THE PROOF SERIES

AI Proof

ChatGPT and Voice Assistants Made Simple



FOR SENIORS

PROUDLY CANADIAN

John Marshall



PROUDLY CANADIAN

FREE SAMPLE CHAPTER

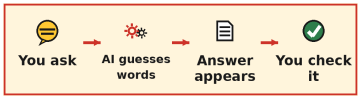
By John Marshall

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FIRST THINGS FIRST

What AI Really Is

Artificial intelligence sounds grand, but at heart it is a very fast guesser. This page gives you the one simple picture that makes everything else click.



1. Think autocomplete — When your phone suggests the next word as you type, that is tiny AI. Big AI like ChatGPT does the same thing, only with whole paragraphs.

2. Trained on mountains of text — AI studied billions of pages — books, websites, manuals — and learned which words usually follow which. That is the whole trick.

3. It predicts, not thinks — AI does not understand like you do. It predicts the most likely next words. Often brilliant, sometimes hilariously wrong.

4. You are the judge — Because AI guesses, your job is to check. Enjoy the speed, keep your common sense switched on.

TALE

Ruth, 76, asked a chatbot for her grandmother's jam recipe and got a perfect-sounding answer — for a jam her grandmother never made.

"It lied so politely," she laughed, "I almost forgave it."

! AI chatbots always answer in full sentences and never get tired, embarrassed, or impatient. Ask the same question three ways if you like.

Take care: AI's confidence is not the same as correctness. Treat every important answer as a helpful draft, not a final verdict.

FIRST THINGS FIRST

Where AI Already Lives in Your Home

Before you ever type a question, AI is already working for you. Spotting it in familiar places makes the new stuff feel far less strange.

Phone › Speaker › Email › Chatbot

1. Your phone's suggestions — Word predictions, autocorrect, and spam filtering on your phone are all small AI helpers you already trust daily.

2. Your voice assistant — Siri, Alexa, and Google Assistant use AI to understand your spoken words and answer out loud.

3. Your email and photos — Junk-mail filters and the feature that finds "photos of the dog" are AI quietly tidying up.

4. New: the chat window — Chatbots like ChatGPT are simply the newest roommate — one you can actually have a conversation with.

TALE

Frank, 81, realized his TV had been recommending shows for years.

"I've been bossed around by AI since 2019," he said, "and I never even sent it a thank-you note."

!

If you have ever said "Hey Siri" or let Netflix suggest a movie, you have already used AI. You are not starting from zero.

Take care: Old helpers and new chatbots share one rule: convenient does not mean infallible. Keep your wits about you with both.



FIRST THINGS FIRST

AI Is Not a Person (and Not Magic)

It chats like a friend and never sleeps, so it is easy to forget: there is nobody in there. A clear picture keeps expectations healthy.

No feelings › No memory › No secrets › Just a tool

1. No feelings inside — AI does not feel happy, hurt, or proud. When it says “Great question!” it is being polite by pattern, not by heart.

2. No memory between chats — Close the window and start fresh, and it forgets you entirely. Each conversation starts with a blank slate.

3. No secret wisdom — It knows only what it was trained on, and training data goes stale. It cannot know your street, your doctor, or today's news unless you tell it.

4. A tool, like a calculator — You would not ask a calculator for life advice. Use AI the same way: brilliant at drafting, lousy at deciding.

TALE

TRUE STORY

Doris, 79, thanked her chatbot for a lovely poem and it replied “You're welcome!” She told her bridge club, “At least someone appreciates my manners.”

! Being kind to AI costs nothing and harms nothing — but don't share secrets with it just because it feels friendly.

Take care: Loneliness can make a chatbot feel like company. It is fine for fun, but real people — family, friends, neighbours — are the real connection.

FIRST THINGS FIRST

AI Versus a Search Engine

Google finds pages; a chatbot writes answers. Knowing which helper to grab saves you from using a hammer to stir soup.

Need a fact? › Search it › Need words? › Ask AI

1. Search finds, AI writes — Google hands you a list of websites. ChatGPT writes you a fresh answer in sentences, like a helpful neighbour explaining.

2. Use search for facts — Need today's weather, a phone number, or store hours? A search engine gives you the real, current source.

3. Use AI for drafting — Need a letter rewritten, ideas brainstormed, or a tricky paragraph simplified? That is chatbot territory.

4. Use both together — Ask the chatbot for ideas, then verify the important bits with a search. They make a fine team.

TALE

E STORY

Stan, 74, asked AI for his pharmacy's hours and drove over on a holiday Monday.

The search engine — consulted too late — knew it was closed. "Now I ask Google for hours and AI for poetry," he says.

!

Chatbots sometimes invent web addresses that look real but lead nowhere. For anything you must click, use a search engine instead.

Take care: If an AI answer includes a phone number or address, double-check it with a search before dialing or driving anywhere.

FIRST THINGS FIRST

What AI Does Well

AI has genuine talents worth knowing. Play to its strengths and you will wonder how you managed the paperwork without it.

Draft › Simplify › Brainstorm › Explain

1. Drafting words — Letters, emails, lists, and summaries pour out in seconds. You supply the ideas; it supplies the sentences.

2. Simplifying the complicated — Paste in a confusing paragraph and ask “explain this simply.” Medical forms and insurance letters become readable.

3. Brainstorming ideas — Stuck for a gift, a trip, or a dinner menu? AI throws out twenty ideas while you sip your tea.

4. Patient tutoring — Ask it to explain anything — tides, taxes, tennis scoring — as many times as you like. It never sighs.

TALE

STORY

Evelyn, 82, had AI draft her strata council complaint and then rewrote it “with feeling.” The council fixed the hallway light in a week.
“Teamwork,” she says.

!

AI is a wonderful first-draft machine. Let it do the heavy lifting, then add your judgment, your stories, and your voice.

Take care: Even at its best, AI is a starting point. Read everything before you send or sign it — your name goes on it, not its.

FIRST THINGS FIRST

What AI Cannot Do

Every tool has edges. Knowing where AI stops keeps you from leaning on it where a human is needed.

Can't know you › Can't verify › Can't answer for it › Humans decide

1. It can't know you — It doesn't know your health, your finances, or your family unless you tell it — and some things you should never tell it.

2. It can't verify truth — It cannot ring up an expert or check a primary source. It can only sound convincing about what it generated.

3. It can't take responsibility — If its advice goes wrong, there is no one to complain to. The decision — and the consequence — stays yours.

4. It can't replace people — Doctors, lawyers, accountants, and grandchildren exist for a reason. AI assists; humans decide.

TALE

E STORY

George, 77, asked AI whether to sell his stocks and got a confident "yes." His advisor — a human who knows his pension — said "absolutely not." George kept the stocks. "And the advisor," he adds.

!

A good rule of thumb: if the answer affects your money, your health, or your legal rights, ask a qualified human being.

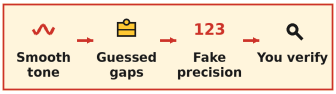
Take care: Never let AI make a decision you wouldn't make without it. If you need a second opinion, make it a human one.



FIRST THINGS FIRST

Why AI Sounds Confident Even When Wrong

The sneakiest thing about AI is its tone: always sure, even when guessing. Once you see the trick, you will never be fooled the same way.



1. Confidence is its default — AI writes every answer — right or wrong — in the same smooth, certain voice. Doubt is not in its vocabulary.

2. It fills gaps with guesses — When it doesn't know, it invents something plausible rather than admitting ignorance. Experts call these hallucinations.

3. Details make lies believable — A made-up fact with a precise date and a quoted expert sounds true. Precision is a style, not proof.

4. Your skepticism is the filter — Read AI answers the way you'd listen to a charming stranger's story: entertained, but verifying before repeating.

TALE

STORY

Irene, 75, asked for the capital of Australia and got a flawless paragraph about Sydney — wrong city, perfect grammar.

"It should run for office," she said. (It's Canberra, by the way.)

!

You can ask "how sure are you?" or "what's your source?" Sometimes AI will honestly admit it's uncertain — believe that version.

Take care: The more confident an AI answer sounds about something important, the more carefully you should check it. Confidence is cheap; truth is not.

FIRST THINGS FIRST

Is AI Safe for Me to Try?

A fair question deserves a straight answer: yes, with a few sensible guardrails. This page is your safety briefing before the fun begins.

Stay curious › Stay private › Stay official › Stay free

1. Yes — for everyday curiosity — Asking questions, drafting notes, and brainstorming ideas with AI is as safe as using a search engine.

2. Keep private things private — Never type your SIN, banking details, passwords, or full address into a chatbot. Fun questions only.

3. Use official apps and sites — Get ChatGPT from chatgpt.com or your phone's official app store. Copycat apps may charge or snoop.

4. Start free — The free version handles everything in this book. Don't pay for anything until you know you love it.

TALE

STORY

Walter, 80, was nervous for a week before trying.
His first question: "Why is the sky blue?" His second, an hour later: "Write a limerick about my cat." He's been hooked ever since.

!

Trying AI costs nothing and risks nothing as long as you treat it like a public conversation: share nothing you wouldn't say aloud in a café.

Take care: Beware of ads or emails offering "new AI software" to download. Real chatbots run in your browser or an official app — no download needed.

TALKING TO CHATGPT

Opening ChatGPT for the First Time

Your first visit takes about two minutes. Here is the whole journey, door to desk, with nothing skipped.

Visit site › Sign up free › Find the box › Say hello

1. Go to the address — In your web browser, type chatgpt.com into the address bar and press Enter. That is the official front door.

2. Make a free account — Click Sign up and use your email address. Choose a password you don't use elsewhere, and you're in.

3. Meet the empty box — You'll see a simple box that says “Ask anything.” That box is the entire machine. Everything starts there.

4. Say hello — Type “Hello, I'm new here” and press Enter. Congratulations — you've just used AI.

TALE

STORY

Betty, 78, stared at the empty box for a full minute, then typed “Are you there?” It answered, “Yes, I'm here!” She jumped.

“It was like the lamp talking back,” she says.

!

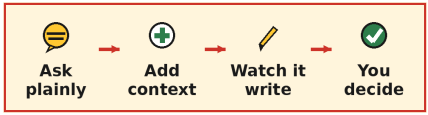
On a phone or tablet, you can install the official ChatGPT app from the App Store or Google Play instead of using the browser.

Take care: Only sign up at chatgpt.com or in the official app. Lookalike sites with extra words in the address may be fakes after your email.

TALKING TO CHATGPT

Asking Your First Question

There is no secret syntax. You ask the way you'd ask a knowledgeable friend — then watch what comes back.



1. Type plainly — Write the question exactly as you'd say it: “What is a good easy dinner for two?” Plain words work best.

2. Add a little context — One detail transforms answers: “...for two seniors who don't like spicy food” beats a bare question.

3. Press Enter and wait — Words will stream out over a few seconds. That streaming is normal — it's thinking out loud.

4. Read, don't worship — Enjoy the answer, then decide what you think of it. You're the editor; it's the eager intern.

TALE

E STORY

Clarence, 83, asked “Why do my knees ache when it rains?” and got a clear, gentle explanation.

“Better bedside manner than my last three doctors,” he chuckled — then still asked his doctor.

!

There is no limit on questions in the free version for normal use. Ask ten follow-ups in a row if you like — it won't get tired.

Take care: Avoid questions with personal details (“I live at...”). Keep your questions about the world, not about your private life.

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