



Apprendre à étudier (English)

Compagnon 2 : AI guide prompt & check

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Introduction

One of the objectives of this guide is to show how to use AI effectively.

The coloured sections indicate the level of risk (moderate** or **high**) associated with using AI for each learning habit. They also highlight recommendations and warnings to promote a thoughtful and responsible use of AI.**

Structure

- Example prompt
- How to verify the answer
- Where to verify

The prompts are generic and can be used with a variety of large language models (LLMs).

How can you verify an AI-generated answer?

Before using information provided by AI, ask yourself the following questions:

- ☐ Is it consistent with my course content?
- ☐ Can I find this information in my lecture notes, textbook, or another reliable reference?
- ☐ Do the examples, figures, or references actually exist?
- ☐ Does this answer match my instructor's expectations?
- ☐ Can I explain this answer in my own words?
- ☐ If this answer were incorrect, would I be able to recognize it?
- ☐ If I am unsure, have I asked a qualified person to confirm it?

Habit 1 – Plan your study time

Moderate risk: AI suggestions remain general and should be adapted to your own context, goals, and your instructors' recommendations.

Example prompts

I am a student in [discipline]. I have these courses, these deadlines, and about X hours available each week. Can you help me create a realistic study schedule and explain your reasoning?

or

Here are my deadlines for the next three weeks. Help me build a balanced study schedule that also includes breaks and review sessions.

Always check that...

- the dates match your actual schedule;
- the proposed workload is realistic for you;
- the schedule leaves room for unexpected events;
- your priorities reflect your course requirements.

Where to verify?

- your syllabus;
- course calendars and deadlines;
- Moodle or your institution's learning platform;
- your personal calendar and real-life constraints.

Habit 2 – Take effective notes

Moderate risk: Be cautious when sharing course materials with commercial LLMs. Do not upload confidential or copyrighted content without permission. Always begin with your own analysis and independent attempts before using AI.

Example prompts

Here are my lecture notes. Compare them with this course document and identify only the important ideas that seem to be missing, without changing what I have written.

or

Rewrite this paragraph using simpler language without adding any new information.

Always check that...

- the information appears in your course materials;
- no new concepts have been invented;
- the proposed examples are real;
- the terminology matches that used in your course.

Where to verify?

Compare the information with:

- your lecture notes;
- lecture slides and official course documents;
- recommended textbooks or chapters;
- lecture recordings or podcasts (if available).

If in doubt, ask your instructor or teaching assistants.

Habit 3 – Solve exercises

High risk: Always start with your own analysis and independent attempts before using AI.

Be aware of AI hallucinations. AI-generated answers may contain mistakes, inaccurate information, or non-existent references.

Example prompts

I'm stuck at this step of my exercise. Please don't give me the solution. Give me only a hint or a question that will help me move forward.

or

Here is my reasoning. Can you identify my first mistake without solving the rest of the exercise?

Always check that...

- the hint helps you think instead of giving the answer;
- the suggested method matches the one taught in your course;
- you are able to complete the exercise on your own.

Where to verify?

Compare with:

- worked examples from your course;
- previous exercise sets;
- exercise sessions;
- explanations provided by teaching assistants.

If several methods exist, make sure you use the one expected in your course.

Habit 4 – Learn from your mistakes

High risk: Always begin with your own analysis before consulting AI.

Be aware of AI hallucinations.

Example prompts

Here is my answer and the official solution. Help me understand why my reasoning is incorrect without simply repeating the solution.

or

What mistakes occur most often in my work? What can I do to avoid them?

Always check that...

- the explanation actually matches your mistake;
- you can explain the mistake in your own words;
- you can successfully complete a similar exercise without assistance.

Where to verify?

- official solutions;
- grading rubrics (when available);
- comments from instructors or teaching assistants;
- similar course exercises.

Habit 5 – Review effectively

Moderate risk: Be cautious when sharing course materials with commercial LLMs.

Example prompts

Test me orally on this chapter. Ask one question at a time and wait for my answer before continuing.

or

Create ten questions at the same level of difficulty as a practice exam for this chapter.

Always check that...

- the questions cover the course learning objectives;
- the level of difficulty matches previous exams;
- the proposed answers are correct;
- you can answer without looking at your notes.

Where to verify?

Prioritise:

- course learning objectives;
- previous exams (when available);
- sample exams provided by instructors;
- lists of key concepts shared during the semester.

Habit 6 – Seek help when needed

High risk: Be aware of AI hallucinations. Always verify the information provided.

Example prompts

Explain this concept in three different ways: a simple explanation, a more detailed explanation, and a concrete example.

or

Compare this explanation with the one from my course. What are the differences?

Always check that...

- the explanation is consistent with your course materials;
- the cited references actually exist;
- the notation matches that used in your course;
- if in doubt, ask your instructor or teaching assistants.

Where to verify?

Always prioritise institutional resources:

- official course materials;
- recommended textbooks;
- library databases and electronic resources;
- library subject guides;
- teaching assistant office hours;
- instructor office hours;
- learning support services.

For academic work, also rely on:

- peer-reviewed journal articles;
- university textbooks;
- recognised scholarly journals in your discipline.

Habit 7 – Manage stress

High risk: AI is neither a friend nor a healthcare professional. It can provide general information and support but cannot replace human relationships or professional help.

Example prompts

I have several deadlines this week. Can you help me organise my tasks into a realistic work plan?

or

Suggest a study plan to prepare gradually for this exam over the next two weeks.

or

Suggest some breathing techniques to help me regain my focus.

Always check that...

- the plan is realistic;
- it includes breaks and rest;
- it does not encourage excessive work;
- if you are struggling, you also seek support from your institution.

Where to verify?

For well-being and health advice, rely on:

- student support services;
- counsellors or coaches;
- university health services;
- healthcare professionals.

AI can provide general advice but should never replace professional support.

Habit 8 – Reflect on your learning habits

Moderate risk: AI is not an educational expert or your academic supervisor. Its suggestions remain general and should be adapted to your own context, goals, and your instructors' recommendations.

Example prompts

Here is how I usually study and my results. What do you think are my strengths, and which study habits could I improve?

or

Here is my schedule, my notes, and my exercise results. Help me identify two or three habits I could improve this semester.

Always check that...

- the advice fits your own situation;
- it is consistent with your instructors' recommendations;
- you try the suggestions for several weeks before deciding whether they work for you;
- you evaluate their effectiveness based on your actual progress.

Where to verify?

Compare AI suggestions with:

- your progress throughout the semester;
- feedback from instructors and teaching assistants;
- discussions with classmates;
- the *Learning to Study* book and MOOC;
- study skills workshops offered by your institution.