AIFreeForever

The Claude Prompt Guide, 2026

If you use Claude for writing, code or research, a well-built prompt gets a better answer the first time. This guide shows the three prompt shapes the Anthropic Prompt Generator writes, the XML tags to use, a system prompt template and a check list for your own prompts. AIFreeForever is not affiliated with Anthropic.

The three prompt shapes

Shape	Where it goes	Best for
Short prompt	A Claude chat	Quick tasks and simple requests
XML-tagged prompt	A Claude chat	Long inputs, many instructions, examples
System plus user	The Claude API	Apps, bots and repeat tasks

XML tags to use

- **<context>** who you are, the situation and the goal.
- **<instructions>** numbered steps for Claude to follow.
- **<example>** one or two answers like the one you want.
- **<format>** the shape of the answer: a list, a table, JSON.
- **<document>** long text you paste in, kept apart from the instructions.

A system prompt template

System: You are a [role] who helps [audience] with [task]. Answer in a [tone] tone. Always [rule]. Never [limit]. Give the answer as [format].
User: [the request, with any text in tags]

Prompt check list

☐ The task is in the first sentence.

☐ Claude knows who the answer is for.

☐ Long text sits inside its own tags.

☐ The answer format is named.

☐ An example is included when the format matters.

☐ Facts and figures come from you, not from Claude.

Draft your own prompt

Task: _____

Context: _____

Audience and tone: _____

Format: _____

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