

OBSIDIAN RISING PRESENTS

The Friendly Guide to *AI*

No jargon. No hype. Just a clear, honest look at what artificial intelligence is, what it can do, and what you should know before using it.

START HERE

What Is AI, Really?

Artificial intelligence is software that can process language, recognize patterns, and generate responses in a way that feels conversational. When you type a question into ChatGPT or Claude, you are using AI.

It does not think. It does not feel. It predicts what words should come next based on the massive amount of text it was trained on. That prediction is often remarkably useful, but it is not understanding. Knowing the difference helps you use it well and avoid trusting it blindly.

The Pros and the Cons

The Pros

- + Saves time on repetitive tasks like writing emails, summarizing documents, and organizing information
- + Available 24/7 and never gets tired, impatient, or distracted
- + Makes technology more accessible to people who are not technical
- + Can translate languages, assist with learning, and explain complex topics in simple terms
- + Helps individuals and small teams do work that used to require large staffs or expensive software
- + Getting better rapidly and becoming more affordable every month

The Cons

- Can generate information that sounds confident but is completely wrong (called "hallucinations")
- Trained on data from the internet, which includes biases and inaccuracies
- Does not truly understand context, emotion, or nuance the way a person does
- Raises real concerns about job displacement in certain industries
- Privacy risks when you enter personal or sensitive information
- Can be used to create misleading content, deepfakes, and scams

How AI Helps Society

AI is not just a business tool. It is already making a meaningful difference in areas that affect everyday life.



Healthcare

AI helps doctors detect diseases earlier, read medical images faster, and identify drug interactions. In some cases, it catches things a human might miss.



Education

Students use AI as a tutor that can explain things in different ways until it clicks. Teachers use it to build lesson plans and differentiate instruction.



Accessibility

AI powers screen readers, real-time captioning, sign language translation, and voice-to-text tools that make the world more navigable for people with disabilities.



Emergency Response

AI helps predict natural disasters, optimize evacuation routes, and coordinate relief efforts. It processes data faster than any team of humans could during a crisis.



Research

Scientists use AI to analyze massive datasets, model climate change, and accelerate breakthroughs in fields from medicine to materials science.



Community Services

Nonprofits and public agencies use AI to match people with housing, food assistance, legal aid, and mental health resources more efficiently.

The Risks You Should Know About

AI is powerful, but it is not neutral and it is not perfect. Here are the risks worth understanding before you start relying on it.

Privacy

Anything you type into a free AI tool may be stored, read, or used to train future models.

Never enter passwords, Social Security numbers, financial info, or other sensitive data.

Misinformation

AI can generate text that reads like a fact but is entirely made up. Always verify important information from a second source before acting on it.

Bias

AI learns from human-generated data, which contains biases around race, gender, age, and more. Its outputs can reflect and amplify those biases without warning.

Deepfakes

AI can generate realistic fake images, audio, and video. This technology can be used to spread false information or impersonate real people.

Over-Reliance

The more convenient AI becomes, the easier it is to stop thinking critically. AI should assist your judgment, not replace it.

Job Disruption

AI is changing what certain jobs look like. Some roles will shift, some will be created, and some will shrink. Staying informed gives you the best chance to adapt.

7 AI Tools You Should Know

These are the major AI platforms available today. All of them offer free access to get started. Try a few and see which one feels right for you.



ChatGPT

by OpenAI

The most widely used AI assistant. Great for writing, answering questions, brainstorming, and quick everyday tasks. Easy to pick up even if you have never used AI before.

Best for: General use, writing, and getting started

[TRY IT FREE ↗](#)



Claude

by Anthropic

Known for thoughtful, detailed responses. Handles long documents well and tends to be more careful and nuanced in its answers. Excellent for reading, summarizing, and analysis.

Best for: Careful analysis, long documents, and nuanced questions

[TRY IT FREE ↗](#)



Gemini

by Google

Google's AI assistant, integrated into Search, Gmail, and Google Workspace. Strong at research and pulling information from the web in real time.

Best for: Research, Google integration, and real-time information

[TRY IT FREE ↗](#)



Microsoft Copilot

by Microsoft

Built into Windows, Edge, and Microsoft 365. If you already use Word, Excel, or Outlook, Copilot works right inside those apps to help you write, organize, and analyze.

Best for: People who use Microsoft products daily

[TRY IT FREE ↗](#)



Perplexity

by Perplexity AI

An AI-powered search engine that gives you direct answers with sources cited. Think of it as Google that actually answers your question instead of giving you a list of links.

Best for: Research with cited sources and fact-checking

[TRY IT FREE ↗](#)



Grok

by xAI (Elon Musk)

Available through the X (Twitter) platform. Known for a more casual, unfiltered conversational style. Has real-time access to posts and trending topics on X.

Best for: Casual conversation and real-time social media context

[TRY IT FREE ↗](#)



Llama

by Meta (Facebook)

Meta's open-source AI model. Unlike the others, Llama is free for anyone to download, modify, and run on their own computer. It powers many of the AI apps you see built by smaller companies.

Best for: Developers, privacy-conscious users, and open-source supporters

[TRY IT FREE ↗](#)

AI Is Here. Now You Know What It Is.

You do not need to be a tech expert to use AI well. Start with one tool, ask it one question, and see what happens. The best way to understand it is to try it.

Learn more at obsidianrisingllc.com ↗

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