



**AlpineLynx**

PRACTICAL GUIDE · FREE

# AI in your business in 1 hour

No coding, and your data  
stays yours.

In 1 hour you'll set up a free AI helper that  
saves you 5 to 10 hours a week — and your  
data stays yours.

## Before you start (read this, it's 1 minute)

You don't need to understand a thing about technology. You won't be coding. You won't install anything complicated. You won't pay a single cent for the tools in this guide.

Here's what you'll do: use three **free** artificial-intelligence assistants — the same ones huge companies use — to handle the boring parts of your day. Quotes. Customer emails. Posts for social media. Translations. That summary of messages you never get around to doing.

The promise is simple and honest:

**In 1 hour you'll set up a free AI helper that saves you 5 to 10 hours a week. And your data stays yours.**

One hour. It's not meant to be read all at once — it's meant to be *done*. Open the guide next to your computer or phone and try things out as you read.

And there's one golden rule you'll see repeated several times, because it's the most important of all:

**Never paste your customers' personal data into a free AI.** Names with addresses, AVS number, IBAN, contracts. I'll explain why in a moment — and what to do instead.

**Never used ChatGPT or anything like it?** Then start with the starter guide, ***Your first conversation with AI*** — free, 20 minutes, made for people starting from absolute zero. Download it at [alpinelynx.ch/ebook](https://alpinelynx.ch/ebook). Then come back here: this guide picks up right where that one leaves off.

Let's get to it.

## Why this matters to you

Think about your last week. How much time did you spend doing things that aren't your real work?

Not painting the wall, cleaning the office, wiring the electrics or cooking. That's what you know how to do and what you get paid for. I'm talking about the rest:

- Writing the **quote** for the gentleman who called yesterday.
- Replying to the customer's email asking whether the job can be brought forward.
- Doing that **post** for the company's Instagram (which never actually goes out).
- Writing up the invoice neatly.
- Translating a message into German because the customer is from Bern.
- Reading 40 WhatsApp messages from the team to work out who does what tomorrow.

Each of these seems small. Five minutes here, ten there. But added up, by the end of the week, they're **hours**. Hours when you're not billing, not resting, not with your family. It's the invisible cost of working for

yourself: nobody pays you for the evening you spend writing emails.

A painter I know, in Martigny, worked out that he was losing **a whole afternoon a week** on quotes and messages alone. An afternoon. Four afternoons a month. Almost a month of work a year, thrown away on tasks he hates.

The good news: nearly all of this is exactly what AI is good at. Writing, rephrasing, summarising, translating, giving you a first draft so you're not starting from a blank page. It doesn't do your work — it does the work *around* your work.

And it's not just for big companies. It's precisely for you: one person, or a small team, with no marketing department, no assistant, no time. It works just as well for:

- **Construction and trades** (painters, electricians, plumbers, bricklayers): quotes, customer messages, job descriptions.
- **Cleaning and services**: proposals, schedules, quick replies.
- **Associations and clubs**: notices, announcements, sponsorship requests.

- **Restaurants and small shops:** menus, posts, replies to reviews.

In this guide you'll learn to do this with three free tools, safely, in about an hour. You won't turn into a tech genius. You'll come away with **a helper that works for you at any hour**, and time back in your pocket.

**What you take from this chapter:** the time you lose on repetitive tasks is invisible money. Free AI was made for exactly those tasks. The hour you're about to invest is worth it.

## CHAPTER 2

# The three free tools (and what each is for)

There are dozens of AI tools. So you don't get lost, we'll use just **three**. They're the best, they're free, and they're more than enough for everything you need.

Think of them as three colleagues with different personalities.

### 1. Claude — the one that writes well and thinks calmly

**Where:** `claude.ai` It's the best at writing naturally, reasoning step by step, and holding a tone. When you need a text that sounds like you — a well-structured quote, a delicate email, something that doesn't read like it was made by a robot — start here. It also has good common sense: if you ask it to check numbers or not to make things up, it follows the request well — but you still check the numbers yourself.

### 2. ChatGPT — the fast, versatile one

**Where:** `chatgpt.com` It's the Swiss army knife. Fast, practical, good for quick ideas, lists, variations. When you want "give me five versions of this" or

"shorten it to fit in a text message", it's great. It's the best known — you've probably heard of it already.

### 3. Gemini — the one connected to Google

**Where:** [gemini.google.com](https://gemini.google.com) It's Google's, so it gets on well with search, with Google (Gmail, Docs) and with **images**: you can show it a photo and it will describe it or work from it. It's good for translation too. If you need "look at this photo of the job and tell me what you see", this is the one. (If it offers to connect to your Gmail or your Drive, say no: Chapter 4 explains why.)

**Do you need an account with all of them?** Yes, but it's free and takes 2 minutes each. Just an email.

Suggestion: create all three today, so you have them to hand. (Keep the passwords somewhere safe. If you use a password manager, great; if not, a notebook kept at home beats a scrap of paper stuck to the screen.)

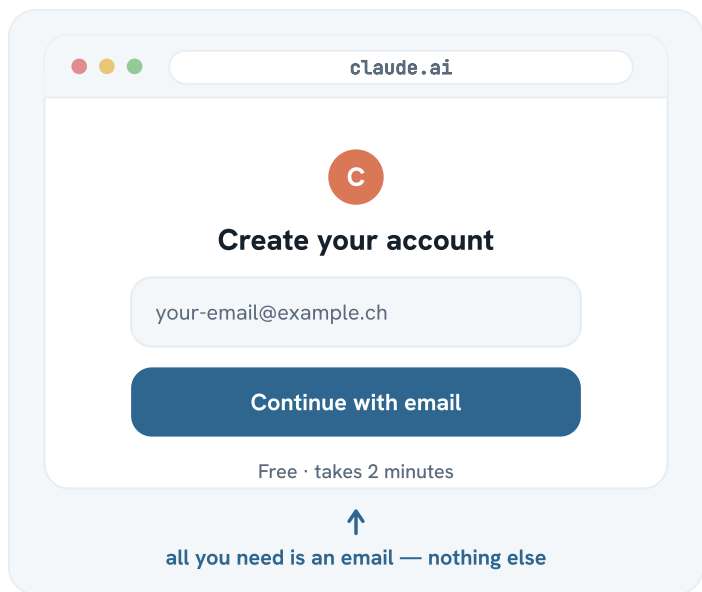


**FIGURE 2.1** Account creation screen (Claude example); email field and continue button. · illustrative screen

## The limits of free accounts (and how to live with them)

The free versions have limits — that's normal, it's how these companies make money. In practice:

- **There's a usage limit per period.** If you use a lot in a row, the tool says "wait a bit" or switches to a simpler version for a while. Don't pay for that: **this is where having all three helps** — if one hits the limit, you switch to another.
- **One customer per conversation.** Why? When a conversation gets long, the AI starts mixing things up: the measurements of the house in Sion turn

up in the quote for the house in Sierre. And, in some tools, a long conversation uses up your limit faster. Moved on to another customer? Open a new conversation. Need something from the previous one? First ask it *"Make a short list of what was agreed"* and use that list as the first message of the new conversation.

- **The paid version is more powerful**, but for what this guide teaches, the free one is perfectly enough. Only think about paying later, if you feel you need it.
- **The limits and names change all the time.** Don't memorise versions or numbers. What matters is the habit: draft in one, improve in another, check in the third. That's what the next chapter is about.

**What you take from this chapter:** three free colleagues — Claude (writes well), ChatGPT (fast and versatile), Gemini (Google and images). Create the accounts today. When one hits its limit, use another.

## Orchestration (the heart of this guide)

Here's the trick most people don't know — and it makes all the difference.

Almost everyone uses AI the wrong way: they ask a question, get an answer, and use it as it is. You're going to do it differently. You're going to **pass the ball** between the tools, like a team.

The method has three beats:

1. **Draft** — ask one assistant for the first rough version.
2. **Improve** — take that rough version to another (or the same one) and ask it to polish: shorten, change the tone, correct. When polishing, the AI tends to rewrite everything — and it may change a price or a date without telling you. So tell it what must not change (*"Keep the prices and the dates"*) or the only part to touch (*"Change only the 2nd paragraph"*).
3. **Check** — read it with your own eyes. AI is fast, but **you** are the one who knows your business, your prices and your customers. Always check numbers, names and dates before sending.

This last step is sacred. AI sometimes makes things up with total confidence. Never send anything without reading it. Think of it as a very fast, very helpful intern — who sometimes gets things wrong.

Three things to watch when you check:

- **Redo the sums yourself.** AI writes well, but it can get a simple sum wrong — and the quote goes out with your name on it. Add up the lines on a calculator. Then compare the address and the agreed day with the customer's message or with your notes.
- **Check Swiss rules at the official source.** Because you write to it in English, it may answer with the rules of the UK or the US. For VAT, AVS contributions, permits or deadlines, start your request with *"I'm in Switzerland, in the canton of [name of the canton]"*. Then look for that information on [ch.ch](https://www.ch.ch) (the official portal of the Swiss authorities) or on your canton's website. If you can't find it there, don't use it.
- **It tends to agree with you.** If you ask *"Is this OK?"*, it will probably say yes. Instead, write: *"Read this as a suspicious customer. What's wrong? If everything is fine, tell me."*

Now, the recipes. They're for copying, pasting and adapting. Where you see [ ... ], you replace it with your own information.

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## Recipe 1 — A quote from 3 lines

**When:** the customer has described the job and you have to send a good-looking quote. **Tool:** Claude (structure) → ChatGPT (shorten, if it gets long).

Paste this into Claude:

PROMPT

You are my office assistant. Write a professional, simple quote, in English, from this description:

[write here in 2-3 lines what the job is, e.g.: "Paint two rooms in a flat, about 45 m<sup>2</sup>, walls and ceilings, white paint. Customer in Sion."]

My business: [name, e.g.: "Martins Painting"].

Lay it out as a table: description of work, quantity, unit price, total.

Leave the prices as [xxx] for me to fill in by hand.

Add a validity line (30 days) and a friendly sentence at the end.

Tone: professional but warm. Don't make up prices, deadlines or guarantees.

**The trick:** you ask for the **table** and leave the prices as [xxx] . You put the numbers in yourself — never let the AI make up figures. If the text gets long, take it to ChatGPT: *"Shorten this quote to fit on one page, keep the table."*

C Claude

You're my office assistant.  
Professional quote: paint two rooms, 45 m<sup>2</sup>, in Sion.  
As a table, prices as [xxx].  
Don't make up prices.

Quote — Martins Painting

| Description                 | Qty               | Price        |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Walls and ceilings painting | 45 m <sup>2</sup> | [xxx]        |
| Prep and protection         | 1                 | [xxx]        |
| White paint, 2 coats        | 45 m <sup>2</sup> | [xxx]        |
| <b>Total</b>                |                   | <b>[xxx]</b> |

Valid for 30 days. Thank you for your trust!

↑

you fill in the [xxx] prices — never the AI

**FIGURE 3.1** Before and after: the prompt pasted into Claude (left) and the quote in a table it returns (right). · illustrative screen

## Recipe 2 — A polite but firm payment-reminder email

**When:** a customer hasn't paid and you have to chase them without seeming rude. **Tool:** Claude.

### PROMPT

Write a short email to remind a customer about an unpaid invoice.  
Polite, but clear. British English.

Details: invoice for [amount] CHF, overdue by [no.] days, reference [xxx].  
My business: [name].

Give me THREE versions, from the gentlest to the firmest:

1. Friendly reminder (first time).
2. Second notice (more direct).
3. Final notice (firm, but still professional).

**The trick:** asking for **three levels of firmness** at once. You keep all three and use the right one for the situation. You don't have to rewrite each time.

**C Claude**

Invoice for 850 CHF, overdue by 15 days — give me 3 versions, from the gentlest to the firmest.

**1 · Friendly reminder**

«Hi! A friendly reminder about invoice no. 2026-14, now due...»

**2 · Second notice**

«The invoice is still unpaid. We'd appreciate settlement...»

**3 · Final notice**

«Without payment by 20/07, we'll have to suspend...»



**keep all three — use the right one at the right time**

**FIGURE 3.2** Claude's reply with the three numbered versions, from the friendly reminder to the final notice. · illustrative screen

### **Recipe 3 — One job photo becomes 3 posts**

**When:** you've finished a job, you have a photo, and you'd like to show it on social media — but you never know what to write. **Tool:** Gemini (sees the photo) → Claude (writes it nicely).

**Before you upload the photo, take a good look at it.** It ends up with Google and then on social media, for everyone to see. Can you see the house number, the name on the letterbox, a number plate, someone's face, papers on the table? Crop the photo to cut that part out, or choose another one. And before you show a customer's house on social media, ask their permission, preferably by message, so it's in writing.

First, in Gemini, upload the photo and write:

PROMPT

Look at this photo of a job I've just finished. Describe what you see in detail: the before and after, the materials, the care in the finish. Be concrete.

Copy the description it gives. Then, in Claude:

Based on this description of a photo from a job:

[paste Gemini's description here]

Write 3 short social media posts, in English, for the business

[name]. Each with a different angle:

1. Pride in a job well done.
2. A useful tip for the customer (e.g. maintenance).
3. An invitation to ask for a quote.

Warm, honest tone, no exaggeration. Include 3-4 simple hashtags in each.

**The trick:** 1 photo → 3 posts. A week of content from a job you've already done.

**G Gemini**



job-photo.jpg

Look at this photo and describe what you see in detail.

I see two walls freshly painted white, clean edges, skirting boards protected, an even and careful finish...



copy and paste into Claude

**C Claude**

3 posts ready to use:

- 1 · Pride — «Another room delivered flawless...»
- 2 · Tip — «To keep the paint like new, avoid...»
- 3 · Invite — «Ask now for your quote, no obligation»



1 photo → 3 posts — a week of content

**FIGURE 3.3** Sequence: the photo uploaded to Gemini and the description it gives; then the 3 posts Claude writes from it. · illustrative screen

## Recipe 4 — Translating while keeping your tone (EN ↔ DE ↔ FR)

**When:** the customer is from another part of Switzerland and you want to write in their language without sounding like a machine translation. **Tool:** Claude (tone) → Gemini (second opinion).

### PROMPT

Translate this message into [German / French]. It's from a small business to a customer. Keep a warm, professional tone, natural for Switzerland. Don't translate word for word — adapt it so it sounds good.

Text: [paste your text in English]

**The trick:** for important texts, paste the translation into Gemini and ask: *"Point out anything that doesn't sound natural to a Swiss-German person and fix it. If it all sounds fine, tell me."* And keep a list of your business's words (materials, services) always translated the same way — your **glossary**. That way you stay consistent.

### Translation in your tone

EN → DE, for a customer in Bern

EN

Hi! Here's the quote attached. Any questions, I'm right here.

DE

Grüezi! Anbei erhalten Sie die Offerte. Bei Fragen melden Sie sich gerne.

✓ Gemini: «sounds natural for Swiss German»



second opinion: one translates, the other confirms

**FIGURE 3.4** The English text and the translation side by side, with Gemini's note confirming it sounds natural. · illustrative screen

## Recipe 5 — A WhatsApp chat becomes a to-do list

**When:** the team group has 40 messages and you just want to know what needs doing tomorrow. **Tool:** ChatGPT or Claude.

**Mind the golden rule:** before pasting, **remove names and personal data**. Swap "Mr Fernandes from Rue du Midi" for "Customer A". I'll explain this better in the next chapter.

Here's a team chat. Make me a clear to-do list:  
what needs doing, who does it (if they say), and when.  
Ignore off-topic chatter. If something wasn't decided, mark it with "TO DECIDE".

Chat:

[paste here, with real names and personal data already removed]

**The trick:** the "TO DECIDE" at the end shows you straight away what's still up in the air. And notice: here you already had to clean out the personal data before pasting. This is a nuisance and easy to forget — which is why, for your schedule and your team, it's safer to use an app that does this **on your phone**, without pasting anything anywhere (Chapter 7).

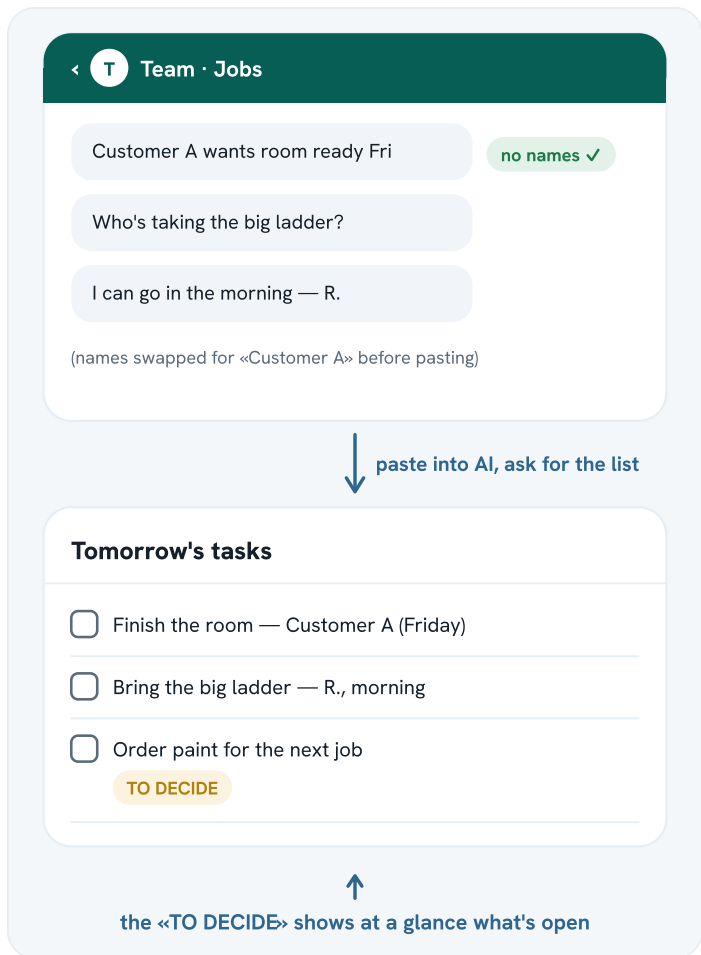


**FIGURE 3.5** The pasted chat (with names already swapped for "Customer A") and the to-do list the AI returns, with one item marked "TO DECIDE". · illustrative screen

## Recipe 6 — The letter you don't understand

**When:** a letter arrives from the tax office, the commune, the AVS office or your insurance, in German or French, and you don't really understand what they want from you. **Tool:** Claude or ChatGPT.

**Before pasting:** remove anything that identifies people — your name and address, customer, contract, policy or AVS/AHV numbers, the name of whoever signs and of anyone else, and anything about health. If there's a payment slip, leave it out: it has account numbers on it. The name of the commune or the company can stay — that's how the AI knows who sent the letter. Sending a photo? Cover those parts before you take it.

I got this letter in [German / French] and don't really understand it.

Answer me in plain, everyday English, point by point:

- who is sending it;
- what they want me to do;
- by when;
- if there's money to pay, how much;
- what happens to me if I don't reply.

Next to each date and each amount, copy the exact sentence

from the letter where it appears. If any part is illegible or

unclear, tell me instead of guessing.

Letter: [paste the text or attach the photo, with names, addresses and personal numbers already removed]

**The trick:** asking for the **original sentence** next to each date and each amount. That sentence is your proof: look for it in the paper letter. If it's there, check the number with your own eyes. If you can't find it, be suspicious — the AI may have misread it or made it up. **Before you pay or reply, what counts is what's in the letter, not what the AI said.**

Something serious — a fine, a payment order from the debt collection office (Betreibungsamt / Office des poursuites), an inspection of your business? Don't leave it for later: some of these letters give

only 10 days to react. The AI helps you understand; you make the decision after talking to someone who knows — the office that sent the letter, your accountant or a lawyer.

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## **Recipe 7 — Learning something new, at your own pace**

**When:** you want to learn something your business needs — doing the month's accounts in a spreadsheet, the words of your trade in German, the new app on your card terminal — and you have neither the time nor the patience for a course.

**Tool:** ChatGPT or Claude. If it's easier, talk instead of typing (the microphone next to the box where you type).

I want to learn how to [what you want to be able to do]

so that I can [what it's for]. I'm a [your trade] and I'm starting from zero. Be my tutor:

- one step at a time, in short sentences; at the end of each step, stop and wait until I type "next";
- use comparisons from my trade;
- if an explanation gets long, make a table or a diagram;
- when I say "test me", ask me 3 questions, one at a time, and only tell me whether I got it right after I've answered.

**The trick:** at the end, **you explain it**, in your own words, and ask: *"Correct what's wrong and tell me what I missed."* That's when it sticks — listening isn't enough, you have to say it yourself.

Five more tips:

- **Start with something you'll use this week.**  
Learning "Excel" in general is tiring; building the table for this month's accounts makes you want to keep going.
- **Follow your curiosity.** A word you didn't understand? Ask. A question that seems silly? Ask anyway — nobody's going to laugh.

- **Ask for both sides.** On a subject where people disagree — opening on Saturdays, hiring someone or subcontracting — ask for the best arguments on each side. The AI sorts out the ideas; you're the one who decides.
- **Stuck?** Take a picture of the screen or copy the error message and ask what to do. Before you do, cover anything that shows customer data (Chapter 4).
- **Match your trust to what's at stake.** When you're learning, a small mistake by the AI does no harm — you'll end up spotting it. For money, contracts and Swiss rules (VAT, AVS, permits), check on `ch.ch` or with someone who knows.

And when it stops being fun, stop. There's always tomorrow — ten minutes when you feel like it are worth more than an hour of forcing yourself.

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## The pocket table (keep this one)

| Your task                     | Tool              | The orchestration trick                                                              |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Quick quote                   | Claude → ChatGPT  | Ask for a table; prices as [xxx] ; check by hand                                     |
| Chasing payment               | Claude            | 3 levels of firmness at once                                                         |
| Post from a photo             | Gemini → Claude   | 1 photo → 3 posts                                                                    |
| Translation EN/DE/FR          | Claude → Gemini   | Keep a glossary for your business                                                    |
| Summarise WhatsApp            | ChatGPT or Claude | <b>Remove personal data before pasting</b>                                           |
| Understand a difficult letter | Claude or ChatGPT | <b>Remove your data</b> ; ask for the original sentence next to each date and amount |
| Learn something new           | ChatGPT or Claude | One step at a time; at the end, explain it yourself and ask it to correct you        |

## Three plays to go further

*If you're just starting out, skip this with no guilt — come back once the recipes above are second nature.* These three plays squeeze a lot more out of the same free tools.

**1. Teach the AI who you are (just once).** In ChatGPT and Claude there's a place in the settings — "custom instructions" in ChatGPT, the preferences or "Projects" in Claude — where you store your business context: *"I own Martins Painting, in Sion, a team of 3. Always reply in British English, warm and honest tone, no exaggeration."* From then on you don't repeat this in every conversation — it already knows. (Don't put customer data there: that gets stored on their servers.)

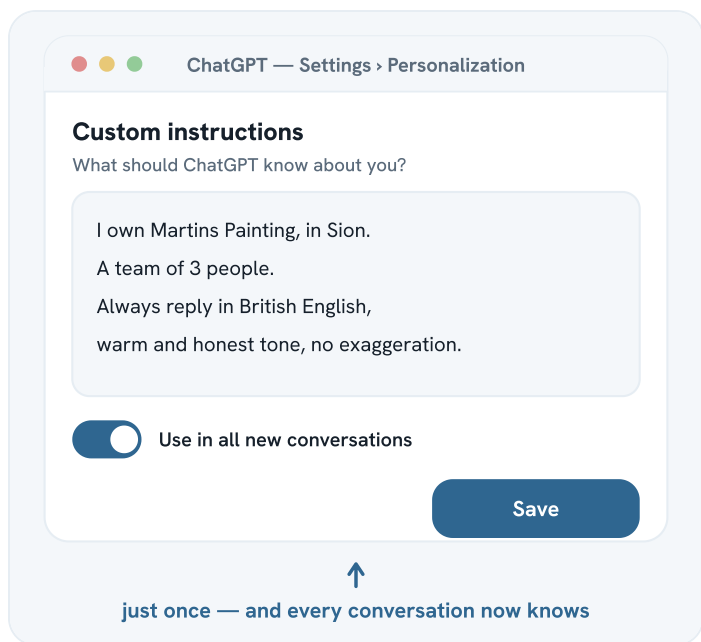


**FIGURE 3.6** The place in the settings (ChatGPT example): you write once who you are and how you want the replies — every conversation then knows it. · illustrative screen

**2. Make a "base prompt" for your business.** Write **once** a block with the essentials — name, services, how you present prices ( [xxx] ), your tone, and the EN/DE/FR glossary from Recipe 4 — and save it in your phone's notes. You paste that block at the start of any conversation and the AI starts off already knowing everything. It's your template, always the same.

**3. Chain tasks in a single request.** Instead of three conversations, ask for the sequence: *"1) read this job description; 2) make the quote as a table with prices as [xxx]; 3) write the short email to go with it. Do all three, in this order."* Fewer back-and-forths, same result.

**The rule of this chapter still applies:** however well-tuned it is, AI gets things wrong with confidence. Always check numbers, names and dates with your own eyes before sending.

**What you take from this chapter:** draft in one, improve in another, **always check with your own eyes**. Seven ready-to-use recipes — and, for those who want more, three advanced plays. This is the habit that gives you hours back.

## CHAPTER 4

# Privacy: what you must never paste into these tools

This is the most important chapter. Read it carefully.

When you write something into a free AI, that text **leaves your computer** and goes to the company's servers (which are mostly outside Switzerland). With the free versions, you should assume that **what you write may be stored and used to improve the tool** — sometimes even reviewed by people. It's not malice; it's how these free services work. But it has a serious consequence for you.

### The golden rule

**Never paste other people's personal data into a free AI.**

Specifically, **never** paste:

- **Customer names together with addresses, phone numbers or emails.**
- **AVS/AHV number** (the Swiss social security number).
- **IBAN, bank details, card numbers.**

- **Contracts, invoices with personal data, identity documents.**
- **Health data or anything sensitive about someone.**
- **CVs from job applicants and your team's data** (salaries, absences, appraisals).
- **Photos, screenshots or PDFs with this data.** The AI reads everything that appears in them: if you upload a photo of an invoice, the customer's name and address go along with it. And what you say into the microphone counts too: it becomes text and goes into the conversation, as if you'd typed it.

Why? Two reasons:

1. **It's not yours to give.** Your customers' data was entrusted to you. Handing it over to a foreign service, without them knowing, isn't right — and it can land you in trouble.
2. **Swiss law expects care.** The **revDSG** (Switzerland's revised data protection law) requires you to handle personal data responsibly. Pasting customer data into a free foreign tool is, at the very least, risky.

## Watch out for this too

The golden rule is about what you paste. But some data leaves without you pasting anything, and some data is yours alone. Three things to watch:

- **Letting the AI into your email or your folders.**

Some tools offer to connect to your mail or to the documents you keep online — Gemini, for example, with Gmail and Google Drive. It seems handy. But from then on the AI can open whatever is in there: the quote with Mr Fernandes's address, the invoice with the building's IBAN. And whatever it fetches from there goes into the conversation, which may be stored like everything you write. If that's where you receive customer requests or keep invoices, don't connect it. If it's already connected, disconnect it.

- **Sharing a conversation by link.** These tools let you create a link (an internet address) that shows the conversation to someone else. If you put it in the team's WhatsApp group, everyone in the group reads the whole conversation — and so does anyone it gets forwarded to. The link keeps working until you delete it, and deleting just the conversation may not be enough. Before sharing, reread the conversation from top to bottom.

- **Your codes and your documents.** Your card or TWINT PIN, the code the bank sends you by text message, your email password, a photo of your passport or residence permit. This is what scammers try to get out of you over the phone. Neither the bank nor TWINT asks you for these codes by phone or by message. If you wouldn't tell it to a stranger, don't type it into a conversation that gets stored either.

### What you can paste freely

- Job descriptions **without** names ("paint 45 m<sup>2</sup>, two bedrooms").
- Your own texts, ideas, marketing drafts.
- General questions ("how do I write a firm payment-reminder email?").
- Anything with names swapped for "Customer A", "Job 1" — swapped **by you, before** pasting. Asking the AI to remove the names doesn't work: by then, you've already sent them.

### Pasted something you shouldn't have?

It happens. You pasted a whole invoice in a hurry and only then noticed it had the customer's address and IBAN in it. Or your password came along stuck to a

text you copied. There's no undo button, but there are three things to do, in this order:

1. **Was one of your passwords in there** (email, bank)? Change it today. Were your card or account numbers in there? Call the bank and explain what happened.
2. **Delete that conversation.** The company doesn't remove it from its servers straight away, but this is where you start. If you shared its link with anyone, delete the link too: in some tools, it doesn't disappear with the conversation.
3. **Open the tool's memory** (I'll explain what that is in a moment) and remove the customer's name from it, if it ended up there.

Next time, swap the names for "Customer A" or "Job 1" first, as you saw above.

### **For next time: five minutes in the settings**

Menu names change from time to time. Look for the idea, not the exact word, and do this in every tool you use.

1. **Turn off training.** *Training* is the company using your conversations to teach the AI, a bit like an apprentice taking copies of your quotes home to study. In the settings, go to the privacy or data

section and turn off the option with the word "improve" in it. In Gemini, look instead for the word "activity": if you turn it off, new conversations also stop being saved in your history. And if one day the app asks you to accept new terms, go back there and check it's still off.

## **2. See what the tool already knows about you.**

Some take notes on their own for the next conversations, like the café waiter who brings you your usual without asking. They call this *memory* (not the computer memory I talk about in Chapter 5). If the settings have a section for memory, open it and remove anything with the names of customers or colleagues.

**This helps, but the golden rule doesn't change.** Even with everything turned off, what you write still leaves your device for the company's servers. If you rate a reply (thumbs up or thumbs down), that conversation may be used for training anyway. A "temporary chat" (some call it "incognito") only stays out of your list of conversations: the company may still keep it for a while. And the paid version doesn't solve it either: your customers' data still isn't yours to give.

## The simple trick

Before pasting anything at all, ask this question: **"If this showed up in a newspaper, would anyone come off badly?"** If the answer is yes, remove the personal data first — or don't paste it.

And here's the bridge to the last part of this guide. There are tasks — your **team schedule**, the **building or club dues**, your **invoices**, your **customers** — that are full of personal data and that you do every week. For those, cleaning out the data by hand every time is a nuisance and dangerous (you always forget a name). The right solution isn't cloud AI. It's using tools that keep the data **on your phone**, without pasting anything into an outside AI — and knowing, app by app, what stays on the device and what leaves it. That's what Chapter 7 is about.

**What you take from this chapter:** free AI is for texts and ideas, not for customer data. The golden rule: never paste other people's personal data. Today, in Claude, ChatGPT and Gemini, turn off the option that lets the company teach the AI with your conversations. It helps, but it doesn't change the golden rule. For anything with sensitive data → tools on your phone.

## CHAPTER 5

# AI on your own computer (advanced, for total privacy)

**Heads up:** this is the most technical chapter in the guide. Most people won't go down this path — and that's completely fine, you can skip to Chapter 6 without missing the essentials. But if you're curious and want the **highest level of privacy**, it's well worth it. This is where your data starts to live **on your computer and only on your computer**.

Remember the golden rule from Chapter 4? *Never paste customer data into a free AI*. Names with addresses, AVS, IBAN, contracts — everything that was risky to send to the cloud.

Here, that rule **flips**. Why? Because now the AI runs **inside** your computer. Nothing leaves it — no foreign server, no internet in between. That summary of the team chat *with the real names*, that quote *with the customer's address*, that document with actual data — things the earlier chapters forced you to clean before pasting — here you can use them just as they are. The computer is yours; the data stays yours.

The price to pay: it takes more work to set up, and the models you run at home are **less powerful** than Claude or ChatGPT. Let's see whether it's worth it for you — and, if it is, how to do it without mistakes.

### **First: what the "B" means (and why your memory calls the shots)**

You'll see models described with a number followed by a **"B"**: Gemma 4B, Qwen 7B, Llama 70B. That **"B"** stands for **billions of parameters** — think of it as the "brain size" of the model. More parameters = generally more capable, but also **heavier**: it needs more memory to run.

And here's the rule that decides everything: **a model has to fit in your computer's working memory**. Not on the disk (where it's stored, and where there's always room), but in the **live memory** — the **RAM**; or, if you have a dedicated graphics card, its memory (the **VRAM**).

Rule of thumb (for the "compressed" format the programs use by default):

**For every billion parameters, count on roughly 0.7 GB of memory.** A 7B model needs ~5 GB. A 14B one, ~9 GB. A 70B one, ~40 GB. And you still have to leave room for the rest of the system.

## RAM or graphics card — which one counts?

- **Recent Mac (Apple Silicon — M1, M2, M3...):** the memory is shared. The RAM you see is what counts. Simple.
- **Windows/Linux PC with a dedicated graphics card (Nvidia/AMD):** what drives the **speed** is the card's memory (VRAM). If the model doesn't fit on the card, it runs on the RAM and the processor — it still works, but **much slower**.
- **Ordinary PC, no dedicated graphics card:** it runs on the RAM and the processor. It works, but it's slow — stick to the small models.

Good news: **you don't have to do these sums.**

The program we'll use tells you straight away whether a model fits your machine. But it's worth understanding why.

# The table: what you can run with the memory you have

| Memory<br>(RAM /<br>VRAM) | What runs well<br>(compressed<br>format)                          | What it feels like in practice                                                                                                                              |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4 GB                      | 1-3B — Gemma 3<br>(1B/4B), Llama 3.2<br>(1-3B), Qwen (1.5-<br>3B) | Basic and slow. Fine for<br>rewording and summarising<br>short texts.                                                                                       |
| 8 GB                      | 3-7B — Llama 3.1<br>8B or Qwen 7B<br>(tight, ~5 GB)               | Day to day: emails, summaries,<br>simple translations.                                                                                                      |
| 12 GB                     | 7-8B with room to<br>spare                                        | Writing and summaries in<br>comfort.                                                                                                                        |
| 16 GB                     | 8-14B — Qwen<br>14B (~9 GB)                                       | A good balance. Gets close to<br>a "decent" cloud assistant.                                                                                                |
| 24 GB                     | 14B easily, 32B<br>tight                                          | More demanding texts start to<br>run well.                                                                                                                  |
| 32 GB                     | 32B — Qwen 32B<br>(~20 GB)                                        | Good quality, useful for<br>serious work.                                                                                                                   |
| 48 GB                     | 32B easily, 70B<br>tight (~40 GB)                                 | Almost the top of what you<br>can run at home.                                                                                                              |
| 64 GB                     | 70B — Llama 3.3<br>70B (~40 GB)                                   | The best at home. On a par<br>with a good <i>mid-range</i> cloud<br>model — still below the top<br>(Claude, ChatGPT or Gemini in<br>their better versions). |

The names and versions change fast (Qwen, Gemma, Llama, Mistral, Phi, DeepSeek...). **Don't memorise them** — the LM Studio catalogue always shows the latest ones and tells you which fit. And read that last column carefully: even the biggest home model generally falls **below the top of the cloud**. The trade is clear and honest: **you lose some power, you gain total privacy**.

## The program I recommend: LM Studio

There are two well-known ways to run local AI — **LM Studio** and **Ollama**. For anyone who isn't in the field, I recommend **LM Studio** without a doubt ( [lmstudio.ai](https://lmstudio.ai) ):

- It's **all windows and buttons** — you don't type a single command.
- It has a **model catalogue** with search and, next to each one, it tells you **whether it fits your computer** (settling the doubt from the table above right away).
- You download with **one click** and chat in a window much like ChatGPT's.

**Ollama** ( [ollama.com](https://ollama.com) ) is the other path. It now also has an **app with a chat window** (it's no longer just for the command line), it's lighter and simpler — it just doesn't tell you as clearly as LM Studio which models

fit your machine. To start without any doubts, go with LM Studio; later, if you want something lighter, try Ollama.

**"But does the program stay locked in a folder, or does it poke around my whole computer?"**

It's a good question, and the answer changes how you think about this. Neither LM Studio nor Ollama "go poking around" your computer. They **only see what you give them**: the text you type in the window, or a file you drag in yourself. They don't read your emails, don't open your folders, don't rummage through anything. The downloaded models are stored in a folder (which you can even choose, in LM Studio's settings), but that's just **tidiness** — it's not a security matter.

In other words: the privacy of local AI **doesn't come from being locked in a folder**. It comes from something much stronger — **nothing you write leaves your computer**. No internet in between, no servers. That's the real guarantee. And, unlike the cloud, this one you can **prove** — coming up next.

### **Step by step (LM Studio)**

1. Go to [lmstudio.ai](https://lmstudio.ai), download and install (Mac or Windows). It's like installing any program.

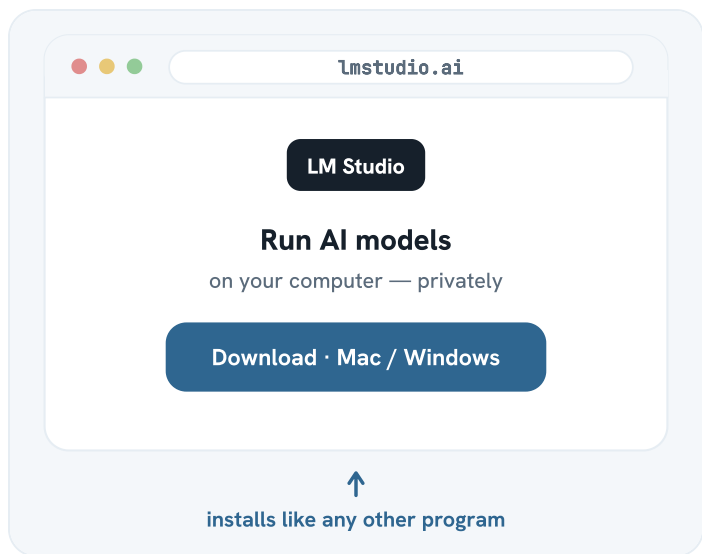


**FIGURE 5.1** The LM Studio page with the download button highlighted. · illustrative screen

2. Open the program and go to the **model search**. Type, for example, **Qwen** or **Gemma**. Notice the label next to each model saying whether it **fits** your machine — pick one that fits with room to spare.

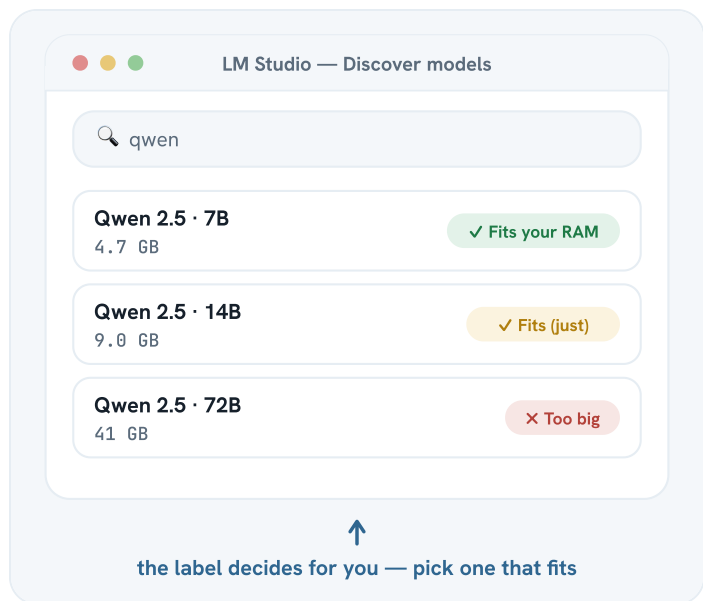


**FIGURE 5.2** LM Studio's model catalogue, with the "fits your RAM" label marked on a model. · illustrative screen

3. Click download and wait (it's several GB — good time for a coffee).
4. Go to the **chat** tab, choose the model at the top, and type. There you go: you're talking to an AI that lives on your computer.

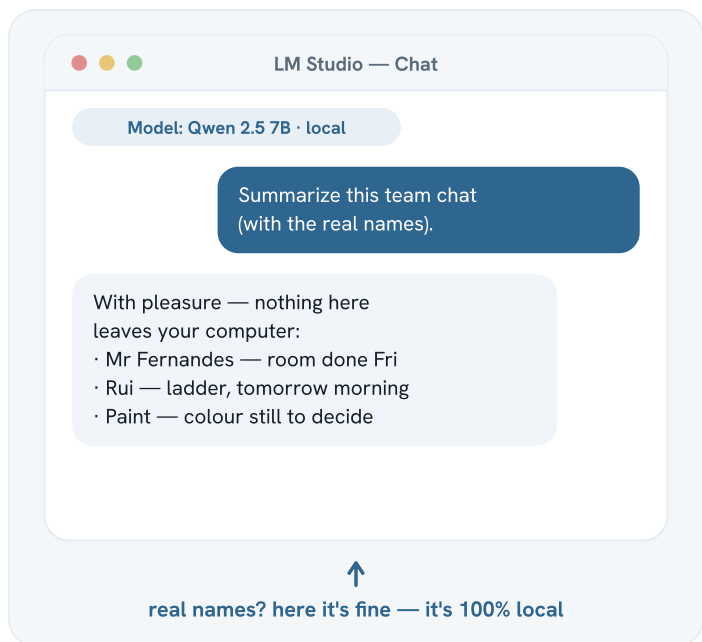


**FIGURE 5.3** LM Studio's chat window, with the local model replying. · illustrative screen

## It sees images too: pulling the text out of a photo

Some local models aren't only about text — **they also "see" images**. In the LM Studio catalogue, look for the ones with *"vision"* or *"VL"* in the name (for example Qwen-VL, Gemma or Llama Vision). With one of these, you drag a photo into the chat and ask, for example:

- *"Pull all the text out of this image for me."* — an invoice, a receipt, a handwritten sheet.

- *"Summarise this invoice in one line: supplier, amount and date."*

This is **text recognition (OCR) and document reading, 100% offline**. It's precious: that receipt or invoice with a customer's data — which you should never send to the cloud — here you can handle it without it ever leaving your computer. Vision models weigh a bit more, so count on one extra step of memory compared with the table above.

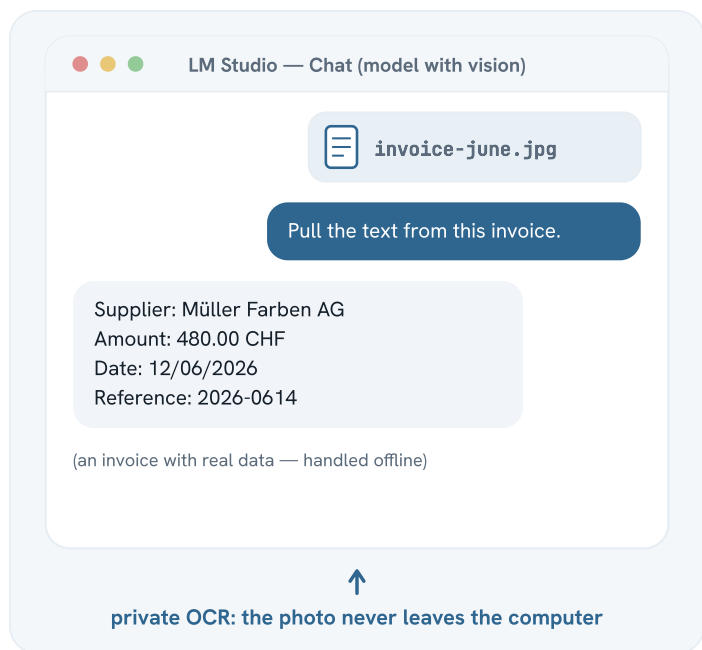


**FIGURE 5.4** A photo of an invoice dragged into the chat and the text the model extracts from it. · illustrative screen

## Proof that it's really private (do this test)

Want to be sure nothing leaves your machine? **Turn off the wifi.** Cut off all internet. Now write a question to the model. If it still replies — and it does — it's proven: that thing runs **100% on your computer**, without talking to the outside world.

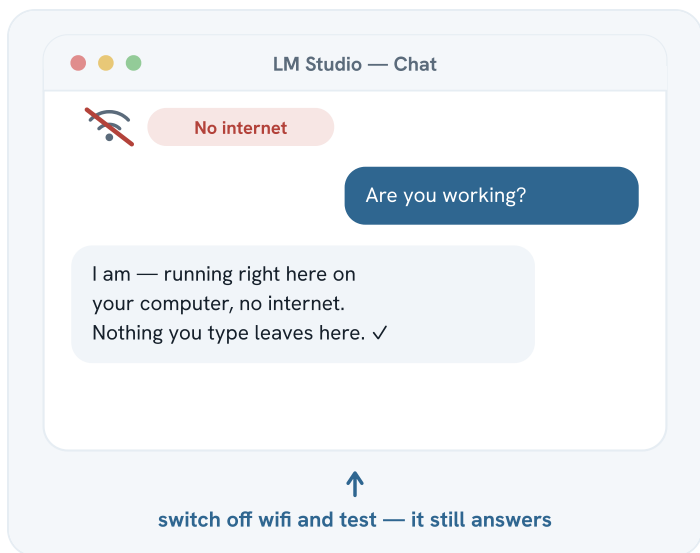


**FIGURE 5.5** The model replying with the wifi turned off — proof that it's local. · illustrative screen

This is where the golden rule flips. With the internet off and a local model, that summary of the team chat **with the real names**, or the quote **with the customer's address**, you can finally paste them with no risk. This is the superpower of this chapter.

## And on your phone? (this is probably where you'll do it)

Most of us live on our phones — and yes, you can run local AI there too, offline. There's just one difference: phones have **less memory** (a recent iPhone is around 6–8 GB) and heat up faster, so you're limited to **small models** (1 to 4B). They're plenty for rewording, summarising and translating short texts, and some even "see" photos. It's slower and uses battery — but it's 100% private.

How to do it, for free:

- **iPhone:** install an app like **PocketPal AI** (free; it has a catalogue of models to download built in). You open it, pick a small model, download and chat — much like ChatGPT, but offline.  
Alternatives: *LLM Farm*, *Private LLM*. Recent iPhones also come with **Apple Intelligence**, built into the system. Part of it works only on the device. But not everything stays on the phone: some heavier requests may go to Apple's servers. And there are outside assistants, like ChatGPT, that only come in if you turn them on in the settings.
- **Android:** **PocketPal AI** exists here too; and Google has an official app, the **AI Edge Gallery**, for running the *Gemma* model locally on the phone.

The wifi test works here too: turn off data and wifi and see that it keeps replying. (App names change — check the App Store / Play Store for "local AI" or "offline AI".)

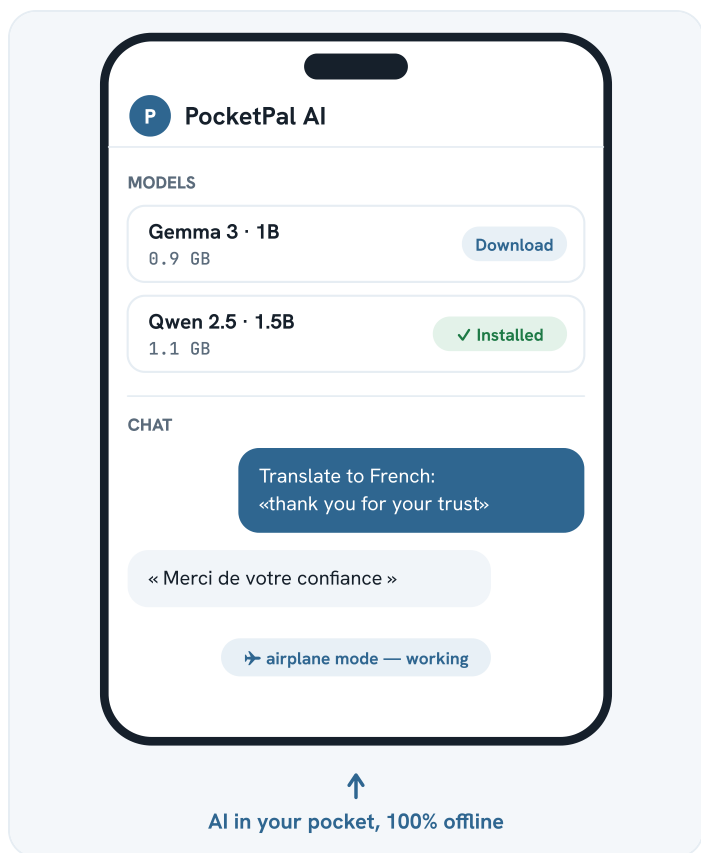


**FIGURE 5.6** The PocketPal AI app on the phone: the catalogue of models to download and an offline conversation. · illustrative screen

## A few cautions (few, but important)

- **Download models only from inside LM Studio or Ollama.** They fetch them from a trusted catalogue (Hugging Face). **Never** download a model file ( `.gguf` ) from some random site that pops up on Google — it may come with surprises. The safe door is the program's own catalogue.
- **Local AI gets things wrong too.** The rule of checking with your own eyes still applies (Chapter 3). Being private doesn't make it more correct.
- **It doesn't know the news.** A local model only "knows" up to the date it was trained and **has no internet** — don't ask it for today's exchange rate or recent news.
- **It uses battery and gets hot.** Running local AI pushes the processor. On a laptop, the battery drain is noticeable — for long sessions, plug it in.

## Do you really need to set all this up?

Be honest with yourself: for 9 out of 10 everyday tasks, the three free tools + the golden rule are perfectly enough. Local AI pays off if you often deal with sensitive data and want to use it **without cleaning it**, or if, on principle, you don't want **anything of yours** to pass through the cloud.

But look at what this chapter asked of you: install programs, understand memory, choose models, configure. It's work. For the tasks you repeat every week — the team schedule, the club dues, the invoices — there's a shorter route: apps made for that one task alone, which keep the data on your phone. The trick is knowing how to recognise them. That's what the next chapter is about.

**What you take from this chapter:** you can run AI 100% on your computer (LM Studio or Ollama) **and even on your phone** (e.g. PocketPal AI) — offline, and some models even read the text in photos (private OCR). The model has to **fit in your memory** (~0.7 GB for every billion parameters; the program warns you). Here the golden rule **flips**: nothing leaves the device. And if you don't fancy setting anything up: for specific tasks there are apps that keep the data on your phone — Chapter 7 shows you how to recognise them.

## CHAPTER 6

# Putting it together: your week with AI

Too many tools with no habit are no use at all. Let's turn this into a light routine, **15 minutes a day**. No revolution — just small gestures that add up.

### The 15-minute routine

**Monday — plan (15 min).** Open the summary of the team's messages (Recipe 5, no personal data) and turn the week into a to-do list. You know straight away what's coming.

### During the week — reply (5 min at a time).

Whenever a quote request or a customer question comes in, use Recipe 1 or 2. Draft in the AI, check, send. It stops being "I have to sit down at night for this".

**Thursday or Friday — marketing (15 min).** Take a photo of a job from the week and make the 3 posts (Recipe 3). Schedule or publish. A presence on social media without the pain.

**Whenever needed — translate and understand (2 min).** Customer in a different language? Recipe 4. A letter you don't understand? Recipe 6. No stress.

**Once a week — learn (10 min).** Pick one small thing it would help you to know and ask the AI to teach it to you, step by step (Recipe 7). After a month, that's four new things.

### **Something new to watch: scams use AI too**

The same AI that saves you time also helps people who want to cheat you. Keep these three habits:

- **Recognising the voice is no longer enough.** AI can imitate a voice from a short recording. A video of you on the business page may be enough. Picture this: whoever handles your payments gets a call "from you" asking them to pay a new supplier right away. Agree on this with your family and your team: an unusual request for money? Hang up and call back on the number you already have for that person. As extra protection, a **code word** that stays between you. No code word, no payment.
- **New IBAN, a re-sent invoice or a QR-bill you weren't expecting?** The email may even come from the supplier's real account, if someone has hacked into it. Before paying, call them yourself on the number you already had. Never the one in the message, and never by replying to it.

- **A message with no mistakes no longer proves anything.** AI writes well in English, German or French. What still gives many scammers away is the hurry and the secrecy: "it has to be today", "don't tell anyone".

## The checklist to print and stick on the wall

PROMPT

### MY WEEK WITH AI

- [ ] Accounts: Claude · ChatGPT · Gemini
- [ ] Business glossary started
- [ ] Mon: messages → to-do list
- [ ] Quotes: AI drafts, I put in the numbers
- [ ] 1 photo of the week → 3 posts
- [ ] Translations when needed
- [ ] 10 min a week: learn
- [ ] Monthly: check shared links and the AI's memory
- [ ] Training off in all three
- [ ] Code word agreed

### GOLDEN RULE

Never paste customer data  
(names+address, AVS, IBAN, contracts).

Money request or new IBAN:  
I call the number I already had.

ALWAYS check with my own eyes  
before sending.

Do this for two weeks and it will stop being effort — it will become the normal way you work. And you'll notice something: you have time to spare.

**What you take from this chapter:** 15 minutes a day, with a simple routine, are enough to gain hours a week. Print the checklist. And when someone rushes you or sends a new IBAN, call them yourself on the number you already had.

## What about tasks with real data?

You've reached the end of the free-AI part. You spotted the pattern: it's great for **texts and ideas**, but there's a wall whenever **real data** shows up — your team's names, customers' addresses, invoice amounts. There, pasting into the cloud is a nuisance and risky.

In Chapter 5 you saw one way out: AI on your own device. It gives total privacy, but it takes work to set up. For the tasks you do every week there's another way out, a simpler one: **apps made for a single task, which keep the data on your phone**. The hard part is telling them apart from the rest — from the outside, they all look the same.

### How to recognise an app that respects your data

Five checks, before you put anyone's data into it:

1. **Read the label in the App Store.** On each app's page, scroll down to the "**App Privacy**" section. The best answer is "**Data Not Collected**". If you see data linked to you, or used to track you from app to app, read the list carefully. A word of warning: the label is filled in by whoever makes

the app. It's their own declaration, not an inspection by Apple — it works as a first filter, not a guarantee.

- 2. See whether it forces you to create an account.** If the app works with no email and no password, there's no account of yours on anyone's server. An optional account, only for those who want one (to use the app on two devices, for example), is fine too.
- 3. Do the Aeroplane Mode test.** Turn on Aeroplane Mode and use the app. If it keeps working, the work is being done on the phone. The only things that should stop are the ones that really need the internet: sending a message, fetching a share price.
- 4. Ask where the backups go.** Ideally, to **your own** iCloud account or to a file you keep yourself. If they go to the servers of whoever makes the app, it's worth knowing why.
- 5. If the app has AI, check where it runs.** Look in the description for words like "on-device" or "on your device". Apple Intelligence, for example, has a part that works only inside the phone (Chapter 5).

No single check proves everything. All five together tell you a lot — and they take two minutes.

## My apps

I make apps like this too: small ones, each for one specific problem. You don't have to take my word for it — run the five checks on them.

- **Send Planning** — schedules for a small team; it sends each person their own, by WhatsApp, text or email.
- **QR Quota** — Swiss QR-bills for collecting dues and shared expenses: an association, a building, a club.
- **Volta** — a logbook for people who invest with the options "wheel" strategy. It records and organises; it gives no advice — the decisions are yours.

If one of them could help you, search for the name in the App Store and see whether it's there yet.

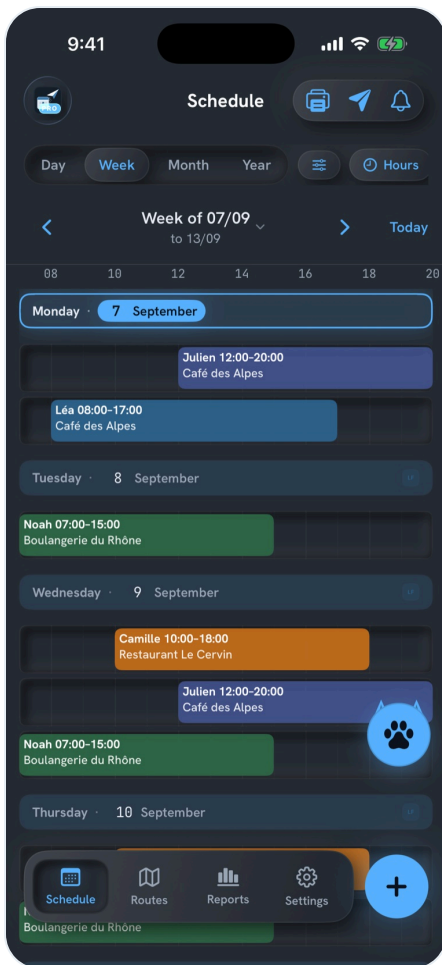


**FIGURE 7.1** Send Planning: the team's week built, ready to send to each person. · real screen, sample data

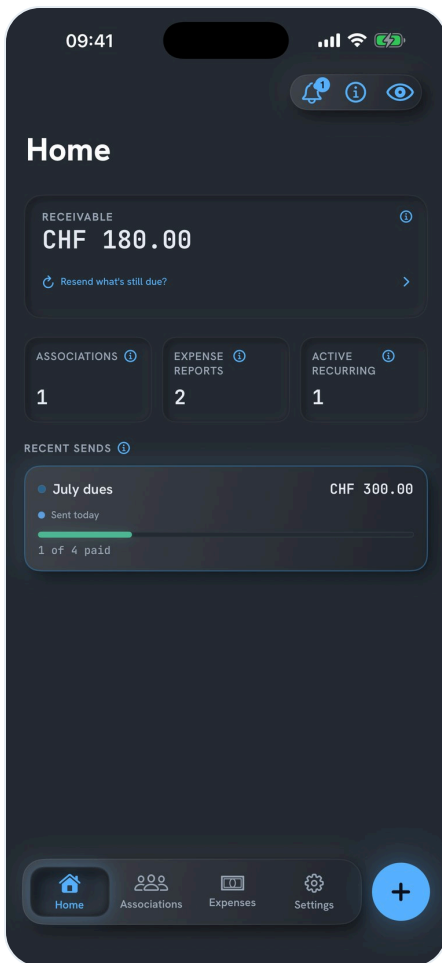


**FIGURE 7.2** QR Quota: the treasurer's dashboard — how much is still to come in and who's already paid. · real screen, sample data

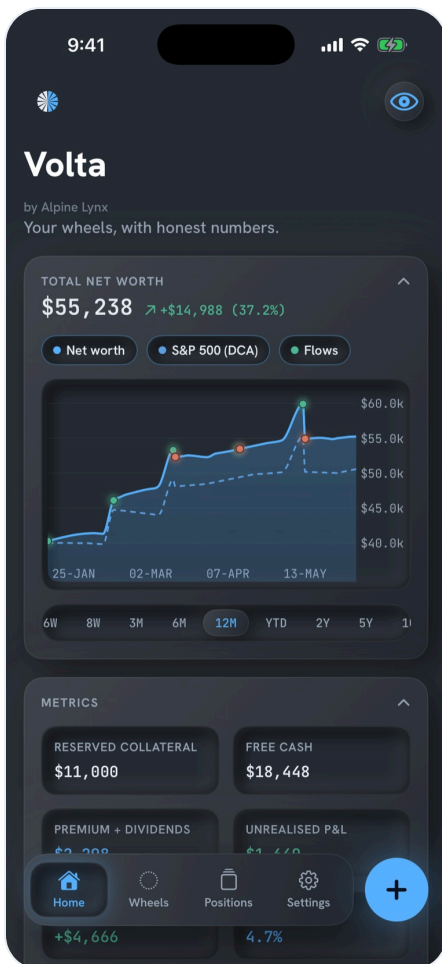


**FIGURE 7.3** Volta: the portfolio picture, on your device. · real screen, sample data

## Thank you

Thank you for reading this far. A question, an idea or a mistake you spotted? Write to me at

[info@alpinelynx.ch](mailto:info@alpinelynx.ch).

If you'd like Alpine Lynx news (new apps, guides and tools, tips), leave your email at [alpinelynx.ch/ebook](https://alpinelynx.ch/ebook). It's optional, and you can unsubscribe with one click.

**What you take from this chapter:** for tasks with sensitive data, use apps that keep everything on your phone. Before you put anyone's data into one, run the five checks: "App Privacy" in the App Store, the account, Aeroplane Mode, the backups and where the AI runs. That goes for mine too — search for them by name in the App Store.

## One last word

If you take only one thing from this guide, let it be this: **you don't have to do it all alone.** You now have three free helpers for texts and ideas, and apps that handle the rest without taking away your privacy. The time you gain is yours — for the business, for resting, for family.

Start small. Pick **one** recipe from this guide and use it this week. Just one. When you see it works, the rest comes on its own.

Good luck — and count on me.

— *Alpine Lynx* [info@alpinelynx.ch](mailto:info@alpinelynx.ch) · [alpinelynx.ch](http://alpinelynx.ch)

## Appendix A — Prompt library (copy and adapt)

All ready to paste. Where you see [ ... ], replace it with your own information. Remember the golden rule: **no other people's personal data**.

### Quotes and proposals

PROMPT

Write a professional, simple quote in English, as a table (description, quantity, unit price, total), with prices as [xxx] for me to fill in. Job: [description without names]. Business: [name]. Valid for 30 days. Don't make up prices, deadlines or guarantees.

PROMPT

Turn this quote into a proposal with 3 options (basic, recommended, full), for the customer to choose. Keep the prices as [xxx].  
Quote: [paste here].

## Emails and customer messages

PROMPT

Write a short, polite email in English to [confirm a booking / postpone a job / apologise for a delay]. Context: [...]. Warm and professional tone. Give me two versions: one more formal and one more informal.

PROMPT

Reminder for an unpaid invoice, in English. Give me 3 versions, from the gentlest to the firmest. Invoice for [amount] CHF, overdue by [no.] days, ref. [xxx].

## Social media

PROMPT

Based on this description of a photo from a job: [description]. Write 3 short posts in English for the business [name]: (1) pride in the work, (2) a useful tip for the customer, (3) an invitation to ask for a quote. Honest tone, 3-4 simple hashtags each.

PROMPT

Give me 10 post ideas for a [trade] business in Switzerland, that I can make with everyday photos. Short and realistic.

## Translations

PROMPT

Translate into [German/French], adapting it to sound natural in Switzerland (not word for word). It's from a business to a customer, warm and professional tone. Text: [in English].

PROMPT

Point out what doesn't sound natural to a [Swiss-German / Swiss-French] person, fix it and explain why in 1 line. If it all sounds fine, say so. Text: [...].

## Difficult letters

PROMPT

I got this letter in [German / French]. Tell me, in plain everyday English and point by point: who is sending it, what they want me to do, by when, how much I have to pay (if anything) and what happens if I don't reply. Next to each date and amount, copy the sentence from the letter. If anything is unclear, tell me instead of guessing. Letter: [WITHOUT people's names, addresses or personal numbers]

## Organisation

PROMPT

Summarise this chat as a to-do list (what, who, when). Mark anything still undecided with "TO DECIDE". [Paste WITHOUT names or personal data.]

PROMPT

Help me plan my week: organise these tasks by priority and suggest which day to do each. Tasks: [list].

## Learning

PROMPT

I want to learn how to [what you want to be able to do] so that I can [what it's for]. I'm a [your trade] and I'm starting from zero. Explain it one step at a time, with comparisons from my trade, and wait until I type "next".

PROMPT

I'm going to explain in my own words what I've learned about [topic]. Correct what's wrong and tell me what I missed. Then ask me 3 questions, one at a time, to see if it stuck.  
Explanation: [your explanation]

## Appendix B — Glossary (1 line each)

- **AI (Artificial Intelligence):** programs that write, summarise and translate from your instructions.
- **Prompt:** the instruction you write to the AI. The clearer it is, the better the answer.
- **Free account:** a no-cost version, with usage limits.
- **Orchestration:** using several tools together — draft in one, improve in another, check.
- **revDSG:** Switzerland's data protection law. It requires you to handle personal data with care.
- **On-device / on your phone:** data that stays on your device and doesn't go to servers.
- **Business glossary:** your list of terms always translated the same way.
- **Parameters (the "B"):** the "brain size" of a model, counted in billions. More = more capable, but heavier.
- **RAM / VRAM:** the computer's working memory (RAM) or the graphics card's (VRAM). It's where the model has to fit.
- **Local AI:** a model that runs on your computer or phone, without internet — nothing you write leaves the device.

- **Vision model (multimodal):** a model that also "sees" images — you show a photo and it reads the text or describes it.
- **OCR:** pulling the text out of an image (photo of an invoice, receipt, handwritten sheet).
- **Custom instructions:** a place in the AI's settings where you store who you are and how you want the answers, so you don't repeat the context in every conversation.
- **Base prompt:** a ready-made block with your business context that you paste at the start of conversations, always the same.
- **Training:** when the company that owns the tool uses conversations to teach the AI. Yours can be used too, if that option is switched on in the settings (check this in each tool).
- **Memory (of the AI):** what some tools store about you on their own, from one conversation to the next. Nothing to do with the RAM in Chapter 5.

## Appendix C — Useful links

- Claude — [claude.ai](https://claude.ai)
  - ChatGPT — [chatgpt.com](https://chatgpt.com)
  - Gemini — [gemini.google.com](https://gemini.google.com)
  - LM Studio (AI on your computer — the easiest; tells you if the model fits) — [lmstudio.ai](https://lmstudio.ai)
  - Ollama (AI on your computer — a lighter alternative, also with an app) — [ollama.com](https://ollama.com)
  - PocketPal AI (local AI on your phone — iPhone and Android) — App Store / Play Store
  - Google AI Edge Gallery (local AI on Android — Gemma model) — Play Store
  - Swiss rules (VAT, AVS, permits, deadlines) — the official portal [ch.ch](https://ch.ch) and your canton's website
  - Online and phone scams: warnings and where to report them — [bacs.admin.ch](https://bacs.admin.ch) (the federal cybersecurity office)
  - My apps — **Send Planning** · **QR Quota** · **Volta** — search for the name in the App Store
  - Alpine Lynx — [alpinelynx.ch](https://alpinelynx.ch) · [info@alpinelynx.ch](mailto:info@alpinelynx.ch)
-

*A free guide from Alpine Lynx. You're welcome to share it with anyone you like — anyone running a small business will thank you. Your data is yours; may it stay that way.*