



COMPANION TOOLKIT

The Claude Starter Vault

Setup checklist · the 50-prompt starter library · your first 14 days with Claude

In one focused sitting, this vault takes you from a blank screen to a confident daily Claude habit — with everything you need to set up, prompt well, and get real work done.

A free companion toolkit for

The Complete Claude AI Bible (7-in-1)

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— SECTION 01

How to Use This Toolkit

Welcome. This is the companion vault to Book 1 of *The Complete Claude AI Bible* — the part you keep open in another window while you actually use Claude.

Here is the simplest way to get value from it:

- ◆ **Set up first.** Work through the 15-Minute Setup Checklist below before anything else. Fifteen minutes now removes the friction that makes most beginners quietly drift away.
- ◆ **Steal the prompts.** The 50-Prompt Starter Library is the heart of this vault. Copy any prompt block, fill in the [bracketed] parts with your own details, and paste it into Claude. They are written to be used, not admired.
- ◆ **Follow the 14-day plan.** If you want a habit rather than a one-off experiment, the day-by-day plan builds one gently, one small win at a time.
- ◆ **Come back when stuck.** The Troubleshooting section answers the snags that trip up almost everyone in their first week.

TIP

Keep a notes file open called "My Prompt Pack." Whenever a prompt in this vault works well for you, paste it in with a short label. Within two weeks you will have a personal toolkit tuned to your real life — exactly the project Book 1 sets you up to build.

You do not need any technical skill, and most of what follows is free to do. Let's get you set up.

— SECTION 02

The 15-Minute Setup Checklist

The fastest way to lose momentum with a new tool is to stumble at the setup. So we will move one careful step at a time. By the end of these fifteen minutes you will have a secure account, Claude on every device you own, and your privacy settings handled properly.

Part 1: Create your account · about 5 minutes

- 1 Open a web browser and go to **claude.ai** in the address bar, then press Enter.
- 2 Click **Sign up**. You can register with an email address, or sign in instantly with an existing Google or Apple account.
- 3 If you used email, check your inbox for a verification message from Anthropic and click the link inside to confirm the address. (No email after a minute or two? Check your spam or promotions folder, or just use "Continue with Google" or "Continue with Apple" to skip this step.)
- 4 Enter your name when prompted, and accept the usage policies after a quick read.
- 5 That's it — you are looking at the Claude home screen.

Part 2: Lock the account down · about 3 minutes

- ◆ If you registered with email, choose a password you do not reuse anywhere else.
- ◆ Turn on two-factor authentication if your email provider offers it — a second code sent to your phone. Your AI conversations will eventually hold work and personal details worth protecting.
- ◆ Use an email address you genuinely control and check, because it is also how you recover access if you ever get locked out.

Part 3: Put Claude on every device · about 4 minutes

- ◆ **Web:** Already done — **claude.ai** works in any browser with no installation.
- ◆ **Desktop:** On **claude.ai**, find the Download link, pick the version for Windows or Mac, and run the installer. The desktop app feels faster and stays one click away.
- ◆ **Mobile:** Open the App Store (iPhone) or Play Store (Android), search "Claude," and install the official app published by Anthropic. Sign in with the same account.

Because you sign in with the same account everywhere, your conversations sync automatically. Start a chat on your phone in a checkout line, open your laptop at your desk, and continue exactly where you left off — nothing to copy or email to yourself.

Part 4: The privacy / training setting · about 3 minutes

This is the one setting most beginners never look at, and it matters. Somewhere in your Settings (often under "Privacy" or "Data controls") you will find an option governing whether your conversations may be used to help train future models.

- 1** Open Settings.
- 2** Find the privacy or data-controls section.
- 3** Read the training option carefully and set it to match your own comfort level. If you are unsure, the cautious choice is to turn training off.

WATCH OUT

Decide your training preference deliberately rather than leaving it on by accident. If you ever paste sensitive work documents, client details, or personal information into Claude, you do not want that material feeding a training process you never consciously agreed to. Book 7 covers privacy and data controls in full — but handle this one setting today, on day one.

NOTE

One more sensible habit — on a shared or public computer, sign out when you finish, just as you would with email or online banking. On your own private devices you can stay signed in for convenience.

— SECTION 03

Choosing Your Plan

Here is the honest truth from Book 1: most people should begin on the free plan and upgrade only when they feel a real limit. Paid plans do not make Claude smarter — they mainly give you more room to use it and access to a few advanced tools. Let your own use, not a sales page, tell you when to upgrade.

PLAN	PRICE (APPROX.)	WHAT YOU GET	BEST FOR
Free	\$0	Writing, analysis, working with images, and web search for current info — the everyday basics most beginners need.	Everyone starting out. Use it for a week or two of real tasks before paying.
Pro	~\$20/mo	Much higher usage limits, plus paid-only tools (Cowork, Claude in Chrome, Claude in Excel/PowerPoint).	The first time waiting for a usage limit to reset gets in your way, or when you want the advanced tools.
Max	~\$100-200/mo	The highest usage ceilings for heavy, sustained work.	Only once Pro itself feels tight — typically when Claude is part of your daily work for hours at a stretch.

There are also Team plans (around \$30 per user per month) that add shared workspaces and central billing for small businesses, and custom Enterprise plans for larger organizations. You don't need either to follow this book.

A simple rule that covers almost everyone

- 1

Start on **Free**. Use Claude for two weeks on real tasks.
- 2

Move to **Pro** the first time hitting a limit interrupts your actual work.
- 3

Consider **Max** only once Pro feels tight.

KEY IDEA

Usage limits reset on a rolling window of roughly five hours, not once a day. A light user may never notice a ceiling at all. The limit isn't a punishment — it's just the line between what's free to run and what costs money behind the scenes. When that pause starts interrupting real work, that's your cue to consider Pro.

— SECTION 04

The Anatomy of a Great Prompt

The same request can produce a forgettable answer or an excellent one, and the difference is almost never the model — it's the prompt. The good news: good prompting is just clear thinking made visible. No tricks, no secret words.

A strong prompt is built from four simple parts. You rarely need all four at once, but when an answer falls flat, adding the missing piece is the fastest fix.

The four parts

- ◆ **Goal** — what you want, stated plainly.
- ◆ **Context** — the details that matter (your situation, the background, the specifics).
- ◆ **Constraints** — the limits: length, tone, what to avoid.
- ◆ **Format** — the shape of the answer you want back.

EXAMPLE

Before — "Write me a cover letter." Claude has to guess your situation, tone, and length, so it guesses blandly. **After** — "Write a cover letter for a junior marketing role. I'm a recent graduate with an internship at a local radio station and strong social-media skills. Keep it under 250 words, warm but professional, no clichés. Give it to me as a finished letter I can paste into a document." Same task, far better result — you simply front-loaded the details you'd have had to supply anyway.

Here is a reusable skeleton. Copy it into your prompt pack and adapt it to any task:

● PROMPT

copy, edit the brackets, send

Act as a [role] writing for [audience].
Goal: [what you want, stated plainly].
Context: [the details that matter — your situation, background, specifics].
Constraints: [length, tone, and what to avoid].
Format: [the exact shape you want back].

Two quick upgrades

- ◆ **Give Claude a role.** "Act as a careful proofreader" or "Respond as a seasoned travel guide" focuses both its knowledge and its tone.
- ◆ **Name the audience.** "Explain compound interest to a twelve-year-old" and "...to a finance student who wants the formula" produce genuinely different answers. Without an audience, Claude aims for a vague middle that fits no one.

TIP

When an answer feels generic, that's almost always a mirror of a generic prompt. The cure isn't a better model or a magic phrase — it's more of you in the prompt: real names, real numbers, a constraint or two, and one example of what good looks like.

— SECTION 05

8 Prompting Patterns That Always Work

Experienced users don't reinvent their approach for every task. They reach for a small set of reliable patterns, the way a good cook reaches for a handful of techniques. Learn these eight and you'll rarely face a task you can't get Claude to handle well.

1. Role

Tell Claude who to be — it focuses tone and judgment.

● PROMPT

[copy](#), [edit the brackets](#), [send](#)

Act as an experienced **[profession]**. **[Your question or task here]**.

Use it when you want expertise and a specific voice — a proofreader's eye, a coach's encouragement, an accountant's caution.

2. Step-by-step

Ask Claude to reason in stages before answering.

● PROMPT

[copy](#), [edit the brackets](#), [send](#)

Think this through step by step before giving your final answer: **[problem with several moving parts]**.

Use it when the task has moving parts — a tricky decision, a calculation, anything where the reasoning matters.

3. Examples (few-shot)

Show a sample of the result you want, then ask for more like it.

● PROMPT

[copy](#), [edit the brackets](#), [send](#)

Here's an example of the style I want:

[paste one good example]

Now write **[number]** more in exactly that style, about **[your topics]**.

Use it when you need to match a specific voice or format. An example carries length, rhythm, and tone better than any description.

4. Constraints

Set clear limits to narrow a sprawling answer.

● PROMPT

copy, edit the brackets, send

[Your request]. Keep it under [length], in [tone], and avoid [what to leave out].

Use it when answers come back too long, too formal, or too vague.

5. Ask me questions first

Have Claude interview you before it starts.

● PROMPT

copy, edit the brackets, send

I want help with [task]. Before you start, ask me any questions you need to do this well.

Use it when you're not sure which details matter — Claude will pull them out of you.

6. Chain the task

Break a big job into ordered steps, done one at a time.

● PROMPT

copy, edit the brackets, send

Let's do this in stages. First, outline [the document]. Don't draft yet — wait for me to approve the outline.

Use it when the job is long. Outline first, then draft, then polish — quality stays high.

7. Summarize, then expand

Get a short version first, approve the direction, then grow it.

● **PROMPT**

copy, edit the brackets, send

Give me a one-paragraph version of **[idea]** first. Once I approve the direction, expand it to a full **[length]**.

Use it when you want to avoid polishing something built on the wrong idea.

8. Critique and revise

Ask Claude to critique its own draft, then rewrite it.

● **PROMPT**

copy, edit the brackets, send

Here's a draft: **[paste]**. Critique it honestly against this goal: **[goal]**. Then rewrite it, fixing every weakness you found.

Use it when a draft is almost right. This pattern often lifts a good answer to a great one.

KEY IDEA

You won't stop and consult this list in practice. Once you know the eight exist, the right one suggests itself: a vague creative task invites "ask me questions first," a long report invites "chain the task," a tricky decision invites "step-by-step."

— SECTION 06

The 50-Prompt Starter Library

These are the workhorses. Each one is genuinely useful and ready to use — copy a block, fill in the [brackets], and paste it into Claude. They're grouped so you can find the right tool for the moment.

EVERYDAY

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

I have [ingredients in my fridge]. Give me 3 dinner ideas I can make in under 30 minutes, with simple steps.

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

Plan my day. Here are my tasks: [list]. I have [hours] available. Order them sensibly and flag anything I should drop.

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

Write a friendly but firm message [declining/postponing] this: [situation]. Keep it warm and under 80 words.

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

Turn this messy to-do brain-dump into a clean, prioritized checklist: [paste your notes].

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

I need to remember [thing]. Create a simple memory trick or mnemonic for it.

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

Draft a quick text to [person] about [topic]. Casual, warm, no more than two sentences.

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

Explain **[news event or topic I keep hearing about]** to me in plain English, like I'm smart but new to it.

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

Help me write a polite review for **[a business/product]**. Here's what happened: **[details]**. Keep it fair and specific.

WRITING & EDITING

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

Improve this paragraph – keep my meaning and voice, but make it clearer and tighter: **[paste]**.

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

Proofread this for grammar, spelling, and awkward phrasing. Show me the corrected version, then list what you changed: **[paste]**.

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

Write a cover letter for **[role]** at **[company]**. I'm **[your background]**. Under 250 words, warm but professional, no clichés. Give it as a finished letter.

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

Rewrite this email to sound **[friendlier / more confident / more concise]**: **[paste]**.

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

Here's an example of my writing style: **[paste sample]**. Now write **[what you need]** in that same voice.

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

Give me 5 subject-line options for an email about **[topic]**. Each under 8 words, none clickbaity.

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

Help me write a thank-you note to **[person]** for **[reason]**. Specific and heartfelt, not generic, under 100 words.

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

Take this long message and cut it to half the length without losing anything important: **[paste]**.

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

Critique this draft honestly against this goal – **[goal]** – then rewrite it fixing every weakness: **[paste]**.

LEARNING

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

Explain **[concept]** to me as if I'm **[a curious 12-year-old / a complete beginner]**. Use a simple analogy.

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

I want to learn **[skill]**. Create a realistic 4-week beginner plan with one small thing to practice each week.

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

Quiz me on **[topic]**. Ask one question at a time, wait for my answer, then tell me if I'm right and explain.

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

Summarize the key ideas of [book / article / topic] in 5 bullet points I'll actually remember.

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

I keep confusing [thing A] and [thing B]. Explain the difference clearly with a memorable example of each.

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

Act as a patient tutor. I'm stuck on this: [problem]. Don't just give the answer – walk me through it step by step.

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

Turn this dense paragraph into plain English I can understand: [paste].

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

Give me 5 thoughtful questions to ask [an expert / in an interview] about [topic], so I sound prepared.

WORK & BUSINESS

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

Write a follow-up email to a client who hasn't replied to my proposal in a week. Friendly, not pushy; remind them of the key benefit; offer to answer questions; under 120 words.

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

Turn these scattered meeting notes into a clean checklist of action items with owners: [paste notes].

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

Draft an agenda for a **[length]** meeting about **[topic]** with **[number]** people. Include time estimates.

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

Help me prepare for **[a difficult conversation / negotiation]** about **[topic]**. Give me 3 ways it might go and how to respond to each.

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

Compare these two options for my decision: **[Option A]** vs **[Option B]**. Lay out the trade-offs in a simple table.

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

Write a clear, professional out-of-office reply for **[dates]**, directing people to **[alternative contact]**.

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

Summarize this document for someone deciding whether to **[sign it / act on it]**: **[paste or attach]**.

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

Draft a short LinkedIn post about **[achievement or idea]**. Professional, human, no hype, under 150 words.

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

I need to give feedback to **[person]** about **[issue]**. Help me phrase it kindly but clearly, so it lands well.

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

Create a simple weekly status update from these notes: **[paste]**. Group it into Done, In Progress, and Blocked.

HOME & PERSONAL

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

Help me plan a [budget] for [trip / event / month]. Here's what I know: [details]. Show it as a clear table.

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

Create a packing checklist for [a trip] – [how many days], [destination/climate], [activities].

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

My [appliance / device] is doing [problem]. Walk me through the most likely fixes, simplest first.

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

Plan a week of dinners for [number of people] with [dietary needs/preferences], plus a shopping list I can tick off.

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

Help me write a heartfelt [birthday / anniversary / thank-you] message for [person], who [details about them].

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

I want to start [a habit – exercise, reading, saving]. Suggest a tiny, realistic first step and how to stick with it.

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

Declutter my plan: I need to organize [room / closet / digital files]. Give me a simple, calm step-by-step.

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

Translate the key points of this into **[language]** so I can share it with **[person]**:
[paste].

DECISIONS

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

I'm deciding between **[options]**. Ask me the questions you need, then help me think it through – don't just pick for me.

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

Make a pros-and-cons table for **[decision]**, based on what matters most to me: **[your priorities]**.

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

Think step by step: given **[my situation and constraints]**, what are the realistic options and the smartest next move?

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

I keep going back and forth on **[decision]**. Play devil's advocate against the choice I'm leaning toward: **[choice]**.

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

Help me write down the 3 most important factors in this decision – **[decision]** – and score each option against them.

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

I have to choose by **[deadline]**. Give me a simple framework to decide without overthinking it.

TIP

When a prompt here works well for you, save it in your prompt pack with a short label like "client follow-up" or "weekly dinners." Adapting beats rewriting, and over a few weeks your pack becomes a personal toolkit tuned to the work you actually do.

— SECTION 07

Working with Files, Images & Data

Claude is far more useful when it can see your material rather than only your description of it. The attach icon — usually a paperclip — lets you add files and images directly to a message. This single capability turns Claude from a talker into a worker.

What you can bring in

- ◆ **Documents** — a PDF contract, a Word report, a text file — for summarizing, rewriting, or pulling out key points.
- ◆ **Images** — a photo of a receipt, a whiteboard, a handwritten note, or a chart — which Claude can read and describe.
- ◆ **Spreadsheets and data** — a list of figures or a small table — for cleaning, summarizing, or explaining.

Four things to ask of any document

After attaching a file, these requests handle most of what you'll ever need:

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

Summarize this for [your real purpose – e.g. "a first-time renter deciding whether to sign"].

● PROMPT

[copy & send](#)

What does this document ask me to do, and by when? List the action items and deadlines.

● PROMPT

[edit the brackets](#)

What does this say about [the specific thing you care about – e.g. "cancellation terms"]?

● PROMPT

[copy & send](#)

Put this in plain English. Then flag anything unusual or worth questioning.

EXAMPLE

You receive a confusing multi-page bank letter. Instead of typing it out, you attach a photo and ask: "What is this letter asking me to do, and by when?" Claude reads it and answers in plain language — the deadline and the action required. That's the everyday magic of file and image input, and it works the same whether the input is a photo, a PDF, or a column of numbers.

Working across several files

You're not limited to one attachment. Add several files to one message and work across them:

PROMPT

copy & send

Compare these two quotes and tell me which is cheaper overall, and why.

PROMPT

copy & send

Here are three reports. Summarize them and list what they agree and disagree on.

Turning mess into structure**PROMPT**

edit the brackets

Here's a block of messy notes. Put it in a clean table comparing **[columns you want]**: **[paste]**.

WATCH OUT

Claude reads photos and scans well, but it can occasionally misread a smudged number or an unusual layout. For anything that truly matters — figures on an invoice, a legal deadline, a medical detail — check the result against the original. Verifying what matters is the whole of responsible use.

— SECTION 08

Your First 14 Days with Claude

Skill comes from use, not reading. This plan builds a real habit one small win a day — ten minutes is plenty. Don't aim for perfection; aim for showing up.

DAY	TODAY'S WIN
1	Finish the setup checklist. Ask Claude to build a simple table about something you care about, just to see it produce, not just answer.
2	Run a real "first win": plan a dinner or draft a tricky email, with your real constraints. Then refine it with two follow-ups.
3	Start your "My Prompt Pack" notes file. Save your two best prompts so far with short labels.
4	Try the Role pattern. Ask the same question as a beginner would, then "as an experienced [expert]," and feel the difference.
5	Attach a photo of a document or receipt and ask Claude to summarize it in plain English.
6	Use the Ask me questions first pattern to write a short intro of yourself for a new job, group, or bio.
7	Week-one review: rename your useful conversations so you can find them later, and delete the clutter.
8	Try Chain the task: get Claude to outline a longer email or document first, approve it, then draft it.
9	Rescue a bland answer. Take a generic result and add one specific detail, one constraint, and one example.
10	Use the Critique and revise pattern on something you wrote yourself.
11	Bring in data: paste a messy list and ask Claude to turn it into a clean table or checklist.
12	Pick a recurring task from your real week and build a reusable prompt for it. Save it to your pack.
13	Try Claude on your phone — dictate a request by voice while you're away from your desk.
14	Two-week review: which three tasks has Claude genuinely saved you time on? Note them. Decide honestly whether you've hit a limit worth paying for.

KEY IDEA

The people who get the most from Claude are rarely the most technical. They're the ones for whom it's always within reach. The friction you remove today is the use you gain tomorrow.

— SECTION 09

Troubleshooting: Common Beginner Snags

Q Claude's answers are bland and generic.

Fix — That's a mirror of a thin prompt. Add specifics (real names, numbers, your actual situation), add a constraint (length, tone, "avoid clichés"), and add one example of what good looks like. More of you in the prompt means more character in the output.

Q I keep hitting a usage limit.

Fix — Limits reset on a rolling window of about five hours, so a short wait often clears it. If pauses keep interrupting real work, that's your honest signal to consider Pro — not a feature you might one day want, but a limit you keep bumping into.

Q Claude doesn't know about a recent event.

Fix — Claude's core training has a cutoff date, so it isn't automatically aware of very recent news. Ask it to search the web, or paste in the source material yourself and ask it to work from that.

Q Claude stated something confidently — and it was wrong.

Fix — Because Claude generates language rather than looking up facts, it can occasionally be confidently wrong (a "hallucination"). Always verify anything that matters — names, numbers, dates, legal or medical specifics — against a reliable source. And don't rely on "Are you sure?" — outside verification beats self-checking.

Q The conversation has wandered off track.

Fix — Refine when you're getting closer, reset when you're getting further away. Use the Edit control to fix your original message and re-send it, or start a fresh chat for a clean slate. Keep one chat per project so old topics don't bleed into new ones.

Q My first answer missed — do I rewrite the whole prompt?

Fix — Usually no. Claude remembers everything in the current conversation, so nudge it: "Good start — make it warmer and cut it to half the length." Three or four small nudges beat one "perfect" prompt, because you're reacting to something real.

Q I can't find an old conversation.

Fix — Use the search box in the conversation sidebar — it looks through your chats by title and content. This is why renaming chats ("Tax return questions") pays off: a clear title surfaces instantly.

Q Claude won't do something / I'm not sure it's safe to share this.

Fix — Apply the same sensible caution you'd use with any online account. Keep truly sensitive personal or client data out unless you've handled your privacy settings (see the Setup Checklist), and remember Book 7 covers data controls in depth.

— SECTION 10

Your Next Step

You now have a secure account, Claude on every device, the four-part prompt framework, eight reliable patterns, fifty ready prompts, and a fourteen-day plan to make it all a habit. That's a genuine foundation — more than most people ever build.

Here's where to go next:

- ◆ **Read Book 2** of *The Complete Claude AI Bible*, which moves from chatting to building — Artifacts, Projects, and the power-user features that let Claude hand you finished documents, spreadsheets, and tools.
- ◆ **Explore the other six toolkits** on your bonus hub. The Starter Vault is just Bonus 1 of 7 — the rest go deeper into prompting libraries, building with Claude, connecting it to your tools, and more.
- ◆ **Keep building your prompt pack.** It's the quiet engine behind everyone who seems effortlessly good with AI.

TIP

The single habit that separates frustrated users from delighted ones is treating Claude like a capable assistant you direct — not a search box you quiz. You already have everything you need to do exactly that. Go make something.