

Cheat Sheet: Improve prompts with context

The **Situation** sets the context: who, where and when. Without it, AI has to guess; with it, you get more relevant answers.

Why it matters

AI cannot guess who you are writing for or under which circumstances you need something. A single extra detail (“*for Year 7 students*”, “*with 15 minutes cooking time*”) can turn a generic answer into a useful one.

START in focus

S – Situation → the context of your request (who, where, when)

T – Task → what should AI do?

A – Attention points → constraints (length, tone, rules)

R – Role → from which perspective does AI answer?

T – Type of output → in what form should the answer come?

👉 In this cheat sheet we zoom in on the **S of START**, often called *context* in AI literature.

Example

❌ “Write a summary.”

✅ “Write a summary for a history teacher (**Situation**).”

Tips

1. Start with **who** or **for whom** (*for a pupil, for a colleague*).
2. Add **where** or **when** (*classroom, exam, holiday, cooking time*).
3. Keep the Situation short: one sentence is often enough.

✔ Checklist

- ✔ Who → audience (student, colleague, customer)?
- ✔ Where → setting (classroom, workplace, daily life)?
- ✔ When → circumstances (exam, deadline, weekend)?

Note: things like tone, length or style belong to **Attention points (A)**, not to **Situation**.

Try this

Write 2 prompts:

- Without Situation: *“Create a cleaning schedule.”*
- With Situation: *“Create a cleaning schedule for a small flat (**Situation**) that can be done in one evening.”*

👉 Compare: which answer is more useful?

Also try

- *“Explain maths (Task) to a group of children waiting in a rollercoaster queue (**Situation**).”*
- *“Write a menu (Task) for a medieval castle banquet (**Situation**).”*
- *“Make a training plan (Task) for an astronaut preparing for a mission to Mars (**Situation**).”*

Learn & apply

“A good cheat sheet is not a copy, but your own version. The most valuable learning comes from making one yourself!”

👉 **Tip:** Pick a topic and note down 3 possible Situations (e.g. audience, place, moment). Build your own cheat sheet around them.

Discover more

- 🎧 Podcast – Episode 1: [Prompting: Don't Ask, Don't Get!](#)
- 🔗 More cheat sheets on prompting: symbio6.nl/en/sheets