

Start Here

AI Explained Like I'm Your Mom: The 30-Minute Starter Packet
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What this is

This is a short, plain-English starter packet for normal adults who want to understand AI without becoming "AI people."

You do not need to know computer science. You do not need to install anything fancy. You do not need to learn a pile of weird vocabulary.

The goal is simple: in about 30 minutes, you should understand what AI tools like ChatGPT are, what they are useful for, what not to trust, how to avoid the most obvious mistakes, and how to try a few lower-risk everyday prompts.

What is included

This packet includes five files:

1. START-HERE.md — this file.
2. ai-explained-like-im-your-mom-30-minute-starter-guide.md — the main plain-English guide.
3. chatgpt-everyday-ai-cheat-sheet.md — a quick do/don't reference for everyday AI use.
4. ai-scam-deepfake-warning-checklist.md — warning signs and verification steps for suspicious messages, calls, images, and videos.
5. everyday-ai-prompts-sheet.md — copy-and-paste prompts you can use right away.

Who this is for

This is for you if:

- You keep hearing about AI and feel behind.
- You want to understand what ChatGPT and similar tools actually do.
- You want practical examples, not hype.
- You are worried about scams, deepfakes, privacy, or accidentally trusting a computer too much.
- You want a few safer ways to try AI in ordinary life or work.

This is not for developers, AI hobbyists, prompt engineers, or people trying to automate their whole business this weekend. It will not teach you coding, advanced automation, business transformation, or expert AI tools. Those people already have plenty of noisy material aimed at them.

How to use this packet

Recommended order:

1. Read ai-explained-like-im-your-mom-30-minute-starter-guide.md.
2. Skim chatgpt-everyday-ai-cheat-sheet.md.
3. Read ai-scam-deepfake-warning-checklist.md before you trust anything urgent, emotional, financial, or surprising.
4. Try two or three prompts from everyday-ai-prompts-sheet.md.

Do not try to memorize everything. The point is to get oriented. Keep the cheat sheet and scam checklist handy.

The most important rule

Do not paste sensitive information into AI tools.

That includes passwords, Social Security numbers, bank information, medical details, legal problems, private family details, confidential workplace information, tax documents, client information, or anything you would not want sitting in a company's computer system.

AI can be useful. It is not your priest, lawyer, doctor, banker, therapist, or vault.

Educational-only note

This packet is general educational information. It is not legal, financial, medical, cybersecurity, fraud-prevention, employment, or compliance advice. It cannot guarantee that you will avoid scams or make perfect decisions.

Use it as a practical starting point. For serious questions, especially involving money, health, law, work, safety, or personal security, slow down and talk to a qualified person you trust.