

How to Use ChatGPT to Save Time at Work

Twenty practical ways to get a useful first draft, organise your thinking and move routine work along. You stay in control of the decisions and the final output.

Use these examples as starting points. Replace the bracketed details with non-sensitive context, specify the audience and format, and ask for a first draft you can review. ChatGPT can help with language and structure, but it does not know your workplace rules or the full context unless you provide it.

Everyday workflow

- 01

Email triage

How it helps: Turn a long, non-sensitive email into a short summary, key requests and a draft reply.
Prompt: "Summarise this email in three bullets, list any actions and deadlines, then draft a polite reply. Keep the tone professional. Email: [remove names and sensitive details, then paste text]."
- 02

Meeting agendas

How it helps: Shape a clear agenda around the outcome, available time and decisions needed.
Prompt: "Create a 30-minute agenda for [topic]. Goal: [outcome]. Include timings, one decision point and a short preparation list. Use plain English."
- 03

Meeting notes to actions

How it helps: Organise rough notes into decisions, actions, owners and open questions.
Prompt: "Turn these anonymised notes into: decisions, actions with owner and due date if stated, and unresolved questions. Do not invent missing details. Notes: [paste]."
- 04

Weekly status updates

How it helps: Convert project notes into a concise update that makes progress and blockers easy to scan.
Prompt: "Draft a weekly update with headings: Done, Next, Risks and Help needed. Use only these facts: [approved, non-sensitive notes]. Flag gaps instead of guessing."
- 05

Routine replies

How it helps: Draft reusable responses for recurring questions, while keeping each reply specific to its recipient.
Prompt: "Write three short reply templates for [common question]: friendly, direct and formal. Leave placeholders for details that must be checked before sending."

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IDEAS 06 TO 10

Writing and planning

Give ChatGPT a clear audience, purpose and source material. Ask it to preserve your facts, then check every claim before sharing.

- 06

First drafts of reports

How it helps: Build an outline or rough draft from your verified findings, so you can spend time on analysis rather than a blank page.
Prompt: "Create a report outline for [audience] about [subject]. Use only the facts below, mark unsupported points as questions, and suggest where evidence is needed: [paste approved notes]."
- 07

Plain-English rewrites

How it helps: Make dense internal wording easier for colleagues or customers to understand without changing its meaning.
Prompt: "Rewrite this for a non-specialist in the UK. Keep every requirement and caveat, define necessary technical terms, and list anything whose meaning is unclear: [text]."
- 08

Proofreading and consistency

How it helps: Spot typos, repeated phrases and inconsistent terms in a draft before a person gives it a final read.
Prompt: "Proofread this for British English spelling, grammar and consistent terminology. Do not change the meaning. Return a corrected version and a short list of substantive edits: [draft]."
- 09

Presentation outlines

How it helps: Turn a goal and key messages into a logical slide sequence, with less time spent deciding what comes next.
Prompt: "Propose a 7-slide outline to explain [topic] to [audience]. For each slide give one takeaway, supporting points and a suggested visual. Use only these facts: [paste]."
- 10

Brainstorming options

How it helps: Generate varied approaches to a work challenge, then compare them against your real constraints.
Prompt: "Suggest 10 different ways to [goal]. For each, include likely benefit, effort and one risk. Do not assume extra budget or staff. Context: [brief]."

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IDEAS 11 TO 15

Research, decisions and projects

Use the model to structure questions and options. Verify research against reliable sources and keep final decisions with the people responsible.

- 11

Research briefings

How it helps: Turn supplied reading or notes into a quick brief with key themes and questions for follow-up.
Prompt: "From the material below, write a short briefing with key points, differing views and questions to investigate. Quote the source section for each claim. Do not add outside facts: [material]."
- 12

Comparing options

How it helps: Lay out trade-offs consistently so a team can discuss choices using agreed criteria.
Prompt: "Compare [A, B and C] against these criteria: [criteria]. Make a table of pros, cons, unknowns and questions. Use only the supplied information and leave unsupported cells blank."
- 13

Project milestones

How it helps: Convert a goal into a draft sequence of milestones, dependencies and checks for the project owner to refine.
Prompt: "Draft milestones for [goal] by [date]. Show deliverable, dependency, owner role and risk for each. If timing is not provided, mark it 'to confirm' rather than assigning a date."
- 14

Breaking down a large task

How it helps: Turn an intimidating deliverable into manageable steps and identify what information is still missing.
Prompt: "Break [deliverable] into steps that can each be completed in about an hour. List the first action, any dependency and what I need to decide. Ask questions where context is missing."
- 15

Planning a realistic day

How it helps: Sort tasks by urgency, importance and effort, while making room for fixed commitments and breaks.
Prompt: "Help me prioritise these tasks for a 7-hour workday. Keep fixed meetings, add breaks and estimate time only where I gave a basis. Show what to defer and why: [task list and constraints]."

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IDEAS 16 TO 20

Focus and repeatable work

Use these ideas to reduce repetitive effort, not to hand over judgement. Check outputs against your expertise and your organisation's policies.

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Spreadsheet formulas

How it helps: Explain an unfamiliar formula or draft one from a clearly described calculation, saving trial and error.
Prompt: "For Excel, write a formula that [calculation]. My columns are [labels] and the data starts in row [number]. Explain each part and include a simple test case."
- 17

Standard operating procedures

How it helps: Turn an established process into a consistent checklist or draft procedure that is easier to follow and update.
Prompt: "Convert these approved process notes into a numbered checklist. Keep warnings and approval steps, mark missing steps 'confirm with owner', and do not add policy: [notes]."
- 18

Feedback themes

How it helps: Group anonymised comments into recurring topics, giving a quicker starting point for review.
Prompt: "Group these anonymised comments into recurring themes. For each theme, give a neutral summary and one representative paraphrase. Do not infer motives or identify individuals: [comments]."
- 19

Job descriptions and interview questions

How it helps: Draft role-focused wording and structured questions from agreed responsibilities, reducing repetitive preparation.
Prompt: "Based on these essential responsibilities and skills, draft an inclusive job description and six structured interview questions. Avoid criteria not supported by the role brief: [approved brief]."
- 20

Learning a new work tool

How it helps: Get a concise learning path or practise a low-stakes task before using the tool on real work.
Prompt: "Teach me the basics of [tool or task] for [work goal]. Give me a 15-minute practice exercise, explain unfamiliar terms and tell me what to verify in the official guidance."

Use it thoughtfully

Human review: Check names, numbers, tone, calculations and every important claim. You are accountable for what you send or use.
Confidentiality: Follow your employer's AI and data policies. Do not enter personal, client, financial, commercially sensitive or confidential information unless your organisation has explicitly approved that tool and use.
Accuracy: ChatGPT can make mistakes or present unsupported details confidently. Verify facts, sources, legal or regulatory points and formulas independently before relying on them.

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