

ChatGPT Settings Explained

A visual guide to privacy, personalisation and everyday controls, with practical choices you can make in a few minutes.

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ChatGPT changes often. The screens and controls you see can differ by plan, region, device, app version, account type and workspace rules. This guide explains common controls, not a promise that every account has every option.

Where to start

Open your profile or account menu and choose Settings. On mobile, the profile icon is usually in the sidebar or settings area. Look for Data controls, Personalization, Voice, Notifications or Apps. Labels and locations can change as interfaces roll out.

Want more control?

Start with Data controls and Personalization. They answer two different questions: how content may be used, and what context ChatGPT can use to tailor replies.

Missing a control?

Check you are in the intended account or workspace, then check the official Help Centre. An administrator, regional rollout or app version may affect what is available.

Free resource from WhatIsChatGPT | whatischatgpt.co.uk

Privacy and personalisation

These settings are related, but they do different jobs. Think of privacy choices as managing data use, and personalisation as managing what ChatGPT remembers or applies to future replies.

01 Improve the model for everyone

For eligible personal accounts, this Data controls option determines whether new conversations may be used to improve OpenAI models. Turn it off if you do not want new conversations used for that purpose. Your chats can still remain in history. Turning it off does not delete past chats.

CHOOSE THIS WHEN You want to opt out of model improvement for new conversations, while keeping your chat history.

02 Temporary chat

A temporary chat stays out of history and is not used to improve models while it remains temporary. It does not create or update memories. OpenAI may keep a copy for up to 30 days for safety. Before you begin, choose whether it is personalised. Saving it turns it into a regular chat.

CHOOSE THIS WHEN You want a one-off conversation that is not kept in your chat history, unless you choose to save it.

03 Memory

Memory can use relevant details to personalise future replies. Under Settings > Personalization > Memory, available controls may include saved memories, chat-history reference, a summary or Manage. Turning Memory off does not erase old chats. Deleting a chat alone may not remove a separate saved memory.

CHOOSE THIS WHEN You want ChatGPT to remember useful preferences, or review and remove details it may use.

04 Custom instructions

These are direct preferences you write, such as “Use British English” or “Explain technical terms”. They apply to chats and can be changed or deleted. Official guidance says the feature is available on all plans on web, desktop, iOS and Android. For privacy, avoid putting sensitive information in instructions. The controls can appear under Personalization on web or Customize ChatGPT on mobile.

CHOOSE THIS WHEN You want consistent response preferences. Use Memory for useful details that build up over time; use instructions for guidance you set yourself.

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Voice, apps and alerts

These controls help ChatGPT fit the way you work. They can also connect conversations with devices, services or notifications, so take a moment to review what is enabled and what each connection can access.

05 Voice

Settings > Voice may offer a voice choice, language and available voice experiences such as Live, Advanced or Standard. Options vary by plan, workspace, region, app version and parental controls. Microphone permission is managed by your device or browser. Separate audio or video sharing controls may also appear.

CHOOSE THIS WHEN You prefer speaking, need spoken replies or want to set a voice or language that suits you.

06 Connected apps

Apps can let ChatGPT find or summarise information from services you connect, and some support actions. Availability depends on plan, region, workspace, role, model and interface. Review the requested permissions and the provider’s privacy terms before connecting. A work administrator may control access.

CHOOSE THIS WHEN You have a clear task for a trusted service. Disconnect an app you no longer use, and check which account is connected.

07 Notifications

If you use scheduled tasks, Settings > Notifications may let you choose push alerts, email or both, and manage tasks. Your browser or mobile device must also allow notifications. Scheduled task features and limits vary by plan and workspace, so check your own task panel before relying on a reminder.

Why your screen may look different

A setting may be missing because it is still rolling out, limited to some plans or regions, unavailable in your app version, or controlled by a managed workspace. Web, desktop, iOS and Android can use different labels or locations. For work or school accounts, your administrator’s settings can override personal preferences. Check the current official article for the control you need rather than assuming your menu should match someone else’s screenshot.

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A five-minute settings review

You do not need to change everything. Use this quick review to decide what fits your work, comfort level and account.

YOUR QUICK CHECK

- ☐ Data use: decide whether new personal chats may be used to improve models.
- ☐ Temporary chat: use for a one-off conversation, and remember it may be retained for safety for up to 30 days.
- ☐ Personalisation: review what Memory uses and whether custom instructions still fit.
- ☐ Connections: confirm each app is trusted, needed and connected to the right account.
- ☐ Alerts: enable only the notifications you want, and allow them in your device or browser.

Official sources checked

OpenAI Help Centre articles used for this guide. Details can change after the date checked above.

- [Data controls in ChatGPT](#)
- [Temporary chat in ChatGPT](#)
- [Memory in ChatGPT](#)
- [ChatGPT Custom Instructions](#)
- [ChatGPT Voice](#)
- [Connected apps in ChatGPT](#)
- [Privacy Center in ChatGPT](#)
- [Scheduled tasks in ChatGPT](#)

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