

Prompting for Impact

Pocket reference card — pin next to your monitor

THE 4CS

Clear

What do I want, in what shape?

Constraints

What must (and must not) be true?

Context

What does Claude need to know?

Check

How will I verify the output?

THE 30-SECOND PRE-SEND CHECK

1. Audience named?
2. Format and length specified?
3. Persona assigned?
4. Must-haves and must-not-haves listed?
5. Compliance lens flagged?
6. Uncertainty handling stated?
7. Disagreement handling stated?

THE MASTER RULES

1. **Front-load:** audience, format, length, persona, constraints.
2. **One brief**, not six messages.
3. **Challenge the maths**, always.
4. **Quote or flag** — no claim without a verifiable source.
5. **Two contexts beat one** — critique in a new chat.
6. **Save what works** — promptbook discipline compounds.
7. **You are accountable** — never copy-paste raw output.

THE THREE HABITS THAT MATTER MOST

1. Save your context block in a Project.
2. Run the 30-second check before send.
3. Critique drafts in a new chat, not the same one.