

LEARNING MADE EASY



# ChatGPT™

for  
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Take a peek under  
the ChatGPT™ hood

Learn to write prompts that  
produce excellent results

Explore how AI affects  
knowledge industries

**Pam Baker**

Author of *Decision Intelligence  
For Dummies*



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by Pam Baker

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# ChatGPT™ For Dummies®

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# Introduction

It's easy to think of ChatGPT as a one-off phenomenon or a hot new trend given its abrupt and sensational emergence on the public scene. But this technology is a harbinger of immense and permanent change. Whether it ultimately succeeds or fails, ChatGPT is changing how we work, play, live, and interact with the world around us. It's also paving the way for the advancement of AI as a permanent fixture and influencer in the human experience.

ChatGPT is evolving fast, making it difficult for anyone to understand and follow its rapid progression. This book is intended to help bring you up to speed on how it works and how to use it. Yes, ChatGPT will continue to advance after this book is published, but you'll still have a working knowledge of the technology that you can build upon while continuing to learn as changes occur. Further, you'll have skills that will help you adapt to and use other AI models, some inevitably far more advanced as time marches on.

If you feel some unease about AI in general and ChatGPT in particular, know that your gut reaction is common and not entirely unwarranted. This technology will most certainly change the nature of work and how your job is done. But also know that AI is not going to take jobs away from most people. Someone good at using AI will. Be that someone!

You can learn this. It's not as hard as you think!

## About This Book

Although you can find lots of content about ChatGPT on YouTube and in blogs, articles, social media, and elsewhere, this book is one of the first, if not *the* first, comprehensive text on the topic, especially at the beginner or introductory level. And make no mistake. Outside of a select group of AI scientists, everyone is a beginner when it comes to ChatGPT. Take comfort in knowing that you're learning alongside millions of other people worldwide.

If you're already experimenting or working with ChatGPT, you'll find several ways in this book to leverage what you already know and new things to incorporate in your efforts to get even more out of ChatGPT.

Note that the discussion of ChatGPT includes explanations and mentions of GPT models that undergird ChatGPT but are also used as the AI models for applications other than this chatbot.

References to ChatGPT-like models may or may not mean that they are technically similar to ChatGPT. For example, competing models may or may not have large language models (LLMs) as their foundation, as ChatGPT does, but they are still referred to as "similar" here because their user interface and function closely resemble those of ChatGPT. In this way, you can more easily compare and understand the various generative AI chatbots on the market without getting dragged through the technical weeds.

Some web addresses break across two lines of text. If you're reading this book in print and want to visit one of these web pages, simply type the address exactly as it's noted in the text, pretending the line break doesn't exist. If you're reading this as an e-book, you have it easy; just click the web address to be taken directly to the web page.

## Foolish Assumptions

This book is written for anyone seeking to understand and use ChatGPT in their work and daily life as well as to prepare for inevitable changes that ChatGPT will introduce.

I make certain assumptions about the book's audience as a practical matter. For instance, I assume that you possess no understanding or a limited understanding of ChatGPT. I assume also that you have at least a basic level of comfort and skill in working with computing devices, browsers, and web applications. Finally, I also assume, as it is with every *Dummies* book, that you are smart and pressed for time and therefore want all meat and no fluff in a fast and easy read. I hope I've hit that mark for you.

## Icons Used in This Book

Occasionally you'll come across symbols in the margins of this book. Their purpose is to point you to important information along the way. Here are what these symbols indicate:



TIP

This icon points to tips and tricks you may want to use to make your work with ChatGPT easier, faster, more efficient, or simply more fun.



REMEMBER

This icon highlights information of particular importance in successfully understanding or using ChatGPT.



WARNING

This icon warns you of a stumbling block or danger that may not be obvious to you until it's too late. Please make careful note of warnings.

## Beyond the Book

In addition to the material in the print or e-book you're reading right now, this product also comes with an access-anywhere cheat sheet. To get to the cheat sheet, go to [www.dummies.com](http://www.dummies.com) and type **ChatGPT For Dummies cheat sheet** in the Search box. You'll find helpful user tips, info on where to access ChatGPT in its many forms, pointers on prompt writing, and a few words of advice on how to make it deliver the output you need precisely the way you need it.

## Where to Go from Here

This is a reference book, so you don't have to read it cover to cover unless you want to know ChatGPT in more detail. Also feel free to read the chapters in any order. Each chapter is designed to stand alone, meaning you don't have to know the material in previous chapters to understand the chapter you're reading. Start anywhere and finish when you feel you have all the information you need for whatever task is at hand.

However, if your aim is to get up and running with ChatGPT quickly, you should read Chapter 3, which is on writing prompts, to guide you through the process. Be sure to also read Chapter 5, where you are warned of several issues you absolutely need to know before you start using ChatGPT.

Chapter 2 shows you how ChatGPT works, which gives you more insight into what it's doing after you enter a prompt. And, if you're worried that AI will take your job or how it will affect your private life, there's good news for most of us in Chapters 6 and 8.

Feel free to open ChatGPT and experiment with each new thing you learn in this book as you go. Many find it easy to follow along this way. But however you choose to learn and experiment with ChatGPT, you'll likely find yourself catching on quickly. That's the beauty of this class of AI — it's very easy to use. The hardest part is stretching your own imagination to allow yourself to reach further with each new project.

## IN THIS CHAPTER

- » Trying out ChatGPT
- » Comparing ChatGPT and search engines
- » Understanding ChatGPT
- » Choosing between ChatGPT and ChatGPT Plus
- » Grasping how ChatGPT is a harbinger of profound change
- » Conquering the fears that ChatGPT conjures

# Chapter 1

## Introducing ChatGPT

ChatGPT is a huge phenomenon and a major paradigm shift in the accelerating march of technological progression. It's a large language model (LLM) that belongs to a category of AI (artificial intelligence) called *generative AI*, which can generate new content rather than simply analyze existing data. Additionally, anyone can interact with ChatGPT in their own words. A natural, humanlike dialog ensues.

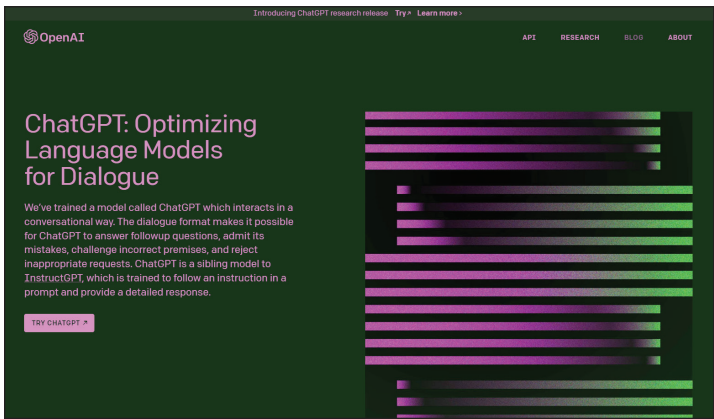
In this chapter, you learn where and how to access ChatGPT, why you should bother, the pros and cons of using it, and whether common fears are justified or wildly off base.

ChatGPT is often directly accessed online by users at <https://chat.openai.com/>, but it is also being integrated with several existing applications, such as Microsoft Office apps (Word, Excel, and PowerPoint) and the Bing search engine. The number of app integrations seems to grow every day as existing software providers hurry to capitalize on ChatGPT's popularity.

# Setting Up an Account

One way to set up an account and enter your first prompt is to simply do the following:

- 1. Go to <https://openai.com/blog/chatgpt>.**  
Returning users can go straight to <https://chat.openai.com/> and skip the rest of the steps.
- 2. Click the Try ChatGPT button, as shown in Figure 1-1.**



**FIGURE 1-1:** Go here to check out ChatGPT.

- 3. Follow the prompts to create your OpenAI account.**  
After you have registered for an OpenAI account, you can choose the free ChatGPT account or select the premium ChatGPT Plus subscription for a \$20 monthly fee. Having an OpenAI account gives you access to other OpenAI models too, such as DALL-E and DALL-E 2.
- 4. When ChatGPT opens, enter your prompt (question or command) in the prompt bar.**  
ChatGPT generates a response.
- 5. If you want to continue the dialog, enter another prompt.**



6. **When you're finished, rate the response by clicking the thumbs up or thumbs down icon.**

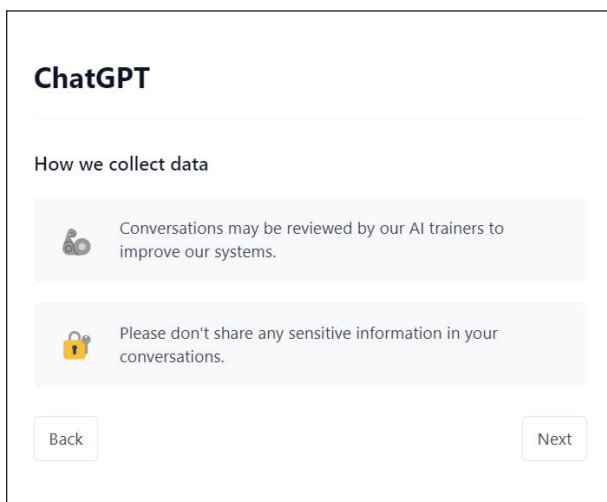
Doing so helps fine-tune the AI model.

7. **Log out or simply close the window in your browser.**



WARNING

OpenAI's team can see any information you enter in the prompt and the entire conversation that ensues. This data may be used in training other AI models. See the disclosure in Figure 1-2. When using ChatGPT, don't disclose anything you want to keep private or confidential.



**FIGURE 1-2:** The ChatGPT data collection disclosure on the OpenAI website.

## Comparing ChatGPT, Search Engines, and Analytics

ChatGPT is just one example, albeit the most publicly well-known, of a generative AI model. It represents a huge jump in AI capabilities.

Previously, *ranking systems* with more limited AI enablement would sort and rank information they found buried in massive datasets. You'll recognize examples of these ranking systems: search engines such as Google and Bing, recommendation engines