



The No-Panic Guide *to AI.*

What it is, how to talk to it, and fourteen copy-paste prompts for the stuff you're already carrying. Readable in about thirty minutes.

Three parts. *Pick your chaos level.*

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Why you're not behind. You're busy.

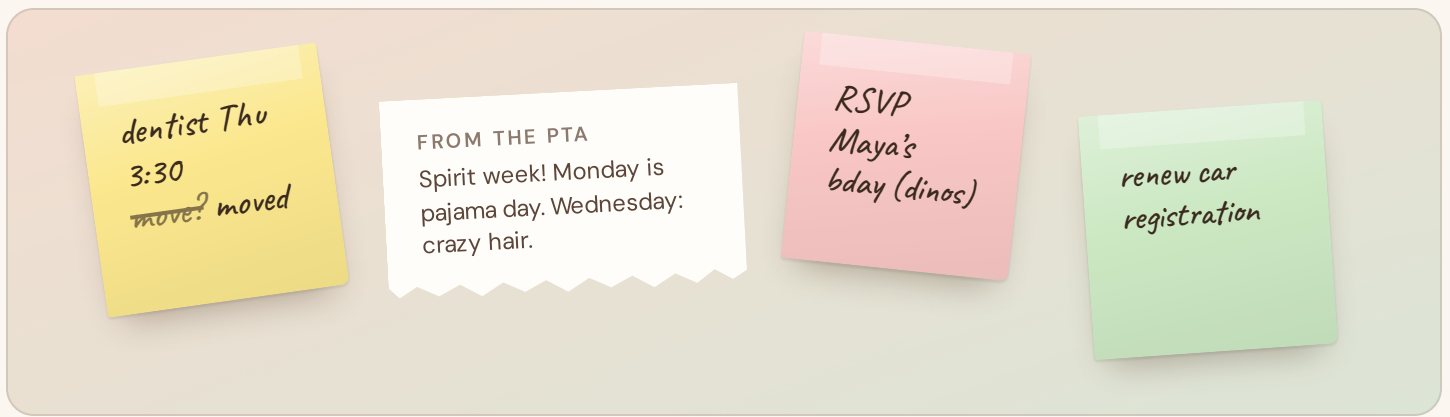
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One page. Screenshot it — it's the part you'll keep.

Written for someone reading this at 9:40 p.m. with one eye open. You don't have to go in order. Want to do something tonight? Skip to page 18, copy one prompt, and come back.



A NOTE BEFORE WE START

You're not behind. *You're busy.*

You've heard "AI" roughly nine thousand times this year. Your coworker won't stop bringing it up. Your feed is full of people turned into mermaids and Pixar characters. Someone in the group chat swears it planned their whole vacation — and you've been nodding along with no real idea what anyone means.

Most of what you've seen AI do is a party trick (hi, mermaid selfie) or a fancier Google. Both are fine. They're also the shallow end, which is

exactly why AI still feels like one more thing to keep up with instead of the thing that hands you a minute back.

This guide is the deeper end. Not complicated — no coding, no jargon, no 5 a.m. routine. Useful: AI drafting the email you've stared at for twenty minutes, turning the sad contents of your fridge into dinner, remembering your kids' ages so you stop explaining yourself from scratch.

How to use *this book*.

The mental load — the invisible project management of running a household — is real, and most of it lands on one person. AI won't fix that on its own. Used well, it can quietly pick up a corner. That's the goal here. Not to make you a "power user." To give you back a little bandwidth.

01 Part one melts the fear

What AI is, the five words worth knowing, and how to pick one and open it. About ten minutes.

02 Part two is the actual skill

How to talk to it so you get something good back — instead of the generic mush that makes people decide AI is overrated.

03 Part three is the payoff

Copy-paste prompts for real mental-load tasks, the honest safety talk, and a low-key first week.

TONIGHT

*one chat
window.
that's it.*

Our promise

By the last page you'll know what AI is, you'll have had a real back-and-forth with one, and you'll have a handful of prompts that do something useful this week. No new app at midnight.

— CLAYTIE & CONLEY

PART ONE

01

The 10-minute *demystify*.

The fear is the only hard part. Three short chapters get rid of it: what AI is, the five words worth knowing, and which one to open tonight.

PTA

*reply to
Jen's email*

What AI is, *and what it isn't.*

Forget the movies. AI is not a robot with feelings, it isn't listening through your phone, and it isn't about to take over the world from inside the pediatrician's waiting room.

Here's the picture that makes it click: a super-smart intern who never sleeps. You say what you need, and it takes a first crack at it. It has, in a sense, read almost everything — every recipe, every parenting blog, every forum thread about red wine on a car seat.

It's fast, tireless, weirdly good at first drafts, and happy to help at 11 p.m. without making you

feel bad for asking.

But it's an intern, not an oracle. Brilliant, eager, and sometimes wrong with total confidence. It doesn't know your family unless you tell it. And it is not a doctor, a lawyer, or a therapist — more on that in chapter nine.

That's the whole concept. If "smart intern who never sleeps" is the only thing you keep from this chapter, you're already ahead of most people.

AI is a super-smart intern who never sleeps. Brilliant at first drafts. Needs supervision.

Good at starting. *Needs a second look.*

WHERE IT SHINES

Starting things. Drafts, plans, lists, options.

Explaining. Anything, in plain language, as many times as you ask.

The boring stuff. The thing you've been putting off since March.

WHERE IT NEEDS YOU

Checking what matters. Numbers, dates, dosages, facts.

Knowing your family. It only knows what you tell it.

Human things. Diagnoses, crises, legal calls.

What it isn't, quickly

It isn't sentient. It isn't judging you. It isn't always right. And it is absolutely not too complicated for you — you run a household's entire calendar on four hours of sleep. A chat box is well within range.



chicken thighs
use by Wed

Five words. *That's the whole vocabulary.*

Chatbot

A.K.A. "AI ASSISTANT"

The window you type into. When people say ChatGPT or Claude, this is what they mean — like texting a well-read friend who never side-eyes a weird question.

Hallucination

THE ONE WORTH KNOWING

When it says something wrong with complete confidence — a made-up date, quote, or source. Like the friend who "one hundred percent remembers" how the movie ends. Double-check anything that matters.

Voice mode

TALK INSTEAD OF TYPE

Made for carpool, dishes, and brainstorming a birthday party out loud while you fold laundry.

Prompt

WHAT YOU TYPE

Your ask. The only trick: specific in, specific out. "Coffee" gets you something. "Oat latte, extra shot, half the syrup, I'm in a hurry" gets you *your* coffee.

Memory

OR "CUSTOM INSTRUCTIONS"

Where you tell it about your life once — kids' ages, how you like answers — so it stops treating you like a stranger. Most offer a version of this, often free.

That's the list.

Five words. Everything else in this book is built from them. You can close the dictionary now.

Pick one and open it. *Don't overthink it.*

This is where most people stall: they research which AI is best, fall into a comparison-video rabbit hole, and never open one. They're all good enough for what you need right now. It's a chat window, not a mortgage — you can switch later.

ChatGPT

The famous one — the one your coworker means. A strong all-rounder.

Claude

Known for writing and planning, with a calmer feel. We lean this way; any of the four works.

Gemini

Google's. If your life lives in Gmail and Google Calendar, it's right there.

Copilot

Microsoft's. Built into Word, Outlook, and Excel if that's your household.

01 Pick one

Whichever is easiest to reach. Flip a coin if you have to.

02 Make a free account

Website or app, about five minutes. Free covers everything in this book.

03 Say something real

Skip "hi." Try the recipe in chapter five, or paste a prompt from page 18.

It's Tuesday, I have chicken thighs and forty minutes, and my six-year-old won't eat anything green. Ideas?

Sheet-pan chicken thighs with roasted potatoes — ten minutes hands-on. Start the oven first. Want me to make it stretch to tomorrow's lunches?

PART TWO

How to actually *talk to it*.

The part that separates “AI is kind of pointless” from “how did I live without this.” Four short chapters: the mindset, the recipe, the follow-up, and the settings box that makes it know your house.

It's a conversation, *not a search bar.*

If you keep one idea from this book, keep this one. It's the biggest reason AI feels underwhelming at first: people walk up to it like it's Google, type three keywords, get a generic answer, shrug, and leave. That's driving a Ferrari to the end of the driveway.

Google hands you links and sends you off to do the work. AI does the work *with* you — and it

gets better the more you tell it and the longer you go back and forth.

In practice that means three things, and they're the next three chapters. Give it far more detail than feels normal. Keep talking after the first answer. And tell it who to be and what your life looks like, so it stops answering a stranger.

SEARCH BAR

easy dinner ideas

CONVERSATION

It's Tuesday, I have chicken thighs and forty minutes, and my six-year-old won't eat anything green. What should I make?

The good-ask recipe: *context, task, format.*

01 Context — tell it your situation

Who you are and what's going on. "I'm a mom of two, ages 3 and 6. It's a weeknight and I'm tired."

02 Task — say exactly what you want

Be a bossy coffee-orderer. "Three dinner ideas using chicken thighs and normal pantry stuff, nothing over 30 minutes."

03 Format — say how to answer

A short list? A table? Written like a text to your mom? "Keep it short and tell me what to start first."

ALL THREE, STACKED

"I'm a mom of two, ages 3 and 6, it's a busy weeknight and I'm exhausted. Give me three dinner ideas using chicken thighs and normal pantry stuff, nothing over 30 minutes. Short list, and tell me what to start first."

You don't need all three every time. The more you add, the better it gets — and you can type like you'd text a friend. Ramble. It sorts it out.

When the answer comes back meh, *and the fix.*

You got a generic listicle

Fix: add context — ages, time, what's actually in the fridge. More detail than feels polite.

It guessed wrong about your situation

Fix: add "Ask me anything you need to know before you answer." It fills its own gaps instead of guessing.

It keeps suggesting things you can't use

Fix: give it a bad example to avoid. "Not another 45-minute recipe with ingredients I don't own."

It's technically right and useless for your kid

Fix: tell it the why. "This is for a kid who thinks anything green is a personal insult."

The first answer is a rough draft. *Reply to it.*

FIRST ANSWER

Here are 10 easy weeknight dinners: 1. Chicken stir-fry 2. Sheet-pan fajitas 3. Pasta primavera 4. Turkey chili 5. Salmon with...

THREE REPLIES LATER

Tonight: sheet-pan thighs + potatoes, 35 min, 10 hands-on. Oven first. Plain strips pulled aside for the six-year-old. Leftovers become Wednesday's lunch wraps.

"SHORTER"

"SHE WON'T EAT PEPPERS"

"MAKE IT COVER LUNCH TOMORROW"

Replies that do the work

"Make it shorter."

"Give me three more, weirder this time."

"My kid's allergic to nuts. Redo it."

"Perfect. Now write the actual email."

"Warm it up, like I'm texting a friend."

"Option 2 is close — more like that."

"Explain that like I'm five."

The people who get the most out of AI aren't more technical than you. They don't stop at the first answer.

Give it a *job title*.

Start a request by telling it who to be. Hand your intern a job title and suddenly they know how to show up — same AI, but more focused and far less generic.

TRY TYPING

“You’re a calm, practical meal-planning assistant who’s great at using up leftovers. Help me plan this week’s dinners.”

“You’re a warm, no-drama communication coach. Help me reply to a passive-aggressive text from a family member without starting a war.”

“You’re a kids’ party planner who’s done a hundred of these on a budget. Help me throw a dinosaur party for a 5-year-old for under \$100.”

WORKS IN ANY CHATBOT

FREE

What it gets wrong

A role changes the tone, not the facts. A “party planner who’s done a hundred of these” still can’t see today’s prices or your venue’s rules. Check before you commit.



RSVP
Maya's
bday
(dinos??)

Tell it about your life *once*.

Somewhere in the settings of most AI apps there's a box for things about you — called memory, personalization, or custom instructions. Fill it in once and every future chat starts miles ahead. Leslie Knope would make a binder. This is the binder, minus the binder.

PASTE INTO YOUR SETTINGS, ONCE

"I'm a working mom of two — *[a 4-year-old and a 7-year-old]*. We meal plan and do a big grocery shop on *[Sundays]*. My *[4-year-old]* is a picky eater and won't touch anything 'mixed together.' I'm usually short on time, so keep answers concise and skip the fluff. I'd rather you ask me a quick question than guess."

ABOUT 5 MINUTES

SWAP THE BRACKETS FOR YOUR LIFE

What it gets wrong

It only knows what you told it last. When a kid has a birthday or soccer season ends, update the box — otherwise it keeps planning around last spring.

That's the whole skill set: it's a conversation, be specific, follow up, give it a role and your context. Part three is putting it to work.

TUES

soccer 4:15
bring snacks
(!!)

SAVE THE DATE

Maya turns 5! Dino dig party,
Sat 10am. RSVP to her mom.

pay preschool
by the 1st

PTA

reply to
Jen's email

8:00 PM

tomorrow's
digest sent
✓

PART THREE

Put it to work *on the mental load.*

Fourteen copy-paste starting points, sorted by the kind of invisible work they take off your plate.

Paste one in, swap in your real details — names, ages, the actual chaos — then use your replies to shape it.

After that: the honest safety talk, and a first week with no streak to keep.

Start with dinner →

Copy, paste, *then reply*.

Anything in *[brackets]* is yours to fill in.

01 What's for dinner

“Here's what's in my fridge and pantry: *[what you've got]*. Give me 3 dinners I can make tonight in under 30 minutes. One should work for a picky 5-year-old. Tell me which to start first.”

“Plan a week of family dinners. Two adults, two kids *[ages 4 and 8, one hates anything spicy]*. Reuse ingredients across meals, keep it realistic for weeknights, and end with a grocery list grouped by store section.”

02 The message you've been avoiding

“Help me write a friendly but firm email to my kid's teacher asking for a meeting about how he's doing in reading. Warm, not pushy, a few sentences. I'll fill in names.”

“I need to tell another parent I can't do carpool this month without it being weird. Draft a short, kind text that doesn't over-explain or over-apologize.”

“Reply to this message for me. Keep it warm, but set a boundary: *[paste the message]*.”

Planning the thing, *and running the house.*

03 Planning the thing

“Help me plan a *[6-year-old’s]* birthday party for about 12 kids, indoors, on a *[\$150]* budget. Give me a timeline for the day, a few activities, a food list, and what I can prep ahead so I’m not panicking that morning.”

“Make me a packing list for a weekend trip with a *[2-year-old and a 5-year-old]*. Assume I’ll forget the un-obvious stuff. Group it by kid and by category.”

04 Keeping the household running

“Turn this brain dump into a to-do list grouped by category, with the 3 most urgent things starred: *[everything on your mind, unfiltered]*.”

“Help me build a simple Sunday reset checklist for our family — meals, laundry, calendar, and one thing to prep for the week. One page, not overwhelming.”

“This week I have *[a doctor’s appointment, a work deadline Thursday, a kid home sick, and a birthday gift to buy]*. Help me think it through and tell me what I can drop or push.”

Explaining, and *the stuff nobody sees.*

05 Explain it like a friend would

“Explain what a 504 plan is like you’re my friend who works in schools. Plain language, what it means for my kid, and what questions I should ask.”

“My 7-year-old asked why the sky is blue and I blanked. Give me a true answer I can say out loud to a 7-year-old.”

06 The thoughtful stuff nobody sees you do

“Give me 5 gift ideas for my mother-in-law, who has every kitchen gadget and likes gardening and mystery novels. Budget around *[\$40]*.”

“Help me write a sweet, not-cheesy card for my kid’s teacher on the last day of school.”

Notice the pattern?

Context, a clear task, a format. And every one gets better the second you reply “shorter” or “she’s vegetarian.” Pick the task that’s been rattling around your head the longest and hand it to the intern.



teacher gift
card – by
Fri

The honest safety talk. *No lecture.*

It's sometimes wrong, confidently

That's the hallucination thing. For anything that matters — medical, legal, money, dates, dosages — treat it as a starting point and check with a real source or a real professional.

Don't hand it your secrets

Skip Social Security numbers, passwords, bank details, and other people's private medical info. "My daughter has a nut allergy" is plenty to get a safe recipe. When in doubt, leave it out.

It isn't a doctor, therapist, or lawyer

It can help you organize questions before an appointment or draft what you want to say. For a diagnosis, a crisis, or legal advice, talk to a person. Reaching out isn't a failure — it's good management.

Kids and AI

Same rules, plus a grown-up nearby. Look for family settings, keep it in shared spaces, and treat it like any other corner of the internet.

Your first week. *No streak to keep.*

No rigid routine — a sick kid should never blow up the plan. Do these in any order, whenever you have two spare minutes. Skip any of them.

01 Open one and say something real

Instead of “hi,” paste a prompt from the gallery. See what comes back.

02 Reply once

“Shorter,” “warmer,” or “three more.” Watch it change. That’s the whole skill.

03 Fix a dinner

Tell it what’s in your fridge tonight. Let it earn its keep.

04 Offload one dreaded message

The email or text you’ve been avoiding. It drafts; you edit and send.

05 Set up its memory

Five minutes in the custom-instructions box. Future-you will feel like it finally gets her.

WED

email coach
re: carpool

If you do two of these

you’ll have gotten more real use out of AI than the person in your group chat who’s been talking about it for a year.

10

MINUTES TO DEMYSTIFY IT

5

WORDS WORTH KNOWING

3

PARTS TO A GOOD ASK

1

REPLY AFTER THE FIRST ANSWER

No time-saved claims in this one — we'd rather measure than guess. The only number that matters tonight: one prompt, one reply.

The No-Panic *cheat sheet*.

WHAT AI IS

A super-smart intern who never sleeps. Great at drafts, plans, and lists. Needs supervision.

THE ONE RULE

It's a conversation, not a search bar.

THE FIVE WORDS

Chatbot the thing you type to · **Prompt** what you type · **Hallucination** confidently wrong · **Memory** your life, told once · **Voice mode** talk, don't type

THE GOOD-ASK RECIPE

Context who you are + what's going on → **Task** exactly what you want → **Format** how it should look. Add: "Ask me anything you need before you answer."

THE MAGIC MOVE

Never keep the first answer. Reply: "shorter," "warmer," "three more," "now write the email."

GIVE IT A ROLE

"You're a calm meal-planning assistant who's great with leftovers..."

STAY SAFE

Verify what matters. No SSNs, passwords, or bank info. Not a doctor, lawyer, or therapist.

IF YOU DO ONE THING TODAY

Open it, paste one prompt, reply once. That's the skill.

Two working moms *who built it for themselves first.*



Conley

VOICE & COMMUNITY

Writes The Weekly Reset and reads every reply. The one who'll tell you the honest version.



Claytie

SYSTEMS & PRODUCT

Builds the setups behind everything we make, tests them on her own household first, and writes down the part that broke.

The friend who set this up for herself and will show you the exact steps — including the part that broke.

Have You Heard AI?

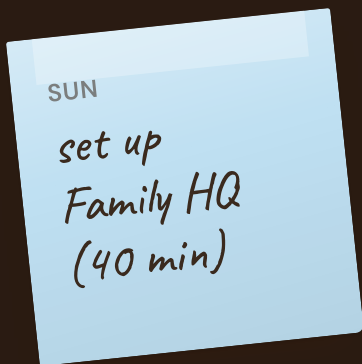
ONE LAST THING

Now go offload *something*.

If this made AI feel less like a monster under the bed and more like the free assistant it is, that's what we were going for. The goal was never to make you a tech person. If AI drafted one email or planned one dinner this week that you didn't have to hold in your head — that's the win.

You've got this. You always did.

■ Have You Heard AI?



Ready for the next step? *Start here.*

Family HQ is the system that emails you tomorrow, every night at 8. Forty minutes to set up, once. Everything you learned in this guide, running on its own.

[Get Family HQ →](#)

[HAVEYOUHEARDAI.COM](https://haveyouheardai.com)