ChatGPT: A Step-by-Step Beginner's Guide

1) Pick one tiny goal (2 minutes)

Choose a single, useful task you'll finish in this session.

- **Examples**: "Draft a 3-sentence event blurb," "Summarize this article," "Turn these bullets into an email."

2) Start a new chat and say what you want

Open a fresh conversation and lead with your outcome.

- **Bad**: "Help?"
- **Better**: "Draft a 150-word event blurb for busy executives."
- **Great**: "Draft a 150-word blurb inviting busy executives to an Oct 15 session on AI accountability. Tone: professional, friendly. Include date/time, RSVP link placeholder, and 3 benefits."

3) Use the simple prompt formula

Goal + Audience + Context + Constraints + Format

- *Goal*: what you want ("create a checklist")
- *Audience*: who it's for (students, execs, customers)
- *Context*: 1–3 key facts it should know
- *Constraints*: length, tone, must-include/must-avoid
- *Format*: bullets, table, email, steps, etc.

Helpful Assistant Template

- **Goal**: [what you want]
- **Audience**: [who]
- **Context**: [3 facts]
- **Constraints**: [length, tone, any do/don't]
- **Format**: [bullets/table/email].
- If anything's unclear, ask me 2 quick questions first.

4) Iterate (this is where the magic is)

Give short, specific feedback and ask for a revision.

- "Shorter, punchier headline options (≤6 words)."
- "Add a one-sentence hook and remove jargon."
- "Keep structure, change tone to conversational."

5) Check quality and accuracy

- **Ask it to self-critique:** "List 5 improvements and apply them."
- **Ask for sources** (when summarizing public info) and verify.
- **Use a fact checklist:** names, dates, numbers, links, claims.

6) Use files, images, and data (optional)

- You can paste text or upload a file to summarize, outline, or turn into slides.
- Ask for structured outputs: "Return a 3-column table: task, owner, due date."
- Privacy tip: avoid uploading confidential or regulated data unless you're allowed to.

7) Get exactly the format you need

- "Output as: subject line + preheader + 3 bullets."
- "Give me a copy-ready email with greeting, sign-off, and a P.S."

- "Provide a markdown table I can paste into Notion."

8) Make it yours (tone & style)

Provide a quick style sample (2–3 sentences) and say, "match this style."

- Or: "More warmth, fewer adjectives; plain-English verbs."

9) Save time with reusable "recipes"

When something works, save your best prompt and reuse it.

- **Example recipe name:** "Event Blurb 150w (Execs)."

10) Track your wins

Note tasks where ChatGPT saves ≥15 minutes. Keep a simple log:

- Date | Task | Minutes saved | Reuse? (Y/N)