

OpenAI Academy

# Getting Started with ChatGPT

## Practical AI for students, educators, and staff

Abilene, TX | April 17, 2026



# Introductions - OpenAI



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Today's goal is to get comfortable with ChatGPT, see practical education workflows, and leave ready to build an assistant.

# Agenda



- 01 Getting started with ChatGPT
- 02 Practical workflows
- 03 How to get better results
- 04 Responsible use + exercise
- 05 Next: build your own assistant

# Follow along on OpenAI Academy

- Today's slides
- Sample prompts & tutorials
- Workshop templates
- Files you can use during activities
- WiFi:
  - WiFi: TSTC\_Guest

**LIVE EVENT** April 15, 2026 · Last updated on April 17, 2026

## OpenAI Academy Abilene Resource Hub

Session materials, tutorials, and next steps

X in ✉

## OpenAI Academy Abilene Resource Hub

April 17, 2026

### Welcome!

Use this page as the follow-along hub for Abilene sessions. Below you'll find session slides, a short recap of what the session covered, copy-ready prompt starters, and current OpenAI Academy resources to keep...

Table Of Contents

[tinyurl.com/oai-abilene](https://tinyurl.com/oai-abilene)



# Getting started

# Why this moment is different

Before ChatGPT

## AI was limited to...

Researchers

Computer programmers

Technical experts

After ChatGPT

## AI is open to **everyone**

Students

Teachers

College faculty

Student services

Advising

Principals

District leaders

Academic affairs

Career services

Campus ops

# Responsible use of AI



Follow your school or institution's AI policy



Get consent before sharing someone else's voice, work, or information



Review for accuracy, bias, tone, and age-appropriateness



Protect sensitive student and staff data, and know your data controls



Seek expert review for legal, medical, or financial advice



Use Search or Deep Research when you need current, cited information

# Today, we'll focus on ChatGPT Plus — but needs grow



## ChatGPT Education

Institution-managed  
ChatGPT with  
enterprise-grade security



## Codex

AI tool that helps you write  
and debug code



## OpenAI API

Build custom solutions  
connected to your data

# One tool, different jobs



## Students

- Understand assignments, readings, and course concepts
- Build study plans and practice questions
- Prepare for resumes, interviews, and transfer/career steps



## Educators

- Draft lesson plans, activities, rubrics, and feedback
- Adapt materials for different learners
- Turn standards, notes, and articles into usable materials



## Staff & admin

- Draft emails, FAQs, and event communications
- Summarize reports, meeting notes, and feedback
- Turn recurring questions and documents into repeatable workflows

# You're 1 minute away from using ChatGPT for real work.

## 01 Go to [chat.com](https://chat.com).

Use your browser, desktop or mobile device.

## 02 Sign-in

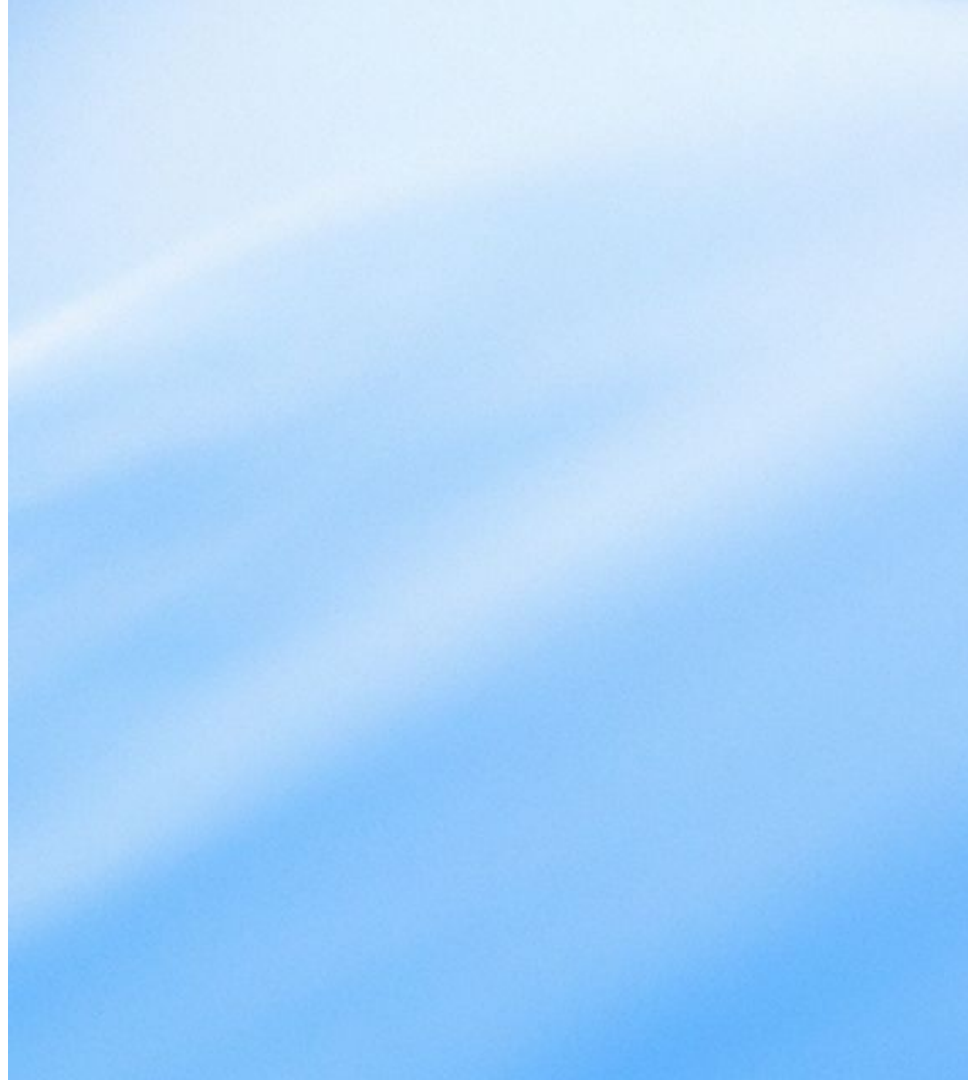
Make sure you're in the right account for this session.

## 03 Send your first message.

Try this prompt:

*I'm a [student / teacher / administrator] at [Institution].  
Give me 3 practical ways ChatGPT could help me this  
week.*

# Academic Workflows



## 01 Understand Learning Materials

Break down complex concepts, readings, slides, or lecture content into simple explanations.

## 02 Explore New Topics

Compare perspectives, generate research questions, or brainstorm ideas.

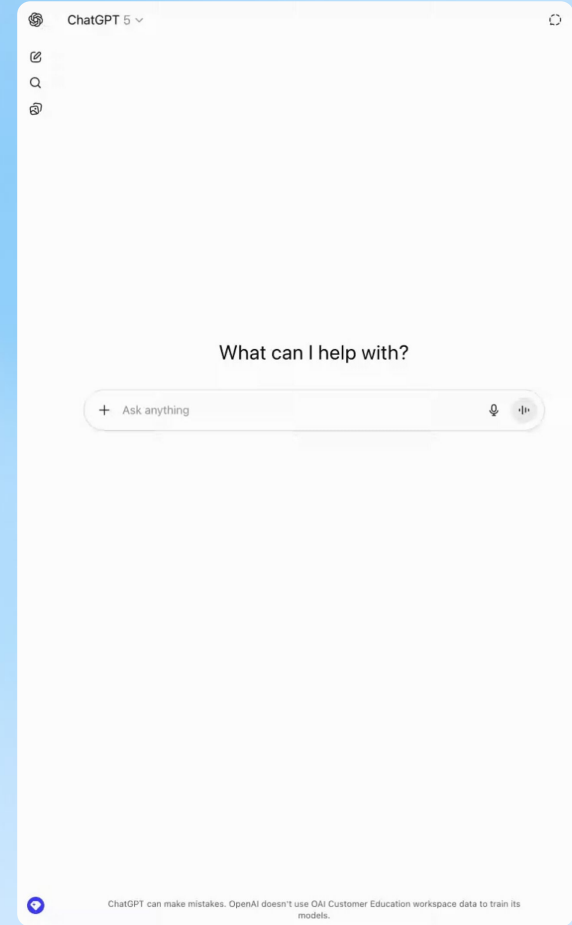
## 03 Improve Written Work

Get feedback on clarity, structure, and argument development in drafts, lessons, or reports.

# Learn with ChatGPT

Ask anything.

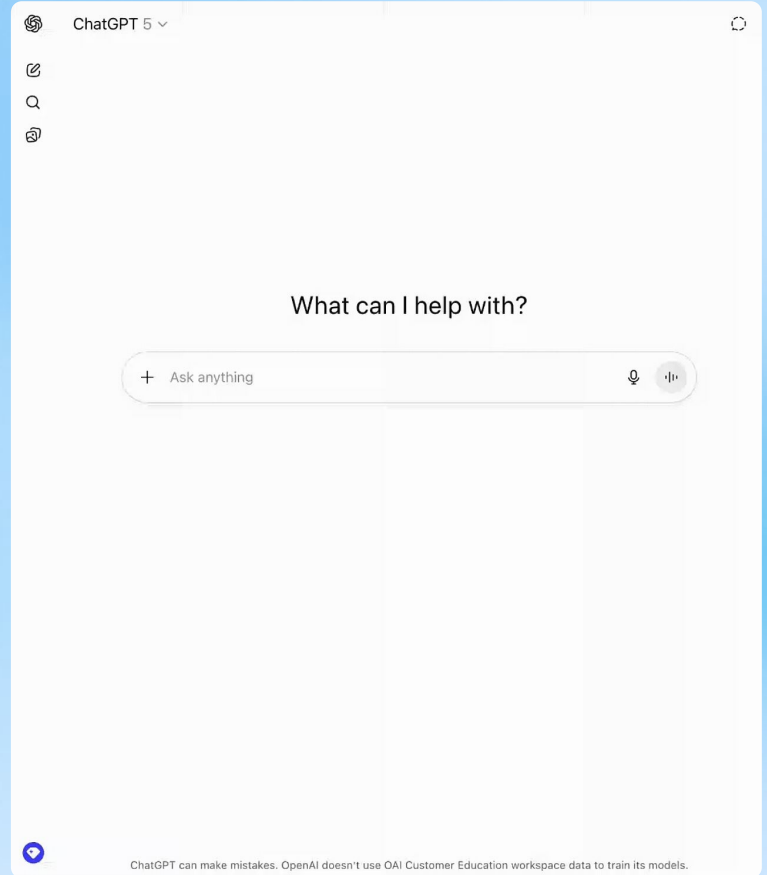
- *How do I prepare for this class?*
- *How do I teach this topic clearly?*
- *Give me ideas for this assignment...*



# Read Files

Attach & understand.

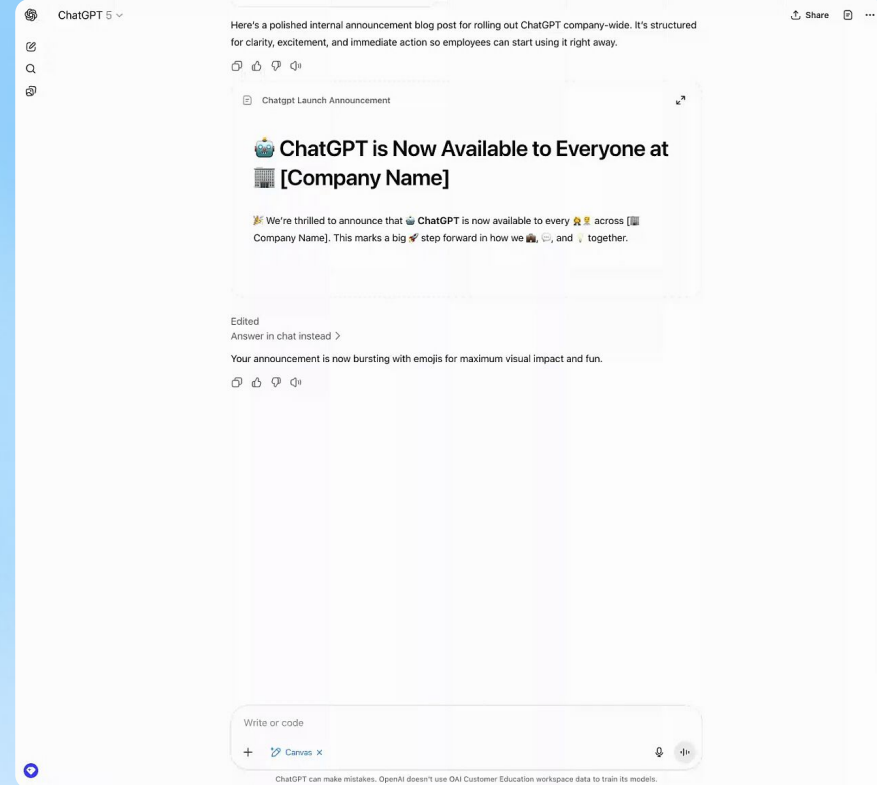
- *Explain this assignment brief...*
- *Adapt this lesson plan...*
- *Summarize this report and next steps...*



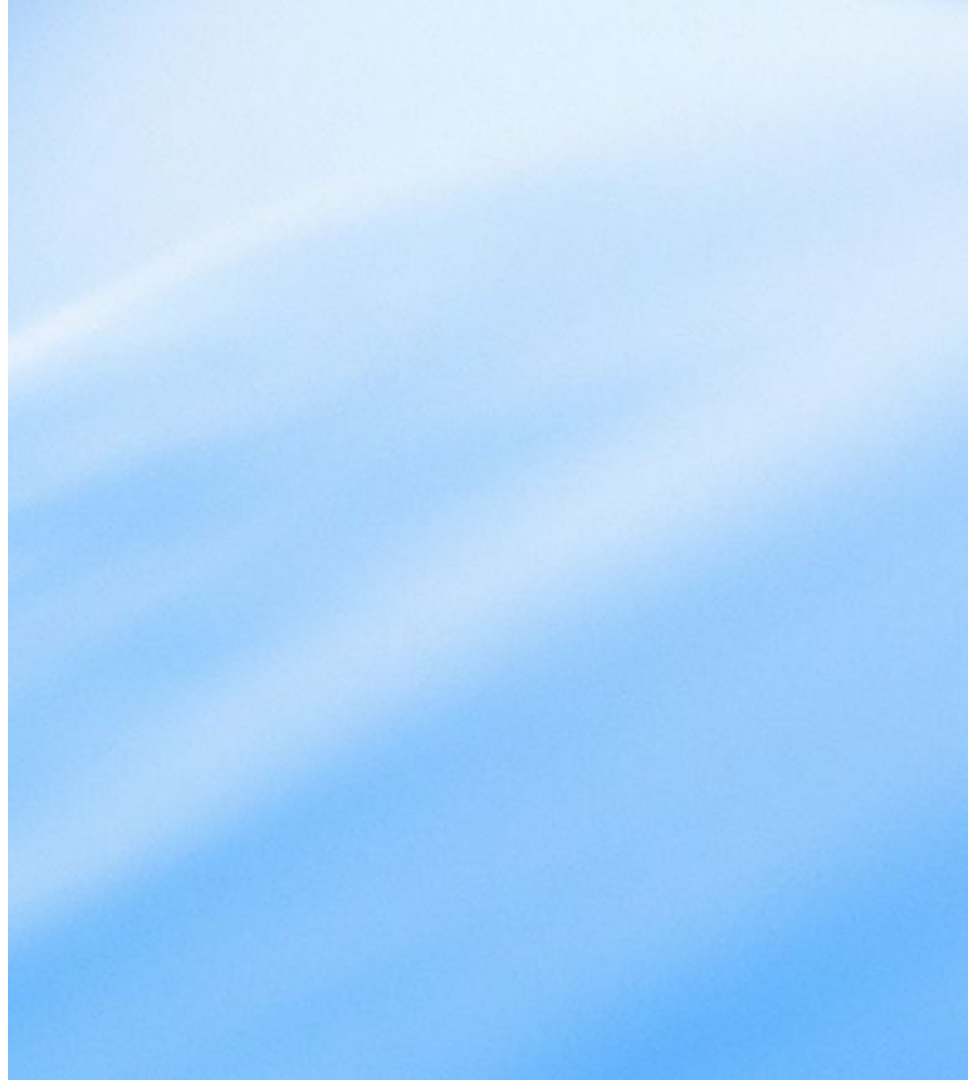
# Draft, translate, and communicate

Work across audiences and languages...

- *How do I say ...*
- *Turn these notes into an email...*
- *Draft a family email...*
- *Translate this message into Spanish...*



# Study & Project Planning



# ChatGPT for Study and Project Planning

## 01 Prepare for exams

Generate practice questions and identify what needs review.

## 02 Breaks down assignments or projects

Turn deadlines into timelines with manageable milestones.

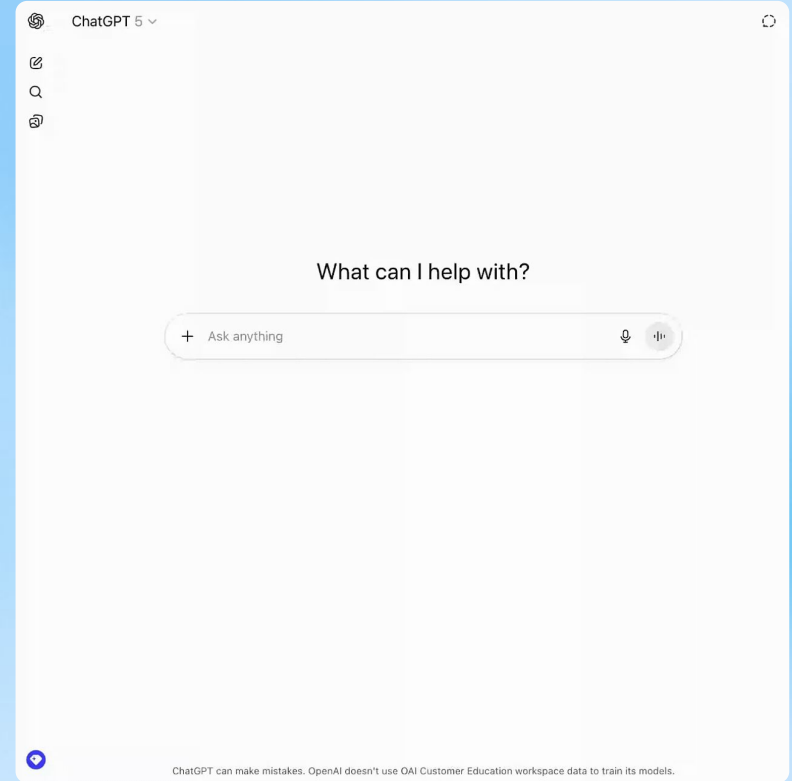
## 03 Plan group work or initiatives

Organise tasks, roles, and next steps for collaborative work.

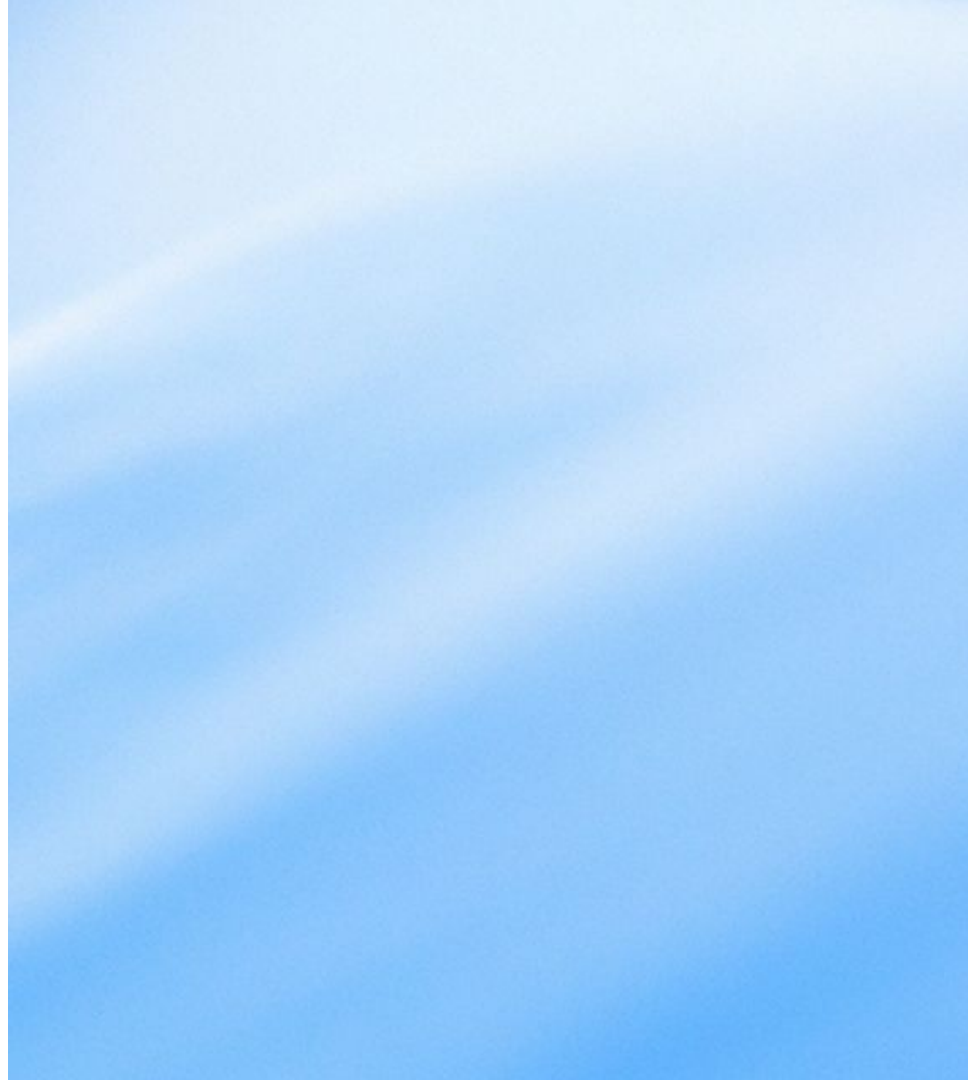
# Organise with Projects

Group your chats and maintain context.

- Upload documents as persistent knowledge across chats
- Add custom instructions (style, output, etc.)
- Use one place for a class, unit, committee, or initiative



# Career Readiness



## 01 Translate Experience

Turn coursework or projects into resume-ready bullet points.

## 02 Prepare Application Materials

Draft and refine resumes or cover letters.

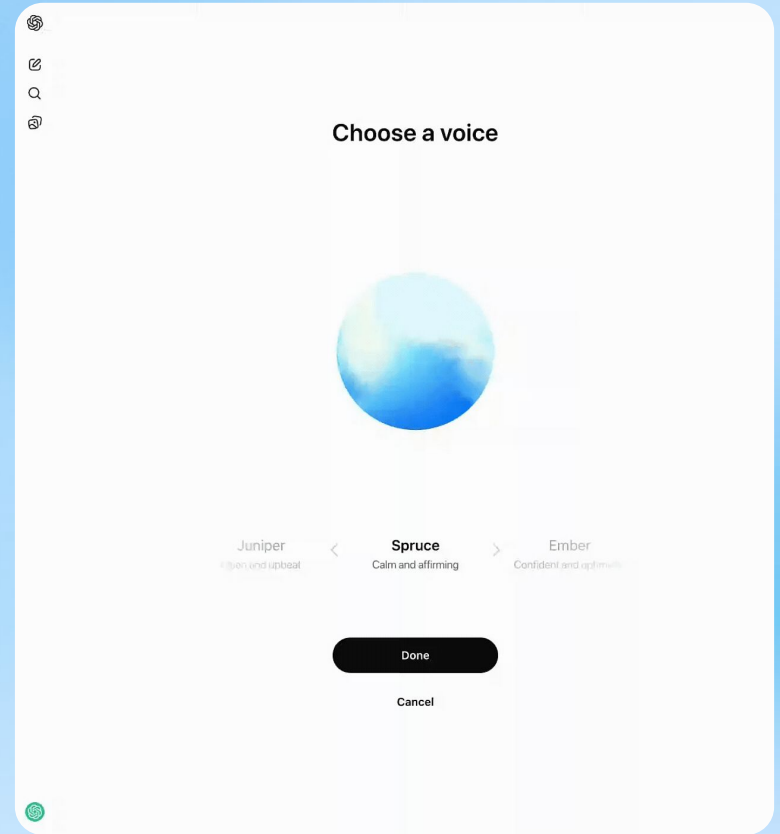
## 03 Practice Interviews

Simulate interview questions and receive feedback.

# Voice Mode

Natural, real-time conversations.

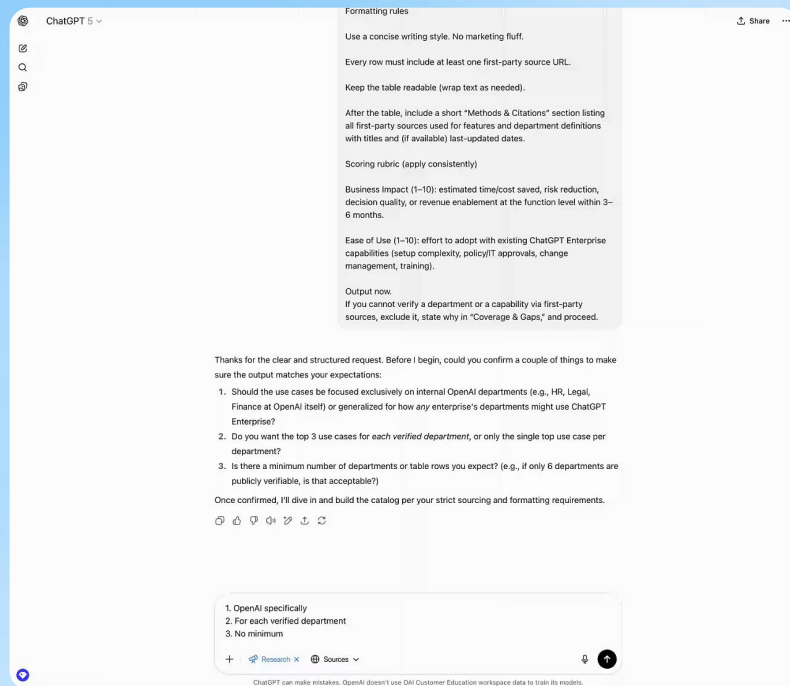
- *Practice an interview answer...*
- *Brainstorm project ideas...*
- *Turn what I say into talking points...*



# Deep Research

Multi-step research on the internet with citations.

- *Find current hiring trends for...*
- *Compare transfer or career paths in...*
- *Find current evidence or examples for...*

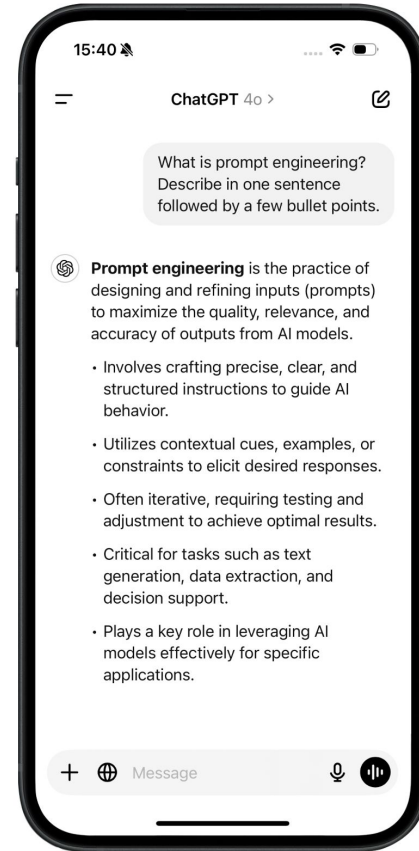


# Prompting fundamentals

# What is prompting?

Prompting is the practice of **designing and refining prompts** — questions or instructions — to **elicit specific responses from AI models**.

High quality inputs will result in better output.



# Get better results with clear prompting

## Task

What should  
ChatGPT do?

*Explain this concept...*

*Summarize this document...*

*Draft this message...*

## Context

What should  
ChatGPT know?

*for a first-year student...*

*for Grade 5 math...*

*for families...*

*for a leadership update...*

## Expectation

What should the  
answer look like?

*in plain language*

*as a checklist*

*in 5 bullet points*

*as an email draft*

# Put in practice



## Task

*What help do you need?*

Help me study for my circuits exam.



## Context

*What should ChatGPT know?*

Help me study for my circuits exam.  
I'm a second-year engineering student preparing for an upcoming exam.



## Expectation

*What format do you want?*

Help me study for my circuits exam.  
I'm a second-year engineering student preparing for an upcoming exam. Create a 3-week revision plan with daily study goals and topic breakdowns.

5 MINUTES

# Pair Activity

Rewrite each prompt

Help me study for my exam.



Make a lesson plan on fractions.



Write an email to families.



Explain space travel to me.

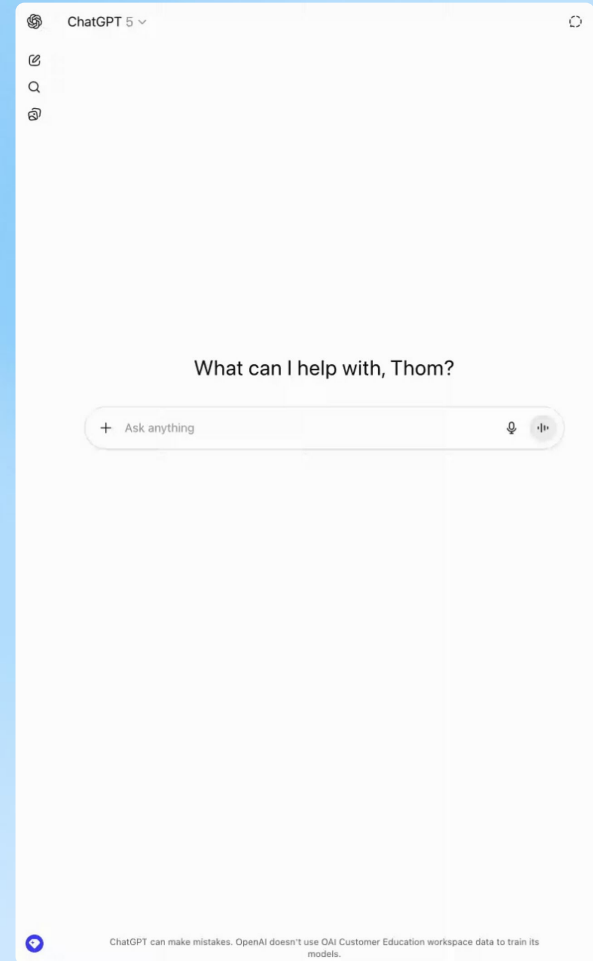


# ChatGPT can you help you *write better prompts*

“Meta-prompting” is used to write and refine more effective prompts.

Simply tell ChatGPT to...

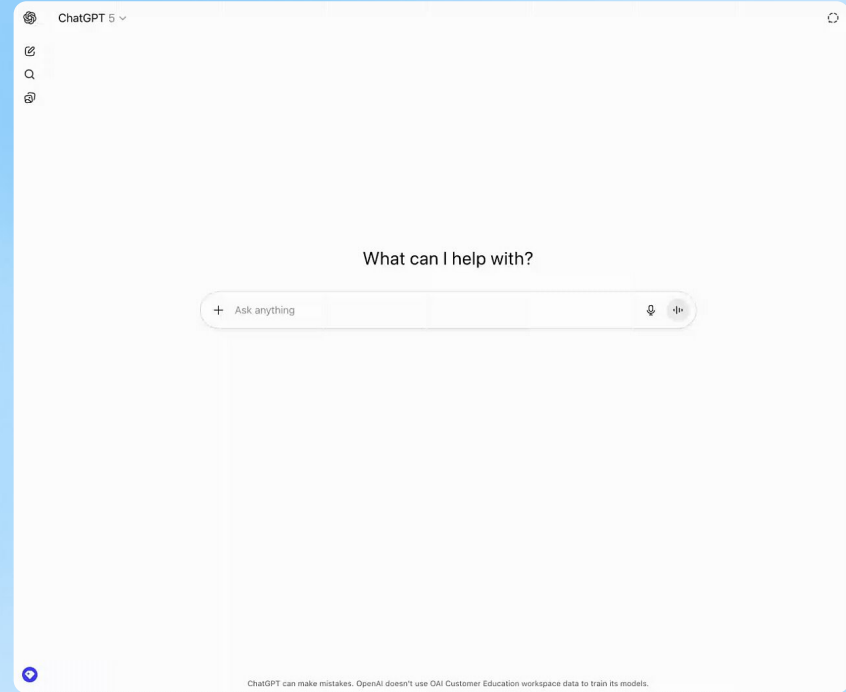
- *Help me write a Deep Research prompt*
- *Rewrite this prompt for another situation*
- *Change this prompt to get a clearer output*



# Next: Build your own reusable assistant

Turn a repeatable task into a reusable assistant.

- Add instructions for how it should behave
- Add optional files or reference material
- Give it conversation starters
- Test it with real prompts



Q+A

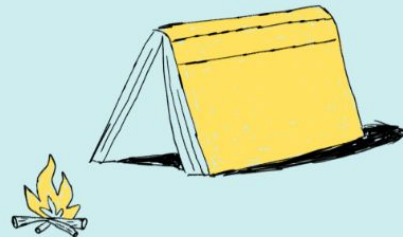
# Resources



# 100 chats for college students

These chats were made by students, for students. Learn new things, start a career, and navigate life more confidently.

Tap a chat to get started.



All Study Career Life

## Pre-grade your essay

Act as my professor and grade my assignment according to the rubric.

Rubric.pdf First Draft.docx

## Decode a tough passage of text

Translate this part that says "confined their employments" into language I can understand.

Photo of the page

## Learn by teaching

I'm studying Behavioral Biology. Ask me questions like a classmate I'm explaining the concept to.

## Talk through your notes to make them stick

I'll go through my slides on RNA interference one by one, and I

## Simplify a confusing topic

Explain quantum physics to me in 3 different levels of

## Make flashcards faster

Turn this into flashcard-style questions and answers.

Class notes.pdf

# ChatGPT Education Resources

## OpenAI Academy

*[academy.openai.com/home/clubs/work-users-ynjqu](https://academy.openai.com/home/clubs/work-users-ynjqu)*



## ChatGPT Cookbook

*[cookbook.openai.com](https://cookbook.openai.com)*



## OpenAI Help Center

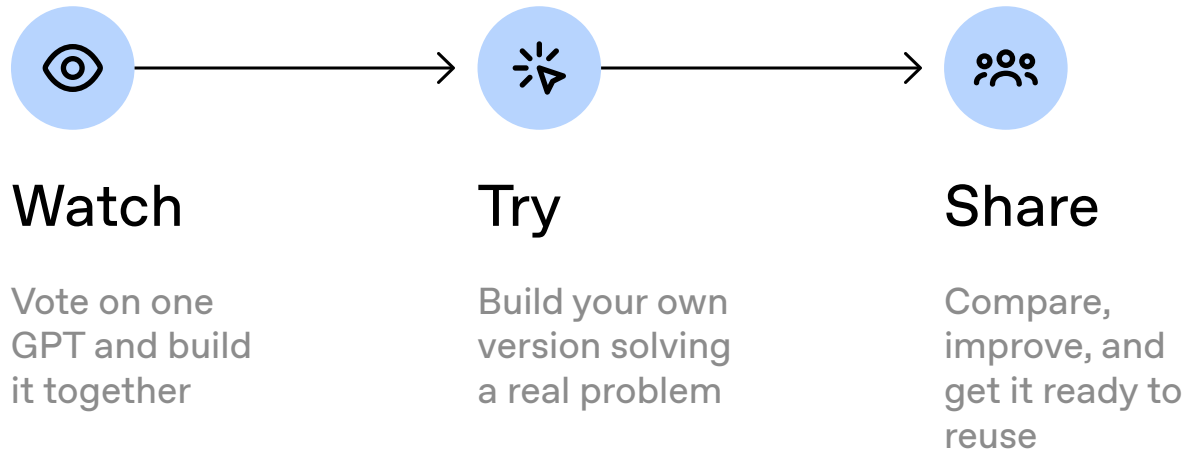
*<http://help.openai.com>*





## Part 2: Build a reusable assistant

# The rest of today



# Vote: Which GPT should we build?

01

## Course / syllabus helper

Answer recurring course questions using a syllabus, assignment brief, or FAQ.

02

## School / campus FAQ helper

Give clear answers using a handbook, event info, or support docs.

03

## Career coach / interview prep

Turn student experience into stronger resume bullets, interview practice, and next steps.

# Build recipe

01	<b>Define the job</b>	Who + when + what 'good' looks like
02	<b>Add context &amp; knowledge</b>	Your notes, policies, examples, files
03	<b>Specify the output</b>	Format, length, tone
04	<b>Add guardrails</b>	Do/don't, when to ask you
05	<b>Test for reliability</b>	5 test prompts / tasks

# Define the job

Who is it for?

When will they use it?

What job does it do?

What does success look like?

My assistant helps [**who?**] do [**job?**] by [**process?**].

# Add context and knowledge

**What content/assets** will the user paste/upload each time?

**What steps** should the assistant follow to produce the output?

**What questions** should it ask when key info is missing?

## What should the output look like?

Be explicit about structure, length, and tone.

Return a 6-line sign + a 120-word email + 1 SMS.



Return a table: Theme | Evidence | Fix | Owner | Effort.



Always include a quick 'human check' checklist.



# Add guardrails

- 
- Accuracy** Don't invent facts; ask clarifying questions

---

  - Safety** Don't include personal data

---

  - Style** Practical, concise, no hype

---

  - Human check** What must be verified before sending?

---

# Test for reliability

Mark each pass/fail  
& fix what breaks

---

**Normal case 1**

---

**Normal case 2**

What you expect  
most often

---

**Normal case 3**

---

**Edge case**

Weird but possible

---

**Missing info case**

Forces it to ask questions

---

# Now it's your turn

## Pick the simplest format

If you're not sure, start in **Chat** or a **Project**.

### Chat / prompt pack

Prompts you can copy & paste.

**Best for**

When you're still exploring a range of tasks.

### Project

Workspace with your files + instructions

**Best for**

Staying organized and consistent while conducting related tasks

### Custom GPT

Reusable assistant for one job

**Best for**

One repeatable job with stable knowledge and a consistent output

### Data workflow

Analyze data from a range of sources

**Best for**

Spreadsheets, reports, reviews, and trends

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Goal: Leave with one working v1 you can reuse next week.

30 MINUTES

Try

# Individual Activity

## Build sprint

Scan a QR code for copy/paste instructions, conversation starters, and test prompts. Build individually or in pairs.



[tinyurl.com/ai-skills-jam](https://tinyurl.com/ai-skills-jam)

Choose the GPT you want to build

### Students

- Study Coach GPT
- Career & Transfer Coach GPT

### Educators

- Lesson & Materials Builder GPT
- Family & Student Comms

### Staff & admins

- Student Services FAQ Navigator GPT
- Leadership Briefing Copilot GPT

# Quick check-in

How is it going?

- What are you building?
- What's working?
- What's not?



# Make it reliable

Iterate, improve,  
and polish

# Iteration clinic

Start with one,  
then test it

## Tighten output format

Make it easy to scan

## Add guardrails

No guessing; asking clarifying questions

## Testing

Add a 5-test set + pass/fail checklist

## Add a knowledge file

(FAQ, policies, menu, pricing notes, etc.) and retest

18 MINUTES



# Individual Activity

Improve, test, and save your solution

Definition of Done:

- Runs end-to-end
- The output is usable
- You've tested it
- You saved it

Improve your v1

Test and retest with each change

Fix what breaks

Save it

## Power-ups

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Finished early? Try going up a level.

- Add a full eval: 3 normal cases, 1 edge case, 1 missing info case
- Add a tool: search, file upload, or image generation

# What did you build?

3 minutes per attendee

## **The problem**

What was the real pain point you chose?

## **The solution**

What does your AI-assisted process do now?

What format did you choose? Did you use any tools?

## **One result**

Describe the result or output of your process.

## **What's next?**

Share how you'd improve or level-up the tool you built, or what you want to make next.

# Thank you

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**Booking.com**



Retail  
Excellence  
Ireland



# Continue learning with OpenAI Academy

Join our free learning communities  
to keep building with AI

## Share your feedback

Tell us what worked, what didn't, and what you want next.

[tinyurl.com/abilene-feedback](https://tinyurl.com/abilene-feedback)



## OpenAI Academy Higher education chapter

Templates, training, and a global community  
for higher education.

## Join today!

[tinyurl.com/oai-higher-ed](https://tinyurl.com/oai-higher-ed)

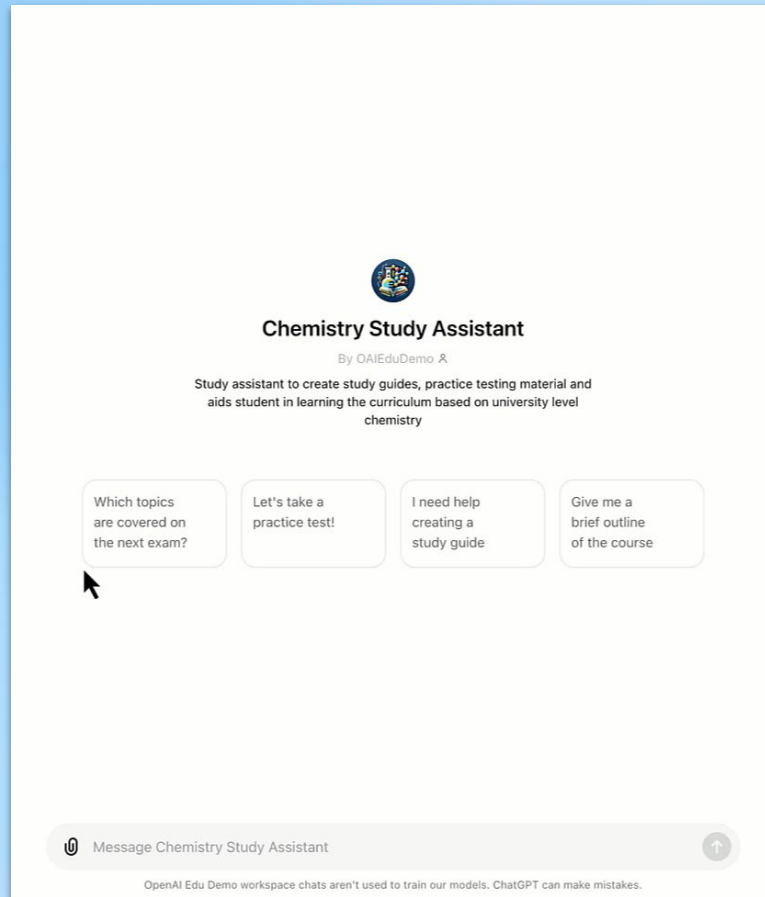


# Appendix

# What is ChatGPT Education?

A secure AI assistant for institutional work

- ✓ **Your secure, private instance of ChatGPT provided by your institution** — designed to support your daily administrative work, campus operations, and institutional initiatives
- ✓ **Access to the latest AI models** to help you draft communications, analyze institutional data, summarize reports, and support strategic decision-making
- ✓ **Advanced capabilities** such as file uploads, data analysis, Deep Research, voice, Canvas, and Custom GPTs to streamline workflows
- ✓ **Enterprise-grade privacy and security** — your chats are not used to train OpenAI's public models and ***admins cannot see your conversation history.***



# Automate tasks, drive analysis and improves campus services

## Automation

## Analysis

## Services

### Virtual IT helper

Support for troubleshooting technical issues, managing digital resources, and answering IT-related queries efficiently.

### Contract Review GPT

AI-powered GPT that analyzes and interprets contracts, ensuring compliance with policies and highlighting key terms and potential issues for easy understanding.

### Student Housing

Manage the administration of student housing, providing assistance with room assignments, lease agreements, maintenance requests, and communication with residents.

### Financial Aid Assistance

Provide guidance on aid eligibility, automate application reviews, generate personalized financial aid packages, and offering real-time support for students and families.

### Career Pathway Guidance

Provides tailored advice and resources to help students navigate their career paths and make decisions.

### Scholarship GPT

Offers comprehensive information on available scholarships, including eligibility criteria and application processes, to help users find funding opportunities for their education.



### Campus Help Desk

By OAI Edu Demo

The Campus Help Desk Chat provides quick and efficient assistance for all your campus-related inquiries, from policy guidance to technical support.

What are the deadlines for course enrollment?

I'm looking for campus mental health support.

I'm having trouble accessing the online portal.

Please help me book an auditorium for next week.

@ Message Campus Help Desk



OpenAI Edu Demo workspace chats aren't used to train our models. ChatGPT can make mistakes.

# Communication & Student Engagement



## Admissions & Enrollment Management

Generate targeted outreach emails, SMS nudges, and follow-ups by geography, program interest, or student type to improve deposit conversion rates while reducing time spent drafting individualized outreach.



## Student Affairs & Student Success

Draft appointment follow-ups, early-alert notifications, and student success communications using consistent tone and actionable next steps to enable scalable support while maintaining a personalized student experience.



## Human Resources

Generate recruitment messaging and onboarding materials for internal hiring workflows to accelerate time-to-hire while reducing administrative overhead.

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# Administrative Process Automation



## Finance & Financial Aid

Automate intake of appeals, verification documents, or eligibility reviews for early-stage assessment to reduce administrative review effort and improve audit readiness.



## Registrar & Academic Operations

Develop standardized guides for recurring workflows such as onboarding, record updates, or graduation clearance to improve internal consistency and reduce manual coordination.



## Resources & Policy Updates

Create onboarding checklists and internal documentation to support repeatable HR processes and reduce administrative burden.

# Strategic Insight & Institutional Decision Support



## Institutional Strategy & Exec Reporting

Summarize enrollment reports, accreditation updates, and student feedback into cabinet-ready briefs to accelerate leadership decision cycles and improve cross-departmental alignment.



## Student Affairs & Student Success

Interpret advising engagement or early-alert data to identify at-risk student populations and inform proactive support planning.

Plot academic path recommendations, structure internship searches, and refine programming.



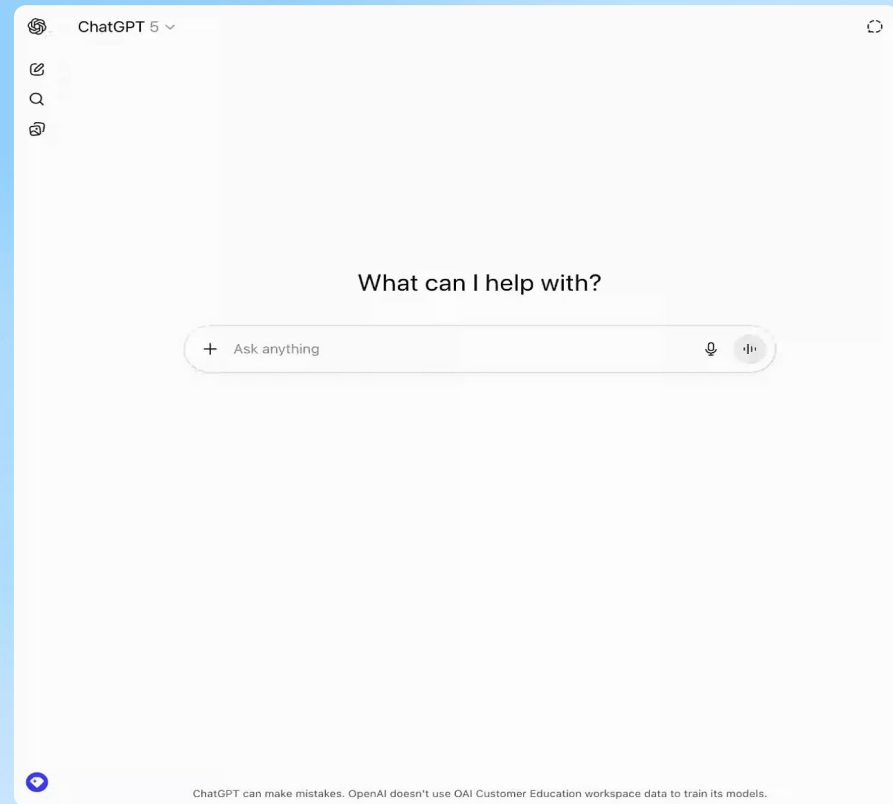
## Program Demand & Capacity Analysis

Analyze application, enrollment, and course fill-rate data to identify over- or under-subscribed programs and support resource allocation decisions (e.g., course sections, staffing, budget prioritization).

# Collaborate with Projects

Group your chats and maintain context...

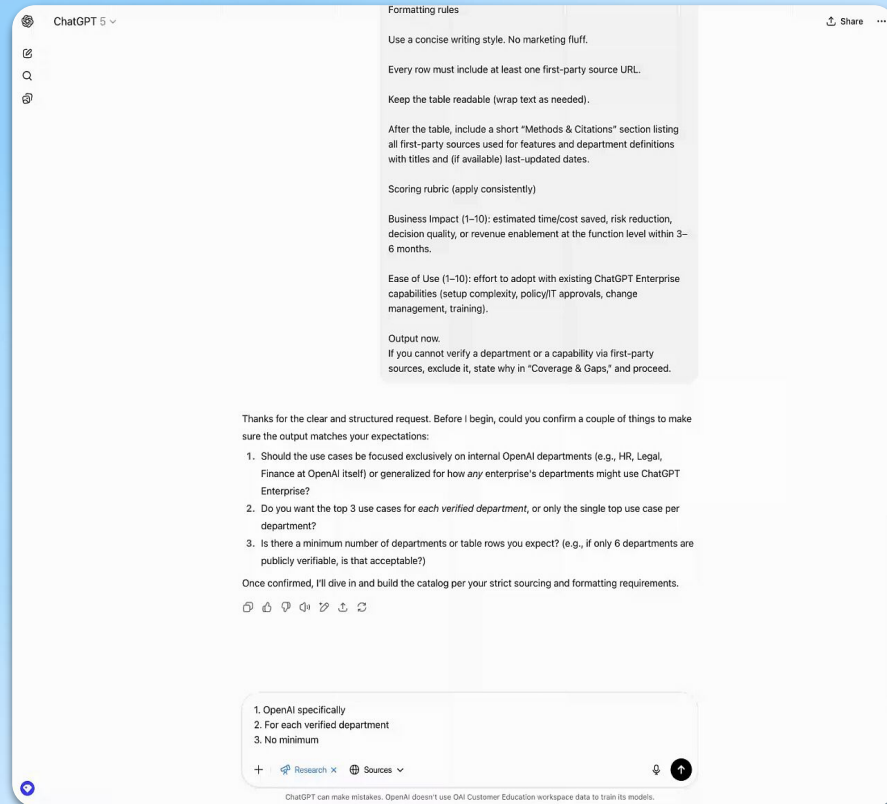
- Upload documents as persistent knowledge across chats
- Provide custom instructions to a Project
- Choose if memories are Project-only or shared with other chats
- Share Projects with colleagues for collaborative work



# Customize Deep Research

Multi-step research on the internet, with our latest updates...

- *Select your organisations data sources ...*
- *Use the websites you trust ...*
- *Edit your research request while running ...*



The screenshot shows the ChatGPT 5 interface with a sidebar on the left containing icons for home, search, and settings. The main content area is titled 'ChatGPT 5' and features a 'Share' button in the top right. A 'Formatting rules' sidebar is open, listing several guidelines: 'Use a concise writing style. No marketing fluff.', 'Every row must include at least one first-party source URL.', 'Keep the table readable (wrap text as needed).', 'After the table, include a short "Methods & Citations" section listing all first-party sources used for features and department definitions with titles and (if available) last-updated dates.', 'Scoring rubric (apply consistently)', 'Business Impact (1-10): estimated time/cost saved, risk reduction, decision quality, or revenue enablement at the function level within 3-6 months.', 'Ease of Use (1-10): effort to adopt with existing ChatGPT Enterprise capabilities (setup complexity, policy/IT approvals, change management, training).', and 'Output now. If you cannot verify a department or a capability via first-party sources, exclude it, state why in "Coverage & Gaps," and proceed.'

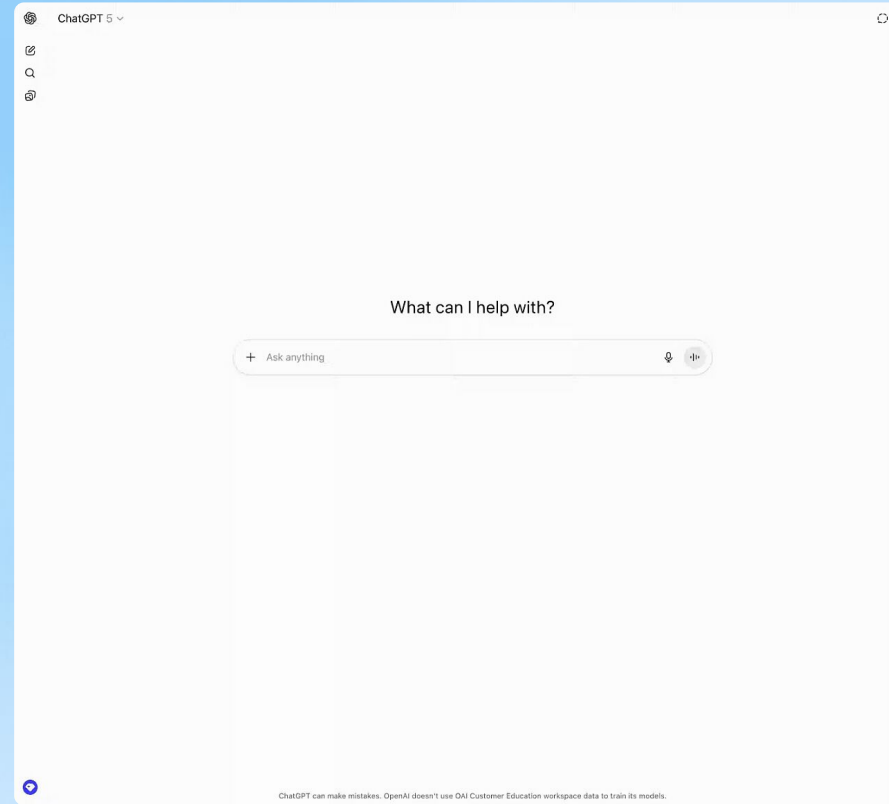
Below the sidebar, the chat history shows a message: 'Thanks for the clear and structured request. Before I begin, could you confirm a couple of things to make sure the output matches your expectations: 1. Should the use cases be focused exclusively on internal OpenAI departments (e.g., HR, Legal, Finance at OpenAI itself) or generalized for how any enterprise's departments might use ChatGPT Enterprise? 2. Do you want the top 3 use cases for each verified department, or only the single top use case per department? 3. Is there a minimum number of departments or table rows you expect? (e.g., if only 6 departments are publicly verifiable, is that acceptable?) Once confirmed, I'll dive in and build the catalog per your strict sourcing and formatting requirements.'

At the bottom, there is a text input field with the following text: '1. OpenAI specifically 2. For each verified department 3. No minimum'. Below the input field are icons for adding sources, a search icon, and a 'Sources' dropdown menu. A small disclaimer at the bottom reads: 'ChatGPT can make mistakes. OpenAI doesn't use OAI Customer Education workspace data to train its models.'

# Crafting & Coding with **Canvas**

Work on content or code with in a shared canvas...

- *Update this paragraph ...*
- *Make suggestions for ...*
- *Make a working prototype...*



# Custom GPTs for Campus Staff & Admins



*Student Services Front  
Desk Assistant*



*Registrar  
& Policy Navigator*



*Campus Comms  
& Alert Builder*



*Admissions & Events  
Templates*



*HR Onboarding  
& Training Guide*