

FREE AI TOOLS STARTER PACK

A short list you can start today.

Fifteen tools with a real free plan, grouped by the job in front of you. Try one on work you already have. Keep it if you come back to it.

Choose one job you already do: research, writing, a graphic, a short video, or connecting two apps.

Open the tool in that section and try it on something you need to finish today.

Keep what you reach for again. Leave the rest. There is no prize for using more tools.

Research and answers

Perplexity Yes



When you want an answer with sources, without bouncing between tabs.

ChatGPT Yes



When you need a first draft, a plan, or a quick look at a question.

Google Gemini Yes



When your work already lives in Docs, Gmail, Sheets, or Drive.

NotebookLM Yes



When you already have notes or PDFs and want them explained back to you.

Claude Yes



When the piece is long, or you want a rewrite that still sounds like you.

Writing and marketing

Grammarly Yes



When a client will read it and you want a last pass on the wording.

Buffer Yes



When you want posts queued without opening five different apps.

Canva Magic Studio Yes



When you need a social graphic and you do not have a designer on hand.

Images and video

Ideogram Yes



When the image needs words in it, like an ad or a thumbnail.

CapCut Yes



When you are cutting a short video for social.

Leonardo AI Yes



When you want a concept or a product-style visual, and the free tier is enough to try.

Descript Yes



When you would rather edit from the transcript, or tidy a podcast recording.

Automation and ops

Zapier Yes (limited)



When two apps should talk to each other. Start with one zap.

Notion AI Yes (limited)



When notes, SOPs, and light docs should live in one place.

Make Yes (limited)



When a simple zap is not enough and you want to see the whole flow.

First week

Day 1

Ask [Perplexity](#) or [NotebookLM](#) a question you actually need answered.

Day 2

Draft an email or a short proposal in [ChatGPT](#) or [Claude](#). Read it before you send it.

Day 3

Create one graphic you can post, in [Canva Magic Studio](#) or [Ideogram](#).

Day 4

Trim a short video in [CapCut](#), or clean up a recording in [Descript](#).

Day 5

Connect two apps you already use with [Zapier](#) or [Make](#). One flow is enough.

If three of these stick, you are in good shape.

Rules of thumb

Try the free plan first. Pay when you are already using the tool, not because a pricing page looked exciting.

One tool per job. Stay with it until the work feels easy. Switch when it gets in the way, not because something new launched.

This is a start. The list is here so you can begin. Future Systems is for the system around the tools, when you want that.