



Step-by-Step Reasoning Cheat Sheet

A simple guide to asking AI to think clearly and transparently.

WHAT IT IS

Chain-of-Thought is a way of asking the model to explain its reasoning step-by-step before giving a final answer. It improves clarity, transparency, and depth.

WHEN TO USE IT

- when the problem is complex
- when you need to understand the reasoning
- when depth matters more than brevity
- when learning a new topic
- when evaluating options
- when the initial answer feels shallow

WHEN NOT TO USE IT

- for short summaries
- for simple rewrites
- for short creative tasks
- for tweets, captions, or brief outputs
- when you want a fast, concise result

CORE PROMPT TEMPLATES

These templates produce clear, simple Chain-of-Thought responses.

1. Basic Version

"Think through this step-by-step and explain your reasoning clearly before giving the final answer."

2. Short Steps Version

"Explain your reasoning in short, simple steps. Keep each step to one sentence."

3. Outline-First Version

"First outline your reasoning in bullet points. Then give the final answer."

4. Teaching Version

"Walk through your thinking as if you're teaching a beginner. Then provide your final conclusion."

5. Diagnostic Version

"Explain how you arrived at this answer. Then list any uncertainties or assumptions you made."

Question → Steps → Reflection (optional) → Final Answer

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