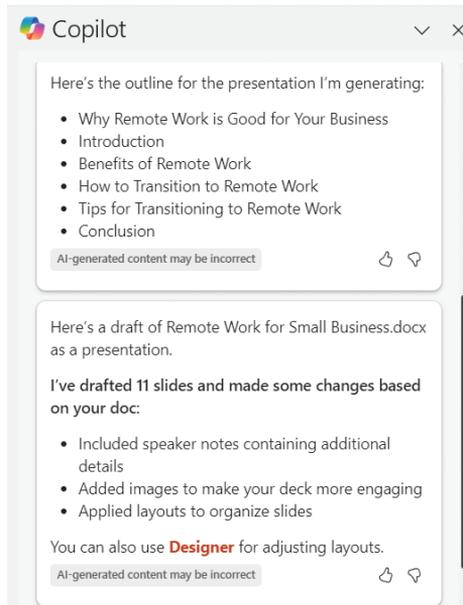
*Copilot responds with a LinkedIn style post on the topic of remote work.*

You can use a Word document as a source to create a presentation using Copilot for PowerPoint by including a link to the document in the prompt.

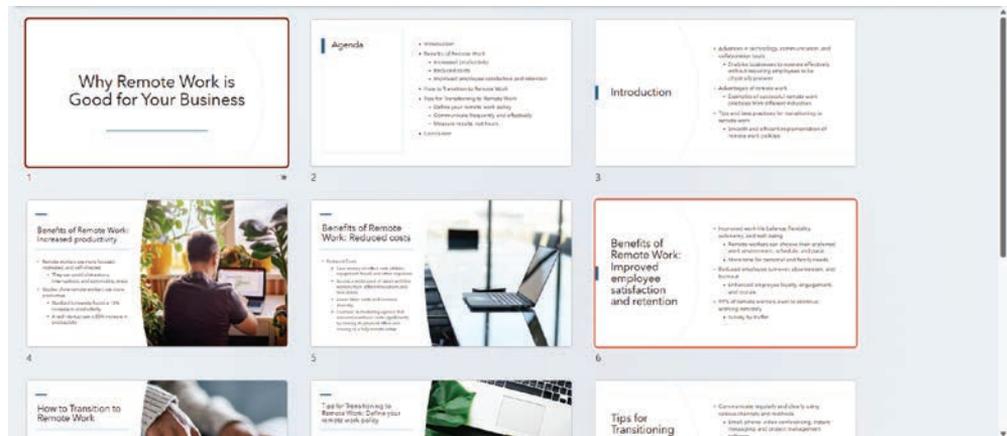
Create a presentation from  
[/https://1drv.ms/w/s!9j2ap6c01a](https://1drv.ms/w/s!9j2ap6c01a)  
<C:\Users\user\Documents\document.docx>

*Add a link to a Word document to a prompt in Copilot in PowerPoint to generate a presentation based on that document.*

Copilot creates a presentation outline based on the source document and uses the content in the document to create the presentation content, speaker notes, and images.



*Copilot creates the presentation from your document, outlining the main sections, creating content, speaker notes, and images.*



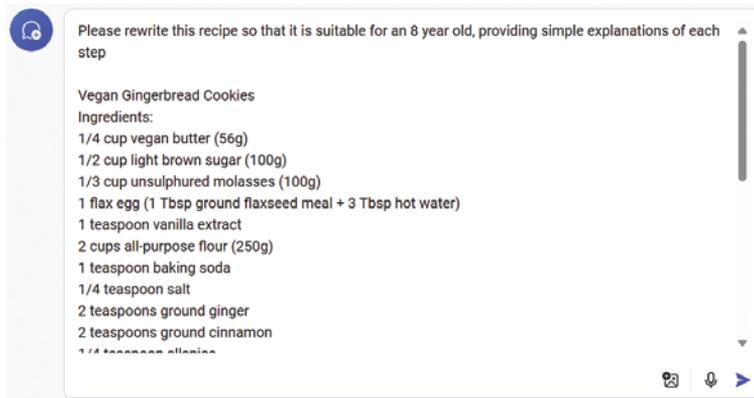
*Copilot creates a presentation using your document as the source.*

 **SEE ALSO** You will learn how to create a presentation from a document step by step in Chapter 8, "Copilot in PowerPoint."



**IMPORTANT** Copilot Pro has limited capabilities to use full documents as the source for prompts in the Microsoft 365 applications. To unlock the full capabilities of using your files as source content, you need a Microsoft 365 Copilot license.

You can also add source content to your prompt by copying and pasting it from the source directly into the prompt area. In this example, you have a vegan gingerbread recipe as your source, and you want to rewrite it to make it easy for children to understand.



Ask Copilot to rewrite the recipe so that it is suitable for an 8-year-old.

Copilot responds with a new version of the recipe written in a different style.

#### Let's Bake!

##### 1. Preheat the Oven:

- Ask an adult to help you set the oven to 350°F (180°C). It's like warming up your gingerbread house!

##### 2. Mix the Wet Ingredients:

- In a big bowl, put the vegan butter (it's like magic butter that doesn't come from cows!), brown sugar, and molasses. Mix them together until they're all friends. 🌟

##### 3. Make Your Flax Egg:

- Flax egg? Sounds fancy! But it's just flaxseed mixed with hot water. Stir it well and add it to your bowl. It helps our cookies stick together.

Copilot rewrites the recipe using language and concepts suitable for an 8-year-old.



**SEE ALSO** You will learn how to use web content as a source in Chapter 3.

## Expectations

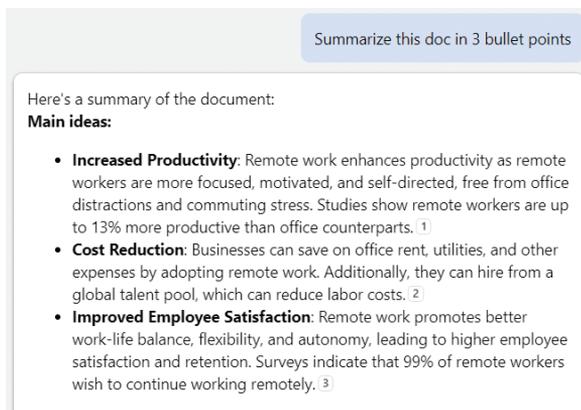
Expectations define the length, tone, or format of the output you have in mind. You can ask Copilot to write to a specified word count or to respond in a different format, such as bullet points. You can describe the intended audience or type of language used.

Just like delegating a task to an assistant, you will find that you get better results if you explain the output style and format you have in mind. Compare the following prompts:

- Summarize this doc
- Summarize this doc in three bullet points
- Write an executive summary for this doc

Each of these prompts asks Copilot to summarize the content of the document, but the intended output is different each time.

- When you ask Copilot to summarize this doc with no other explanation of the desired output, you will get a comprehensive summary, which may be written in bullet points or paragraphs, as you saw in the previous section.
- Adding the expectation that you want the output written “in three bullet points” will provide you with a much more concise summary, written in a bullet point format.



*Providing expectations in your prompt will change the output of the response.*

- You can express the desired output as a style, such as asking for an “executive summary.” In this case, Copilot will summarize the key points of the document focusing on the main conclusions and recommendations for a business decision-maker.

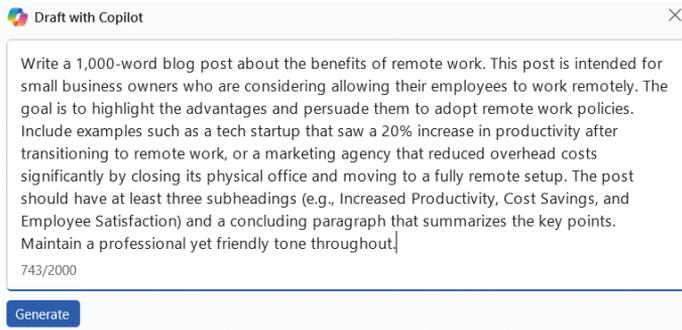
### Executive Summary

Remote work is not only a convenient option for employees, but also a strategic advantage for businesses. By allowing workers to choose their preferred location and schedule, remote work can boost productivity, efficiency, profitability, and employee satisfaction. Remote work can also help businesses save costs, reduce environmental impact, access a wider talent pool, and increase diversity and innovation. However, remote work also poses some challenges, such as communication, coordination, security, and culture. Therefore, businesses need to adopt remote work policies that suit their specific needs and goals, and provide adequate support and guidance to their remote workers. This blog post will explore the benefits and challenges of remote work, and offer some examples and tips on how to implement remote work successfully.

*Copilot can generate an executive summary of your document.*

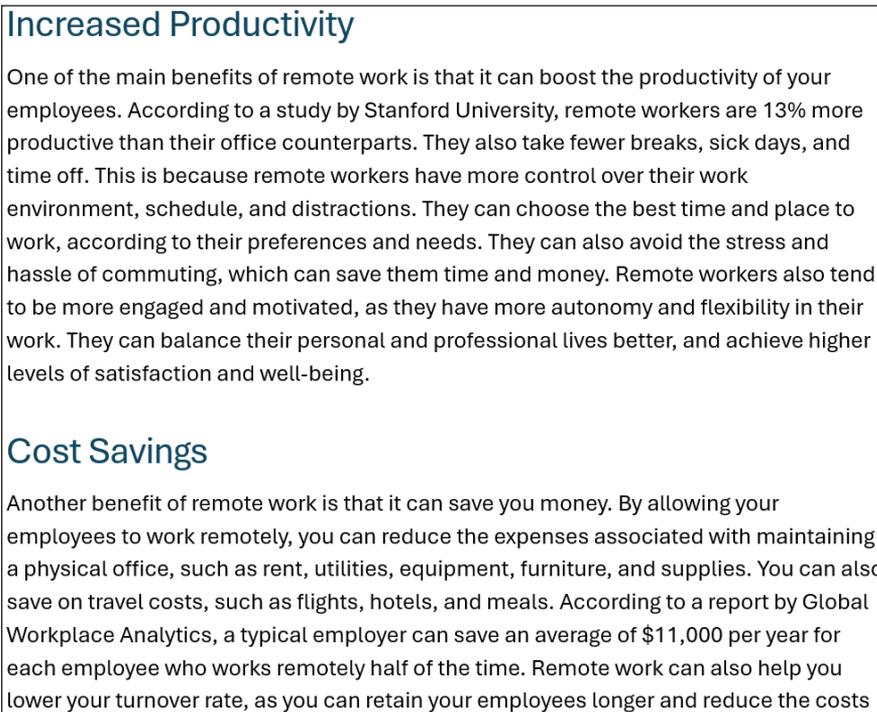
You can describe in detail your expectations from the output, including structure, content, and tone. Here is an example of a prompt that now includes the desired length (1000 words) and specific subheadings (Increased Productivity, Cost Savings, Employee Satisfaction) and asks for a concluding paragraph. It also specifies the tone that should be used (professional yet friendly).

*Write a 1,000-word blog post about the benefits of remote work. This post is intended for small business owners who are considering allowing their employees to work remotely. The goal is to highlight the advantages and persuade them to adopt remote work policies. Include examples such as a tech startup that saw a 20% increase in productivity after transitioning to remote work, or a marketing agency that reduced overhead costs significantly by closing its physical office and moving to a fully remote setup. The post should have at least three subheadings (e.g., Increased Productivity, Cost Savings, and Employee Satisfaction) and a concluding paragraph that summarizes the key points. Maintain a professional yet friendly tone throughout.*



*A prompt that uses a goal, context, examples, and a description of the expected output.*

The response follows the expected output requested in the prompt.



*Copilot responds with a blog post that takes in the instructions from the prompt.*

Compare the output with a prompt on the same topic that sets a very different expectation.



Write a 150 word elevator pitch about the benefits of remote work. This is intended to help me explain to small business owners that they should consider allowing their employees to work remotely. Use a conversational, friendly, but persuasive tone.





*A prompt requesting a different style of output on the benefits of remote work.*

From this prompt, Copilot produces a very different response.

🌟 **Unlocking Success with Remote Work: A Smart Choice for Your Business** 🌟

Hey there, savvy business owner! 🙌 Ready to level up your company? Remote work isn't just a trend—it's a game-changer. Here's why:

1. **Boosted Morale:** Happy employees are productive employees. Remote work gives them flexibility and trust. 🚀
2. **Crisis-Mode Superpower:** When chaos strikes (hello, pandemic!), remote work keeps your business humming. 🙌
3. **Retain Aces:** Top talent wants freedom. Embrace remote work, keep your stars. 🌟
4. **Productivity Surge:** Fewer distractions, focused work. Your team becomes productivity ninjas. 🎯
5. **Cost Savings:** Say goodbye to pricey office space. Hello, profits! 💰
6. **Global Talent:** Cast your net worldwide. Skills from New Zealand to Brazil. 🌍

Ready to make the leap? Your business will thank you! 🙌

*Copilot responds with a series of quick points using emojis for emphasis.*



**TIP** The results from your prompt will be different using Copilot on the web than from Copilot in Microsoft 365 applications. In the applications, Copilot expects to work in a certain style—for instance, in Word, it expects to draft a document. For more free-form types of content like this, you are likely to get a better result using Copilot on the web.

## Iterate and refine

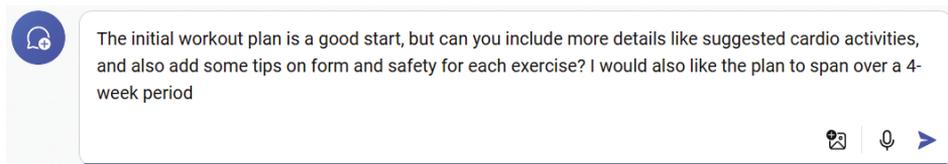
In this section, you have learned the main components that make up a prompt—goals, context, source, and expectation—and how to use them to get better results. However, it is unlikely that you will ever get a perfect result the first time from a single prompt. It is important to understand that generative AI will not always correctly understand your intent the first time.

Think again about delegating a task to an assistant. You may need to go back and provide additional information, context, source material, or expectations to get the results you were hoping for. More likely, you would engage in a conversation either at the start or throughout the process with the assistant to clarify, refine, and provide additional detail.

When working with Copilot, think about the interaction as a conversation, as you might have with an assistant, rather than only as a single prompt and response. Developing your skills in this area and learning how to iterate and refine your prompts to get better responses is the most important factor in your success using Copilot.

Returning to the example of using Copilot to create a workout plan, when we first asked Copilot to “create a workout plan for a beginner who is looking to improve their fitness and has not had a regular exercise or workout routine before,” we got a response that suggested a simple six-week workout plan.

However, it was a general response with very little detail. Perhaps you had in mind that you wanted a four-week program to start with, or you need to provide more details about the exercises to help beginners get started. You can refine the results by responding with another prompt.



*Provide Copilot with feedback and ask for changes with another prompt.*



**TIP** Being polite to Copilot and providing feedback on what you liked or didn't like in the response can also help you get better results.

Copilot takes your feedback and refines the initial response to provide the changes and additional details you requested.

 **Copilot**

Certainly! Let's enhance the workout plan and make it more comprehensive. Here's a 4-week beginner workout routine that includes cardio activities, exercise tips, and safety guidelines:

**Week 1: Building the Foundation**

**1. Day 1 (Full-Body Strength):**

- **Cardio:** 10 minutes of brisk walking or light jogging.
- **Strength Exercises:**
  - Squats (3 sets of 10 reps)
  - Push-ups (3 sets of 8 reps)
  - Bent-over dumbbell rows (3 sets of 10 reps)
- **Tips:**
  - Maintain proper form: Keep your back straight during squats and engage your core during push-ups.
  - Start with light weights for rows.
- **Safety:**

*Copilot adjusts the response based on the changes you requested in your prompt.*

You can continue the conversation in this style until you get the result you want, iterating to ask for more changes or for additional information to be added.



This looks much better! Could you now add variations for each week to keep the workouts engaging, and also include some nutrition tips for beginners?





Provide Copilot with feedback and ask it to make changes and additions with another prompt.

**Nutrition Tips for Beginners:**

- **Hydrate:** Drink water before, during, and after workouts.
- **Balanced Diet:** Include whole grains, lean proteins, fruits, and vegetables.
- **Pre-Workout Snack:** Have a small meal 1-2 hours before exercising.
- **Post-Workout Fuel:** Consume protein and carbs within 30 minutes after workouts.
- **Listen to Your Body:** If something feels uncomfortable or painful, stop and consult a professional.

Enjoy your fitness journey! 🎉 🙌 : Muscle & Strength: Beginner Workouts

*Copilot responds based on your prompt. The response now includes nutrition tips for beginners.*



**TIP** Don't forget to use the elements of prompting you learned earlier as you iterate and refine. You can continue to provide additional context, examples, sources, and descriptions of your expected output.

## Additional tips to improve prompting

Goals, context, source, and expectations are the core elements of writing effective prompts. You can improve your prompting even further with the additional tips covered in this section.

### *Be specific*

In the previous section, you learned how to make your prompt more specific by adding context, examples, and expectations about the output. Providing detailed and clear instructions helps guide Copilot to give you a better result. This is true even for a simple prompt. Compare the following two examples. Even without adding context or examples, you will get better results by being more specific about what you want Copilot to do.

- Tell me about cats
- Describe the different breeds of domestic cats and their unique characteristics

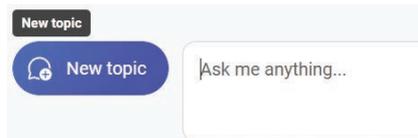
### *Tell Copilot when you are starting a new conversation*

Copilot expects you to have an ongoing conversation where you iterate and refine your prompts, so when you are ready to start a new topic or conversation, you should tell Copilot. That effectively resets the conversation and avoids confusion.

In the Copilot experiences on web, mobile, and Windows, there is a button you can select next to the prompt area that restarts the conversation.

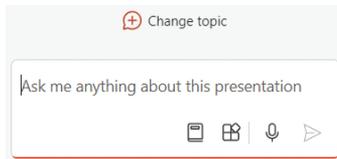


Select the icon next to the prompt area in Copilot on the web to start a new topic.



When you select the icon, it will expand to show the words "New topic," and Copilot will be ready to start a new conversation.

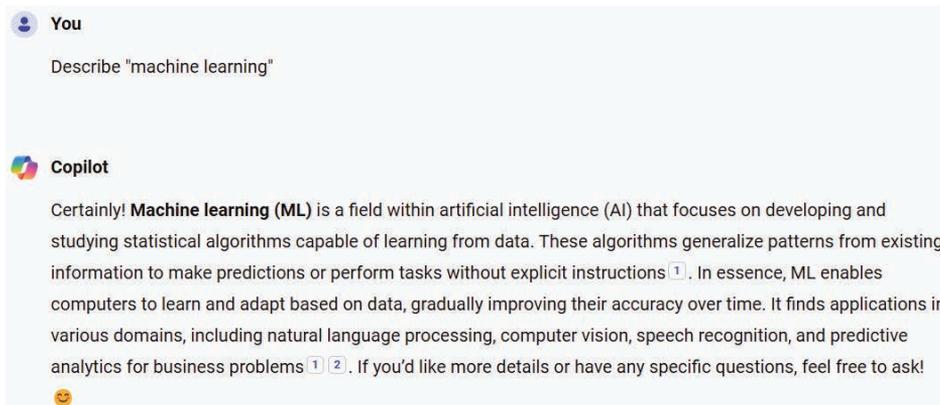
In the Copilot experiences in the Microsoft 365 applications, look for the option to click a button to change topic, just above the prompt area.



Select the "Change topic" option above the prompt area to start a new topic with Copilot in the Microsoft 365 apps.

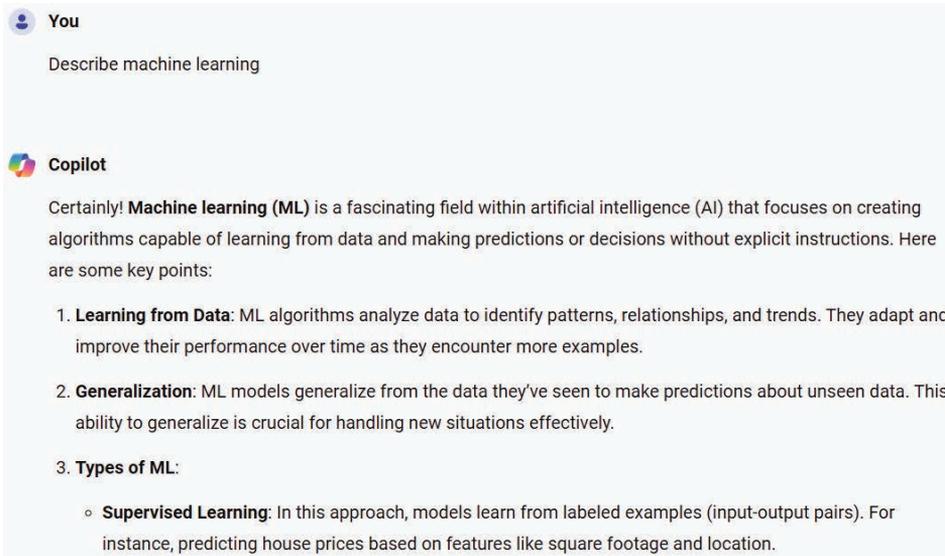
### Use quotation marks

You can use quotation marks in your prompt to provide greater clarity and precision. For example, if you ask Copilot to describe "machine learning," providing quotation marks around the term will focus the output precisely on defining this term.



Using quotation marks helps Copilot focus on a specific part of your prompt.

The same prompt without quotation marks will vary in the focus of the response, giving you a more general answer.



**You**

Describe machine learning

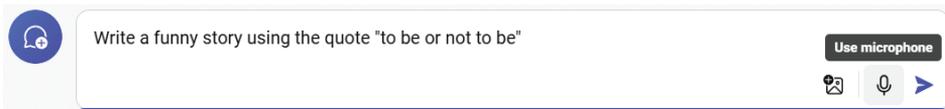
**Copilot**

Certainly! **Machine learning (ML)** is a fascinating field within artificial intelligence (AI) that focuses on creating algorithms capable of learning from data and making predictions or decisions without explicit instructions. Here are some key points:

1. **Learning from Data:** ML algorithms analyze data to identify patterns, relationships, and trends. They adapt and improve their performance over time as they encounter more examples.
2. **Generalization:** ML models generalize from the data they've seen to make predictions about unseen data. This ability to generalize is crucial for handling new situations effectively.
3. **Types of ML:**
  - **Supervised Learning:** In this approach, models learn from labeled examples (input-output pairs). For instance, predicting house prices based on features like square footage and location.

*Without quotation marks, Copilot will provide a less focused answer to the same prompt.*

Quotation marks can also help when you want Copilot to use an exact phrase or quote rather than paraphrasing it. They can also help to provide clarity on where the quote is in your prompt, rather than the words running together in an ambiguous way.



Write a funny story using the quote "to be or not to be"

Use microphone

*Use quotation marks in your prompt to ask it to use a specific quote.*

Quotation marks are also useful when you want to refer to a title in your prompt:

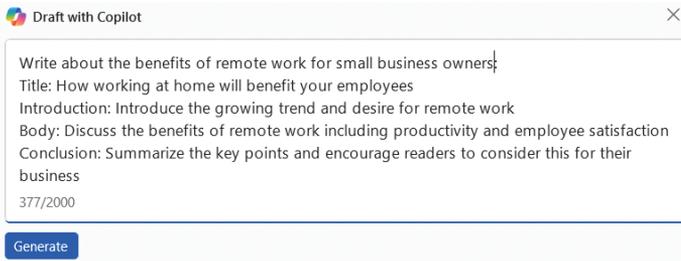


Please tell me what "1984" by George Orwell is about

*Use quotation marks to indicate a title of a book, movie, or other proper title.*

## Use tags or labels

You can help make your prompt clearer by using tags to identify different parts of your prompt or describe the desired output. In this example, the prompt asking Copilot to write about the benefits of remote work also includes tags describing the structure and what to include in each section.



*Use tags in your prompt to guide Copilot on the content and structure of the response you're looking for.*

The response follows the requested structure and description of the content.

# How working at home will benefit your employees

A guide for small business owners who want to embrace remote work

## Introduction

Remote work is not a new concept, but it has become more popular and feasible in recent years, thanks to the advances in technology and communication. More and more workers are seeking flexibility and autonomy in their work arrangements, and more and more employers are recognizing the benefits of allowing their staff to work from home or anywhere they choose.

As a small business owner, you might be wondering if remote work is suitable for your business and your employees. You might have some concerns about the challenges and risks of managing a remote team, such as communication, collaboration, accountability, and security. However, you might also be curious about the potential advantages of remote work, such as cost savings, productivity, and employee satisfaction.

*Copilot responds with a blog post in the structure requested.*

## Write prompts to generate images

Copilot can also generate images for you, using the DALL-E 3 model, which is a type of AI model that specializes in creating unique, high-quality, detailed images based on the text description you put in your prompt.

Effective prompting for image generation in Copilot requires some different knowledge and skills than prompting to generate text content. When you are writing prompts to generate images, you should think about fine details, as well as the mood or aesthetic of the image you want to create, and understand the different kinds of art, digital, photography, and other mediums you can use to describe images.

As you learned with prompting for text, using a very broad general prompt to generate an image is unlikely to give you a satisfactory result and can generate vastly different results each time. In this example, the very simple prompt “create an image of a tree” creates two very different styles each time the prompt is used and adds a lot of additional detail that may not be what you had in mind.



*A very broad general prompt is unlikely to give you a good response when generating an image.*



"A tree"

*Copilot generates an image of a tree with squirrels, flowers, and butterflies.*

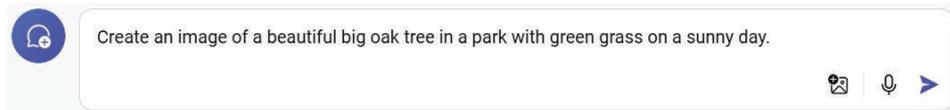


"A tree"

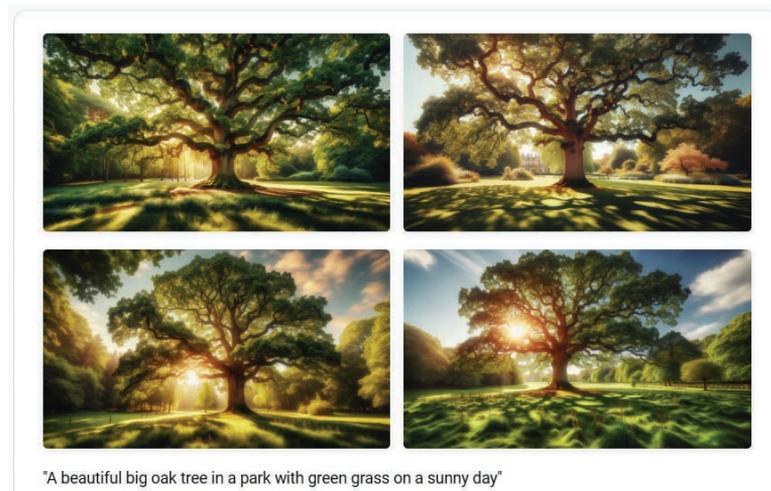
*Using the same broad general prompt a second time generates a very different looking set of images.*

## Write a caption to generate an image

One way to write an effective prompt to generate an image is to picture the image in your mind and then write a caption for it. Imagine describing the image to someone else to help them picture the same thing. In this example, the prompt is still relatively simple, but the output is a good match to the description in the prompt, featuring the key elements that were requested.



*Using a prompt that describes the image in the style of a caption helps Copilot generate something more like what you have in mind.*



*The generated images are well aligned with the description in the prompt.*

## Describe the background of your image

When you write your prompt, think about what you want in the background of your image and describe that as well as the main part of the image you want to generate. If you don't specify the details of the background, the AI will fill in something for you or even leave it blank. In this example, asking for a 3D cartoon-style image, the background is blank in most options.



*If you don't describe the background of the image in your prompt, Copilot will generate the background or leave it blank.*



*With this prompt, the background is blank in most of the generated images.*

Compare this to the following version of the prompt that includes a description of both the cartoon-style bird and the details of the desired background.



*You can write a prompt to describe the background you want as well as the main image.*

Copilot adds some background options as described.



*Copilot generates the image with the background as requested in the prompt.*

## Refining and iterating your prompt

As you learned earlier in this chapter, think about prompting Copilot as a conversation in which you can continue to refine and iterate your prompts to get what you requested. This is a particularly important skill when you are prompting for image generation, where communicating in words an image you have in your mind can take multiple attempts or iterations, especially when you are starting out.

In this example, the previous prompt asking Copilot to generate an image of an oak tree is refined to describe that the background should be a clear blue sky.



*Rewrite the prompt asking for an image of an oak tree, this time describing the background.*

This changes the image results and opens up the image to bring the tree into the foreground and adds sky to the background.



*Copilot generates images with sky in the background, but it is not clear sky as requested in the prompt.*

However, the results here don't match what was requested, which was a "clear blue sky." Copilot has not understood that the phrase was intended to mean that there should be no clouds. You can continue the conversation with Copilot to ask it to try again, providing more details or different wording.



**TIP** Remember to be polite and reinforce the things you like to help get better results as you refine your prompt.

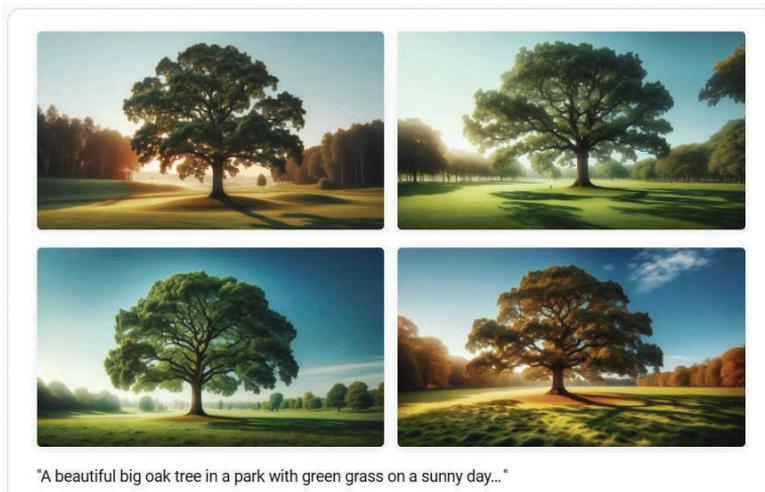


I love this but I want the background to be clear blue sky with no clouds



*Give Copilot feedback and use different language to request what you want changed.*

The refined results are much better and represent what was requested.

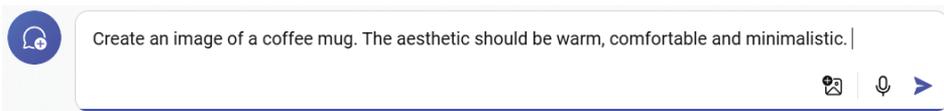


*Copilot generates a new set of images that are a better match to the request.*

## Use adjectives to describe the emotion or aesthetic

When you are writing prompts to generate images, using adjectives to describe the mood, tone, emotion, or aesthetic of the image can help generate the kind of image you have in mind. In the following examples, both prompts ask for an image of a coffee cup, but the description of the aesthetic, even without any specific detail about the scene, produces vastly different results.

In this first example, the aesthetic is described as warm, comfortable, and minimalistic.



*Describing the aesthetic of the image, even without any other detail, can be an effective way to write a prompt.*



"A warm, comfortable and minimalistic coffee mug"

Copilot generates images based on the aesthetic described.

The same basic prompt with a different aesthetic description (colorful and happy) creates a completely different set of images.



Using the same prompt with a different aesthetic will create an entirely different image.



"A colorful and happy coffee mug"

Copilot produces images that fit the colorful and happy aesthetic requested in the prompt.

## Describe specific artistic or photographic styles

One of the best ways to get an image in the style you have in mind is to describe a specific artistic, digital, or photographic style. Copilot can create images in all sorts of styles and mediums. Think about styles of drawings or paintings, such as “impressionist” or “watercolor.” You can ask for realistic photographs and describe photographic techniques or styles or ask for cartoon-style images as shown in the previous example. You can also ask for images in the style of different mediums, such as clay or embroidery.



**SEE ALSO** Your ability to use these kinds of prompts effectively to generate images will depend on the kinds of styles you can think of and describe. Later in this section, you will learn how to use Copilot to help you better describe image styles.

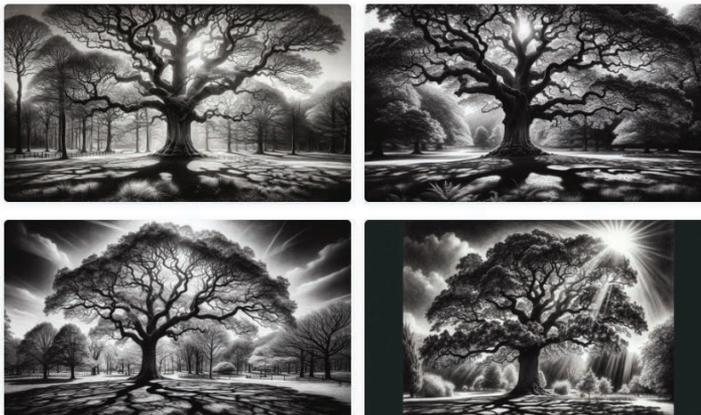
Let’s return to the example of asking Copilot to generate an image of an oak tree, this time using different artistic styles. The first prompt asks for a black and white charcoal etching.



create an image of a large oak tree in a park on a sunny day in the style of a black and white charcoal etching



*Describe a specific artistic style as part of your prompt when generating images.*



"A large oak tree in a park on a sunny day in the style of a black a..."

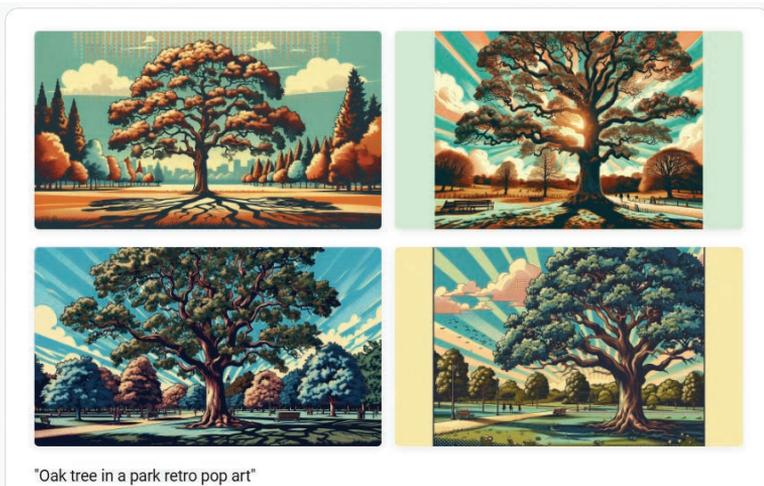
*Copilot generates images in the style described.*

Compare the results using the same basic request with a different art style—this time, a “retro pop-art style.”



2

You can use the same prompt with a different artistic style to create different images.



Copilot generates the images again using the new style.

 **SEE ALSO** When you generate images using Copilot, you will get a series of artistic style suggestions you can use to change your image into different styles. You will learn about this in Chapter 3.

 **TIP** You can ask for very specific artistic styles, naming a particular artist, painting, or era.

## Ask Copilot to help you with image prompting

One of the most effective ways to learn how to write great prompts for images is to ask Copilot to help you write the prompt. This is particularly useful if you don't know how to describe a particular style in detail.

### To ask Copilot to help you write a prompt to generate an image

1. Write a prompt asking Copilot how to write a good prompt for the outcome you are trying to achieve, describing the subject and the style.



*Ask Copilot to help you write effective prompts to describe the image style you want.*

2. Copilot responds with a suggested prompt you can use. It may also explain the thought process behind how it constructed the prompt, helping you with other ideas you can use.

Putting it all together, your prompt could be:

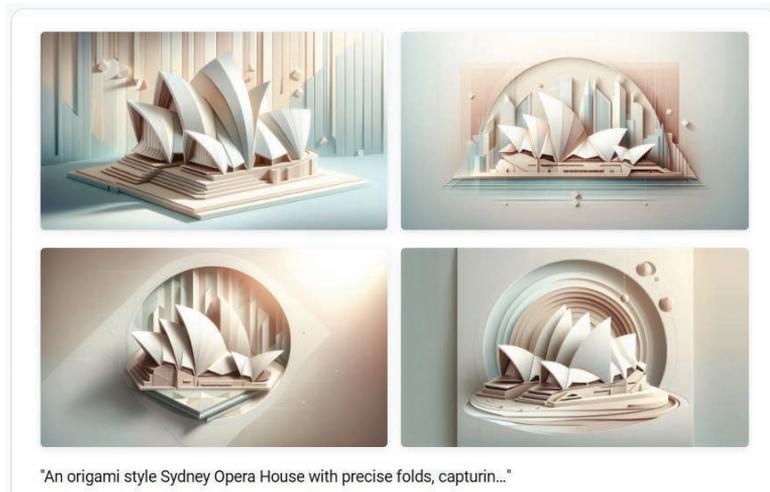
"Generate an image featuring an origami-style Sydney Opera House. The folds should be precise, capturing the architectural details. Use a soft color palette reminiscent of paper, and set it against an abstract background with subtle geometric shapes. Illuminate the folds with natural light and create gentle shadows."

*Copilot suggests a prompt you can use to describe the image style you want to create.*

3. Copy the text of the suggested prompt.
4. Select the **New topic** button to start a new conversation before generating the image.
5. Paste that prompt into the prompt area.

Copilot generates an image as described, with refined details you may not have known how to request.

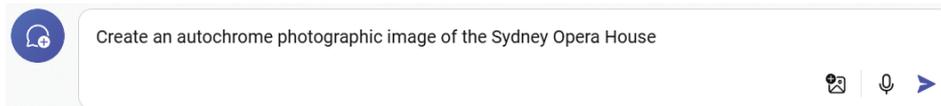
2



*Copilot generates a set of images based on the prompt.*

You can also ask Copilot to help refine your prompt to get more subtle and detailed changes to the results.

In this example, you started by asking for an image in the style of an autochrome photograph.



*Describe a photographic style for Copilot to create an image.*



"Autochrome photographic image of the Sydney Opera House"

*Copilot generates a series of images using the style described in the prompt.*

Let's say you want to make some changes to this, but you don't have the knowledge or terminology to describe the way you want to refine or change it to be truer to the style.

You can ask Copilot for help in how to refine your prompt.

**You**

help me write a really good prompt to ask for an autochrome image

**Copilot**

Certainly! Here's a refined prompt you can use to request an autochrome-style image:

"Create an early 20th-century autochrome photograph featuring the Sydney Opera House. The scene should include a few sailing boats in the foreground on the harbor. I'd like the colors to be vibrant yet soft, with a slight graininess typical of autochrome photos. Please ensure the lighting captures natural daylight, casting gentle shadows and highlights to enhance the nostalgic feel of the image."

Feel free to adjust or add any specific details to make it even more tailored to your vision! 😊

*Ask Copilot to help you refine and describe a photographic style in detail.*

Using this prompt changes the image in subtle ways as described. In particular, notice the change to the lighting in these images compared with the first set of images.



*Copilot generates another four images, making the changes requested in the prompt.*

## Use more advanced prompting techniques

In addition to the main elements of effective prompting you learned earlier in this chapter, you can use these additional prompting techniques to get more out of your Copilot Pro experience.

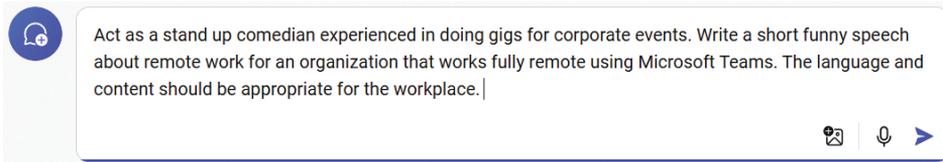
### Personas

Asking Copilot to take on the role of a persona is a very effective way to use generative AI to take on the point of view and expertise of another person. While this doesn't substitute for actual expertise, it can help you empathize with or anticipate another person's point of view or learn about a problem or topic from a different perspective. You can use the persona pattern of prompting in two ways.

## Act as a persona

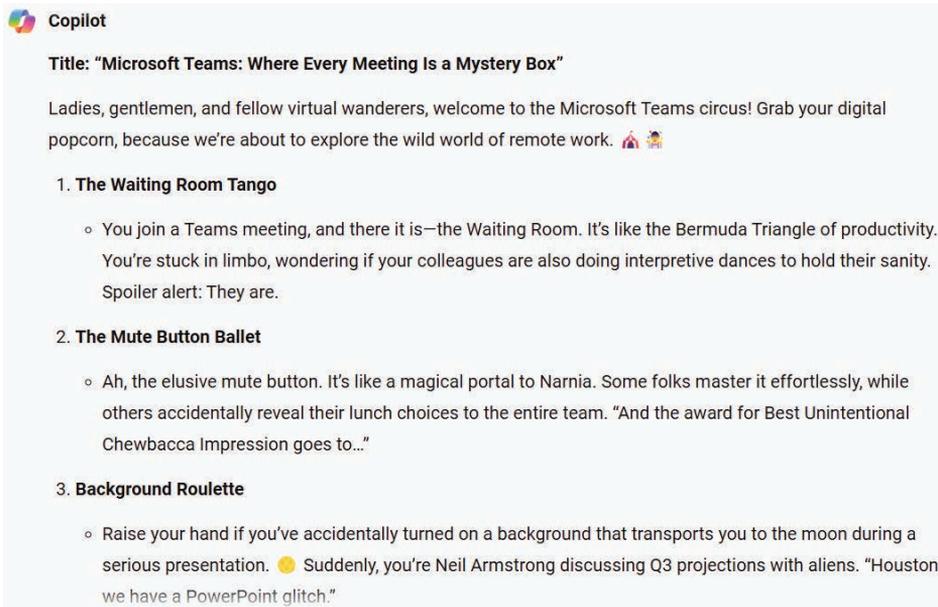
You can use this type of prompt by starting with the phrase “act as” or “you are a” and then filling in a description of a person or organization before outlining the task.

This type of prompting can help you write in a different style or take a different perspective you don’t have, as shown in this example that provides a different angle on the conversation about remote work.



Ask Copilot to act as a stand-up comedian persona.

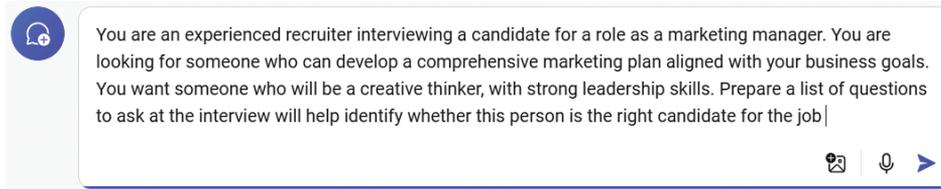
Copilot responds to the topic with a series of jokes.



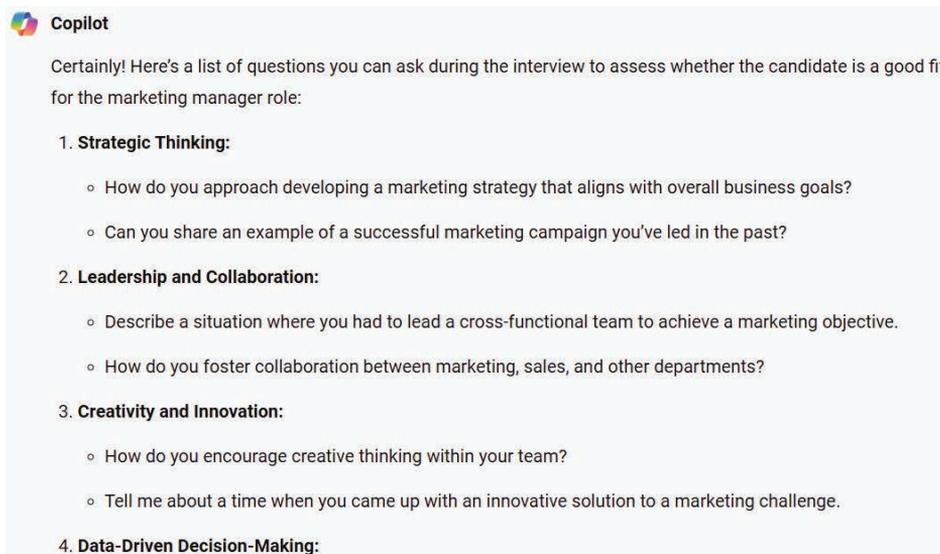
Copilot responds with a series of jokes.

You can also use this prompting pattern to generate answers using expertise you don’t have, such as in this example, where you are a manager recruiting for a new role,

but you don't have much experience as an interviewer. You can ask Copilot to take on the persona of an experienced recruiter to help you with the task.

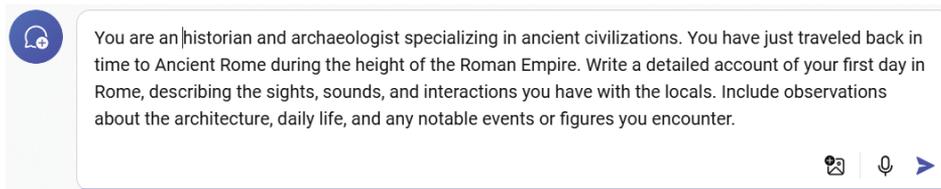


*Ask Copilot to take on the role of an experienced recruiter to help you come up with suggested interview questions.*



*Copilot responds with a list of suggested interview questions.*

The persona pattern can also be helpful in your creative work or to learn about topics in different ways. In this example, we ask Copilot to act as a time-traveling historian, to learn more about life in Ancient Rome.



*You can use the persona pattern to get creative and different perspectives on a topic.*

The response is presented in an interesting storytelling format as requested.

 **Copilot**

**Title: “A Day in Ancient Rome: A Time Traveler’s Tale”**

As the sun rose over the Tiber River, I stepped onto the cobblestone streets of Ancient Rome, my heart racing with anticipation. The year was 117 AD, and I found myself surrounded by a bustling metropolis that would shape the course of history.

**The Sights:** The architecture was awe-inspiring. Marble columns adorned grand temples dedicated to Jupiter, Venus, and countless other gods. The Colosseum loomed in the distance, its massive amphitheater promising gladiatorial spectacles and chariot races. Statues of emperors and heroes stood proudly in every square, their stern gazes following me as I wandered.

**The Sounds:** The air hummed with activity. Vendors hawked their wares—olives, figs, and amphorae of wine. The clatter of horse-drawn carriages mixed with the chatter of merchants negotiating deals. Children played games, their laughter echoing off the stone walls. And above it all, the distant roar of the crowd from the Circus Maximus carried on the wind.

**Interactions with Locals:** I approached a woman weaving fabric outside her modest domus. She smiled, her hands deftly working the loom. We exchanged pleasantries in Latin, and she offered me a cup of spiced wine. Her eyes held a mix of curiosity and suspicion—perhaps wondering why a stranger wore such peculiar clothing.

*Copilot responds from the perspective of the fictional time traveler.*

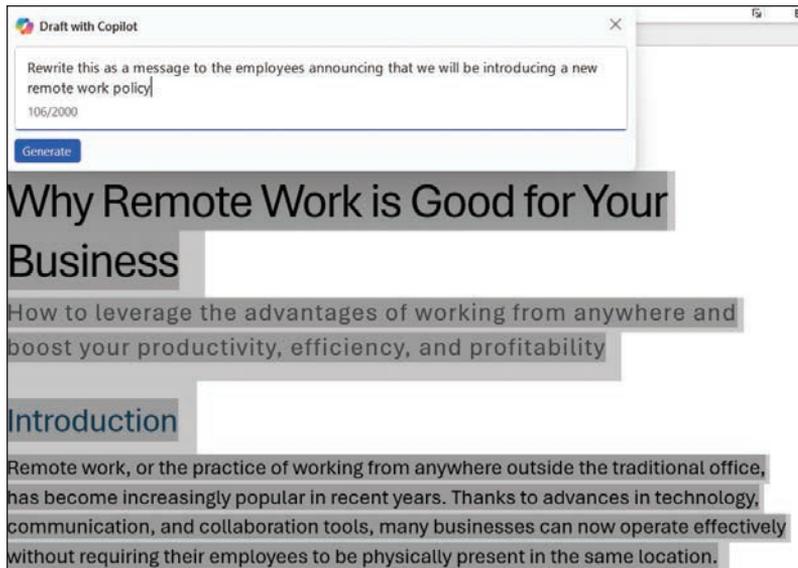
You can continue the conversation using iterative prompting as you learned earlier in this chapter, such as asking for more information about any of the scenes and experiences in the response.



**TIP** You can also use persona prompting to name specific people, such as your favorite author or entrepreneur, to discuss a problem or explain something to you.

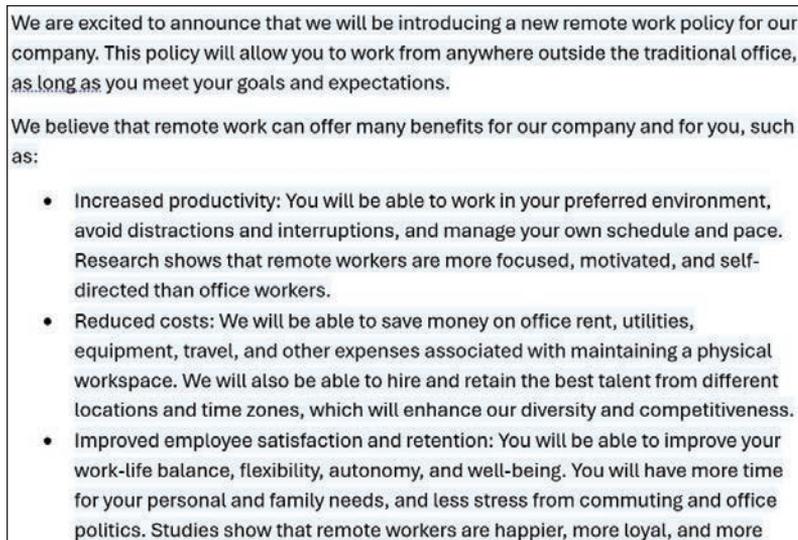
### *Write for a persona*

The persona prompting pattern is also useful to create content for a particular audience. In this case, you describe the persona you are writing for, rather than the persona creating the content. This is a useful way to use the “rewrite” capabilities of Copilot in Word. In this example, you ask Copilot to write a message about remote work for the employees of the business, using the original blog post as the source.



You can use the persona pattern to ask Copilot to write content for a different audience.

Copilot responds with a message written with the employees in mind.



Copilot responds by providing text with the employees in mind first.



**SEE ALSO** You will learn how to use the rewrite capability of Copilot in Word in Chapter 7, "Copilot in Word."

## Ask for multiple options

If you are using Copilot to help you generate new ideas, you can ask it to provide multiple options or suggestions. This is an example of another way to use the element of expectations in your prompt. In this example, you ask Copilot to suggest more engaging titles for the blog post on remote work, using that as the source.



*Ask Copilot to generate multiple options or suggestions.*

Copilot responds with a list of suggestions to choose from. This can be more effective than just getting a single response and iterating, although you can still refine your prompt at this point if the suggestions don't match what you had in mind.



*Ask Copilot to provide you with more than one option to use in your content.*

## Providing examples

Another way to prompt Copilot with expectations is to provide examples of the output you are seeking. This type of prompting is called "in-context learning." You are effectively training the model in the context of the conversation.

In this example, you are asking Copilot to create a job description for a marketing manager. You have a particular kind of output in mind, so you provide an example from another job description you already have.



**TIP** Notice the use of quotation marks here to separate the example from the rest of the prompt.



You are a recruitment specialist. Here is an example of a job description for a software developer:

Example:

'Job Title: Software Developer

Responsibilities: Develop and maintain software applications, collaborate with cross-functional teams, and participate in code reviews. Requirements: Bachelor's degree in Computer Science, 3+ years of experience in software development, proficiency in Java and Python. Preferred: Experience with cloud technologies and Agile methodologies.'

Now, write a job description for a marketing manager.'



*Provide Copilot with examples to show how you want the response to be presented.*

Copilot responds by following the example provided, generating the job description with a title, list of responsibilities, and list of requirements.

#### **Job Title: Marketing Manager**

##### **Responsibilities:**

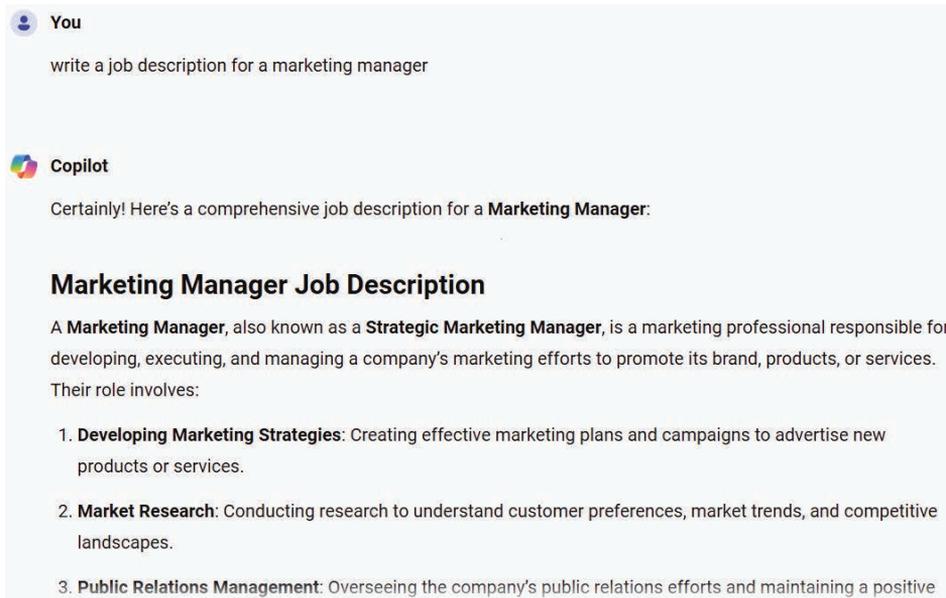
- Develop and execute marketing strategies to drive brand awareness, customer acquisition, and revenue growth.
- Collaborate with cross-functional teams (including sales, product, and creative) to create integrated marketing campaigns.
- Analyze market trends, customer insights, and competitive landscapes to inform marketing decisions.
- Manage digital marketing channels (such as social media, email, and SEO) and track performance metrics.
- Oversee marketing budgets, allocate resources effectively, and optimize ROI.
- Lead a team of marketing professionals, providing guidance, coaching, and performance evaluations.

##### **Requirements:**

- Bachelor's degree in Marketing, Business, or a related field.
- 5+ years of experience in marketing, with a focus on strategy, campaign management, and team leadership.
- Proficiency in digital marketing tools and analytics platforms.

*Copilot generates a job description following the example format.*

Compare this with the response you get from the more general prompt, “write a job description for a marketing manager,” where there is no example output format specified.



**You**

write a job description for a marketing manager

**Copilot**

Certainly! Here's a comprehensive job description for a **Marketing Manager**:

**Marketing Manager Job Description**

A **Marketing Manager**, also known as a **Strategic Marketing Manager**, is a marketing professional responsible for developing, executing, and managing a company's marketing efforts to promote its brand, products, or services. Their role involves:

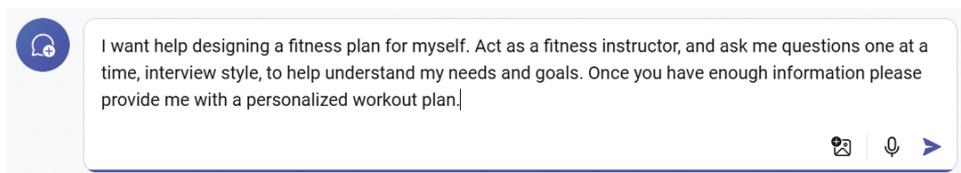
- 1. Developing Marketing Strategies:** Creating effective marketing plans and campaigns to advertise new products or services.
- 2. Market Research:** Conducting research to understand customer preferences, market trends, and competitive landscapes.
- 3. Public Relations Management:** Overseeing the company's public relations efforts and maintaining a positive

*Without an example, Copilot gives general suggestions about the role of a marketing manager.*

## Brainstorming and problem solving

You can also change the question-and-answer pattern so that Copilot asks you questions. This is useful if you want Copilot to help you with brainstorming or thinking through or solving a problem. This is known as the “flipped interaction pattern.”

Rather than asking Copilot to come up with a workout schedule, you can ask it to ask you questions about your needs first.

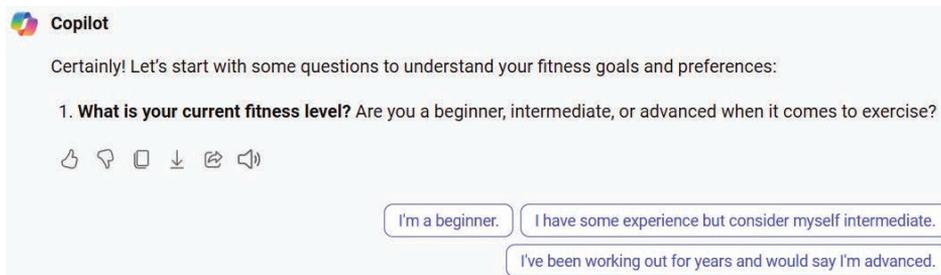


 I want help designing a fitness plan for myself. Act as a fitness instructor, and ask me questions one at a time, interview style, to help understand my needs and goals. Once you have enough information please provide me with a personalized workout plan.

*Ask Copilot to ask you a series of questions rather than providing an answer.*

Copilot responds with a question instead of an answer and then works through a series of questions with you before generating a final response.



*Copilot responds by asking you a question.*

## Skills review

In this chapter, you learned how to:

- Understand how generative AI works with prompts and responses.
- Discover and use suggested prompts with Copilot Lab for different apps, tasks, and job roles.
- Write effective prompts for Copilot using the main elements of a prompt: goal, context, source, and expectations.
- Write prompts to generate images and use Copilot to help you describe different image styles.
- Use more advanced prompting techniques including the persona pattern, asking for multiple options, using examples, and brainstorming.



## Practice tasks

No practice files are necessary to complete the practice tasks in this chapter.

### Understand prompts and responses

In your browser, navigate to <https://copilot.microsoft.com>, and then perform the following tasks:

1. Select the **Sign in** button at the top right of the screen.
2. Sign in with the Microsoft account you used to sign up for Copilot Pro.
3. In the prompt area, enter the following prompt: **Mary had a**
4. Select the arrow icon to submit the prompt.
5. Notice that Copilot completes the first line of the nursery rhyme, "Mary had a little lamb," based on predicting what is most likely to come next from the prompt you entered.

### Discover and use suggested prompts with Copilot Lab

Open your browser, navigate to Copilot Lab, and then perform the following tasks:

1. Navigate to the Copilot Lab home page: <https://copilot.cloud.microsoft/en-US/prompts>.
2. Select the **Sign in** icon at the top right of the screen, and sign in using the Microsoft account you used to sign up for Copilot Pro.
3. Scroll down to the suggested prompts.
4. Select **View all prompts**.
5. Select the **App** menu, and then select **PowerPoint**.
6. Select the **Job** menu, and then select **Create**.
7. Scroll through the suggested prompts on the screen, select the suggested prompt to **Develop training materials**, and open it.
8. Read the details of the prompt, and then select the **ribbon** icon to save it. Close the card window.

9. Browse through the other suggested prompts and select the **ribbon** icon for any other prompts you think would be useful.
10. Select the **Saved prompts** button to view your saved prompts.
11. Select the **ribbon** icon to deselect any prompts you don't want to keep after this practice task.
12. Select the **Saved prompts** button again to return to the full list of prompts.

## Use the elements of effective prompts

In your browser, navigate to <https://copilot.microsoft.com>, and then perform the following tasks:

1. In the prompt area, enter the following prompt: **Help me plan for a holiday to Slovenia**
2. Refine this prompt by adding context. In the prompt area, type **I will be traveling with my partner and two children aged 8 and 10. We are looking for a mixture of fun activities, beaches, and places to relax.**
3. Refine the prompt again by adding expectations about the output. In the prompt area, type **This sounds great. Please suggest an itinerary to visit these places for a two-week trip.**
4. Select any of the suggested prompts to continue the conversation.

## Write prompts to generate images

Remain in the browser with <https://copilot.microsoft.com> open, and then perform the following tasks:

1. Select the **New topic** button to start a new conversation.
2. Enter the following prompt: **Create an image of sunset over the beach in a bold impressionist style.**
3. After Copilot has generated the images, add a new prompt: **Change it to a realistic polaroid photo style.**
4. Select the **New topic** button.
5. In the prompt area, ask Copilot for help with your next prompt by typing: **How can I write a prompt to generate an image of the New York skyline as a pop-up book.**

6. Copy the suggested prompt Copilot provides in the response.
7. Select the **New topic** button.
8. Paste in the suggested response from Copilot or use this one: **Design a vibrant pop-up book scene featuring the iconic New York City skyline. Capture the towering skyscrapers, the Statue of Liberty, and the Brooklyn Bridge. Imagine the cityscape coming to life as the pages unfold, revealing intricate paper structures and colorful details.**

## Use more advanced prompting techniques

Remain in the browser with <https://copilot.microsoft.com> open, and then perform the following tasks:

1. Select the **New topic** button to start a new conversation.
2. Enter the following prompt: **Act as an entrepreneur who is investing in new food businesses. You are having a meeting with a young pastry chef who has an idea for a food truck that specializes in desserts. What questions would you ask?**
3. Enter the following prompt: **Act as the pastry chef. Please suggest 10 ideas for signature desserts you could offer.**
4. Select one of the options and write a new prompt asking Copilot to expand on that idea. Your prompt will be **I love the sound of [insert dessert name here]. Please help me write a description for the menu and suggest three more ideas for the name of that dessert.**

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