RESULT 3 · HANDBOOK FOR SENIORS

AI & Sustainability Handbook

A plain-language guide for older adults: what AI is, how to talk to it safely and critically, and practical green habits for every day.



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Welcome and how to use this handbook



What this handbook is for, who it is for, and how to use it alone, in a group or with the G-PRO board game.

Welcome

This handbook is for you if you are curious about artificial intelligence (AI) and want to live in a way that is kinder to the planet. You do not need to be good with technology. You do not need to know anything about AI. You only need curiosity and a little time.

The handbook was written as part of G-PRO, which stands for *Green Prompt: Promoting Healthy and Sustainable Ageing Through AI and Interactive Learning*. G-PRO is a European project co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union. It brings together three organisations: Associação de Melhoramentos e Bem Estar Social de Pias (AMBESP) in Portugal, RRINOVA OÜ in Estonia and Fundacja Edu Active in Poland.

We believe that older adults have a great deal to offer. You have life experience, practical skills and good judgement. Many of us learnt from parents or grandparents how to repair things, grow food, save water and waste very little. These habits are exactly what the world needs now.

AI is a new tool. Your experience is what makes that tool useful.

DID YOU KNOW

More than one in five people in the European Union is aged 65 or over: 22.0% of the EU population on 1 January 2025. (Source: Eurostat, Population structure and ageing.)

Who this handbook is for

This handbook is written for:

- adults aged 55 and over who want to try AI for the first time, or feel more confident with it
- people who want simple, practical ideas for saving water, energy and money at home
- adult educators, librarians, volunteers and family members who support older learners
- groups playing the G-PRO board game

You can read it from start to finish, or you can jump to the chapter you need today.

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What you will find inside

The handbook has three parts.

Part one: understanding AI (chapters 2 to 6). What AI is, how to start using a chatbot, how to ask good questions, how to judge the answers, and how to stay safe.

Part two: green living (chapters 7 to 11). Practical ideas about water, energy, nature, waste and repair, and shopping and food. Each chapter shows how AI can help you, and where it cannot.

Part three: living well and quick reference (chapters 12 and 13). Staying healthy, connected and active in a changing climate, plus a bank of ready-made prompts, a glossary of words, and a log for your own commitments.

The three-step method: ASK, EVALUATE, DECIDE

All through this handbook we use one simple method. It is the same method printed on the AI Prompt cards in the G-PRO board game.

Step	What you do	Key question
ASK	Type or say a clear, specific question to the AI. Say who you are, where you live and what you want.	Have I given enough detail?
EVALUATE	Read the answer slowly, or read it aloud to your group. Check it.	Is it specific? Is it accurate? What did it miss? Do we know better?
DECIDE	You choose what to do. The AI only makes suggestions.	What will *I* do, and why?

The most important step is the last one. **You decide, not the AI.** AI can be helpful, but it can also be wrong, out of date or one-sided. Your own knowledge, your common sense and the wisdom of people around you are just as important as any computer answer.

> **REMEMBER**
>
> AI is like a well-read assistant who sometimes makes things up with great confidence. Listen to it, check it, and then make up your own mind.

The four G-PRO letters

The G-PRO board game is built around four letters. You will see them in this handbook too.

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Letter	Stands for	What it means for you
G	Green Literacy	Understanding the basics of water, energy, nature and recycling
P	Prompt Intelligence	Knowing how to ask AI good questions
R	Real-World Reasoning	Thinking practically about real-life choices, including everyday shopping and food, and checking whether advice makes sense
O	Own It	Making one specific, named personal commitment and keeping it

The letter **O** is special. Each chapter ends with an "Own It" box. It invites you to choose one small action and say it out loud, or write it down.

Small, specific promises are easier to keep than big, vague ones:

Hard to measure	Easy to measure
"I will be greener."	"I will turn the tap off while I brush my teeth, starting tomorrow."

TRY IT TOGETHER

The Promise Tree is a creative closing ritual that turns everyone's Own It promises into something the whole group can see, and help each other keep.

Three ways to use this handbook

On your own

Read one chapter at a time. Have a phone, tablet or computer next to you if you can, and try the example prompts. If you do not have a device, you can still read the green tips and make your commitments. Take your time. There is no test.

With a friend or family member

Many people learn best side by side. Ask a friend, grandchild, neighbour or carer to sit with you while you try your first prompts. Take turns typing. Talk about the answers. You may find that you teach them as much as they teach you, especially about saving and repairing.

In a group or with the G-PRO board game

The board game is designed for small groups with an educator or facilitator. Players move around the board, answer questions about the five green themes (Water, Energy, Nature, Recycling and Shopping) and use AI Prompt cards. When a player draws an AI Prompt card, the group follows ASK, EVALUATE, DECIDE together. Someone types the prompt, someone reads the answer aloud, and the whole group discusses it.

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This handbook is the "book behind the game". Educators can use each green chapter to prepare a session, and players can take the handbook home to go further.

TRY IT TOGETHER

The G-PRO Activity Kit has 14 games and activities, from a scam-call role play to a seed swap, and many need no device at all. Start with How to use the Activity Kit to pick one for your group.

FOR EDUCATORS

Before a game session, read the green chapter that matches the theme you plan to focus on. Pick two "Try this prompt" examples and test them on the device you will use, so you know roughly what kind of answer to expect. Answers change each time, so do not promise the group a particular result. Treat a weak or wrong AI answer as a gift: it is a perfect chance to practise the EVALUATE step.

What you need

To try the prompts in this handbook you will need:

- a smartphone, tablet or computer
- an internet connection (home Wi-Fi, mobile data, or free Wi-Fi at a library or community centre)
- access to a free AI chatbot such as ChatGPT (chatgpt.com), Microsoft Copilot (copilot.microsoft.com) or Google Gemini (gemini.google.com)

Some chatbots ask you to create an account, and some let you try them without one. Chapter 3 explains this step by step.

Before your first try, tick off what you have:

- [ ] a charged phone, tablet or computer
- [ ] a working internet connection
- [ ] a quiet half hour
- [ ] a friend or family member nearby, if you would like company
- [ ] a pen, for your first commitment

TIP

Many public libraries, community centres and senior clubs offer free help with digital devices. Ask at your local library or town hall what is available near you.

A few words about language

This handbook uses plain English. When we must use a technical word, we explain it. You can also find all the special words in the glossary in chapter 13.

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AI chatbots understand many languages. You can write to them in Portuguese, Estonian, Polish, English or many other languages, and they will usually answer in the same language. If you feel more comfortable in your own language, use it.

Our promise to you

We do not pretend that AI is magic, and we do not pretend that it is dangerous for everyone. It is a tool, like a calculator or a telephone. Used with care and good sense, it can help you find ideas, save time and learn new things. Used without thinking, it can mislead you.

We also do not lecture you about the environment. Most of the green ideas here save money as well as resources. Many of them are things your parents or grandparents did every day.

Talk about it

Ask someone from a different generation:

- "What did your family do to avoid waste when you were young? What does mine do now?"
- "What is one thing you would like to learn from me, and one thing you could teach me?"
- "When you hear the words 'artificial intelligence', what is the first thing you think of?"

Quick check

1. True or false: you need to be good with technology to use this handbook.
2. In the method ASK, EVALUATE, DECIDE, who makes the final decision? a) The AI b) You c) The chatbot company
3. What does the letter **O** in G-PRO stand for? a) Online b) Own It c) Organise

NOTE

Answers. 1. False. You only need curiosity and a little time. 2. b) You. The AI only makes suggestions. 3. b) Own It: one specific, named personal commitment that you keep.

Your first step

OWN IT

Before you go on, make your first small commitment. Say it out loud or write it in the log in chapter 13. For example: "This week I will read chapter 2 and try one question with an AI chatbot, with help from my granddaughter on Sunday."

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What is AI?

A plain-language explanation of artificial intelligence, where you already meet it, and what it can and cannot do.



A new word for an old dream

People have dreamed of "thinking machines" for a long time. Today the words *artificial intelligence*, or *AI*, are everywhere: on the news, in shops, on your phone. It can feel confusing, or even a little worrying. This chapter explains what AI really is, in simple words.

Here is a short definition:

Artificial intelligence is computer software that can do tasks we usually connect with human thinking, such as understanding language, recognising pictures or making suggestions.

AI is not a person. It does not have feelings, wishes or a life of its own. It is a very clever pattern-finding machine.

How does it learn?

Most modern AI learns from examples. Imagine teaching a child what a dog is. You do not give the child a rule book. You point at many dogs: big dogs, small dogs, black dogs, spotted dogs. After a while, the child recognises a dog they have never seen before.

AI learns in a similar way, but with millions of examples. To learn about language, an AI system is shown enormous amounts of text: books, websites, articles and more. From this, it learns which words usually follow other words, and how sentences and ideas fit together.

What is a chatbot?

A **chatbot** is a computer program you can have a written or spoken conversation with. You type a question, and it types an answer. The chatbots in this handbook, such as ChatGPT, Microsoft Copilot and Google Gemini, are built on a type of AI called a *large language model*. "Large" because it has learnt from a huge amount of text. "Language model" because its job is to predict and produce language.

When you ask a chatbot a question, it does not look up the answer in one big book of facts. It builds a reply word by word, choosing what is most likely to make sense based on everything it has learnt. This is why its answers often sound very natural. It is also why it can sometimes sound completely sure about something that is completely wrong.

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REMEMBER

A chatbot is very good at sounding right. That is not the same as being right. This is why the EVALUATE step matters so much.

TRY IT TOGETHER

Two Truths and an AI is an icebreaker game: can your group tell the true statements from the one an AI made up, even when it sounds just right?

You already use AI

You may be surprised how often you already meet AI in daily life.

Where you meet it	What the AI does
Your phone camera	Recognises faces and improves photos automatically
Email	Moves suspicious messages into a "spam" or "junk" folder
Maps and navigation	Suggests the quickest route and warns about traffic
Online shops and streaming	Recommends products, films or music "you might like"
Voice assistants	Understands spoken requests such as "What is the weather tomorrow?"
Translation apps	Translates text or speech between languages
Banks	Watches for unusual payments that might be fraud

So AI is not completely new to you. What is new is that you can now talk to it directly, in your own words, and ask it almost anything.

DID YOU KNOW

In 2025, about one in three people aged 16 to 74 in the EU (32.7%) used generative AI tools such as chatbots. Estonia was among the highest users in Europe, at 46.6%. (Source: Eurostat, use of generative AI tools by individuals, 2025.)

What AI can do well

AI chatbots can be genuinely helpful. They are often good at:

- explaining something in simple words ("What does 'carbon footprint' mean?")
- giving ideas and lists ("Ten ways to use leftover bread")
- helping you write ("Help me write a polite letter to my landlord about a dripping tap")
- summarising long text ("Summarise this article in five sentences")

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- translating and rephrasing
- answering follow-up questions patiently, as many times as you like
- planning ("Make a simple weekly meal plan with little food waste for one person")

They are available at any hour, they never get tired of your questions, and they will not judge you for asking something "basic".

What AI cannot do, or does badly

AI also has real limits. Knowing them will protect you.

- **It can be wrong.** It sometimes invents facts, names, numbers, books or websites that do not exist. Experts call this "hallucination". The answer may look very convincing.
- **It may be out of date.** All chatbots learnt from information up to a certain date and may not know about recent changes, such as new prices, rules or local services. Some can also search the internet, but even then they can make mistakes.
- **It does not know your local situation** unless you tell it. Recycling rules, water prices and energy support schemes differ from country to country, and even from town to town.
- **It does not truly understand.** It has no experience of life, no common sense in the human way, and no feelings, even when it sounds caring.
- **It can be biased.** It learnt from text written by people, so it can repeat unfair ideas or give a narrow view, for example by assuming everyone lives in a big city or in one particular country.
- **It cannot take responsibility.** If its advice about health, money or law is wrong, it will not suffer the consequences. You might.

WATCH OUT

Never use an AI chatbot as a replacement for your doctor, pharmacist, lawyer or financial adviser. You can use it to prepare questions for them, but always check important advice with a qualified person.

A helpful way to think about AI

Here is a picture that many people find useful. Imagine AI as **a very well-read new assistant**. They have read thousands of books, they are polite, fast and eager to help.

But they started yesterday. They do not know your town, your neighbours or your health. And sometimes, rather than say "I don't know", they guess.

Would you let a new assistant like this make your decisions? Probably not. But you might ask them for ideas, a first draft, or a quick explanation, and then check their work. That is exactly the right relationship with AI.

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This idea is called **Human–AI collaboration** (sometimes called human-centred AI). The human and the AI each bring something:

The AI brings	You bring
Speed	Life experience
Lots of general information	Local knowledge
Ideas and suggestions	Common sense and judgement
Patience with questions	Values and personal priorities
Help with writing and summarising	The final decision

Does AI use energy?

This is a fair question for a green handbook. Yes. AI systems run on large computer centres, sometimes called data centres, which use electricity and, in many cases, water for cooling. The exact amount for each question is hard to know and depends on many things.

This does not mean you should never use AI. It means it is worth using it thoughtfully: ask clear questions that get you a useful answer, rather than lots of vague ones. Good prompts, which you will learn about in chapter 4, are better for you and better for the planet.

Try it yourself

TRY THIS PROMPT

"I am 70 years old and I have never used AI before. Explain in five short sentences what an AI chatbot is and one thing it is good at and one thing it is bad at."

EVALUATE: Was the explanation clear? Did it match what you read in this chapter? Did it mention that it can make mistakes?

DECIDE: Choose one thing you would like to try asking it next.

TRY THIS PROMPT

"What are three examples of AI that a retired person in Europe might already use every day without realising it?"

EVALUATE: Do you recognise the examples from your own life? Are any of them unusual or wrong for your country?

DECIDE: Talk with a friend or your group: which of these do you use, and do you trust them?

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FOR EDUCATORS

A nice warm-up activity is to show the "You already use AI" table and ask each participant to tick the ones they have used. Most people discover they already use two or three. This builds confidence before anyone touches a keyboard.

Key points from this chapter

- AI is software that finds patterns and makes suggestions. It is not a person.
- Chatbots build answers word by word. They sound confident even when they are wrong.
- You already use AI in maps, email, photos and more.
- AI is good for ideas, explanations and writing help. It is bad at local details, very recent facts and taking responsibility.
- The best approach is Human–AI collaboration: the AI suggests, you decide.

Talk about it

Ask someone from a different generation:

- "Which of the things in the 'You already use AI' table do you use every day? Which do I use?"
- "Has a computer, phone or app ever been confidently wrong with you? What happened?"
- "What new invention in your lifetime first felt strange and then became normal?"

Quick check

1. True or false: a chatbot looks up each answer in one big book of facts.
2. What do experts call it when AI invents facts, names or websites? a) Hallucination b) Translation c) Recommendation
3. Which of these is AI usually bad at? a) Explaining something in simple words b) Knowing your local recycling rules c) Giving a list of ideas

NOTE

Answers. 1. False. It builds a reply word by word, choosing what is most likely to make sense. 2. a) Hallucination. 3. b) It does not know your local situation unless you tell it, and rules differ from town to town.

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Your next step

OWN IT

Choose one everyday example of AI you use and pay attention to it this week. For example: "This week, each time my phone suggests a word while I type a message, I will notice it and remember: that is AI guessing what comes next."

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Getting started with an AI chatbot



Step-by-step guidance for opening a chatbot on a phone, tablet or computer, typing or speaking your first question, and using voice assistants.

Your first conversation

Starting something new can feel uncomfortable. That is normal. The good news is that using an AI chatbot is very similar to sending a text message or an email. You write something, and you get a reply. Nothing you type can "break" the chatbot.

This chapter walks you through the steps in a general way. The exact buttons and words on the screen change often, because the companies update their apps regularly.

So we describe *what to look for*, rather than exact labels. If something looks different on your screen, do not worry. Look for the same idea in a slightly different place, or ask someone to help.

DID YOU KNOW

In 2025, 64% of people aged 16 to 24 in the EU had used generative AI tools, compared with 7% of people aged 65 to 74. If you are starting now, you are one of the early explorers of your generation, and the young people around you may be happy to sit beside you. (Source: Eurostat, use of generative AI tools by individuals, 2025.)

Choosing a chatbot

There are several well-known chatbots. They are all similar for everyday use. Most offer a free version, with paid versions for extra features. You do not need to pay to use anything in this handbook.

Chatbot	Made by	Website
ChatGPT	OpenAI	chatgpt.com
Microsoft Copilot	Microsoft	copilot.microsoft.com
Google Gemini	Google	gemini.google.com

You can use them in two ways:

- **In a web browser.** Open the internet program you normally use (for example Chrome, Safari, Edge or Firefox) and type the website address into the address bar at the top.

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- **As an app.** On a smartphone or tablet, you can download the official app from your phone's app store (the "App Store" on Apple devices, the "Play Store" on most Android devices).

WATCH OUT

Only download apps from your device's official app store, and check that the app is made by the real company (OpenAI, Microsoft or Google). There are copycat apps with similar names and logos that may show lots of adverts, ask for payment or collect your data.

TRY IT TOGETHER

Real or Robot? is a detective game where teams decide what is genuine and what is fake. It is good practice for spotting copycats.

Do I need an account?

Some chatbots let you ask questions without signing in. Others ask you to create an account, or to sign in with an account you already have, such as a Google or Microsoft account. An account usually lets the chatbot keep a history of your conversations, so you can return to them later.

If you create an account:

- use an email address you check regularly
- choose a strong password that you do not use anywhere else
- never share this password with anyone, including people who phone or message you claiming to be "support"

If this step feels difficult, ask a trusted family member or a volunteer at your library to help you set it up. You only need to do it once.

Step by step: typing your first question

These steps work in the same general way on a phone, tablet or computer.

1. Open the chatbot website in your browser, or open the chatbot app.
2. If a welcome message or information box appears, read it. You may be asked to accept terms of use. Read what you are agreeing to, and only continue if you are comfortable.
3. Find the box where you type your message. It is usually at the bottom of the screen and may contain grey words such as an invitation to ask anything.
4. Tap or click inside that box. On a phone or tablet, a keyboard will appear.
5. Type your question. Do not worry about perfect spelling. The chatbot usually understands small mistakes.
6. Send your message. Look for a small arrow or a "send" symbol next to the box, or press the Enter key on a computer keyboard.

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7. Wait a few seconds. The answer will appear, often line by line, as if someone is typing.
8. Read the answer. If it is long, scroll down slowly with your finger or the mouse wheel.
9. To ask a follow-up question, type into the same box again. The chatbot remembers what you said earlier in this conversation.
10. To start a fresh topic, look for an option to start a new chat or new conversation. This is usually a "plus" sign, a pencil symbol or similar near the top or side of the screen.

Your first-conversation checklist:

- [ ] I found the box where I type.
- [ ] I sent one question.
- [ ] I read the whole answer, scrolling down if needed.
- [ ] I asked one follow-up question.
- [ ] I started a new conversation.

TRY IT TOGETHER

The Prompt Kitchen is a card game where teams "cook up" a question from ingredient cards on paper first, then test the best one on a chatbot. It is a relaxed way to try your first questions as a group.

TIP

If the text is too small, you can usually make it bigger. On a computer, hold the Ctrl key (or the Cmd key on a Mac) and press the plus key. On a phone or tablet, you can make text bigger in your device's display or accessibility settings, or spread two fingers apart on the screen to zoom.

Speaking instead of typing

If typing is tiring or difficult, you can often speak to the chatbot instead.

1. Look for a small **microphone** symbol, usually near the box where you type.
2. Tap it. The first time, your device will ask whether the app may use your microphone. Allow it if you want to use this feature.
3. Speak clearly and at a normal pace. You do not need to shout.
4. Your words will appear as text, or the chatbot will answer you out loud, depending on the app and the mode you choose.
5. Check that the words were understood correctly before you rely on the answer.

Some apps also have a **voice conversation** mode, where you talk and the chatbot talks back, like a phone call. This can be very comfortable for people with poor eyesight or stiff hands.

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Voice assistants on phones and smart speakers

You may already have a **voice assistant**. Most smartphones have one built in, and some homes have a smart speaker in the kitchen or living room. You wake them by saying a special word or phrase, or by pressing and holding a button on the phone.

Voice assistants are good for short, simple tasks:

- "What will the weather be tomorrow?"
- "Set a timer for 20 minutes."
- "Remind me at 6 pm to take the washing out."
- "Call my daughter."
- "Turn off the living room light." (if you have smart lights)

They are less good at long, detailed conversations, although some voice assistants use the same kind of AI as chatbots.

> **REMEMBER**
>
> A smart speaker listens for its wake word all the time. Most have a button to switch off the microphone. Switch it off if you are having a private conversation nearby, and look in the speaker's app to see and delete stored voice recordings if you wish.

Sustainability apps

Beyond chatbots, there are many apps that help with green living. Some use AI and some do not. Common types include:

- apps that identify plants, birds or insects from a photo or sound
- apps from your energy or water supplier that show how much you use
- apps that connect people who have leftover food to share or sell cheaply
- municipality apps that tell you which day your rubbish and recycling are collected
- apps that help you find a repair shop or second-hand items nearby

What is available depends on your country and town. You can ask a chatbot for ideas (see the prompt below), but always check that an app really exists and is made by a trustworthy organisation before you download it. Ask at your library, municipality office or community centre for local recommendations.

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Try it yourself

TRY THIS PROMPT

"Hello. I am 66 and this is my first time using a chatbot. Please explain, in very simple words, how I can ask you a follow-up question and how I can start a new conversation."

EVALUATE: Was the explanation simple enough? Does it match what you see on your screen? If not, the chatbot may be describing a different version of the app.

DECIDE: Try one follow-up question right now, then try starting a new conversation.

TRY THIS PROMPT

"I live in a small town in Portugal and I want to waste less food and recycle better. What kinds of apps could help me? Please describe the type of app, not just names, and tell me how I can check that an app is trustworthy."

EVALUATE: Did it describe types of app clearly? If it named specific apps, are they available in your country? Did it give sensible advice about checking trustworthiness?

DECIDE: Ask a librarian, friend or your group whether they know a good local app before downloading anything.

Common worries, answered

Worry	Answer
"I will break something."	You cannot break the chatbot by asking a question. The worst that happens is a strange answer.
"I will look silly."	The chatbot does not judge you. No question is too simple.
"It costs money."	The free versions are enough for this handbook. Be careful of copycat apps that ask for payment.
"Someone is reading what I write."	Your conversations may be stored by the company and may be used to improve their systems, depending on your settings. That is why you never share private information. See chapter 6.
"I typed it wrong."	Just send a new message to correct yourself, for example "Sorry, I meant Estonia, not Latvia."

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FOR EDUCATORS

In a group session, connect one device to a projector or large screen if you can, so that everyone can see the conversation. Ask a participant to type while others suggest words. This keeps everyone involved and takes the pressure off the person with the keyboard. Make sure the session device uses a group account, not a participant's personal account.

Talk about it

Ask someone from a different generation:

- "What was the first time you used a telephone, a computer or a mobile phone like? How did it feel?"
- "What do you do when an app or a screen looks different from what you expected?"
- "Which would you rather do with a chatbot: type or speak? Why?"

Quick check

1. True or false: you can break a chatbot by asking the wrong question.
2. Where should you download a chatbot app from? a) Any website with the right logo b) Your device's official app store c) A link in a text message
3. True or false: a smart speaker listens for its wake word all the time.

NOTE

Answers. 1. False. The worst that happens is a strange answer. 2. b) Your device's official app store, and check the app is made by the real company. 3. True. Most have a button to switch off the microphone.

Your first step

OWN IT

Choose one specific first step. For example: "On Thursday afternoon I will open Microsoft Copilot on my tablet and ask it one question about my garden, with my neighbour Ana next to me."

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Writing good prompts

The ASK step in depth, showing how to give AI the right details so that its answers are useful, specific and suited to your life.



What is a prompt?

A **prompt** is simply the message you give to an AI. It can be a question, a request or an instruction. "What is composting?" is a prompt. So is "Write me a shopping list for a vegetable soup for two people."

The quality of the answer depends a great deal on the quality of the prompt. If you ask a vague question, you get a vague, general answer. If you ask a clear, specific question, you usually get a much more useful answer.

This is the **ASK** step of the G-PRO method, and it is the "P" in G-PRO: **Prompt Intelligence**.

DID YOU KNOW

Most people use chatbots for everyday life, not for work. In 2025, about a quarter of people aged 16 to 74 in the EU (25.1%) used generative AI for private purposes, compared with 15.1% for work and 9.4% for formal education. (Source: Eurostat, use of generative AI tools by individuals, 2025.)

Think of it like asking a stranger for directions

Imagine you stop someone in the street and say, "Where is the shop?" They will not know which shop you mean, or where you are coming from. Now imagine you say, "Excuse me, I am walking, and I am looking for the nearest pharmacy that is open on Sunday." Now they can really help you.

AI is the same. It cannot see you. It does not know your age, your town, your budget or your health unless you tell it.

The four building blocks of a good prompt

The AI Prompt cards in the G-PRO game ask you to say **who you are, where you live and what you want**. We add a fourth block: **any limits**.

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Building block	What to include	Example
Who	Age group, situation, household	"I am a 72-year-old widow living alone..."
Where	Country, town or countryside, type of home	"...in a flat in Tartu, Estonia, with electric heating..."
What	Exactly what you want to know or get	"...give me five ways to lower my winter electricity bill..."
Limits	Budget, time, ability, format	"...that cost under 50 euros, do not need a ladder, and are explained in short sentences."

You do not have to use all four every time. But the more of them you include, the better the answer usually becomes.

Before you send a prompt, check:

- [ ] **Who:** have I said who I am?
- [ ] **Where:** have I said where I live?
- [ ] **What:** have I said exactly what I want?
- [ ] **Limits:** have I said my budget, time, ability or the format I want?

TRY IT TOGETHER

In The Prompt Kitchen, teams turn a vague question into a full "recipe" using ingredient cards, another team plays a very literal robot, and the best recipe is tested on a real chatbot at the end.

REMEMBER

Only share general details. "I live in a flat in Tartu" is fine. Your full address, date of birth or bank details are never needed. See chapter 6.

Vague and specific prompts side by side

Vague prompt	Specific prompt
"How do I save water?"	"I am 68 and live in a house with a small garden in southern Portugal, where summers are very dry. Give me five simple ways to save water in the garden that do not need heavy lifting."
"Tell me about recycling."	"I live in a block of flats in Kraków, Poland. Explain in plain words how to sort household waste, and tell me what I should check with my municipality because rules differ."
"Healthy recipes?"	"Suggest three cheap, healthy lunch recipes for one person, using seasonal vegetables available in Estonia in October, with no more than six ingredients each."
"Is this product green?"	"A washing-up liquid says 'eco-friendly' and 'natural' on the bottle but has no official label. What questions should I ask to check whether this claim is real?"

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Notice how the specific prompts are longer. That is fine. A few extra words save you time later.

TRY IT TOGETHER

Grandma's Recipe vs the Robot puts a family recipe up against a chatbot's version of the same dish. A good prompt makes a real difference to who wins.

Useful phrases to add to any prompt

These short phrases can make answers easier to read and use:

- "Explain it in simple words."
- "Use short sentences."
- "Give me a numbered list of no more than five points."
- "Explain why each idea helps."
- "Tell me what I should double-check with a local expert."
- "If you are not sure, say so."
- "Ask me questions first if you need more information."
- "Answer in Polish." (or any language you prefer)

The phrase "If you are not sure, say so" is especially useful. It does not stop the AI from making mistakes, but it can encourage it to be more honest about uncertainty.

Follow-up questions: the conversation continues

A chatbot remembers what you said earlier in the same conversation. You do not need to repeat everything. You can build on the first answer, just as you would in a conversation with a person.

Good follow-up questions include:

- "Can you explain number three in more detail?"
- "That is too expensive. Give me cheaper ideas."
- "I cannot kneel easily. Which of these can I do standing up?"
- "Make it shorter."
- "Why do you say that? Where does this information usually come from?"
- "What are the disadvantages of this idea?"
- "Is this true in Estonia too, or only in some countries?"

Asking "What are the disadvantages?" is a powerful habit. AI often gives you the positive side first. Asking for the other side gives you a fuller picture.

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TIP

If the conversation gets confused, start a new chat and write one clear prompt that includes everything important. A fresh start is often quicker than correcting a muddled conversation.

Giving the AI a role

Sometimes it helps to tell the AI what kind of helper you want. For example:

- "Act as a patient teacher explaining to a beginner..."
- "Act as a friendly gardener with experience of dry Mediterranean climates..."
- "Act as an energy adviser who explains things simply..."

This can change the tone and focus of the answer. But remember: telling the AI to "act as an expert" does not make it an expert. It is still the same AI, and it can still be wrong.

Try it yourself

TRY THIS PROMPT

"I am 75 and live alone in a two-room flat in Lisbon. My electricity bill went up this winter. Give me five simple, low-cost ideas to use less electricity, explained in short sentences. Tell me which ones save the most and which ones I should check with my energy supplier."

EVALUATE: Is every idea suitable for a flat? For Lisbon's climate? Are any ideas expensive or difficult? Did it tell you what to check with your supplier?

DECIDE: Pick the one idea that fits your life best and decide when you will do it.

TRY THIS PROMPT

First type the vague prompt "How can I be more eco-friendly?" Read the answer. Then start a new chat and type: "I am 63, I live with my husband in a village in eastern Poland with a vegetable garden and a wood-burning stove. Suggest five eco-friendly habits that suit our life and save money."

EVALUATE: Compare the two answers. Which one is more useful to you? What made the difference?

DECIDE: Write down which building blocks (who, where, what, limits) you want to remember to use next time.

A simple prompt recipe to remember

If you remember only one thing from this chapter, remember this recipe:

"I am [who]. I live [where]. I want [what]. Please [limits]."

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For example: "I am a retired teacher. I live in a terraced house in Tallinn. I want to start composting kitchen scraps. Please give me a simple step-by-step guide that does not need a garden."

FOR EDUCATORS

Run a "prompt makeover" activity. Write a vague prompt on a large sheet of paper, such as "Tell me about energy." Ask the group to improve it by adding one building block at a time: who, then where, then what, then limits. Test the vague version and the final version on the AI and compare the answers out loud. This links directly to the P (Prompt Intelligence) cards in the game.

Key points from this chapter

- A prompt is your message to the AI.
- Specific prompts give better answers than vague ones.
- Use the four building blocks: who, where, what, limits.
- Follow-up questions help you get exactly what you need.
- Ask for disadvantages and ask the AI to say when it is unsure.

Talk about it

Ask someone from a different generation:

- "How did you find information before the internet? How do you find it now?"
- "What is the best piece of advice you ever got because you asked the right question?"
- "If you could ask an expert one question about your home or garden, what would it be? Let's turn it into a prompt together."

Quick check

1. Which of these is one of the four building blocks of a good prompt? a) Your password b) Where you live c) Your date of birth
2. True or false: telling the AI to "act as an expert" makes it an expert.
3. True or false: a chatbot remembers what you said earlier in the same conversation.

NOTE

Answers. 1. b) Where you live, in general terms such as your country or town. Never share passwords or your date of birth. 2. False. It is still the same AI, and it can still be wrong. 3. True. You can build on the first answer with follow-up questions.

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Your next step

OWN IT

Write your own "I am... I live... I want... Please..." prompt about something you genuinely want to know this week, and try it. For example: "On Saturday morning I will ask Gemini for a simple plan to start a small herb pot on my balcony in Gdańsk."

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Thinking critically about AI answers



The EVALUATE and DECIDE steps in depth, showing how to judge AI answers, spot mistakes and bias, and stay in charge of your own decisions.

Why this chapter matters most

Asking a good question is only half the work. The other half is deciding what to do with the answer. This is where you are the expert. Your experience, your common sense and your knowledge of your own life are things no computer has.

This chapter covers the **EVALUATE** and **DECIDE** steps of the G-PRO method. In the G-PRO board game these steps complete an AI Prompt card and earn the letter **P: Prompt Intelligence**. The same critical habit also underpins **R: Real-World Reasoning**, which players earn on Shopping cards by thinking through real-life choices.

The golden rule: AI suggests, you decide

AI is designed to be helpful and to produce an answer. It rarely says "I don't know". It will usually give you *something*, written smoothly and confidently. This is useful, but it means you must stay alert.

Think of AI answers as **a first draft or a suggestion from a helpful stranger**. Useful as a starting point. Never the final word.

REMEMBER

Following AI blindly is like signing a document without reading it. Take a moment. Read. Think. Then decide.

Common problems in AI answers

Made-up facts

AI can invent things: statistics, quotes, names of experts, studies, laws, book titles, phone numbers and website addresses. This is often called **hallucination**. The invented information can look completely real.

Be especially careful when an answer includes:

- exact numbers or percentages ("This saves 37% of your energy")
- names of specific laws, grants or schemes

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- names of organisations, studies or experts
- phone numbers, addresses or website links
- quotes from famous people

None of these are automatically wrong. But they are exactly the kind of detail AI sometimes invents, so check them before you rely on them.

TRY IT TOGETHER

Two Truths and an AI is a quick, lively icebreaker: spot the made-up statement hidden among true ones, and practise looking past a confident tone.

Out-of-date information

Prices, rules, grants, opening times and recycling rules change. An AI may give information that was true a few years ago but is not true now.

Wrong place

Much of what AI has learnt was written for certain countries. It might tell you about a support scheme in another country, or recycling rules from another region, or plants that do not grow in your climate. Always ask yourself: "Is this true *here*, where I live?"

Bias

AI learnt from text written by people, and people are not always fair. Answers can be biased in quiet ways. For example, AI might:

- assume older people are not able to learn new technology
- assume everyone lives in a large city, owns a car or has a big budget
- give advice that suits rich countries better than others
- present one opinion as if it were the only view
- recommend buying new products rather than repairing, sharing or doing without

Bias is not always obvious. A good question to ask is: **"Who might this answer not work for?"**

Missing the obvious

Sometimes AI gives a long list but leaves out the simplest, cheapest or most traditional solution, the one your grandmother would have known. Your experience is valuable here.

The EVALUATE checklist

Use these questions after every important answer. In a group, read the answer aloud first, then go through the questions together. The short version used in chapter 1 and in the board game is: Is it specific? Is it accurate? What did it miss? Do we know better? The checklist below extends it.

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Question	What to look for
Is it **specific**?	Does it answer *my* question, for *my* situation, or is it general?
Is it **accurate**?	Does it match what I know? Can I check it in another reliable place?
Is it **up to date**?	Could prices, rules or services have changed?
Is it **local**?	Is this true in my country and town?
What did it **miss**?	Is there an obvious idea, risk or cost it left out?
Is it **balanced**?	Does it show disadvantages as well as advantages?
Is it **fair**?	Does it make unfair assumptions about age, money or lifestyle?
Do **we know better**?	Does someone in the group, or someone I trust, have real experience?

You do not need to tick every box every time. For a recipe idea, a quick check is enough. For anything about health, money, law or safety, check carefully.

How to double-check

When something matters, check it in at least one other reliable place. Good places to check include:

- official websites of your government, your municipality, or your water or energy supplier
- your doctor, pharmacist, nurse or other health professional
- a consumer advice organisation in your country
- your bank, by calling the number on the back of your card or on an official letter
- a librarian, who can help you find trustworthy sources
- people with real experience: neighbours, friends, members of your group

You can also ask the AI itself to help you check, for example: "Which parts of your answer should I double-check, and with whom?" This can be useful, but it is not a replacement for checking.

DID YOU KNOW

In 2021, almost half of people aged 16 to 74 in the EU (47%) saw information on news websites or social media that they thought was untrue or doubtful. But only about a quarter (23%) checked whether it was true. (Source: Eurostat, 2021.)

WATCH OUT

If you ask a chatbot "Are you sure?", it may change its answer simply because you seemed to doubt it, even when the first answer was right. Or it may insist on a wrong answer. Its confidence tells you nothing. Check with a real source.

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Helpful or harmful? Some examples

AI suggestion	Helpful or not?	Why
"Turn off lights when you leave a room."	Helpful	Simple, free, true everywhere.
"Apply for the government's 500-euro heat pump grant."	Check carefully	Grants differ by country and change often. It may not exist where you live.
"Stop taking your blood pressure tablets during a heatwave."	Harmful	Never change medicine without a doctor's advice.
"Buy a new energy-efficient fridge to save money."	Partly helpful	May be true for a very old fridge, but buying new has a cost and an environmental impact. Repair or keeping a working appliance may be better.
"Pour cooking oil down the sink with hot water."	Harmful	Oil can block pipes and harm water treatment. Check local disposal advice.

The DECIDE step

After evaluating, you decide. There are several possible decisions, and all of them are acceptable:

1. **Use it.** The answer is good. You act on it.
2. **Adapt it.** Part of it is useful. You change it to fit your life.
3. **Check first.** It might be right, but you need to confirm with someone or somewhere reliable.
4. **Ask again.** The answer was poor. You improve your prompt and try again.
5. **Reject it.** The answer is wrong, unsuitable or unsafe. You trust your own judgement.

Saying "no" to the AI is a perfectly good outcome. It shows you are thinking critically, which is the whole point.

TRY IT TOGETHER

In Green Claims Court, the group holds a mock trial of a product's green claim, weighs the evidence and reaches its own verdict: the DECIDE step, acted out.

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Try it yourself

TRY THIS PROMPT

"I am 70 and live in a village in Estonia. Tell me about grants or financial support I could get to insulate my house."

EVALUATE: Does it name specific schemes? Are they really Estonian? Are they current? Did it tell you where to check? This is a perfect example of a question where AI may be out of date or invent details.

DECIDE: Write down any scheme names it gives, then check them on official government or municipality websites, or ask at your municipality office, before you take any action.

TRY THIS PROMPT

"Give me ten tips for older people to reduce their carbon footprint."

EVALUATE: Read each tip aloud. Do any tips make unfair assumptions about older people? Do any assume you own a car, a big house or have lots of money? What simple, traditional habits did it miss?

DECIDE: As a group, cross out tips that do not fit, and add one tip from your own experience that the AI missed.

FOR EDUCATORS

Prepare one AI answer in advance that contains a deliberate error, such as a wrong recycling rule for your country or an invented statistic. Let the group evaluate it without telling them there is a mistake. Then discuss what they noticed. Finding the mistake builds confidence and shows that their knowledge counts. Always reveal and correct the error at the end.

Key points from this chapter

- AI answers can sound confident and still be wrong, out of date, biased or not suited to where you live.
- Be extra careful with numbers, names, laws, grants, links and health or money advice.
- Use the EVALUATE checklist, and double-check important answers with reliable sources.
- In the DECIDE step, you can use, adapt, check, ask again or reject.
- Your experience and your group's knowledge are as valuable as the AI.

Talk about it

Ask someone from a different generation:

- "Where did you go to check if something was true when you were my age? Where do you go now?"

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- "Tell me about a time you were sure about something and it turned out to be wrong."
- "Which simple, old-fashioned solution do you think a computer would forget to suggest?"

Quick check

1. True or false: if you ask a chatbot "Are you sure?" and it keeps its answer, the answer must be right.
2. Which of these should you check most carefully in an AI answer? a) A general tip such as "turn off lights" b) The name of a grant, a law or a phone number c) A suggestion to read the answer aloud
3. In the DECIDE step, is "reject it" an acceptable choice? a) Yes b) No, you should always use the answer

NOTE

Answers. 1. False. Its confidence tells you nothing. Check with a real source. 2. b) Names of laws, grants, organisations, numbers and links are exactly what AI sometimes invents. 3. a) Yes. Saying "no" to the AI is a perfectly good outcome.

Your next step

OWN IT

Make a personal checking rule. For example: "Whenever an AI gives me advice about my health or money, I will not act on it until I have checked it with my pharmacist, my doctor or my bank."

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Staying safe and private online with AI



How to protect your personal information when using AI, and how to recognise scams, fake voices and fake messages.

Safety first, not fear first

Using AI chatbots is generally safe if you follow a few clear rules. Just as you would not shout your bank PIN across a busy market, there are some things you should never type into a chatbot. This chapter explains what to keep private, and how to spot the tricks that criminals use, including new tricks that use AI.

Where does your information go?

When you type a message into a chatbot, it is sent over the internet to the company's computers. Depending on the company and your settings, your conversations may be stored and may be read by staff or used to improve the AI. The companies publish privacy information explaining what they do, and many offer settings to limit how your data is used.

The simplest way to stay safe is this: **treat anything you type into a chatbot as if it could one day be read by a stranger.**

REMEMBER

If you would not write it on a postcard, do not type it into a chatbot.

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What never to share

Never share	Why
Passwords and PIN codes	Nobody, not even AI, needs these to help you.
Bank card numbers, account numbers, security codes	These can be used to steal your money.
National ID, passport or social security numbers	These can be used for identity theft.
Your full home address and date of birth together	Together, they can be used to pretend to be you.
Detailed health records, test results or diagnoses with your name	Health information is very private and sensitive.
Photos of documents such as ID cards, bank letters or prescriptions	They contain many private details at once.
Other people's private information	Respect your family's and friends' privacy too.

What you *can* share

You can share general information that helps the AI give useful answers without identifying you:

- your age group ("I am in my seventies")
- your country, region or town ("I live near Porto")
- your type of home ("a flat with electric heating")
- general health needs, without names or records ("I have arthritis in my hands, so I need simple tools")
- your interests and goals

If you want help with a letter or document that contains private details, you can replace them with placeholders. For example, write "[my name]" or "[account number]" instead of the real information, and fill them in yourself afterwards.

Scams that use AI

Criminals use technology too. AI makes some old tricks more convincing. Here are the main ones to know about.

Fake voices

AI can copy a person's voice from a short recording, such as a video posted online. Criminals use this to phone people and pretend to be a family member in trouble: "Grandma, it's me, I've had an accident, I need money urgently, please don't tell Mum."

The voice may sound real. The story is usually urgent and emotional, and asks for money, often by bank transfer, gift cards or cryptocurrency.

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What to do:

1. Stay calm. Do not send money while you are on the call.
2. Hang up.
3. Call your family member back on the number you already have for them, or call another relative.
4. If you cannot reach them, talk to someone you trust before doing anything.

TIP

Agree a family "safe word" or question that only your close family knows. If someone calls asking for money in an emergency, ask for the safe word. A criminal with a copied voice will not know it.

TRY IT TOGETHER

Scam Call Theatre is improvised phone-call theatre: one player is a smooth "caller", and the audience can shout "Freeze!" to coach the person answering to slow down, hang up and call back. It is surprisingly funny, and it sticks.

Fake videos and pictures

AI can create realistic photos and videos of things that never happened, sometimes called **deepfakes**. You may see a well-known person apparently recommending an investment, a miracle health product or a "government" payment. If a famous person seems to be promoting something on social media, be very suspicious. Real celebrities rarely sell investment schemes through adverts.

Fake messages and emails

AI helps criminals write messages without spelling mistakes, so the old advice "look for bad spelling" is no longer enough. Look instead for these warning signs:

- **Urgency.** "Act now", "your account will be closed today".
- **Unusual payment requests.** Gift cards, cryptocurrency, transfers to an unknown account.
- **Requests for codes or passwords.** Your bank will never phone, text or email to ask for your password, PIN or a one-time code sent to your phone.
- **Too good to be true.** Prizes, refunds, guaranteed investment returns.
- **Secrecy.** "Don't tell anyone."
- **Links and attachments** in unexpected messages.

TRY IT TOGETHER

In Real or Robot?, teams of detectives decide what is real and what is fake, and explain the clues that gave each one away.

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Fake AI apps and websites

Some websites and apps pretend to be famous chatbots. They may ask for payment details, show endless adverts or try to install harmful software. Use the official addresses (chatgpt.com, copilot.microsoft.com, gemini.google.com) or your device's official app store.

WATCH OUT

A chatbot will never phone you, send you a text message asking for money, or ask for your bank details. If something claiming to be an AI service does this, it is a scam.

If something goes wrong

If you think you have been scammed, or you have shared information you should not have:

- contact your bank immediately, using the number on your card or an official letter, and ask them to block your card or account if needed
- change any password you may have shared, and change it anywhere else you used the same one
- report the scam to the police; procedures differ by country, and your bank or local police station can tell you how
- tell someone you trust; being scammed is not your fault, and criminals are very skilled
- in an emergency, the number 112 works across the European Union

DID YOU KNOW

112 has been the single European emergency number since 1991. Calls to 112 are free from landlines and mobile phones in every EU country, and it works alongside national emergency numbers. (Source: European Commission.)

Good everyday habits

- Use a different, strong password for important accounts. A short sentence of several random words is easier to remember and harder to guess than a single word.
- Turn on two-step verification (a code sent to your phone) for email and important accounts. Ask a trusted person to help you set it up.
- Keep your phone, tablet and computer updated. Updates often fix security problems.
- Do not click on links in unexpected messages. Go to the official website or app yourself.
- Look in your chatbot's settings for privacy options, such as turning off chat history or opting out of your chats being used for training. Ask for help if you cannot find them.
- Check whether your chatbot has a "memory" or personalisation setting. It can save details you share and use them in later chats. You can usually view what it has saved, delete it or switch the setting off.
- Delete conversations you no longer need, if the app allows it.

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My safety check, to do with a trusted person:

- [ ] I have agreed a family safe word.
- [ ] My bank's official phone number is written next to my telephone.
- [ ] Two-step verification is on for my email.
- [ ] My phone, tablet or computer is up to date.
- [ ] I have looked at my chatbot's privacy and memory settings.

AI and the law

The European Union has a law on artificial intelligence, often called the AI Act. It entered into force in 2024. The first rules applied from 2025, and most rules apply from August 2026, with some later.

Among other things, it aims to make AI systems safer and more transparent, for example by requiring that people are told when they are interacting with certain kinds of AI or seeing AI-generated content.

You do not need to know the details, but it is useful to know that you have rights, for example to be told when you are talking to a chatbot, and that data protection law in the EU also protects your personal information.

Try it yourself

TRY THIS PROMPT

"I am 74. Explain in simple words how criminals use AI to copy voices for phone scams, and give me a short checklist of what to do if I get a suspicious call from a 'family member' asking for money."

EVALUATE: Is the checklist clear and practical? Does it include hanging up and calling back on a known number? Does it ask you to share any private information? (It should not.)

DECIDE: Choose a family safe word and share it in person with your close family.

TRY THIS PROMPT

"Here is a message I received. Does it show signs of a scam? 'Dear customer, your electricity will be disconnected today due to an unpaid bill. Pay now using this link to avoid disconnection.'"

EVALUATE: Did the AI point out the urgency and the link? Did it advise you to contact your supplier using official contact details? Remember that you removed any names or account numbers before pasting the message.

DECIDE: Never click the link. If you are worried, call your supplier on the number from an official bill.

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FOR EDUCATORS

Never ask participants to type real personal details during a session, even as an example. Use invented names and towns. A good role-play is the "urgent phone call": one person plays a caller with a sad story asking for money, and the group practises the steps: stay calm, hang up, call back on a known number.

Key points from this chapter

- Never share passwords, bank details, ID numbers, health records or photos of documents with a chatbot.
- Share general information only, and use placeholders for private details.
- AI can copy voices and create fake videos. Hang up and call back on a number you know.
- Urgency, secrecy and unusual payment requests are warning signs.
- Use only official websites and app stores.

Talk about it

Ask someone from a different generation:

- "What tricks did con artists use when you were young? Which ones do they use today?"
- "Has anyone ever tried to scam you, by phone, message or at the door? What made you suspicious?"
- "What should our family safe word or question be, and how will we remember it?"

Quick check

1. True or false: because criminals now use AI, scam messages often have no spelling mistakes.
2. Someone with your grandson's voice phones asking for money urgently. What should you do first? a) Send a small amount to be safe b) Stay calm, hang up and call him back on the number you already have c) Ask the caller for their bank details
3. True or false: it is fine to type your bank card number into a chatbot if you are asking for help with a payment.

NOTE

Answers. 1. True. So "look for bad spelling" is no longer enough. Look for urgency, secrecy and unusual payment requests. 2. b) Stay calm, hang up, and call back on a number you know. 3. False. Never share bank card numbers, account numbers or security codes with a chatbot.

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Your next step

OWN IT

Choose one safety action and name the day. For example: "On Sunday at lunch I will agree a family safe word with my son and daughter, and I will write the official phone number of my bank on a card next to my telephone."

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Water at home

Simple ways to use water wisely in the kitchen, bathroom and garden, and how AI can help you plan and check your water habits.



Why water matters

Clean water feels endless when it flows from the tap. But in many parts of Europe, droughts and water shortages are becoming more common, especially in summer. Treating water and pumping it to our homes also uses energy. And heating water is one of the biggest energy costs in many households.

So saving water, and especially hot water, helps the environment and often lowers your bills. Many of the best water habits are old ones: collecting rainwater, never leaving a tap running, reusing water from washing vegetables. Many of us learnt them from parents or grandparents.

This chapter matches the **Water** theme in the G-PRO board game.

Know your water use

Before changing anything, it helps to notice where you use water. In most homes, the main uses are:

- showers and baths
- the toilet
- washing clothes
- washing dishes
- cooking and drinking
- the garden or balcony plants

If you have a water meter, you can read it at the same time on two days to see how much you used in between. Your water bill may also show your usage. If you are not sure how to read your meter, your water supplier can explain.

There is also "hidden" water: the water used to grow, make and transport the things we buy.

DID YOU KNOW

Making a single pair of jeans takes around 7,500 litres of water, mostly to grow the cotton. That is about as much water as one person drinks in seven years. (Source: United Nations, UN News, 2019.)

TRY IT TOGETHER

Water Detectives is a guessing game about hidden water: teams guess how much water it takes to make everyday things, then find out who came closest.

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TIP

A simple way to check for a hidden leak: make sure no water is being used in the home, then look at your water meter. If the numbers keep moving, there may be a leak. Your water supplier or a plumber can help you find it.

In the bathroom

- **Shorter showers.** A short shower usually uses less water than a full bath. Try a song-length shower, or use a kitchen timer.
- **Turn off the tap** while you brush your teeth, shave or soap your hands.
- **Fix drips.** A dripping tap or a toilet that keeps running wastes water all day and night. Often a cheap washer or a small part is all that is needed.
- **Dual-flush toilets.** If your toilet has two buttons, use the smaller flush when possible.
- **Water-saving shower heads and tap aerators.** These small devices mix air with the water, so the flow feels strong while using less water. They are usually cheap and easy to fit.

WATCH OUT

Safety comes first. Do not make showers so short or water so cool that you feel rushed or cold, especially if you have balance problems. A grab rail and a non-slip mat matter more than a few litres of water.

In the kitchen

- **Wash vegetables in a bowl**, not under a running tap. Use the leftover water for plants.
- **Fill the kettle only with the water you need.** This saves water and energy.
- **Keep a jug of drinking water in the fridge** instead of running the tap until the water is cold.
- **Use the dishwasher only when full.** A modern dishwasher on a full load often uses less water than washing the same dishes by hand under a running tap. If you wash by hand, use a bowl.
- **Cook with less water.** Steaming vegetables, or using just enough water with a lid on the pan, saves water and energy and keeps more flavour.

Washing clothes

- Wait until you have a full load.
- Many clothes come out clean at lower temperatures such as 30°C. Lower temperatures use less energy.
- Use an "eco" programme if your machine has one. It may take longer, but it is usually designed to use less energy and water.
- Not everything needs washing after one wear. Airing clothes can be enough.

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In the garden and on the balcony

Gardens can use a lot of water in summer, especially in southern Europe.

- **Water early in the morning or in the evening**, when less water evaporates in the sun.
- **Water the roots**, not the leaves.
- **Collect rainwater** in a water butt or large container connected to a drainpipe, or simply in buckets. Cover it to stop mosquitoes breeding.
- **Mulch.** A layer of bark, straw, leaves or grass cuttings on the soil keeps moisture in.
- **Choose plants that suit your climate.** Plants that naturally grow in your region usually need less watering. Mediterranean herbs such as rosemary and thyme cope well with dry conditions.
- **Use a watering can rather than a hose** where possible, so you can see how much you use.
- **Reuse "grey" water** from washing vegetables for plants. Avoid using water with strong soaps or chemicals on edible plants.

REMEMBER

Rules about water use in gardens, such as hosepipe bans during droughts, differ by country and region. Check with your water supplier or municipality.

Protecting water quality

Saving water is one part. Keeping it clean is the other.

- **Never pour cooking oil or fat down the sink.** Let it cool, then put it in a container and dispose of it as your municipality advises. Some places collect used cooking oil for recycling.
- **Do not flush wet wipes, cotton buds or medicines.** Only toilet paper should go down the toilet. Return unused medicines to a pharmacy if your country offers this.
- **Use less cleaning product.** More is not always cleaner. Simple products such as vinegar and bicarbonate of soda can handle many cleaning jobs, though not all. Never mix cleaning products, especially bleach with other products.

Your water check

Tick what you already do. Choose one to start this week.

- [ ] I turn off the tap while I brush my teeth.
- [ ] I have checked my water meter for a hidden leak.
- [ ] I wash vegetables in a bowl and reuse the water on plants.
- [ ] I run the dishwasher or washing machine only when full.
- [ ] I water the garden early in the morning or in the evening.
- [ ] I never pour cooking oil or fat down the sink.

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Quick summary table

Action	Cost	Effort	Saves money?
Turn off the tap while brushing teeth	Free	Very low	Yes, a little
Fix a dripping tap	Low	Low to medium	Yes
Fit a water-saving shower head	Low	Low	Yes, also on heating
Wash clothes at lower temperatures	Free	Very low	Yes, on energy
Collect rainwater for the garden	Low to medium	Medium	Yes, if you pay for water
Mulch garden beds	Free to low	Medium	Yes

How AI can help

AI can help you plan, learn and troubleshoot. For example, it can:

- explain how to change a tap washer, step by step
- suggest drought-tolerant plants for your region
- help you calculate how much rainwater a container might collect
- help you write a message to your landlord about a leak

But AI cannot see your pipes, does not know local water rules for certain, and may give plant suggestions that do not suit your exact climate. Use EVALUATE and DECIDE.

Try it yourself

TRY THIS PROMPT

"I am 69 and I have a small garden in the Alentejo region of Portugal. Summers are very hot and dry. Suggest six plants that need little water, attract bees and can be planted in autumn. For each, say how much sun it needs."

EVALUATE: Do you know these plants? Do they really grow well in your area? Are any of them invasive or unsuitable? Ask a local garden centre or an experienced gardener in your group.

DECIDE: Choose one or two plants to try, and decide where you will put them.

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TRY THIS PROMPT

"My kitchen tap drips all the time. I live in a rented flat in Poland. Explain in simple steps what usually causes a dripping tap, whether I should try to fix it myself, and help me write a short, polite message to my landlord asking for a repair."

EVALUATE: Is the explanation clear and safe? Did it remind you to turn off the water supply before any repair? Does the message sound polite and clear? Is it right for a tenant to fix it, or is it the landlord's job where you live?

DECIDE: Decide whether to fix it yourself, ask a handy friend, or send the message to your landlord.

FOR EDUCATORS

Bring a bucket and a measuring jug to the session. Ask a volunteer to estimate how long it takes a dripping tap to fill a cup, or run a tap for ten seconds and measure the water. Real, hands-on numbers from your own room are more memorable than any statistic, and they avoid relying on figures that may not apply locally.

Talk about it

Ask someone from a different generation:

- "How did your family get, carry or save water when you were a child?"
- "Which water habit from the past would you bring back today?"
- "Where do you think most of the water in your day goes: the shower, the toilet, the washing, or the things you buy?"

Quick check

1. True or false: watering the garden in the middle of a sunny day is best, because the plants are thirstiest then.
2. What should you do with used cooking oil? a) Pour it down the sink with hot water b) Let it cool, put it in a container and dispose of it as your municipality advises c) Flush it down the toilet
3. True or false: a water-saving shower head can save money on heating as well as on water.

NOTE

Answers. 1. False. Water early in the morning or in the evening, when less water evaporates in the sun. 2. b) Some places collect used cooking oil for recycling. 3. True. Less hot water means less energy to heat it.

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Your next step

OWN IT

Choose one specific water commitment. For example: "From tomorrow, I will wash my vegetables in a bowl and use that water for my balcony tomatoes." Or: "This Saturday I will put a bucket under the drainpipe to collect rainwater for my garden."

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Energy at home

Practical ways to stay warm, cool and comfortable while using less energy, reading energy labels, and using AI to understand bills and options.



Comfort and savings together

Energy is what keeps us warm in winter, cool in summer, and lets us cook, wash and light our homes. Much of the energy used in European homes still comes from fossil fuels such as gas, oil and coal, which add to climate change. Energy prices can also rise sharply, as happened in 2022.

The goal of this chapter is not to make you cold or uncomfortable. For older people, staying warm in winter and cool in summer is important for health. The goal is to **use energy wisely**, so that you stay comfortable and spend less.

This chapter matches the **Energy** theme in the G-PRO board game.

WATCH OUT

Never put your health at risk to save energy. Cold homes can be dangerous for older people, especially those with heart or breathing conditions. If you are struggling to pay for heating, ask your energy supplier, your municipality or social services about support. Help exists in many countries, although schemes differ.

Heating: the biggest energy use

In colder parts of Europe, heating is usually the largest energy use at home.

DID YOU KNOW

Across the EU, heating our homes used 62.5% of all the energy households consumed in 2023. Heating water came second, at 15.1%. Together, that is more than three quarters. (Source: Eurostat, Energy consumption in households.)

- **Turn the thermostat down a little.** Even one degree lower can make a noticeable difference to your bill over a winter. Find a temperature where you are still comfortable. Your doctor or a health service can advise you on a safe minimum indoor temperature.
- **Heat the rooms you use.** If your radiators have individual valves, turn them down in rooms you rarely use, and close those doors.
- **Keep heat in.** Close curtains at dusk. Make sure furniture and long curtains are not covering radiators.

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- **Stop draughts.** Use draught excluders at the bottom of doors, and draught-proofing strips around windows and doors. These are cheap and easy to fit, but do not block air vents, which are needed for safety, especially if you have a gas appliance.
- **Dress warmly.** Several thin layers keep you warmer than one thick layer. Warm socks, slippers and a blanket on the sofa help.
- **Bleed radiators** if they are cold at the top. Ask someone to show you if you have not done it before.

A before-winter checklist:

- [ ] Curtains close easily and do not cover radiators.
- [ ] Draught excluders are in place, and air vents are left clear.
- [ ] Radiators are warm at the top (bled if needed).
- [ ] The boiler or gas appliance has been serviced.
- [ ] A carbon monoxide alarm is fitted if anything burns gas, oil, coal or wood.
- [ ] Warm layers, socks and a blanket are ready.

TIP

Have heating boilers and gas appliances serviced regularly by a qualified professional, and fit a carbon monoxide alarm if you have any appliance that burns gas, oil, coal or wood. This is about safety as well as efficiency.

Staying cool in summer

Heatwaves are becoming more frequent in many parts of Europe. Chapter 12 talks about heat and health in more detail. For energy:

- Close blinds, shutters and curtains on sunny windows during the day.
- Open windows at night and early morning, when the air outside is cooler, if it is safe to do so.
- Fans use much less electricity than air conditioning. In very high temperatures (above about 35°C), a fan alone may not prevent heat illness; see chapter 12.
- If you use air conditioning, close windows and doors, and set it to a moderate temperature rather than very cold.

Electricity: small habits that add up

- **Switch off lights** when you leave a room.
- **Use LED bulbs.** They use much less electricity than old-style bulbs and last much longer. Replace old bulbs when they fail.
- **Switch off fully.** Televisions, computers and other devices on "standby" still use some electricity. Unplug them or use a switchable power strip, but check the instructions first for devices that need to stay on, such as some internet routers or recorders.

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- **Kettle.** Boil only the water you need.
- **Cooking.** Put lids on pans, match the pan to the size of the hob, and use a microwave, slow cooker, pressure cooker or air fryer for small portions, as they often use less energy than a full oven.
- **Fridge and freezer.** Keep the fridge at 5°C or below (around 4°C is ideal) and the freezer at about minus 18°C. Defrost the freezer if ice builds up and keep the door seals clean. Let hot food cool first, but put leftovers in the fridge within about two hours.
- **Washing and drying.** Wash at lower temperatures with full loads, and dry clothes on a line or rack instead of a tumble dryer when you can.

TRY IT TOGETHER

The Standby Hunt is a detective walk round a home or venue: teams hunt for the little lights and glowing screens that show something is still using electricity on standby.

Understanding the EU energy label

New household appliances sold in the European Union carry an **energy label**. For most of them, such as fridges, washing machines, dishwashers, televisions and lamps, the label shows a scale from A (most efficient) to G (least efficient). These labels were updated to the new A to G scale from 2021, so a product that was once "A+++" may now show a lower letter, even though it is the same product.

A few product types, such as ovens and some heaters and air conditioners, still use the older scale with A+++.

The label usually also shows the estimated energy use per year in kilowatt hours (kWh). When comparing two appliances, the kWh figure can be more useful than the letter alone.

REMEMBER

The greenest appliance is often the one you already own. If your appliance works well, keeping and maintaining it is usually better than replacing it. When it does need replacing, the energy label helps you choose well.

Reading your energy bill

Energy bills can be confusing. Most show:

- the amount of energy you used, in kWh
- the price per kWh
- a fixed daily or monthly charge (sometimes called a standing charge)
- taxes
- whether the reading was **actual** (from your meter) or **estimated**

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If your bill is estimated, sending a real meter reading to your supplier can make it more accurate. You can ask an AI chatbot to explain the words on your bill, but **remove your name, address, account number and customer number** before sharing any text from it, and do not upload a photo of the whole bill.

Bigger changes

Some people may be able to make bigger changes, such as insulating the loft or walls, upgrading windows, installing solar panels or a heat pump, or switching to a green electricity tariff. These can make a big difference, but they cost money and are not right for every home or every budget.

Grants and support schemes for these changes exist in many European countries, but they **differ greatly and change often**. This is exactly the kind of topic where AI may give out-of-date or invented details. Always check with your municipality, a government energy advice service or an independent energy adviser.

WATCH OUT

Be careful of doorstep sellers and cold callers offering "free" solar panels, insulation or government grants. Take time, get several quotes, and check the company independently before signing anything.

How AI can help

AI can explain energy words, help you compare two appliances, suggest ways to keep warm on a budget, and help you write to your energy supplier. It cannot see your home, does not know your exact tariff, and may not know current local grants.

Try it yourself

TRY THIS PROMPT

"I am 77 and live alone in a two-bedroom flat in Tallinn with central heating. I feel the cold easily. Give me eight low-cost ways to keep warm and use less heating this winter, without putting my health at risk. Put them in order from cheapest to most expensive."

EVALUATE: Are the ideas safe for an older person? Does any idea suggest blocking ventilation or making the home very cold? Are the costs realistic? Do any ideas not fit a flat with central heating?

DECIDE: Pick the two cheapest ideas and decide when you will do them.

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TRY THIS PROMPT

"Explain in simple words what these terms on my electricity bill mean: kWh, fixed (standing) charge, estimated reading, unit rate. Then tell me three questions I could ask my supplier to check whether I am on a good tariff."

EVALUATE: Are the explanations clear and do they match your bill? Remember the AI does not know your supplier or your country's rules. Are the three questions useful?

DECIDE: Decide whether to send a meter reading or call your supplier with one of the questions.

FOR EDUCATORS

Bring an old-style bulb and an LED bulb, or photos of energy labels from different appliances. Ask the group to find the letter and the kWh figure. Then use an AI prompt to explain the label, and evaluate the answer together. Avoid quoting specific saving percentages unless you have a reliable, current, local source for them.

Talk about it

Ask someone from a different generation:

- "How did your home keep warm in winter when you were a child? Which room was the warmest?"
- "Which gadgets in your home are never really switched off?"
- "What would you find hardest to live without for one day: heating, hot water, the fridge or the internet?"

Quick check

1. True or false: a television on standby uses no electricity at all.
2. On the updated EU energy label for most appliances, which letter is the most efficient? a) A b) D c) G
3. True or false: you should block air vents to stop draughts.

NOTE

Answers. 1. False. Devices on standby still use some electricity. 2. a) A is the most efficient and G the least. 3. False. Do not block air vents. They are needed for safety, especially if you have a gas appliance.

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Your next step

OWN IT

Choose one energy commitment with a time. For example: "Every evening at dusk I will close my curtains to keep the heat in." Or: "This week I will switch off the television's power strip each night before bed."

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Nature and biodiversity close to home



How to support birds, bees, plants and other wildlife in your garden, on your balcony or in your neighbourhood, and how AI can help you learn about nature.

Nature on your doorstep

Biodiversity means the variety of life: all the plants, animals, insects, fungi and tiny organisms that live together and depend on each other. Healthy nature gives us clean air, fertile soil, pollinated fruit and vegetables, and places to rest and feel well.

Across Europe, many wild species have become less common because of loss of habitat, pesticides, pollution and climate change.

The good news is that small actions close to home really can help. A balcony pot of flowers, a corner of long grass, or a bird bath can become a little refuge for wildlife.

DID YOU KNOW

Around four in five (about 80%) of crop and wild flowering plant species in the EU depend, at least in part, on animals such as bees, hoverflies and butterflies to pollinate them. (Source: European Commission, EU Pollinators Initiative.)

Being in nature is also good for us. Many people find that time outdoors, even a short walk in a park, helps them feel calmer and more connected.

This chapter matches the **Nature** theme in the G-PRO board game.

In the garden

You do not need a big garden to help. Here are some ideas, from easiest to more involved.

- **Leave a wild corner.** Let a small area of grass grow long, and leave some fallen leaves or a small pile of logs. Insects, hedgehogs, frogs and birds use these places for food and shelter.
- **Mow less often.** Letting the lawn grow a bit longer allows small flowers such as daisies and clover to bloom, which feed bees.
- **Plant for pollinators.** Choose flowers that bees, butterflies and other insects visit. Open, simple flowers are usually easier for insects to use than very "double" flowers with many petals. Aim for something flowering from spring to autumn.

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- **Choose local plants.** Plants that naturally grow in your region are usually well suited to local wildlife and climate.
- **Avoid pesticides and weedkillers.** They can harm bees and other helpful creatures. Pull weeds by hand, or accept that a few "weeds" are actually wildflowers.
- **Provide water.** A shallow dish of water with a few stones for insects to stand on, or a bird bath, helps wildlife, especially in hot weather. Clean it regularly.
- **Make a home.** Bird boxes, insect hotels and a gap at the bottom of a fence for hedgehogs all provide shelter.
- **Compost.** Garden compost feeds the soil and its many tiny creatures. See chapter 10.
- **Use peat-free compost.** Peat bogs are important habitats and store carbon. Look for "peat-free" on compost bags.

WATCH OUT

Some garden plants can spread into the wild and cause harm to native nature. These are called invasive species. The list differs by country. Check with a local garden centre, nature organisation or your national environment agency before planting something unfamiliar.

On a balcony or windowsill

If you live in a flat, you can still help nature.

- Pots of herbs such as thyme, lavender, rosemary, oregano and chives are loved by bees and are useful in the kitchen.
- A window box of flowering plants can feed passing insects.
- A small dish of water helps insects and birds on hot days.
- Even a single pot of flowers, cared for well, makes a difference to a passing bee.

TRY IT TOGETHER

Pocket Garden & Seed Swap is a hands-on session where everyone makes something green to take home, and swaps seeds and growing tips across the generations.

TIP

When choosing plants at a garden centre, look for plants that have not been treated with insecticides. You can ask staff. Some shops label plants as suitable for pollinators.

In your neighbourhood

Nature is not only in private gardens. You can:

- join a community garden or allotment group

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- take part in a local litter-pick in a park or by a river
- support efforts to keep green spaces, trees and hedges in your town
- suggest wildflower areas to your municipality or residents' association
- share seeds and cuttings with neighbours

Citizen science: help scientists from your garden

Citizen science means ordinary people helping scientists by collecting information. For example, you might count the birds in your garden for one hour on a certain weekend, record when you first see a certain butterfly in spring, or photograph plants and insects with an app that helps identify them.

Many countries have national bird counts, butterfly surveys and other projects. Ask a local nature organisation, library or environmental group what is available in your area. This is a lovely activity to share with grandchildren.

A simple nature-watch to try this week:

- [ ] Sit by a window or in a park for 15 minutes.
- [ ] Note three living things you see or hear.
- [ ] Find out the name of one you did not know.
- [ ] Ask a local nature group whether there is a count you could join.

Identifying plants, birds and insects with AI

Some apps use AI to identify plants from a photo, or birds from their song. They can be fun and help you learn. But they are not always right, especially with blurry photos, unusual species or similar-looking plants.

WATCH OUT

Never eat a wild plant, berry or mushroom based on an app or chatbot identification. Mistakes can be very dangerous. Only eat wild food if an experienced, knowledgeable person has checked it in person.

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A table of easy nature actions

Action	Space needed	Cost	Helps
Shallow water dish	Balcony or garden	Free	Birds, bees and other insects
Pot of flowering herbs	Windowsill or balcony	Low	Bees and butterflies
Wild corner with long grass	Garden	Free	Insects, small mammals, birds
Leave fallen leaves in a corner	Garden	Free	Insects, hedgehogs, soil
Stop using pesticides	Any	Saves money	Bees and many other species
Bird box	Garden or wall	Low	Nesting birds
Join a bird count	Any	Usually free	Scientists and nature

How AI can help

AI can suggest plants suited to your area, explain what a creature needs, help plan a small wildlife garden, or describe how to build a simple insect hotel. It can be wrong about which plants are native or invasive in your exact region, and it can confuse similar species. Local knowledge matters a great deal here, and older gardeners often have exactly that knowledge.

Try it yourself

TRY THIS PROMPT

"I am 71 and have a small south-facing balcony in a flat in Wrocław, Poland. I want to help bees and butterflies. Suggest six plants that grow well in pots, flower at different times from spring to autumn, and are easy to care for. Tell me which ones are native to Central Europe."

EVALUATE: Are the plants really easy and suitable for pots? Does the flowering time cover spring to autumn? Are the "native" claims correct? Ask a local garden centre or gardener.

DECIDE: Choose two plants to start with next spring, and note them in your commitment log.

TRY THIS PROMPT

"Explain in simple steps how to make a small insect hotel from things I already have at home, such as old bamboo canes, pine cones and bits of wood. I have arthritis in my hands, so please suggest an easy method."

EVALUATE: Are the steps safe and simple? Do they need tools you do not have? Did the AI say where to place the insect hotel? Does someone in your group have experience to share?

DECIDE: Decide whether to make one alone or as a group activity, perhaps with grandchildren.

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FOR EDUCATORS

Take the group outside, even for ten minutes, to a park or garden near your venue. Ask each person to notice three living things. Back inside, use an AI prompt to learn more about one of them, and compare the AI's answer with what people saw and know. This connects the G (Green Literacy) and R (Real-World Reasoning) letters.

Talk about it

Ask someone from a different generation:

- "Which birds, insects or wild flowers did you see often as a child that you see less now?"
- "Where is your favourite green place nearby, and why?"
- "If we planted one thing together this season, what should it be?"

Quick check

1. True or false: you need a big garden to help nature.
2. Which kind of flower is usually easier for bees and other insects to use? a) Open, simple flowers b) Very "double" flowers with many petals c) Plastic flowers
3. True or false: it is safe to eat a wild mushroom if an app has identified it.

NOTE

Answers. 1. False. A balcony pot, a windowsill or a dish of water can help. 2. a) Open, simple flowers. 3. False. Never eat wild plants, berries or mushrooms based on an app or chatbot. Only eat wild food if an experienced person has checked it in person.

Your next step

OWN IT

Choose one nature commitment. For example: "This autumn I will leave the fallen leaves under the hedge in my garden for the hedgehogs." Or: "Next week I will put a shallow dish of water with stones on my balcony and keep it clean."

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Waste, repair and recycling

The circular economy in everyday life, from reducing waste and repairing things to upcycling, composting and recycling correctly.



Nothing wasted

Many of us learnt from parents or grandparents to throw very little away. Clothes were mended, jars were reused, leftovers became tomorrow's soup, and broken things were repaired. Today, this way of living has a modern name: the **circular economy**.

In a "linear" economy, we take resources, make products, use them and throw them away. In a **circular economy**, we keep products and materials in use for as long as possible, through reuse, sharing, repair and recycling. Waste becomes a resource.

Your experience is valuable here. You may have skills that younger generations want to learn.

This chapter matches the **Recycling** theme in the G-PRO board game.

The waste ladder

Not all actions are equally good. A helpful way to think about waste is a ladder. The higher you start, the better for the planet.

Step	What it means	Example
1. Refuse	Do not take what you do not need	Say no to free plastic bags, flyers and samples
2. Reduce	Use less	Buy only the food you will eat
3. Reuse	Use again, or pass on	Glass jars for storage, give clothes to a charity shop
4. Repair	Fix instead of replace	Sew on a button, mend a chair, repair a toaster
5. Upcycle	Turn into something new and useful	An old T-shirt becomes cleaning cloths
6. Recycle	Material is made into new products	Paper, glass, metal and some plastics
7. Dispose	Last option	General waste bin

Recycling is good, but it is near the bottom of the ladder. It still uses energy and not everything can be recycled. Refusing, reducing, reusing and repairing are even better.

Before you throw something away, ask:

- [ ] Do I really need to get rid of it?
- [ ] Could someone else use it?

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- [ ] Can it be repaired?
- [ ] Could it become something new?
- [ ] Which bin or collection point is right for it here?

DID YOU KNOW

In 2023, each person in the EU produced on average 511 kg of municipal waste, the rubbish collected from homes and similar sources. Just under half of it (48%) was recycled or composted. (Source: Eurostat, Municipal waste statistics.)

Repair: a skill worth sharing

Repairing saves money, keeps useful things out of the bin and can be very satisfying.

- **Clothes:** sewing on buttons, fixing hems, darning socks, patching knees.
- **Furniture:** tightening screws, gluing loose joints, re-covering a seat.
- **Small appliances:** some faults are simple, such as a loose knob or a blocked filter. A worn or damaged cable is a safety risk: stop using the appliance and have it repaired by a competent person or at a repair café.
- **Bicycles:** fixing punctures and adjusting brakes.

Repair cafés are community events where volunteers help people repair their items for free or for a small donation. They exist in many European towns. Ask at your library, community centre or town hall, or search online for one near you. You might go as a visitor, or offer to volunteer and share your skills.

TRY IT TOGETHER

Repair Café Relay is a hands-on skill swap built around small repair jobs, where older and younger people teach each other as they go.

In 2024 the European Union adopted a "right to repair" law (Directive (EU) 2024/1799). It applies since 31 July 2026 and makes repair easier for some products, such as washing machines and mobile phones: manufacturers must offer to repair them at a reasonable price and make spare parts available.

Details differ by product and country, so ask the seller or manufacturer.

WATCH OUT

Do not open or repair electrical appliances while they are plugged in, and do not attempt repairs on gas appliances or mains electrical wiring yourself. These need a qualified professional.

Upcycling ideas

Upcycling means turning something old into something new and useful. Some ideas:

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- old T-shirts and towels become cleaning cloths
- glass jars become storage for spices, buttons or leftovers
- tins become plant pots or pencil holders (cover sharp edges)
- old curtains become shopping bags or cushion covers
- wooden pallets become garden planters
- an old colander becomes a hanging basket

Composting

In many homes, a large part of the rubbish bin is food and garden waste. When food waste goes to landfill, it can produce methane, a gas that adds to climate change. Composting turns it into rich soil for plants instead.

Simple composting at home

1. Get a compost bin or make a simple heap in a corner of the garden.
2. Add a mix of "greens" (fruit and vegetable peelings, tea leaves, coffee grounds, fresh grass cuttings) and "browns" (dry leaves, cardboard, paper, small twigs).
3. Avoid meat, fish, dairy and cooked food in a simple garden heap, as they can attract animals.
4. Turn or mix it every few weeks to let air in.
5. After some months, the bottom will become dark, crumbly compost for your garden.

No garden? Many towns collect food waste separately; EU rules have required separate collection of bio-waste, or home composting, since 2024, but how it works differs from place to place. Some people use small indoor worm bins or other indoor systems. Ask your municipality what is available.

Recycling correctly

Recycling rules **differ greatly between countries and even between towns**. Bin colours, what goes in each bin, and whether items need to be washed all vary. A general guide:

- **Rinse** food containers lightly so they do not contaminate other recycling.
- **Keep things separate** that your municipality asks you to separate.
- **Do not put** batteries, electrical items, light bulbs, medicines, paint or chemicals in household bins. Most places have special collection points, often at shops or recycling centres.
- **Deposit return schemes.** Many European countries have deposit systems for drinks bottles and cans, where you pay a small deposit and get it back when you return the container. Check whether your country has one.
- **When in doubt**, check your municipality's guidance rather than guessing. Putting the wrong thing in recycling can spoil a whole batch.

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TRY IT TOGETHER

The Great Bin Sort is a team relay: players race to put everyday items in the right bin, then check their answers against the local rules.

REMEMBER

AI often gets local recycling rules wrong because they differ so much. Always check with your municipality, its website or app, or the information printed on your bins.

Sharing and borrowing

Not everything needs to be owned. You can:

- borrow tools from neighbours or a "library of things" if your town has one
- use the public library for books, newspapers, and sometimes films and games
- swap clothes, books, plants and seeds at community swap events
- give away things you no longer need to friends, neighbours or charities

Try it yourself

TRY THIS PROMPT

"I am 67 and live in a house with a small garden in Estonia, where winters are cold. Give me a simple step-by-step guide to start composting kitchen and garden waste. Tell me what to put in and what to keep out, and whether composting slows down in winter."

EVALUATE: Is the guide clear and practical? Does it suit a cold climate? Does it match what experienced gardeners in your group say? Did it suggest checking local food-waste collection?

DECIDE: Decide where your compost bin will go and what you will start with.

TRY THIS PROMPT

"I have a pile of old cotton bedsheets and some glass jars. Give me eight practical upcycling ideas that an older person can do with simple tools, and say which ones could be nice gifts."

EVALUATE: Are the ideas practical and safe? Do they need a sewing machine or tools you do not have? Which ideas are actually useful, rather than creating new clutter?

DECIDE: Choose one project to do this month, alone or with a friend or grandchild.

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TRY THIS PROMPT

"Where should I put used batteries, an old kettle and some out-of-date medicines in [your town and country]? Please tell me what I should check with my municipality."

EVALUATE: Did the AI give general advice and tell you to check locally, or did it make confident claims about your town? Check its answer on your municipality's website or by phone.

DECIDE: Put the items aside in a box and take them to the correct place.

FOR EDUCATORS

Organise a mini "repair and swap" at the end of a game session. Invite participants to bring one small item to mend, such as a sock, a button or a loose handle, and one item to swap. Those with repair skills can teach others. This is a natural intergenerational activity if younger people can join.

Talk about it

Ask someone from a different generation:

- "What was the last thing you repaired, and who taught you how?"
- "What did your family reuse that people throw away today?"
- "Which repair skill would you most like to learn, or to teach?"

Quick check

1. On the waste ladder, which is better for the planet? a) Recycle b) Repair c) Dispose
2. True or false: meat, fish and dairy are good things to add to a simple garden compost heap.
3. True or false: the EU "right to repair" law (Directive (EU) 2024/1799) has applied since 31 July 2026.

NOTE

Answers. 1. b) Repair. Recycling is near the bottom of the ladder, and disposal is the last option. 2. False. They can attract animals. 3. True. It makes repair easier for some products, such as washing machines and mobile phones.

Your next step

OWN IT

Choose one commitment from the waste ladder. For example: "This week I will take my broken lamp to the repair café at the library instead of buying a new one." Or: "From Monday I will keep a container by the sink for vegetable peelings and put them in the compost every two days."

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Shopping, food and spotting greenwashing



How to shop and eat more sustainably on any budget, understand eco-labels, and recognise misleading green claims.

Every purchase is a choice

Every time we buy something, we make a small choice about how it was made, how far it travelled, how it was packaged and what will happen to it when we are finished with it. Sustainable shopping does not mean buying expensive "eco" products. Very often, it means buying less, buying better, and wasting less. That usually saves money too.

This chapter matches the **Shopping** theme in the G-PRO board game.

Before you buy: four questions

Before buying something that is not food, ask yourself:

1. **Do I really need it?** Or do I already have something that does the job?
2. **Can I borrow, share or buy it second-hand?**
3. **Will it last?** Is it well made and repairable?
4. **What will happen to it at the end?** Can it be repaired, reused or recycled?

Second-hand shops, charity shops, markets and online second-hand platforms can offer good quality items at lower prices.

TRY IT TOGETHER

Two games for this chapter. In The Time Machine Shop, a sorting game with a story twist gets the group talking about how shopping has changed, and which old habits are worth bringing back. In Grandma's Recipe vs the Robot, a family recipe goes head to head with a chatbot's version of the same dish.

Food: good for you and for the planet

Food is one of the biggest ways our daily lives affect the environment. The good news is that eating more sustainably often means eating more healthily.

Waste less food

Throwing away food wastes the money, water, energy and land used to produce it.

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DID YOU KNOW

In 2024, about 129 kg of food was wasted for every person in the EU. More than half of it, around 69 kg per person, was wasted in our homes. (Source: Eurostat, food waste estimates for 2024.)

- **Plan meals** for the week and write a shopping list. Check the fridge and cupboards first.
- **Buy the amount you need.** Large packs and special offers are only good value if you use them.
- **Store food well.** Keep the fridge cold, put older food at the front and newer food at the back.
- **Freeze leftovers** and food that is close to its date. Bread, cooked meals, grated cheese and many fruits freeze well.
- **Cook with leftovers.** Soups, stews, omelettes, fried rice and fruit crumbles are classic ways to use them.
- **Understand date labels** (see below).

A five-minute food check before you shop:

- [ ] I looked in the fridge, freezer and cupboards.
- [ ] I moved older food to the front.
- [ ] I planned a meal for the leftovers.
- [ ] I wrote a shopping list.

"Use by" and "best before"

Label	Meaning	What to do
Use by	About safety. Usually on fresh foods like meat, fish and dairy.	Do not eat after this date, even if it looks and smells fine.
Best before	About quality. On foods like dried pasta, tins, biscuits and frozen food.	Often safe to eat after this date if stored well. Look, smell and taste carefully.

REMEMBER

For older people, food safety is especially important. Always respect "use by" dates, and follow storage instructions on the packet.

Eat more plants, seasonally and locally where you can

- **More vegetables, beans, lentils and whole grains.** Plant-based meals generally have a lower environmental impact than meals based on red meat. You do not have to give up meat. Many people simply have a few meat-free days each week.
- **Seasonal food.** Fruit and vegetables in season locally are often cheaper and tastier, and may need less heated greenhouse growing or long-distance transport.
- **Local markets.** Buying from local producers supports your community. But "local" is not automatically greener in every case, so it is one factor among several.

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- **Tap water.** In most of Europe, tap water is safe to drink and much cheaper than bottled water. If you are unsure about tap water where you live, check with your water supplier.

> **WATCH OUT**
>
> If you have a medical condition, take medication or follow a special diet, talk to your doctor, pharmacist or a dietitian before making big changes to what you eat. Do not rely on an AI chatbot for medical dietary advice.

Understanding labels

Real labels have clear rules behind them. There are two main kinds you may see in Europe.

Official EU labels are set by EU law. Public authorities check that products follow the rules.

Label	What it means
EU energy label	Shows the energy efficiency of appliances, for most products on a scale from A to G. See chapter 8.
EU Ecolabel (a flower symbol)	The EU's official label for products that meet environmental standards across their life.
EU organic logo (a leaf made of stars)	Food produced according to EU organic farming rules.

Independent certification labels are run by organisations that check products against their own published standards.

Label	What it means
FSC	Wood and paper from forests managed according to the Forest Stewardship Council's standards.
MSC	Wild fish and seafood from fisheries certified against the Marine Stewardship Council's standard.
Fairtrade	Products meeting Fairtrade standards for producers in lower-income countries.

There are also national labels in many countries. If you see a label you do not recognise, look it up. A real label will have an organisation behind it that explains its rules.

Spotting greenwashing

Greenwashing is when a company makes a product or itself look more environmentally friendly than it really is. It can be deliberate or careless, but either way it misleads customers.

Common greenwashing tricks

- **Vague words.** "Eco-friendly", "natural", "green", "planet-friendly", "conscious". These sound good but often mean nothing specific.

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- **Green pictures.** Leaves, trees, earth-toned colours and pictures of nature on packaging, with no real claim behind them.
- **Made-up labels.** A logo that looks official but was invented by the company itself.
- **One small good thing.** "Now with 10% recycled plastic!" on a product that is otherwise wasteful.
- **Irrelevant claims.** Boasting about being free from something that is banned anyway.
- **Hidden trade-offs.** Highlighting one green feature while ignoring bigger problems.
- **Offsetting claims.** "Climate neutral" or "carbon neutral" claims based mainly on paying for projects elsewhere, rather than reducing the product's own impact.

Since 27 September 2026, EU rules (Directive (EU) 2024/825) ban generic environmental claims such as "eco-friendly", "green" or "biodegradable" unless the company can prove them.

They also ban sustainability labels that are not based on a certification scheme or set up by a public authority, and claims that a product is "climate neutral" because of offsetting. How the rules are enforced varies by country, so your own critical eye still matters.

Greenwashing checklist

When you see a green claim, ask:

1. **Is it specific?** "Made with 50% recycled cardboard" is more meaningful than "eco-friendly".
2. **Is there proof?** Is there an official, independent label or clear information?
3. **Is it about the whole product, or just one part?**
4. **Is it relevant?** Does the claim actually matter?
5. **Does it sound too good to be true?**

TRY IT TOGETHER

In Green Claims Court, the group holds a mock trial of green claims, weighs the evidence and reaches its own verdict.

TIP

Remember the G-PRO method works on shops too. ASK the company or shop staff what the claim means. EVALUATE the answer. DECIDE for yourself.

How AI can help, and where it can mislead

AI can help you plan meals, use up leftovers, compare products, explain labels and examine green claims. But be aware:

- AI may repeat a company's own marketing as if it were fact.
- AI may confuse labels or invent details about certifications.

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- AI shopping recommendations may favour buying new things, rather than repairing or not buying at all.
- Some shopping websites and apps use AI to recommend products in order to sell more. That is not the same as advice in your interest.

Try it yourself

TRY THIS PROMPT

"I am 72 and live alone in a town in northern Portugal. In my fridge I have half a cabbage, three carrots, two eggs, some cooked rice from yesterday and a bit of cheese. Suggest two simple, healthy meals for one person that use these up, with no special equipment."

EVALUATE: Are the recipes realistic and safe? (Cooked rice should be cooled quickly, kept in the fridge and eaten soon. Does the AI mention this?) Do they need ingredients you do not have?

DECIDE: Cook one of the meals, or adapt it with your own experience.

TRY THIS PROMPT

"A bottle of shampoo says 'eco-friendly, natural and planet-positive' with a green leaf logo, but I cannot find any official certification on it. Using a greenwashing checklist, tell me which parts of this claim are vague and what I should look for instead."

EVALUATE: Did the AI identify the vague words? Did it mention looking for independent labels such as the EU Ecolabel? Did it make any claims about the brand that you cannot check?

DECIDE: Decide whether to buy it, choose another product, or simply keep using what you have.

FOR EDUCATORS

Bring real packaging from home: cleaning products, food packets, shampoo bottles. In pairs, participants look for green claims and labels and sort them into "specific and certified", "vague" and "not sure". Then use AI to check one "not sure" example together, and evaluate the AI's answer. This is a strong activity for the Shopping theme cards.

Talk about it

Ask someone from a different generation:

- "What did a weekly shop look like when you were young? What has changed most?"
- "What is your best trick for using up leftovers?"
- "Have you ever bought something because the packaging looked 'green'? Was it worth it?"

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Quick check

1. True or false: food past its "use by" date is fine to eat if it looks and smells fine.
2. Which of these is a sign of greenwashing? a) "Made with 50% recycled cardboard" b) "Eco-friendly" with a green leaf and no official label c) The EU Ecolabel flower
3. True or false: since 27 September 2026, EU rules ban generic claims such as "eco-friendly" unless the company can prove them.

NOTE

Answers. 1. False. "Use by" is about safety. Do not eat food after this date. "Best before" is about quality. 2. b) Vague words and green pictures with no proof behind them. 3. True, under Directive (EU) 2024/825. How the rules are enforced varies by country.

Your next step

OWN IT

Choose one shopping or food commitment. For example: "Every Sunday evening I will check my fridge and write a shopping list before I go to the market on Monday." Or: "Next time I see the word 'eco-friendly' on a product, I will look for an official label before buying."

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Living well and staying connected

Active and healthy ageing in a changing climate, including heatwave safety, community action, learning between generations and using AI to stay connected.



A good life is a green life

Sustainability is not only about water, energy and waste. It is also about people: our health, our friendships, our communities and the world we leave to younger generations. Many of the things that make life good as we grow older, such as walking, gardening, cooking fresh food, learning and spending time with others, are also good for the planet.

This chapter brings together healthy ageing, community and climate. It is also about the letter **O: Own It**, because the actions here are about the kind of life you choose to live.

Active, healthy and green

Some everyday activities are good for your health and the environment at the same time:

- **Walking** to the shops, a friend's house or the bus stop, instead of driving short distances.
- **Cycling**, if it is safe and comfortable for you, including on an adult tricycle or an electric bike.
- **Gardening**, which brings gentle exercise, fresh air and perhaps fresh vegetables.
- **Cooking fresh meals** with seasonal vegetables.
- **Public transport**, which can be cheaper for older people in many places. Ask your local transport provider about senior discounts.

REMEMBER

Start gently and choose activities you enjoy. If you have a health condition, ask your doctor or physiotherapist what kind and amount of activity is right for you.

Heatwaves and older people

Summers are getting hotter in many parts of Europe, and heatwaves are happening more often. Older people are more at risk from heat. The body may find it harder to cool down, the feeling of thirst may be weaker, and some medicines can affect how the body copes with heat.

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DID YOU KNOW

The World Health Organization estimates that heat causes more than 175,000 deaths a year in its European Region, and that heat-related deaths there rose by about 30% over the past two decades. (Source: WHO Regional Office for Europe, 2024.)

Before hot weather arrives

- Check the weather forecast regularly in summer. Many national weather services issue heat warnings.
- Ask your doctor or pharmacist whether any of your medicines affect how you cope with heat, and whether you need to do anything differently. Do not stop or change medicines yourself.
- Find the coolest room in your home.
- Find out whether your town opens cool public spaces during heatwaves. Libraries, shopping centres and some community centres may be cooler places to spend the hottest hours.
- Agree with a friend, neighbour or relative to check on each other during hot weather.

Heat-ready checklist:

- [ ] I know how to get heat warnings.
- [ ] I have asked my doctor or pharmacist about my medicines and heat.
- [ ] I know which room in my home is coolest.
- [ ] I know a cool public place nearby.
- [ ] Someone will check on me, and I will check on them.

During a heatwave

- **Drink regularly** throughout the day, even if you do not feel thirsty, unless your doctor has told you to limit fluids.
- **Keep your home cool.** Close curtains, blinds and shutters on sunny windows during the day. Open windows when it is cooler outside, at night or early morning, if safe.
- **Stay out of the sun** in the hottest part of the day, usually around the middle of the day and early afternoon.
- **Wear light, loose clothing** and a hat outdoors.
- **Cool your body** with cool showers, damp cloths on your skin, or a cool foot bath.
- **Eat light meals** with fruit and vegetables that contain plenty of water.
- **Check on others**, especially people who live alone.

WATCH OUT

Signs of serious heat illness can include confusion, dizziness, a very high body temperature, fainting, or hot skin (dry or sweaty). This can be an emergency. Call 112 or your local emergency number if someone shows these signs. Move them to a cooler place and cool them down while you wait for help. Do not give drinks to someone who is confused or unconscious.

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Cold, storms and other weather

For staying warm safely in cold weather, see chapter 8. Climate change can also bring heavy rain, floods and storms in some regions. It is sensible to:

- know how to receive local weather warnings, on the radio, television or your phone
- keep a small emergency kit with a torch, batteries, a battery radio, a list of important phone numbers, a supply of your medicines and some drinking water
- know who you would call for help, and who might need your help

Community action: you are not alone

Acting together is more powerful, and more enjoyable, than acting alone. Older people are often the backbone of local communities, as volunteers, organisers and keepers of local knowledge.

You might:

- join or start a community garden, repair café, swap shop or litter-pick
- volunteer with a local environmental or nature group
- join a G-PRO game group, a senior club or a learning circle
- take part in local consultations about parks, transport or green spaces in your town
- share your skills: cooking from leftovers, preserving fruit, sewing, woodwork, growing vegetables

Learning between generations

Intergenerational learning means people of different ages learning from each other. It works in both directions:

Older people can share	Younger people can share
Repairing, mending and making do	Using apps, phones and AI chatbots
Growing and preserving food	Finding information online
Cooking from scratch and using leftovers	Social media and video calls
Local history and knowledge of nature	New ideas about sustainability
Patience and perspective	Energy and enthusiasm

Try a "skills swap" with a grandchild, a neighbour's teenager or a local school: you teach them to sew on a button or plant seeds, and they help you set up a video call or try a new chatbot prompt.

TRY IT TOGETHER

In Memory Lane Interviews, younger and older people interview each other about their memories and turn the stories into a small home-made magazine (a zine).

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Staying connected with technology

Loneliness and isolation can affect health. Technology can help you stay in touch with people you love, but it works best alongside real-life contact, not instead of it.

- **Video calls** let you see family and friends far away.
- **Messaging groups** can keep a family, neighbourhood or club connected.
- **Online courses and talks** let you keep learning from home.

AI chatbots can be patient helpers for learning and practical questions. Some people also enjoy chatting with them. That is fine, but remember that an AI is not a friend, does not truly care about you, and cannot replace human company. If you feel lonely or low, reach out to people: family, friends, neighbours, a doctor, or local support services.

TIP

You can use AI to help you reach out to people. For example, ask it to suggest questions to ask a grandchild about their life, or to help you write a message inviting a neighbour for coffee. Then you send it in your own words.

Try it yourself

TRY THIS PROMPT

"I am 78 and live alone in a third-floor flat in a city in southern Poland with no air conditioning. A heatwave is forecast for next week. Give me a simple, practical plan to stay safe, in a short numbered list, and tell me what I should ask my pharmacist."

EVALUATE: Is the plan practical for a flat with no air conditioning? Does it include drinking water, keeping the flat cool and checking medicines with a professional? Does it suggest contacting someone who can check on you? Does it give any risky medical advice?

DECIDE: Choose who you will ask to check on you, and when you will speak to your pharmacist.

TRY THIS PROMPT

"I am a retired carpenter in a small town in Estonia. I would like to share my skills with young people and help my community become greener. Suggest five realistic ideas, and for each one, tell me who I could contact locally to get started."

EVALUATE: Are the ideas realistic for your town and your energy level? Are the suggested contacts real types of organisation in your area, such as the library, school or municipality? The AI cannot know specific local groups for certain.

DECIDE: Pick one idea and decide on a first small step, such as a phone call or a visit.

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FOR EDUCATORS

Consider inviting a group of young people, such as students from a local school, to a G-PRO game session. Mix the teams so each has older and younger players. Ask younger players to type the AI prompts while older players lead the EVALUATE discussion based on their life experience. Both sides learn, and the game becomes a bridge between generations.

TRY IT TOGETHER

End a session or a course with The Promise Tree, a creative closing ritual where everyone shares their own Own It promise and the group sees them grow together.

Talk about it

Ask someone from a different generation:

- "What did summers feel like when you were young? Do they feel different now?"
- "Who checks on you, and who do you check on?"
- "What is one skill you could teach me, and one I could teach you, this month?"

Quick check

1. True or false: during a heatwave you should only drink when you feel thirsty.
2. Which of these is a sign of serious heat illness that can be an emergency? a) Feeling a little warm b) Confusion, dizziness or fainting c) Wanting a cold drink
3. True or false: intergenerational learning means older people teaching younger people, and not the other way round.

NOTE

Answers. 1. False. Drink regularly through the day, even if you do not feel thirsty, unless your doctor has told you to limit fluids. 2. b) Call 112 or your local emergency number. 3. False. It works in both directions.

Your next step

OWN IT

Choose one commitment for wellbeing and connection. For example: "Before summer, I will agree with my neighbour Maria that we will check on each other every day during heatwaves." Or: "Once a month, I will teach my grandson a repair skill, and he will teach me something new on my phone."

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Quick reference

A ready-to-use prompt bank by theme, a glossary of AI and green words, and a personal Own It commitment log.



How to use this chapter

This final chapter is for quick use. Keep it next to your device, or bring it to a G-PRO game session. It has three parts:

- **A prompt bank**, with ready-made prompts for each theme. Change the words in square brackets to fit your own life.
- **A glossary**, explaining the special words used in this handbook.
- **An Own It log**, where you can record your personal commitments.

The method on one page

Step	Remember
ASK	I am [who]. I live [where]. I want [what]. Please [limits].
EVALUATE	Specific? Accurate? Up to date? Local? What did it miss? Do we know better?
DECIDE	Use it, adapt it, check it, ask again, or reject it. I decide, not the AI.

REMEMBER

Never share passwords, bank details, ID numbers, health records or photos of documents with a chatbot. Double-check health, money and legal advice with a qualified person.

Activities to try

The G-PRO Activity Kit turns this handbook into games, challenges and stories for groups. Many need no device at all. Start with How to use the Activity Kit.

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Activity	What kind	Goes with chapter
Two Truths and an AI	Icebreaker game · intergenerational	Thinking critically
Grandma's Recipe vs the Robot	Cooking challenge · intergenerational	Shopping, food and greenwashing
The Time Machine Shop	Sorting game · story	Shopping, food and greenwashing
Repair Café Relay	Hands-on · skill swap · intergenerational	Waste, repair and recycling
Real or Robot?	Detective game	Staying safe
The Great Bin Sort	Team relay · movement	Waste, repair and recycling
Green Claims Court	Role play · mock trial	Shopping, food and greenwashing
The Prompt Kitchen	Card game · unplugged, then tested	Writing good prompts
Scam Call Theatre	Improv · role play	Staying safe
The Standby Hunt	Detective walk · home audit	Energy at home
Water Detectives	Guessing game · hidden water	Water at home
Memory Lane Interviews	Story · interviews · zine · intergenerational	Living well and staying connected
Pocket Garden & Seed Swap	Making · nature · wellbeing	Nature and biodiversity
The Promise Tree	Closing ritual · creative	Living well and staying connected

Printable cards and sheets for the activities are in Printable cards and sheets.

Prompt bank

Replace the words in square brackets with your own details. After each answer, use EVALUATE and DECIDE.

Getting started

- "I am [age] and new to AI chatbots. Explain in simple words what you can and cannot help me with."
- "Explain [a word or idea] in simple words, in no more than five sentences."
- "I did not understand your last answer. Please explain it again more simply, with an everyday example."
- "What parts of your answer should I double-check, and with whom?"
- "Please answer in [your language]."

Thinking critically

- "What are the disadvantages of what you just suggested?"
- "Who might this advice not work for?"
- "Is this true in [your country], or only in some countries?"

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- "If you are not sure about any part of this, please say so clearly."

Staying safe

- "Explain the warning signs of a phone or text message scam, in a short checklist."
- "Here is a message I received, with personal details removed: [paste message]. Does it show signs of a scam?"
- "How can I make a strong password that is easy for me to remember? Do not ask me for my real password."

Water

- "I live in [type of home] in [region and country]. Give me five easy ways to use less water in the bathroom and kitchen."
- "Suggest plants that need little water for a [garden or balcony] in [region], and say how much sun each needs."
- "Explain in simple steps what usually causes a dripping tap and when I should call a plumber."
- "How can I collect and use rainwater safely for my garden in [region]?"

Energy

- "I am [age] and live in [type of home] in [country] with [type of heating]. Give me low-cost ways to keep warm and use less energy, without risking my health."
- "Explain these words on my energy bill in simple terms: [list words]. Do not ask for my account details."
- "Explain how to read the EU energy label on a [fridge or washing machine]."
- "How can I keep my [flat or house] cool in a heatwave without air conditioning?"

Nature

- "I have a [size] [garden or balcony] in [region]. Suggest plants that help bees and butterflies from spring to autumn."
- "How can I make my garden friendlier for [hedgehogs, birds, insects] with little money and effort?"
- "Explain how to make a simple insect hotel with materials I have at home."
- "What kinds of citizen science activities could I join from my garden or local park? Tell me what type of organisation to contact."

Waste, repair and recycling

- "Give me a step-by-step guide to start composting at home in [climate or country], including what to keep out."
- "How can I repair [item and problem]? Tell me when it is safer to ask a professional."
- "Give me upcycling ideas for [old item] that an older person can do with simple tools."
- "Where should I usually dispose of [batteries, old electrical items, medicines]? Tell me what to check with my municipality."

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Shopping and food

- "I have [list of ingredients]. Suggest two simple, healthy meals for [number of people] that use them up."
- "Make a simple weekly meal plan for one person, using seasonal vegetables in [country] in [month], with little food waste."
- "Explain the difference between 'use by' and 'best before' dates."
- "A product says '[green claim]'. Is this specific or vague? What official labels should I look for instead?"

Living well and staying connected

- "Give me a simple heatwave safety plan for an older person living alone in [type of home] in [region]. Tell me what to ask my doctor or pharmacist."
- "Suggest ways an older person in [town or country] could get involved in local green community activities."
- "Suggest some questions I could ask my grandchild about their life, to start a good conversation."
- "Help me write a short, friendly message inviting my neighbour for coffee."

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Glossary

AI words

Word	Simple meaning
Artificial intelligence (AI)	Computer software that can do tasks we usually connect with human thinking, such as understanding language or recognising pictures.
AI agent	An AI tool that can carry out a series of steps for you, such as searching websites or filling in a form, not just answer a question. Check carefully what it is allowed to do.
Algorithm	A set of step-by-step instructions that a computer follows.
App	Short for "application". A program on a phone, tablet or computer.
Bias	When an answer is unfair or one-sided, for example because of the information the AI learnt from.
Chatbot	A computer program you can have a written or spoken conversation with.
Data	Information, such as text, numbers, pictures or sounds.
Deepfake	A fake video, picture or voice recording made with AI to look or sound real.
Few-shot prompt	A prompt that includes one or more examples of the kind of answer you want, so the AI can copy the style or format.
Hallucination	When an AI invents information, such as false facts, names or links, and presents it as true.
Inference	The moment when an AI produces an answer to your prompt. Each answer uses some computing power and energy.
Large language model	The type of AI behind modern chatbots. It has learnt from huge amounts of text to predict and produce language.
Prompt	The question, request or instruction you give to an AI.
Privacy settings	Options in an app or account that control how your information is stored and used.
Token	A small piece of text, such as a short word or part of a word, that an AI reads and writes. Chatbots count length and limits in tokens.
Two-step verification	An extra security step, such as a code sent to your phone, when you sign in.
Voice assistant	AI on a phone or smart speaker that understands spoken requests.
Wake word	The word or phrase that makes a voice assistant start listening.

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Green words

Word	Simple meaning
Biodiversity	The variety of all living things in an area: plants, animals, insects, fungi and more.
Carbon footprint	The amount of greenhouse gases caused by a person, product or activity.
Circular economy	A way of living and producing where things are reused, repaired and recycled, so little is wasted.
Citizen science	Ordinary people helping scientists by collecting information, such as counting birds.
Climate change	Long-term changes in the Earth's climate, largely caused by human activity such as burning fossil fuels.
Compost	Rich soil made from rotted food and garden waste.
Deposit return scheme	A system where you pay a small deposit on a drinks container and get it back when you return it.
Energy label	The EU label on appliances showing how efficient they are, for most products from A to G.
Fossil fuels	Coal, oil and gas, formed over millions of years. Burning them adds to climate change.
Greenhouse gases	Gases, such as carbon dioxide and methane, that trap heat in the atmosphere.
Greenwashing	Making a product or company seem more environmentally friendly than it really is.
Grey water	Lightly used water from washing, which can sometimes be reused, for example on plants.
Invasive species	A plant or animal that spreads outside its natural area and harms local nature.
kWh (kilowatt hour)	The unit used to measure electricity use on bills and labels.
Mulch	A layer of material, such as bark, straw or leaves, placed on soil to keep moisture in.
Native plants	Plants that grow naturally in a region.
Pollinators	Bees, butterflies and other creatures that carry pollen between flowers, helping plants make fruit and seeds.
Repair café	A community event where volunteers help people repair their belongings.
Sustainability	Meeting our needs today without harming the ability of future generations to meet theirs.
Upcycling	Turning something old into something new and useful.

My Own It commitment log

A good commitment is **specific**, **named** and **realistic**. It says what you will do, when, and, if useful, with whom. Copy this table into a notebook, or print this page and fill it in.

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Date	Theme	My commitment (what, when, with whom)	How did it go?
	Water		
	Energy		
	Nature		
	Recycling		
	Shopping		
	AI and safety		
	Living well		

Examples of good commitments

Vague	Specific and named
"I will save water."	"From tomorrow, I will turn off the tap while I brush my teeth, morning and evening."
"I will use less energy."	"Every evening at dusk, I will close my curtains to keep the heat in."
"I will help nature."	"This Saturday, I will put a shallow dish of water on my balcony and refill it every two days."
"I will recycle more."	"On Monday, I will check my municipality's website to find where to take used batteries."
"I will shop better."	"Every Sunday, I will check my fridge and write a shopping list before going to the market."
"I will learn AI."	"On Thursday afternoon, I will try one prompt from this handbook with my granddaughter."

TIP

Share your commitment with someone: a friend, family member or your G-PRO group. Saying it out loud to another person can help you keep it. Check back together after a week or a month.

FOR EDUCATORS

At the end of each game session, give participants a few minutes to write one Own It commitment in their log. At the start of the next session, invite volunteers to share how it went. Celebrate small successes, and treat difficulties as useful learning, not failure.

OWN IT

Look back through this handbook and choose the one commitment that matters most to you right now. Write it in your log with today's date. Then tell one person about it.

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