

Welcome to Our Guide to Artificial Intelligence

At **Epsom & Ewell u3a**, many of our members enjoy exploring new ideas, technologies, and ways to make everyday life easier. Recently, there has been a growing interest in **Artificial Intelligence (AI)** and how it can be used for learning, writing, research, and general curiosity.

It's natural to have questions such as:

- *How do I access AI safely?*
- *Do I need to pay for it?*
- *Is it secure to use?*
- *Is it difficult to learn?*

These are sensible questions. The internet today contains both very useful services and potential scams, so it's important to understand how to use new technology safely.

This guide explains:

- What AI is
- How to access **ChatGPT** safely
- The difference between the free and paid versions
- What it can be used for
- What precautions to take

Many people initially feel unsure about AI. However, once they understand it, they often find it **surprisingly useful and easy to use**.

Quick Start: Using ChatGPT

Here's a simple way to start using ChatGPT:

1. Open your web browser (e.g., **Google Chrome**, **Microsoft Edge**, or **Safari**).
2. Go to **chatgpt.com**.
3. Click **Sign Up** and enter your email and a password.
4. Confirm your email by clicking the link sent to you.
5. Log in and start typing questions in the chat box.

Tip: Start with a simple question like:

"Explain how the internet works in simple terms."

This will help you see how the AI responds and begin exploring safely.

What Is ChatGPT?

ChatGPT is an AI program that allows you to **have a conversation with a computer**. You type a question or request, and it generates a written response.

It is commonly used for:

- Asking questions
- Learning about history, science, or hobbies
- Writing letters and emails
- Planning trips or activities
- Summarising information

Think of it as a **helpful digital assistant available at any time.**

Free vs Paid Versions

Free Version

- Suitable for most users
- Allows questions, conversations, and simple writing help
- Ideal for beginners

Paid Version: ChatGPT Plus

- Monthly subscription
- Access to more powerful AI models
- Faster responses during busy periods
- Additional features

The free version is usually enough to get started and explore AI safely.

20 Useful Things ChatGPT Can Help With

Writing & Communication

1. Write letters
2. Draft emails
3. Improve the wording of text
4. Check spelling and grammar

Learning & Curiosity

5. Explain historical events
6. Simplify complicated topics
7. Help with family history research
8. Translate languages

Travel & Days Out

9. Suggest day trips
10. Recommend walking routes
11. Provide background info on places
12. Suggest museums or attractions

Hobbies & Interests

13. Gardening advice
14. Cooking tips and recipes
15. Photography help
16. Learn about art, music, or literature

Everyday Practical Help

17. Explain technology
 18. Help with spreadsheets (**Microsoft Excel**)
 19. Generate ideas for talks or presentations
 20. Summarise long documents
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10 Questions That Impress First-Time Users

1. “Explain how the internet works in simple terms.”
2. “Tell me an interesting story about the history of Southwark.”
3. “Write a polite letter complaining about a noisy neighbour.”
4. “Suggest three interesting day trips from London by train.”
5. “Explain Artificial Intelligence in language a 12-year-old would understand.”
6. “How can I recognise a scam email?”
7. “Write a short humorous story about a retired detective.”
8. “Summarise this paragraph in three sentences.”
9. “Plan a two-hour historical walk around central London.”
10. “Tell me five unusual facts about the Tower of London.”

Tip for live demos: Ask the audience what question they would like to try. It makes the session interactive and engaging.

Common Concerns About AI

“AI is dangerous.”

ChatGPT is a computer program that responds to questions. It cannot act independently or access your computer.

“AI will steal my information.”

ChatGPT does not require personal information. Simply avoid sharing sensitive details.

“AI will replace human thinking.”

AI is a tool, like a calculator or search engine. Human judgment remains essential.

“AI is always correct.”

AI can make mistakes. Important facts should always be verified.

“AI is too complicated.”

Modern AI tools are designed to be simple. If you can type a question, you can use it.

Top 10 Safety Tips for AI

1. Use the official website (chatgpt.com).
 2. Keep your password private.
 3. Do not share bank or financial details.
 4. Avoid giving out private personal information.
 5. Remember AI can make mistakes.
 6. Do not rely on AI for medical or legal advice.
 7. Watch out for scams and suspicious sites.
 8. Keep your computer secure and updated.
 9. Ask someone if you are unsure about something.
 10. Start slowly with simple questions to build confidence.
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Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Do I have to pay to use ChatGPT?

No. The free version is sufficient for most purposes. ChatGPT Plus is optional.

Do I need to install anything?

No. ChatGPT runs directly in your browser.

Can ChatGPT access my computer or files?

No. It only responds to the questions you type.

Can I trust everything it says?

No. Always verify important information.

Is my personal information safe?

Yes, if you follow basic online safety rules.

What can I use ChatGPT for?

Writing, learning, planning trips, summarising text, generating ideas, and more.

Am I too old to use AI?

Absolutely not. Anyone who can type a question can use ChatGPT.

Sensible Cautions

- Treat AI as a helpful guide, not an authority.
- Never share passwords, bank details, or private info.
- Double-check important information.
- Stick to the official website.

Final Thoughts

Artificial Intelligence is becoming part of everyday life, like email, online shopping, or online banking. Used carefully, **ChatGPT** can help you learn new things, save time, and explore ideas.

The best way to understand it is simply to try it. Start with simple questions and see how useful AI can be.

Safety Notice (Highlighted Panel for Website)

Important: ChatGPT is a safe and helpful tool if used sensibly. Always use the official website, never share passwords or financial details, and treat responses as guidance rather than absolute fact.

This combined document is **ready to place on a website**. It includes:

1. A **welcoming introduction**
2. A **Quick Start panel**
3. A full **guide to free and paid versions**
4. **20 useful ways ChatGPT can help**
5. **10 impressive questions for beginners**
6. **Common concerns about AI**
7. **Top 10 safety tips**
8. **FAQ section**
9. **Final thoughts and safety notice**