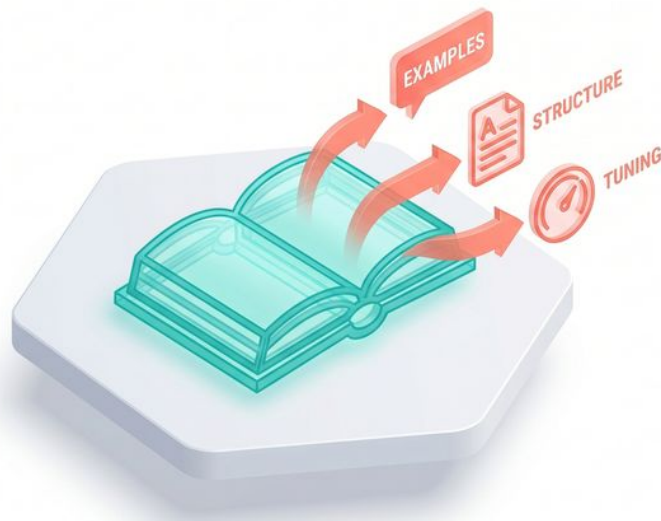


The Prompting Playbook

How prompting has changed in 2026. Three moves that consistently earn their keep.



What still works

- **Examples** — two or three concrete cases beat a paragraph of description
- **Structure** — break the request into named sections (context, task, constraints, output)
- **Specificity** — name the file, the function, the format. Vague is expensive

What changed in 2026

- Models infer intent better, so the floor is higher
- Extended thinking lets the model do its own planning when you give it room
- Skills load context on demand, so the prompt does not have to carry everything

Quick wins

- Show what the output should look like, not what it should not
- Pin the format with a worked example, then ask for the new one
- Keep the system prompt under 500 tokens unless you have a measurement saying more helps

From "Claude Code, Definitive Guide for 2026" — Chapter 3. Source: The prompting playbook talk, Code with Claude London 2026.