



Artificial Intelligence for Lifelong Learners

Welcome to our comprehensive guide designed to demystify artificial intelligence and show you practical applications that can enhance your daily life. Our goal is to help you stay relevant in today's digital world, bridge generational gaps, and protect yourself from emerging threats. No technical background required—just bring your curiosity!

Presenter: Deacon Larry M. Deschaine, PhD

Leader: Indigenous Peoples Ministry - Diocese of Charleston

Team Lead: Data Sciences - Savannah River National Laboratory

Contact: Larry.M.Deschaine@alum.mit.edu

Center for Lifelong Learning @ USC-Aiken

Updated for the Spring 2026 classes (presentation is free to share)

Course Overview

This 2-hour course is designed specifically for lifelong learners and seniors who want to understand the basics of artificial intelligence in a friendly, approachable way.

We'll cover everything from what AI actually is to how you can use it safely in your everyday life.

Our approach focuses on practical applications and real-world examples rather than technical jargon.

By the end, you'll feel confident navigating this technology that's becoming increasingly important in our daily lives.

Duration

2 hours (two 1-hour sessions)

Format

Presentation with Open Questions Throughout

Prerequisite

None! Just bring your curiosity

What We'll Cover Today

01

Understanding AI Basics

What artificial intelligence is (and isn't) and how it's already part of your daily life

02

Practical AI Tools

Introduction to user-friendly AI assistants, image creators, and organizational tools

03

Critical Thinking Skills

How to evaluate AI responses and recognize potential limitations

04

Safety & Protection

Identifying AI-powered scams and strategies to keep yourself and your family safe

05

Next Steps

Resources for continued learning and building your AI confidence

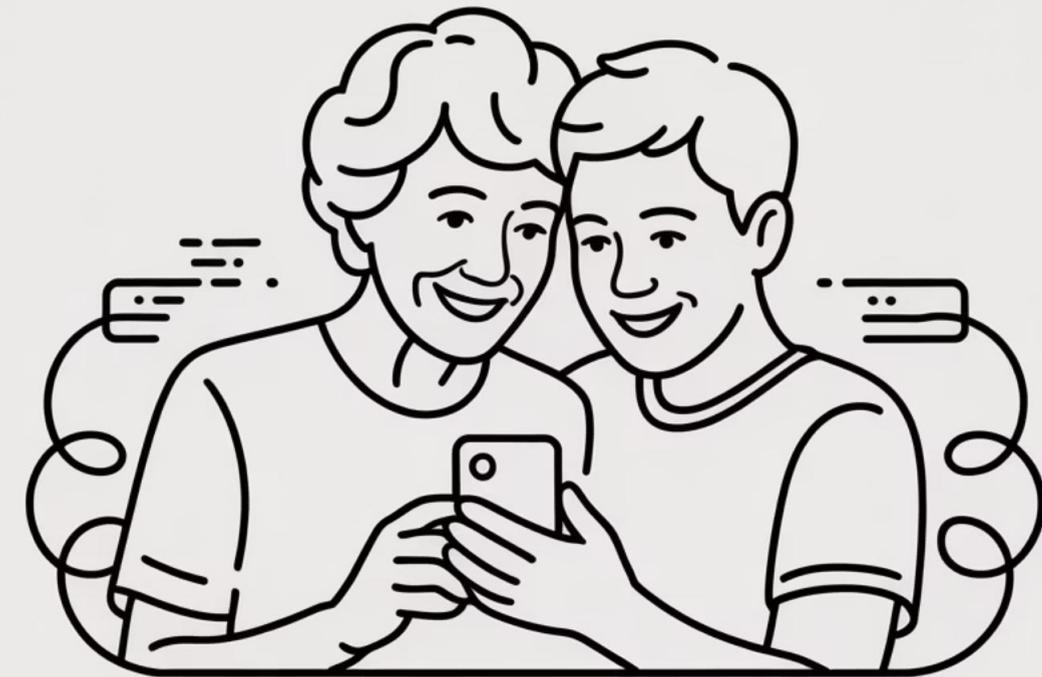
Why This Matters

Understanding artificial intelligence isn't just about keeping up with technology—it's about maintaining meaningful connections across generations.

When your grandchildren talk about using ChatGPT for homework or show you AI-generated images, you'll be able to engage in those conversations with confidence.

More importantly, as AI becomes increasingly embedded in our daily lives, having this knowledge will help you make informed decisions and protect yourself from potential risks.

AI literacy helps bridge generational gaps and strengthens family bonds.



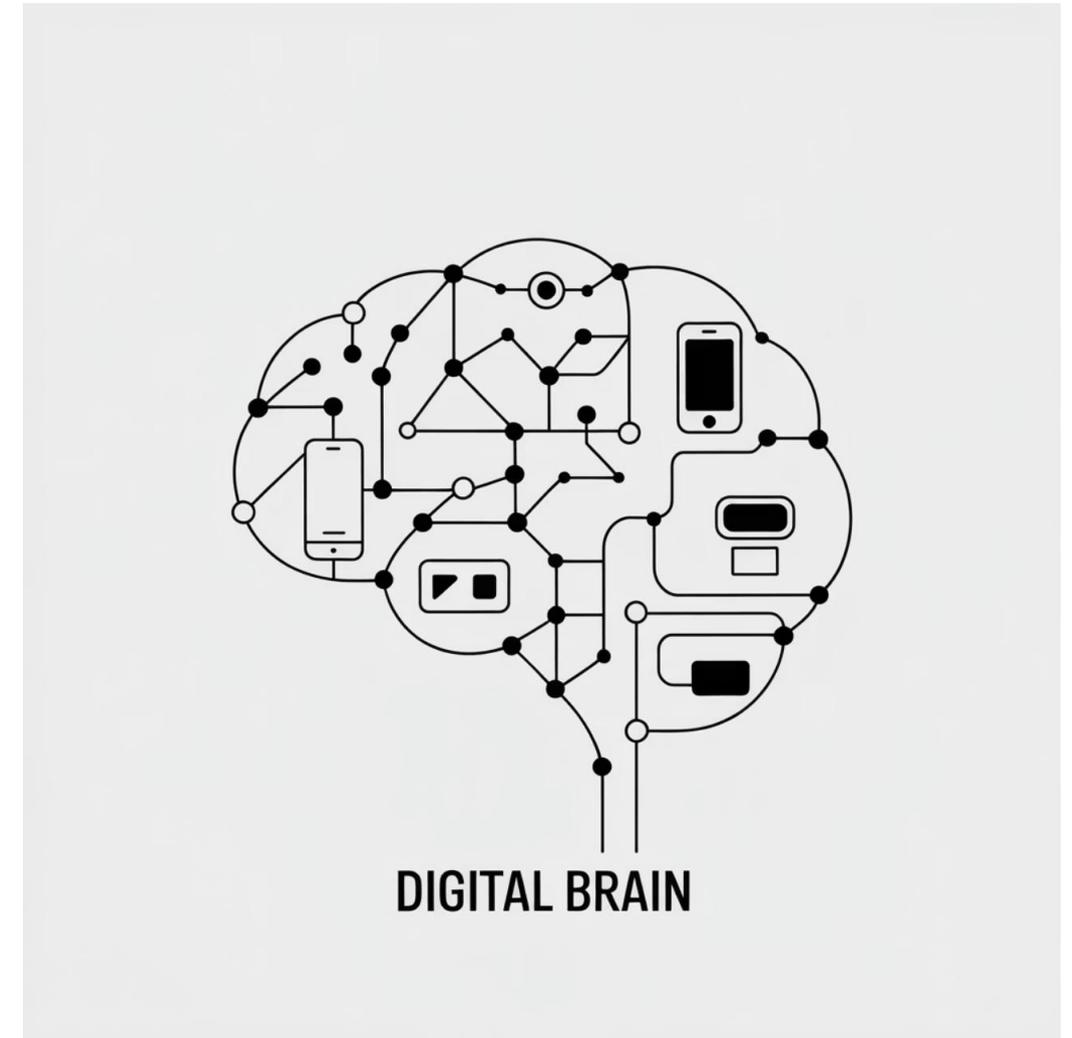
**Happy Birthday,
Grandson**

What is Artificial Intelligence?

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is technology that can perform tasks that typically require human intelligence. Think of it as computer programs that can "learn," make decisions, and improve over time.

Unlike traditional software that follows specific instructions, AI systems can analyze patterns in data, adapt to new information, and sometimes even appear to "think" creatively.

The most important thing to remember is that AI is a tool created by humans to solve problems and make certain tasks easier—it's not magic or science fiction, but rather sophisticated software with both capabilities and limitations.



AI is Already in Your Life



Smartphones

Predictive text suggests words as you type, voice assistants like Siri respond to commands, and photo apps automatically organize pictures by recognizing faces and places.



Smart TVs

Streaming services like Netflix and YouTube analyze your viewing habits to recommend shows and movies you might enjoy—that's AI working behind the scenes.



Online Shopping

When Amazon suggests products "you might also like" or shows you personalized deals, that's AI analyzing your browsing and purchase history to make predictions.



Healthcare

From appointment scheduling systems to medication reminders, AI helps manage aspects of healthcare. Even some medical devices use AI to improve accuracy.

You're already interacting with AI dozens of times daily, often without realizing it!

Why Learn About AI Now?

Staying Connected

87% of young adults use AI tools regularly. Understanding these technologies helps you relate to younger generations and participate in meaningful conversations about digital life.

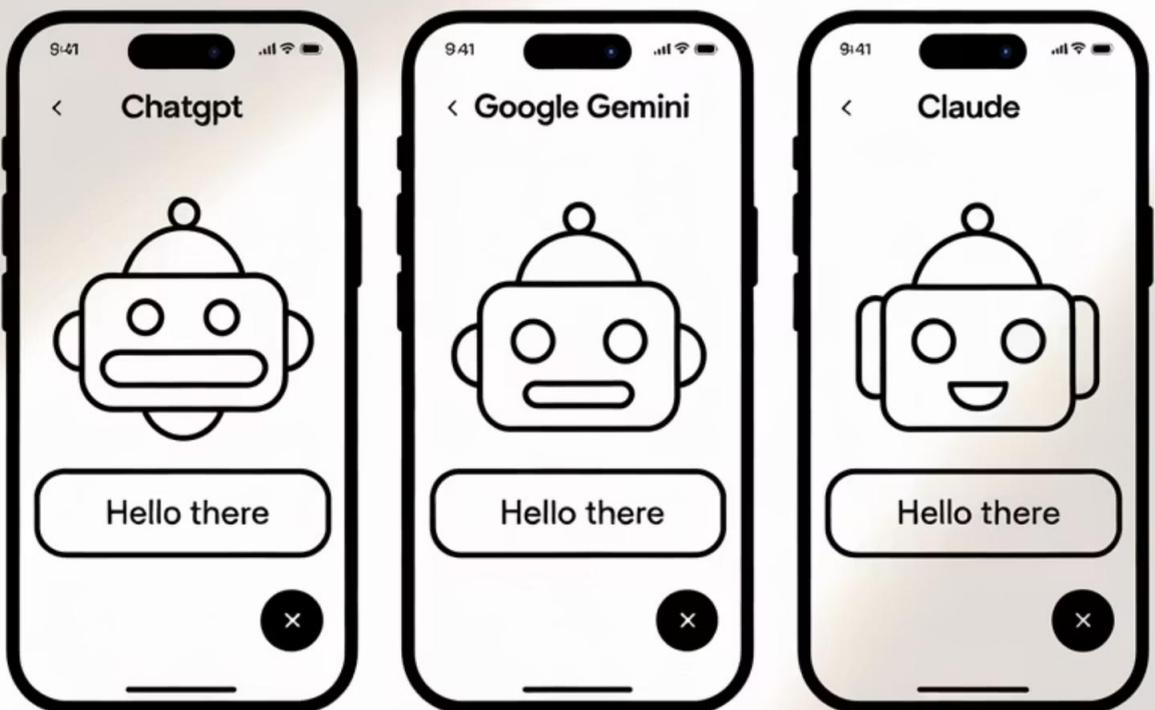
Maintaining Independence

AI literacy empowers you to make informed decisions about which technologies to adopt and how to use them safely, preserving your autonomy in an increasingly digital world.

Protection from Scams

As AI-powered scams become more sophisticated, understanding how this technology works is your first line of defense against deception and fraud.





The Big Three AI Assistants

Let's explore the most popular AI assistants available today. Think of these as digital helpers that can answer questions, generate content, and assist with various tasks through conversation.

These AI assistants can help with everything from answering questions and creative writing to research and planning. The good news is that all three offer free versions, so you can try them without any cost!

ChatGPT

What it does:

ChatGPT is a conversational AI that can answer questions, assist with writing, provide explanations, and help with creative tasks.

It's designed to be easy to use—you simply type questions or requests in natural language, just like texting a friend.

Best for:

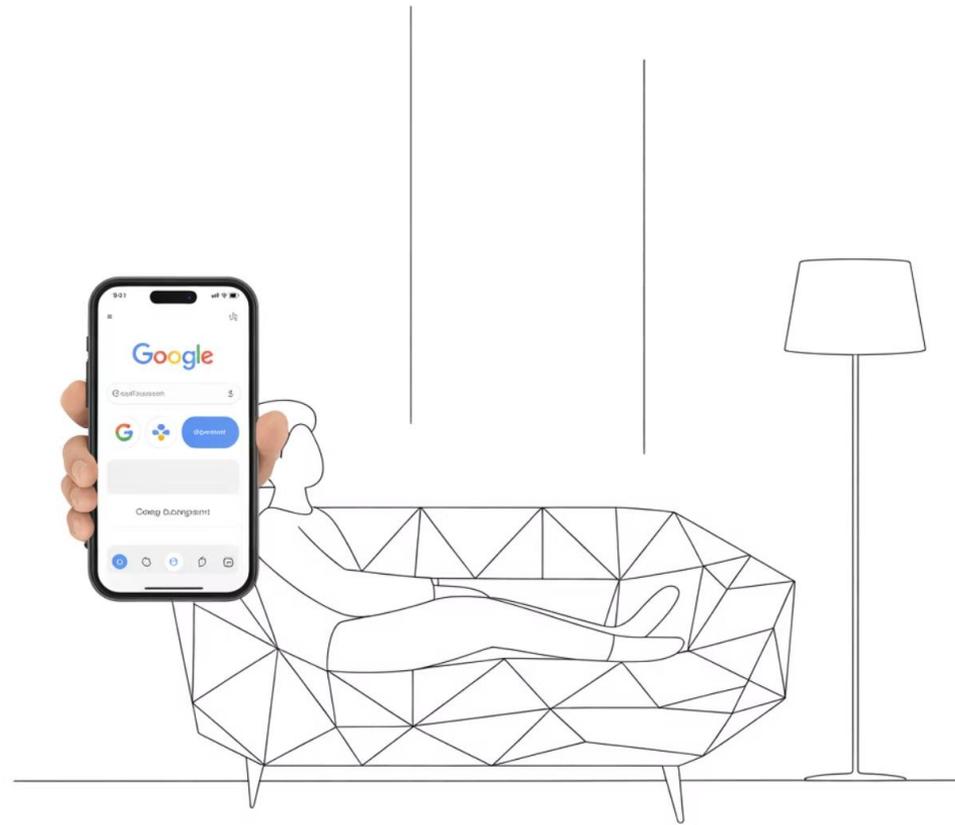
- General questions on almost any topic
- Creative writing assistance (poems, stories, letters)
- Learning explanations of complex topics
- Planning assistance (travel itineraries, meal plans)

Cost: Free version available, \$20/month (and more) for premium features



Access ChatGPT at chat.openai.com
or download the mobile app.

Google Gemini



What it does:

Google's AI assistant integrates with Google services like Search, Gmail, and Maps. It can provide information, translate languages, and help organize information across Google's ecosystem.

Best for:

- Research that benefits from Google's vast knowledge
- Translations between languages
- Tasks that connect with other Google services
- Visual analysis (it can "see" images you upload)

Cost: Free with Google account, premium features available

Gemini integrates seamlessly with other Google services you might already use.

Claude

What it does:

Claude specializes in thoughtful analysis, reasoning, and processing longer documents.

It's known for its nuanced responses and ability to understand complex instructions.

Best for:

- Analyzing lengthy documents
- Detailed, thoughtful responses to complex questions
- Tasks requiring careful reasoning
- Explanations that prioritize accuracy and safety

Cost: Free tier available, \$20/month for professional features



Claude is accessible at claude.ai and doesn't require downloading any software.

Also has an app for your smart phone

Which AI Assistant Should You Try First?

For General Exploration

Start with **ChatGPT**, which offers the most user-friendly experience for beginners. Its interface is straightforward, and it's excellent for a wide range of general questions.

For Google Users

Gemini makes sense if you already use Google services like Gmail or Google Drive, as it integrates well with these tools and feels familiar.

For Complex Analysis

Try **Claude** if you're interested in detailed analysis of documents or need especially thoughtful, nuanced responses to complicated questions.

Our recommendation: Try all three free versions!

Each has different strengths, and you'll quickly discover which feels most natural and helpful for your specific needs.

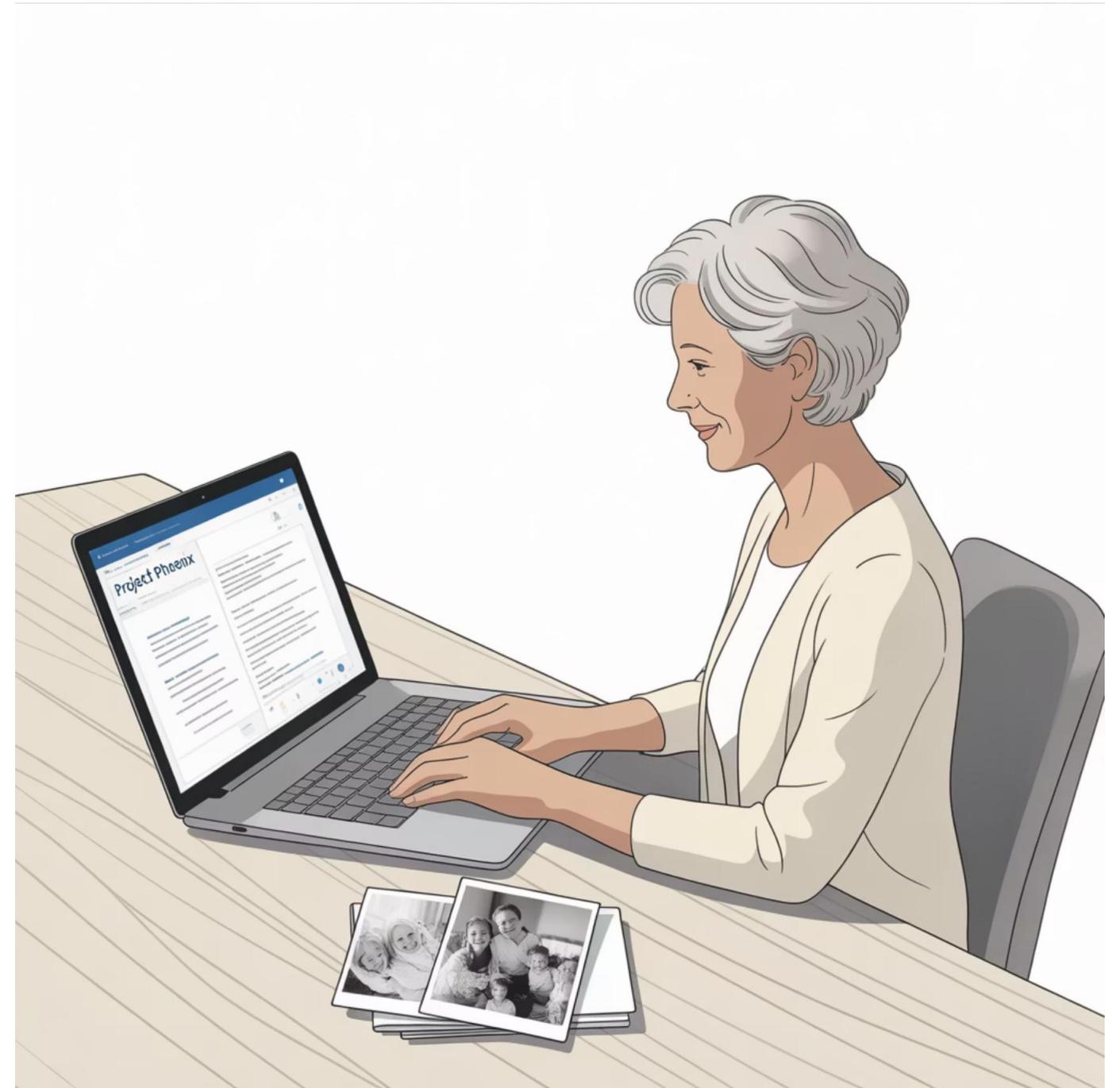
Google's NotebookLM - Your AI Research Assistant

NotebookLM is a free AI-powered research tool that helps you organize and explore information from various sources.

It's especially useful for personal research projects.

Key features:

- Upload documents, PDFs, and web articles
- Ask questions about your uploaded content
- Get AI-generated summaries and insights
- Create audio versions you can listen to
- Organize notes and research in one place



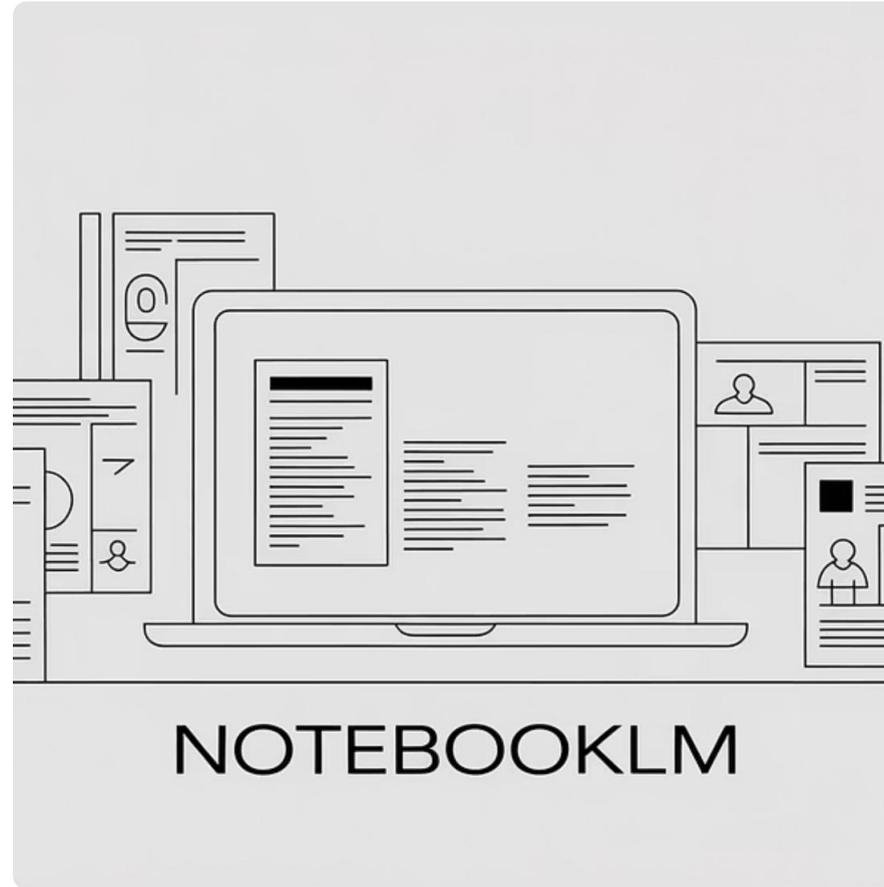
NotebookLM is particularly valuable for organizing family history, health information,

NotebookLM Practical Applications



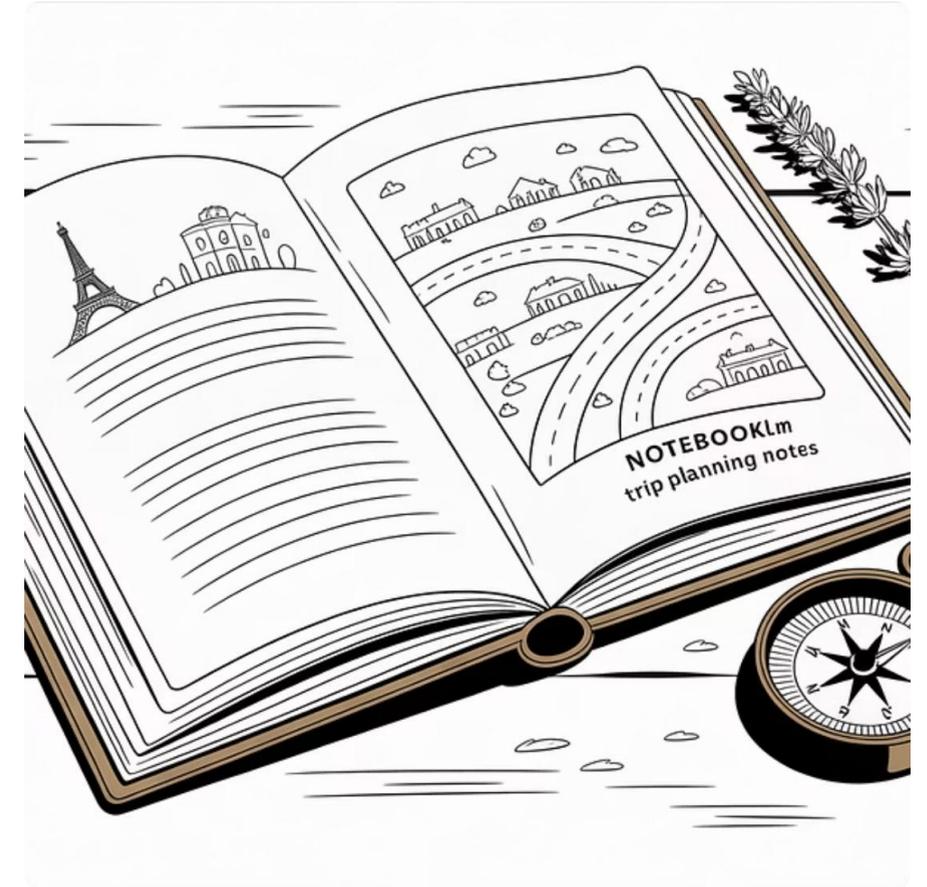
Family History

Upload family documents, letters, and histories. Ask NotebookLM questions about your ancestors or create a narrative timeline of family events.



Health Information

Organize and better understand medical information. Upload health articles and ask questions to clarify complex terms (always consult healthcare professionals for medical advice).

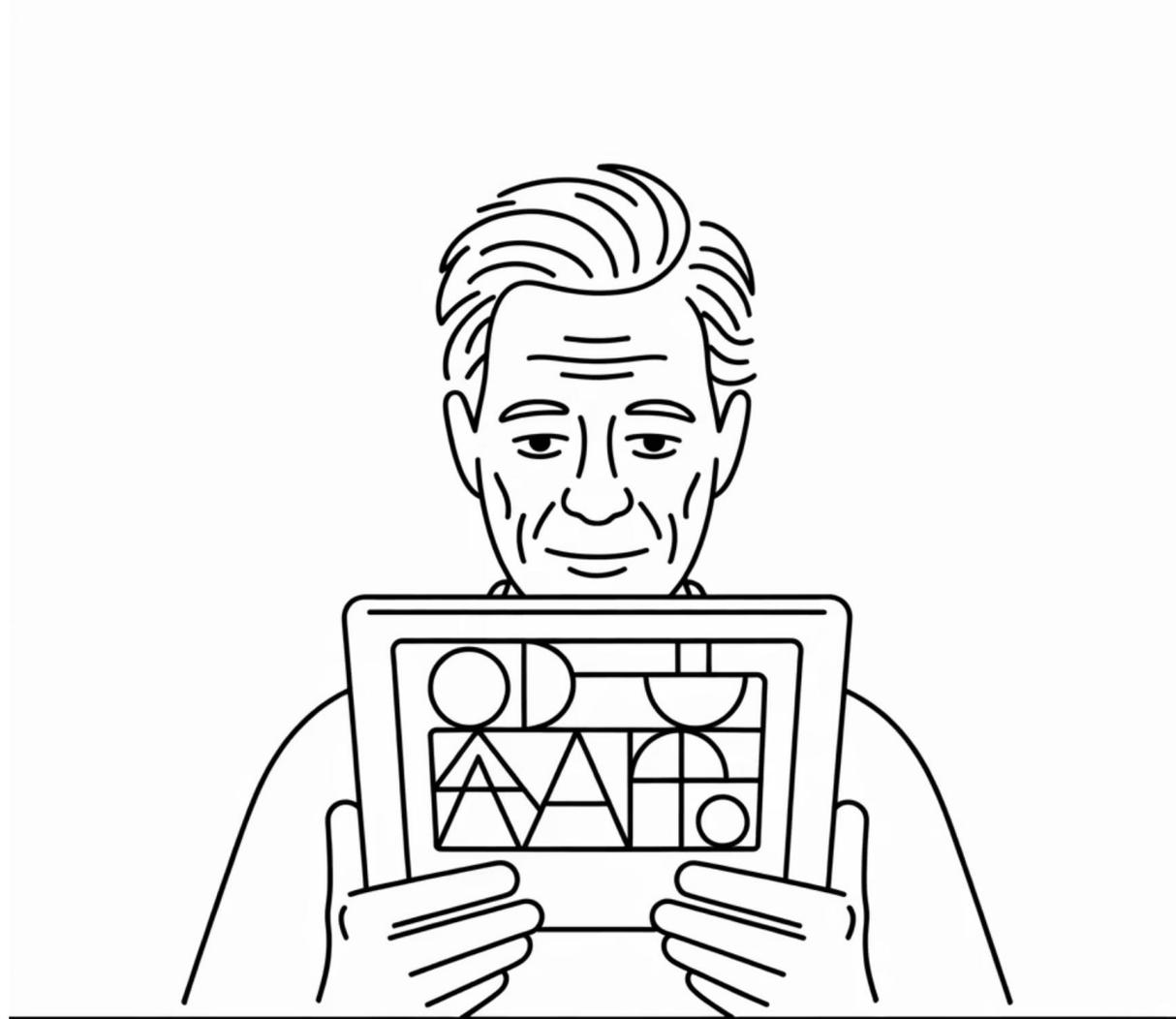


Trip Planning

Upload travel guides, reviews, and itineraries. Ask NotebookLM to create custom recommendations based on your interests and mobility needs.

AI for Creative Expression

Image Generation Tools



AI image generators can create original artwork based on your text descriptions.

Popular Tools:

- **DALL-E 3:** Creates detailed, realistic images from text descriptions. Available through ChatGPT Plus (\$20/month) or Microsoft Bing (free)
- **Midjourney:** Produces artistic, stylized images with a creative flair. Subscription required (\$10/month)

Fun Applications:

- Custom holiday greeting cards
- Personalized gifts with family portraits
- Visual aids for storytelling
- Creative projects with grandchildren

Voice AI Technology

ElevenLabs - AI Voice Generation

This technology converts written text into remarkably natural-sounding speech in over 70 languages. It's like having a professional narrator for any text.

Practical Applications:

- Create audiobooks of family stories or histories
- Generate audio versions of articles for easier consumption
- Assist those with reading difficulties
- Preserve family narratives in audio format

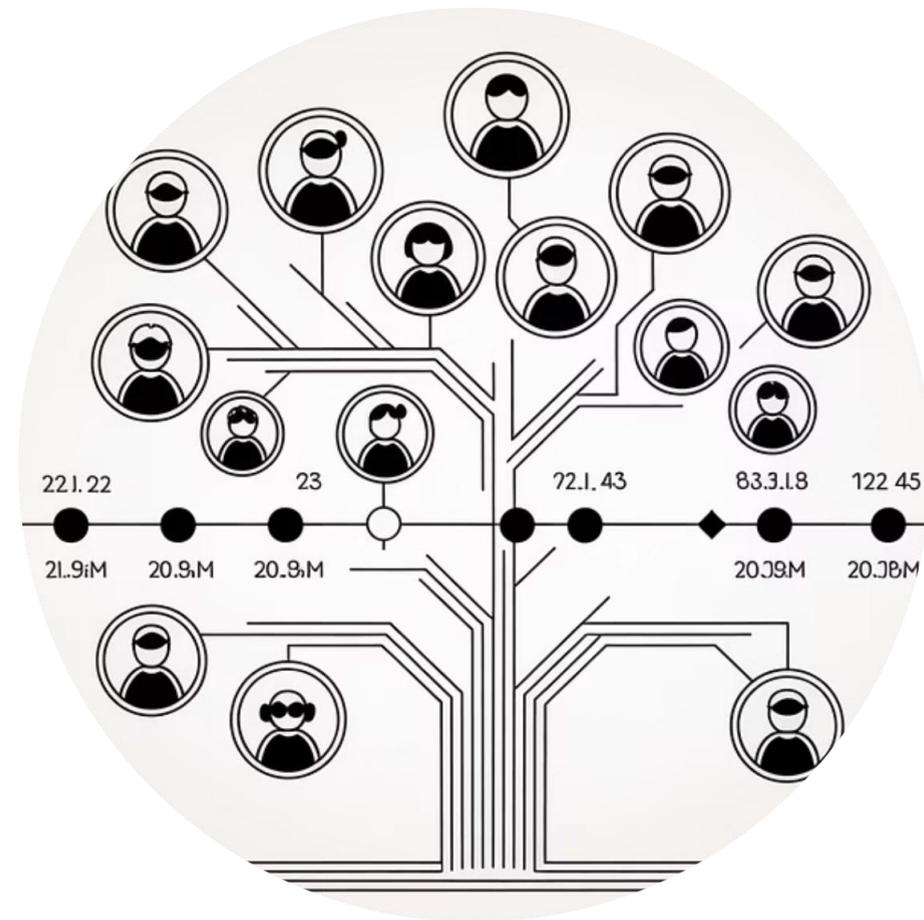
Cost: Free tier available (limited usage), paid plans start at \$5/month



Voice AI can make text more accessible and help preserve family stories for future generations.

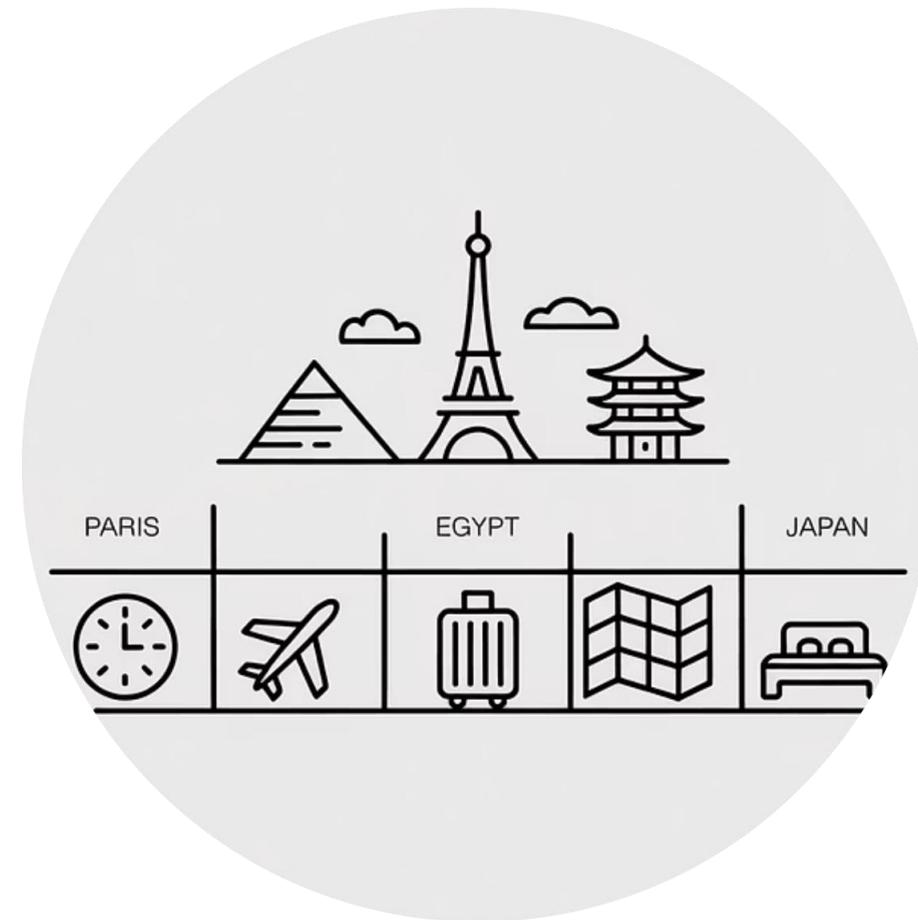
Gamma AI for Lifelong Learners

Practical Applications



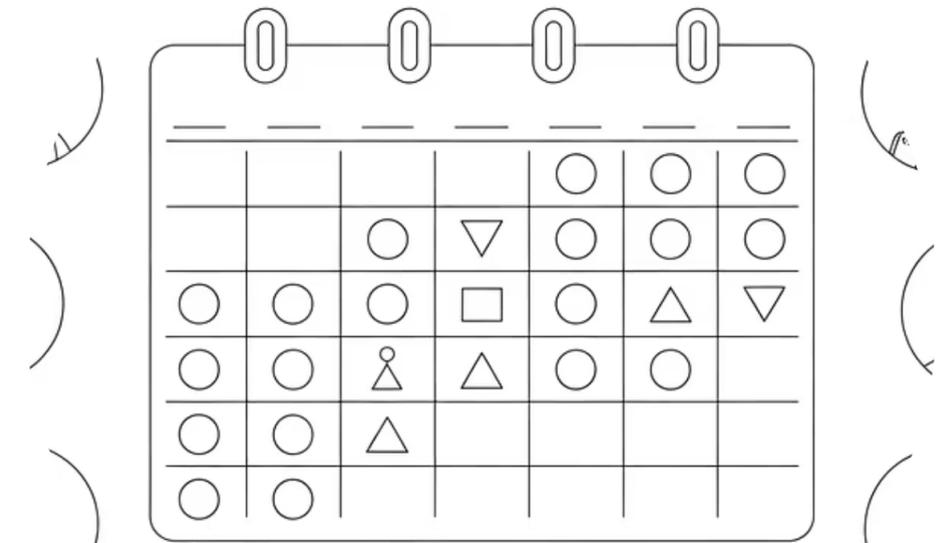
Family Histories

Create engaging visual presentations of family stories, genealogy research, and historical events. Add photos, timelines, and maps to bring family heritage to life for younger generations.



Trip Planning

Organize travel plans into visual itineraries complete with maps, accommodation details, and sightseeing recommendations. Share with travel companions or family members to keep everyone informed.



Community Involvement

Create professional-looking presentations for clubs, religious organizations, or volunteer groups. Design announcements, event schedules, or educational materials with minimal effort.

Gamma's interface is designed to be user-friendly, making it accessible even for those with limited technology experience.

AI Image Generation

Practical Applications:

- Custom greeting cards
- Illustrations for family stories
- Visual aids for presentations or teaching
- Unique artwork for home decoration
- Creative projects with grandchildren



Voice AI for Accessibility

1

Reading Assistance

Convert articles, books, or documents into natural-sounding audio you can listen to while doing other activities. Particularly helpful for those with vision impairments or reading difficulties.

2

Language Practice

Hear correct pronunciations of words in different languages. Use voice AI to practice conversations or improve pronunciation in language learning efforts.

3

Family Projects

Create audio narratives for family photo albums or history projects. Record family stories in multiple voices for a more engaging listening experience.

4

Personalized Audiobooks

Convert favorite books or personal writings into audiobooks read in a voice you enjoy. Share these audio creations with family members who prefer listening to reading.



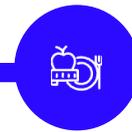
AI for Family Organization



Cozi Family Organizer

A color-coded family calendar app that keeps everyone on the same page. Share shopping lists, to-do lists, and meal plans in one place.

AI features help suggest meal plans and organize activities.



AI Meal Planning

Ask ChatGPT to create weekly meal plans based on dietary needs, preferences, and what's in your pantry.

It can generate shopping lists and even estimate costs to help with budgeting.



Google Assistant

Voice-controlled reminders, timers, and information.

Set medication reminders, control smart home devices, or get answers to questions—all hands-free with simple voice commands.

These tools can simplify coordination with family members and help maintain independence.



The Importance of AI Literacy

Empowerment

Knowledge about AI allows you to make informed decisions about which technologies to use and how to use them effectively. You maintain control rather than feeling overwhelmed.

Safety

Understanding AI's capabilities and limitations helps you recognize potential risks, protect your personal information, and avoid AI-powered scams.

Connection

AI literacy bridges generational gaps, enabling meaningful conversations with tech-savvy family members and creating opportunities for shared activities.

AI literacy isn't about becoming a technology expert—it's about having enough knowledge to navigate today's digital world confidently and safely.

Now Let's Talk About Safety

The Critical Question: Can You Trust AI?

As we move into the next part of our course, we'll focus on developing critical thinking skills to evaluate AI responses. While AI tools are incredibly useful, they have important limitations you should understand.

You'll learn:

- How to verify information from AI sources
- Common mistakes AI systems make
- How to protect yourself from AI-powered scams
- When to trust AI and when to seek human expertise



The Reality Check

AI Can Be Wrong

AI systems sometimes provide incorrect information (called "hallucinations") with complete confidence. They can make up facts, dates, or statistics that sound plausible but are entirely fictional.

AI Reflects Biases

These systems learn from existing data, which means they can reflect and amplify societal biases—including ageism. They may not represent the perspectives of older adults accurately.

AI Has Limited Context

AI doesn't truly understand the world like humans do. It lacks common sense, real-world experience, and the ability to judge importance based on context.

The Golden Rule: Trust but verify --- or--- Verify then Trust!!!

Always double-check important information.

Common AI Mistakes and Limitations



What AI Gets Wrong:

- **Outdated Information:**
 - AI training data has cutoff dates (which vary and change when models are updated)
- **Made-up "Facts":**
 - AI can confidently present fictional information as truth
- **Mathematical Errors:**
 - AI often makes mistakes with calculations and statistics
- **Bias:**
 - May reflect societal prejudices, including ageism
- **Context Misunderstanding:**
 - Misses nuances that humans easily grasp

Even the most advanced AI systems have significant limitations you should be aware of.

The VERIFY Method

A Framework for Checking AI Responses

1

Verify with reliable sources

Cross-check information from government websites (.gov), established news outlets, academic institutions (.edu), or recognized experts in the field.

2

Examine multiple sources

Don't rely on a single source. Look for consistency across several reputable sources before accepting information as accurate.

3

Review the source's credibility

Consider who created the information. Do they have appropriate expertise? Do they have potential biases or conflicts of interest?

4

Investigate recency of information

Check when the information was published. For many topics, more recent information is more reliable, especially in rapidly changing fields.

5

Find original data for statistics

When AI provides statistics or numerical claims, try to locate the original research or data source rather than accepting the numbers at face value.

6

Yield to professional advice

For medical, financial, or legal information, always consult qualified professionals rather than relying solely on AI-generated advice.

Red Flags - When to Be Extra Cautious

Be especially skeptical when AI provides information in these high-stakes areas:

Medical advice or diagnosis

AI is not a doctor and shouldn't replace professional medical consultation. It may miss critical context about your specific health situation.

Financial investment recommendations

AI lacks understanding of your complete financial picture and can't provide truly personalized financial advice based on your goals.

Legal advice

Legal matters are complex and jurisdiction-specific. AI may miss critical nuances that could have serious consequences.

Information that seems too good to be true

If the AI provides information that seems surprisingly positive or convenient, it deserves extra scrutiny.

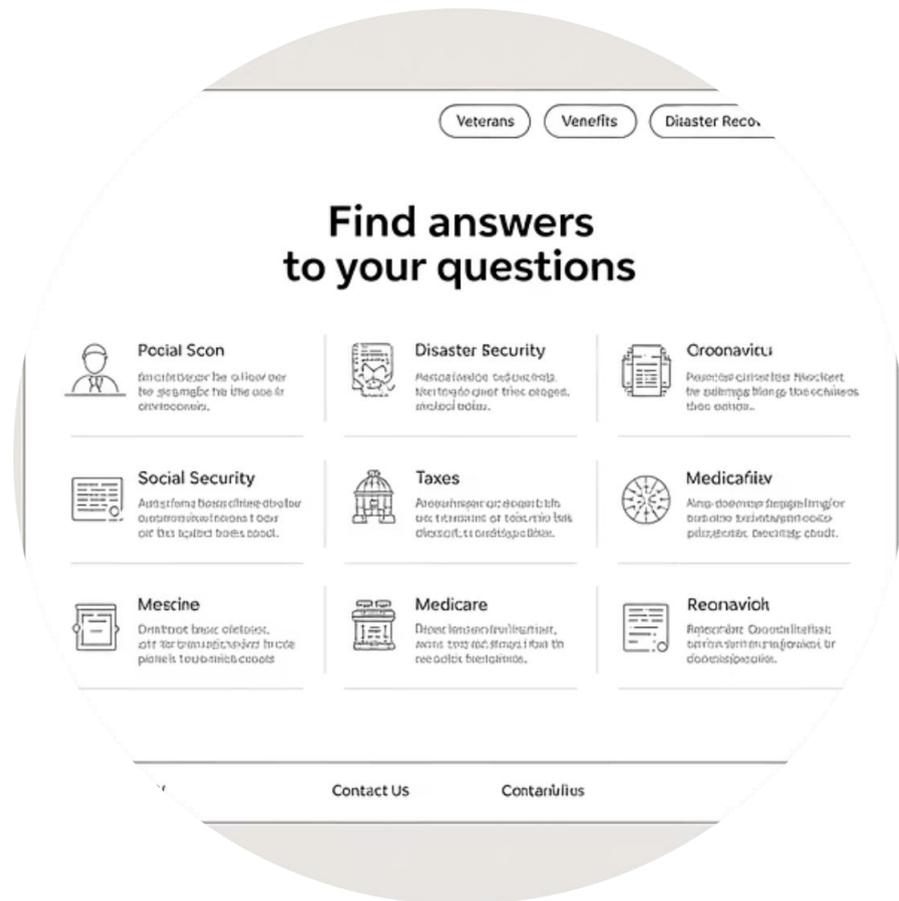


DIGITAL SAFETY

Remember: AI systems are designed to provide

⊗ answers even when they don't know something. They rarely say "I don't know" unless specifically programmed to do so.

Fact-Checking Tools and Resources



Government Websites

Sites ending in .gov are official government sources. Examples include CDC.gov for health information, Medicare.gov for insurance questions, and SSA.gov for Social Security details.

When in doubt, consult multiple sources before making important decisions based on AI-provided information.



Fact-Checking Sites

Snopes.com, FactCheck.org, and PolitiFact examine popular claims and rate their accuracy. These sites employ professional fact-checkers who investigate claims methodically.



Established Authorities

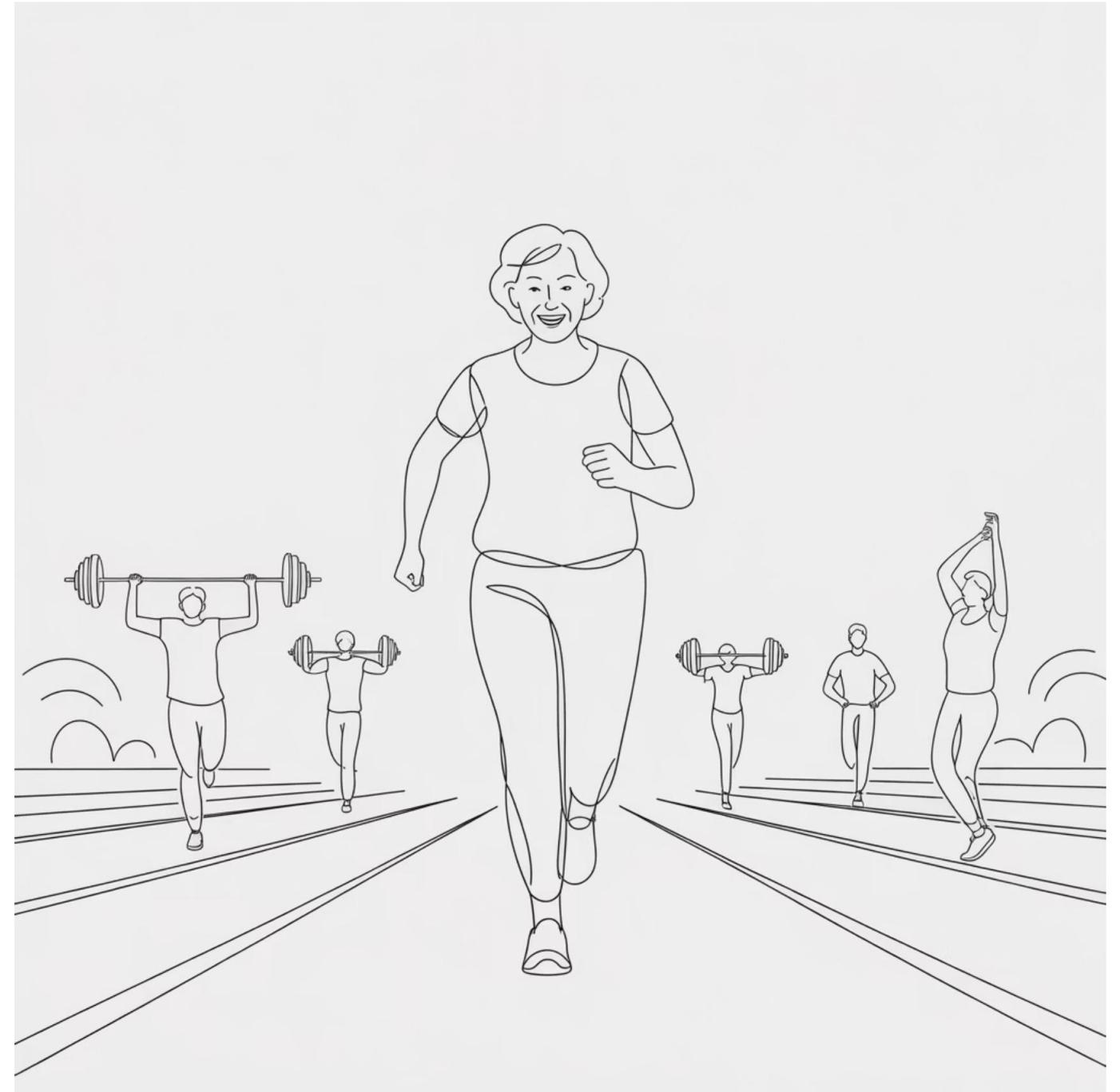
For health information, sites like MayoClinic.org or NIH.gov provide reliable information. For consumer issues, Consumer Reports or the Better Business Bureau offer trustworthy guidance.

Understanding AI Bias

Potential Types of Bias Affecting Seniors:

- **Age bias:** AI systems might reflect younger perspectives and may exclude or misrepresent older adults' experiences
- **Representation bias:** Training data might typically contain less information about seniors, making AI less accurate for this demographic
- **Historical bias:** AI can perpetuate past discrimination patterns if they exist in training data

AI systems might perpetuate stereotypes about aging rather than representing the diverse realities of older adults' lives.



AI Cannot Do Everything

Some Important Potential Limitations to Remember



Empathy and Emotional Understanding

AI cannot truly understand emotions or provide genuine empathy. It can simulate caring responses, but doesn't actually feel or comprehend human experiences.



Common Sense Reasoning

AI lacks the intuitive understanding of the world that humans develop through experience. It struggles with obvious (to humans) logical conclusions in new situations.



True Creativity

While AI can generate content that appears creative, it's ultimately recombining patterns from existing works rather than creating truly original ideas based on lived experience.



Moral and Ethical Judgment

AI has no inherent moral compass or ethical framework. It can't make value judgments about what's right or wrong beyond what it's been programmed to recognize.

The Growing Threat: AI-Powered Scams

Scammers are increasingly using AI technology to create more convincing and personalized deceptions.

According to the Federal Trade Commission, approximately 42.5% of fraud attempts now incorporate some form of AI technology.

New Scam Techniques:

- **Voice cloning:** Creating fake distress calls that sound exactly like family members
- **Deepfake videos:** Synthetic videos showing people saying or doing things they never did
- **Hyper-personalized phishing:** Emails that use personal details gleaned from social media to appear legitimate
- **Chatbot impersonation:** Scammers pretending to be AI assistants from legitimate companies



Scammers specifically target older adults, who lose an estimated \$3 billion annually to fraud according to the FBI.

Protecting Yourself: The SAFE Strategy

Skeptical mindset

Question unexpected requests for money or personal information, especially those creating urgency or fear. If something seems off, trust your instincts—they're usually right!

Authenticate identity

Never use the contact information provided in a suspicious message. Instead, look up the official number for the organization and call them directly to verify.

Family code words

Establish secret phrases with family members that a scammer wouldn't know. If someone claiming to be family doesn't know the code word, be extremely cautious.

Expert consultation

Before making significant financial decisions or sharing sensitive information, consult with a trusted advisor, family member, or financial professional.

Voice Cloning Scams

A Growing Threat to Families

How It Works:

Modern AI can clone a voice using just 3 seconds of audio. Scammers obtain voice samples from social media videos, voicemail greetings, or phone calls, then create convincing fake emergency calls.

Common Scenario:

You receive a distressed call that sounds exactly like your grandchild claiming they're in jail or the hospital and need money immediately. The voice is identical, creating immediate emotional distress that bypasses rational thinking.

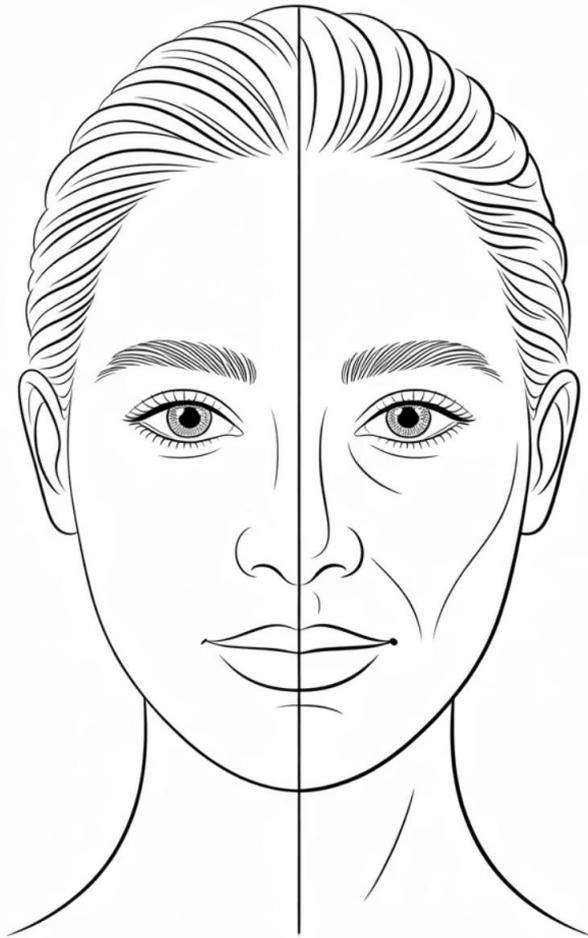
Protection Strategy:

- Establish family code words that only real family members would know
- Always hang up and call back on a known number
- Ask personal verification questions only the real person could answer



If you receive a distress call from a "family member," always hang up and call them back on their known number to verify.

Deepfake Detection Tips



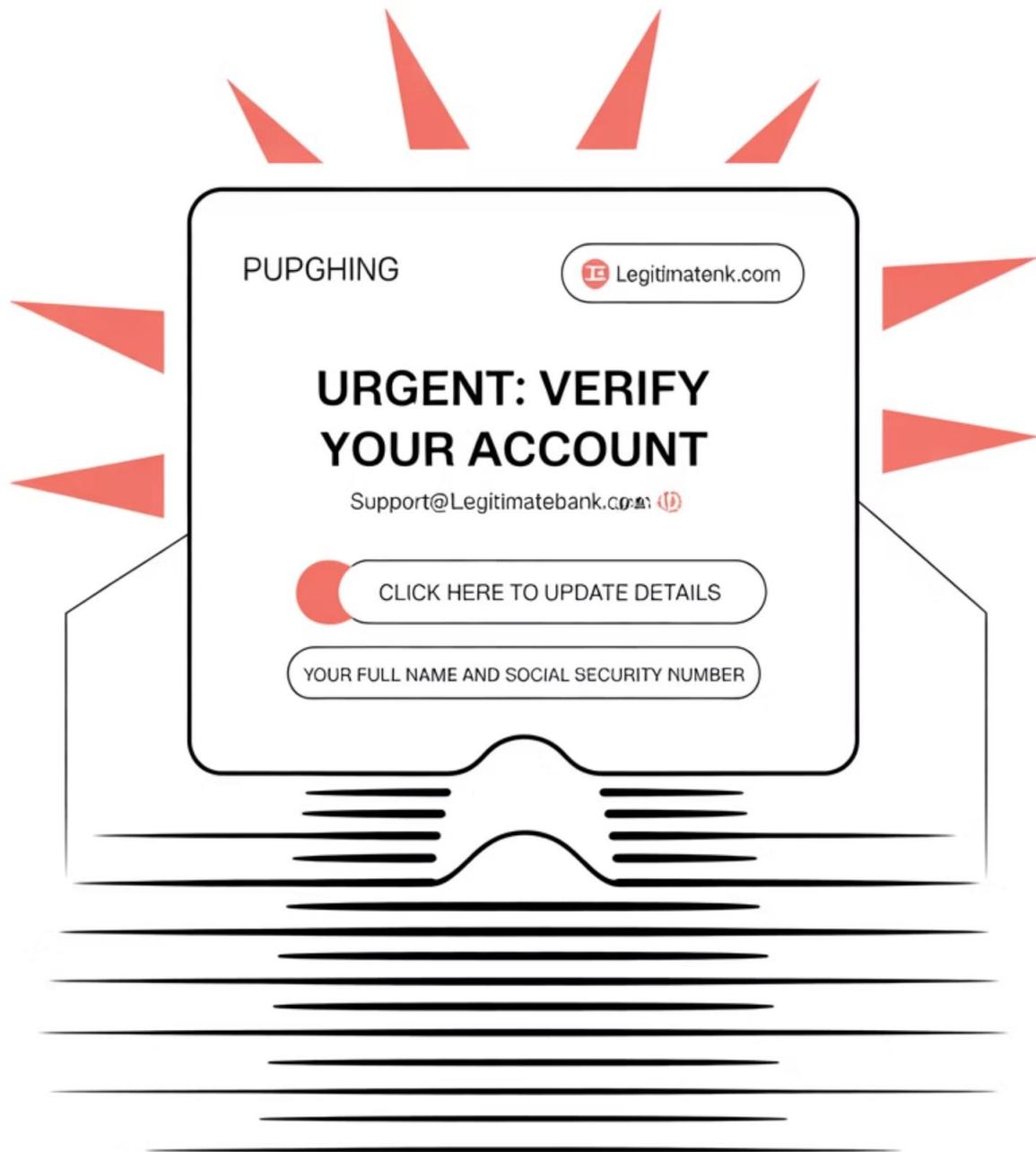
Warning Signs of Fake Videos/Images:

- **Unnatural eye movements** - Eyes that don't blink normally or move in strange patterns
- **Inconsistent lighting or shadows** - Shadows falling in impossible directions
- **Audio-visual mismatches** - Lip movements that don't perfectly match the words being spoken
- **Unnatural skin texture** - Skin that looks too smooth or has strange patterns
- **Distorted backgrounds** - Areas around the person that warp or blur unnaturally

The Golden Rule: If you receive a video that seems suspicious or shows someone acting out of character, [verify through other channels](#) before taking any action.

Learning to spot the warning signs of manipulated videos can help protect you from scams.

Email and Text Scam Protection



Red Flags in Messages

- Urgent requests requiring immediate action
- Unexpected messages about accounts or problems you didn't know about
- Requests for personal information, passwords, or financial details
- Poor grammar despite claiming to be from reputable organizations
- Generic greetings (like "Dear Customer") from companies that should know your name

Protection Actions

- Never click links in suspicious emails or texts
- Go directly to the official website by typing the address yourself
- Call the organization using the number from their official website
- Check email sender addresses carefully for slight misspellings
- Use the "hover test" - hover over links to see where they actually lead

Building Your AI Critical Thinking Skills

Daily Practice:

Question sources

For any important information, ask "Where did this come from?" and "How do they know this?"

Cross-reference

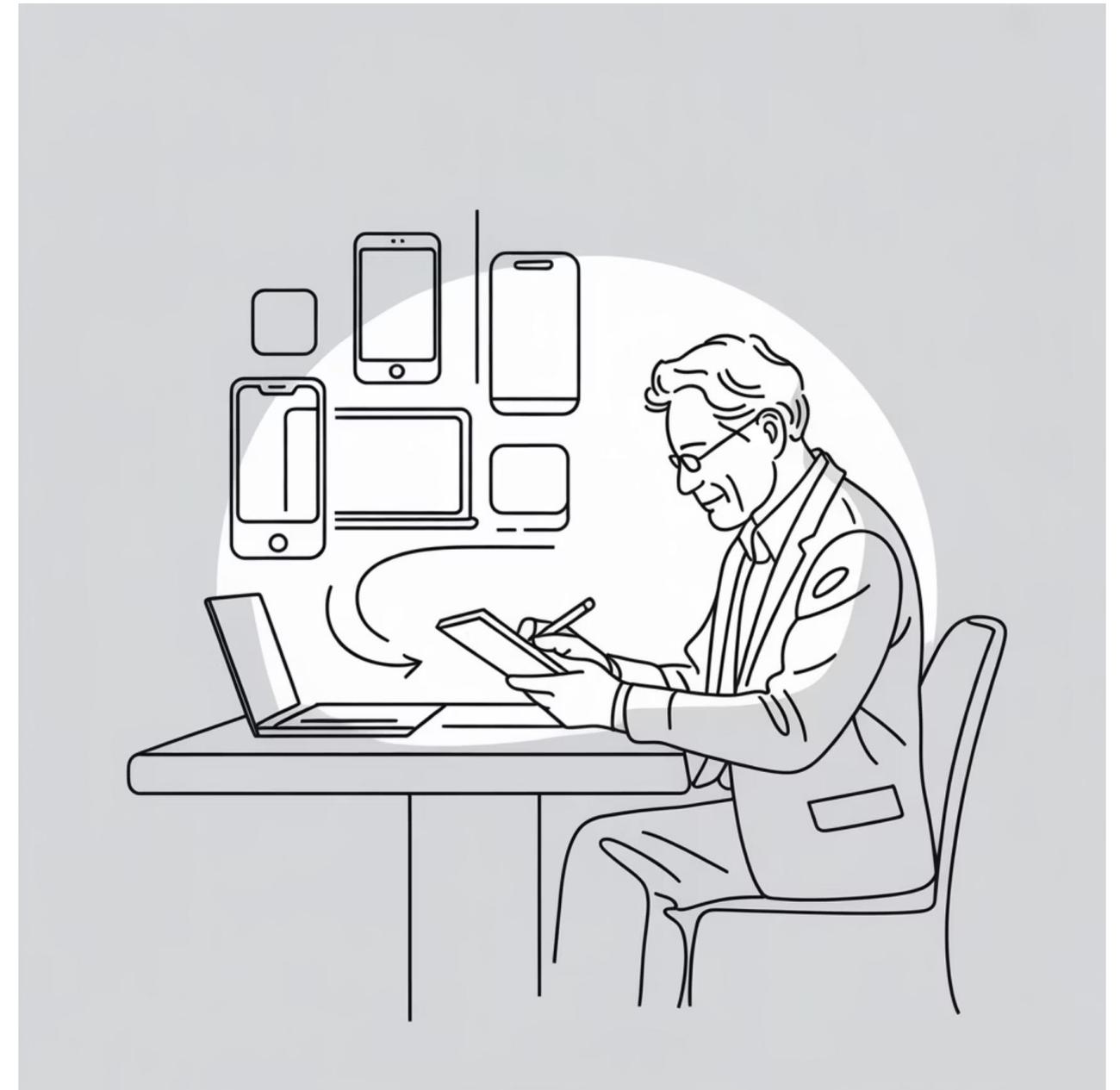
Check information against 2-3 reliable sources before accepting it as fact

Pause before sharing

Verify information before forwarding it to friends or family members

Stay updated

Follow reputable technology news sources to stay informed about AI developments



"In the digital age, skepticism is not cynicism—it's wisdom."

Taking a moment to verify information is one of the most valuable habits you can develop.

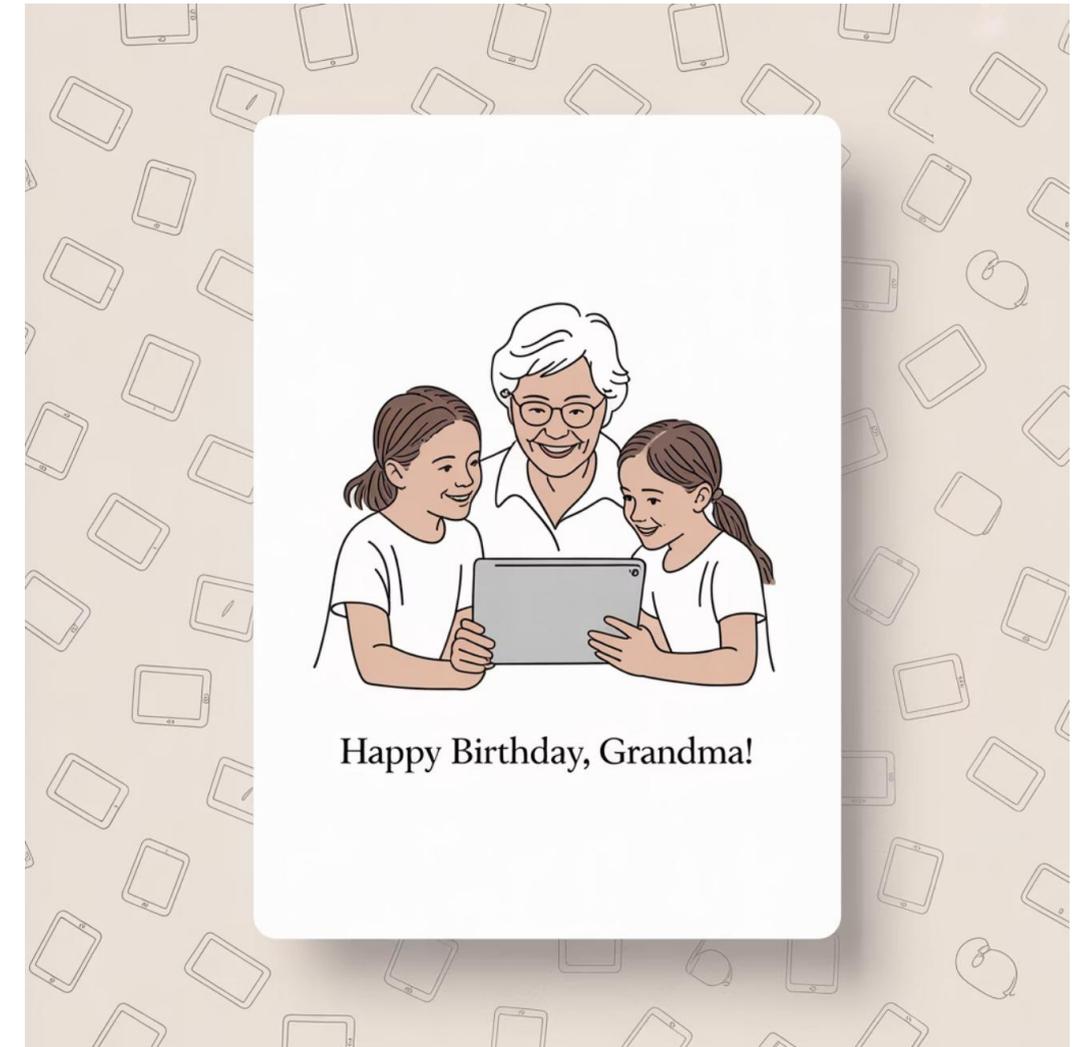
Teaching AI Safety to Your Family

Become the Family AI Expert:

The knowledge you're gaining isn't just for your protection—it can help safeguard your entire family across generations. By sharing these skills, you create a network of informed digital citizens.

Ways to Share Your Knowledge:

- Teach verification techniques to children and grandchildren
- Discuss AI bias and limitations during family technology conversations
- Create family protocols for handling suspicious communications
- Share articles and resources about AI safety with your network
- Model good digital habits by verifying information before sharing



Sharing your knowledge about AI safety strengthens family bonds while providing essential protection.

When AI is Helpful vs. When to Avoid It



Good AI Uses

- Research starting points (then verify with reliable sources)
- Creative inspiration and brainstorming
- Learning explanations of new topics
- Organization and planning assistance
- Translation of text between languages
- Entertainment and hobby support



Probably Good to Avoid AI For

- Final medical decisions or health diagnoses sans doctor
- Financial investment choices without professional advice
- Legal matters without consulting an attorney
- Sharing highly sensitive personal information
- Accepting information without verification
- Exclusive social connection (supplement, don't replace human interaction)

Remember that AI is a tool to augment human capabilities, not replace human judgment.

The most effective approach combines AI assistance with critical thinking and professional advice when appropriate.

The AI Landscape

Staying Current with New Developments

Resources for Keeping Up:

- **Senior Planet from AARP:** Free technology classes specifically designed for adults over 50, including regular AI workshops (<https://seniorplanet.org/>)
- **Google AI Courses:** Free online learning resources that explain AI concepts in accessible language
- **Local Libraries:** Many public libraries offer digital literacy programs and technology workshops
- **Community Centers:** Senior centers often host technology training sessions
- **Family Tech Time:** Schedule regular sessions where tech-savvy family members can share updates and answer questions



The field of AI is evolving rapidly, but many resources are available to help you.

Stay informed without feeling overwhelmed.

Digital Literacy Programs

Available Support:

- **Local Libraries:** Many public libraries offer free technology classes, one-on-one tech help sessions, and digital literacy workshops
- **Senior Centers:** Community centers for older adults frequently host technology training specifically designed for seniors
- **Community Colleges:** Look for continuing education programs with courses on digital skills, often at reduced rates for seniors
- **OATS (Older Adults Technology Services):** Nonprofit organization providing technology training in many communities (<https://oats.org/>)
- **AARP TEK Workshops:** Free or low-cost technology education specifically for older adults

Many programs offer financial assistance or free options for those on fixed incomes. Don't let cost be a barrier to learning!



AI Ethics

Your Values Matter

Privacy Considerations

When using AI tools, consider what personal data you're sharing. Different companies have different privacy policies regarding how they use your interactions to improve their systems.

Accuracy Responsibility

As users of AI, we have a responsibility to verify information before acting on it or sharing it with others. This helps prevent the spread of misinformation.

Bias Awareness

Be aware that AI systems may not represent diverse perspectives, particularly those of older adults.

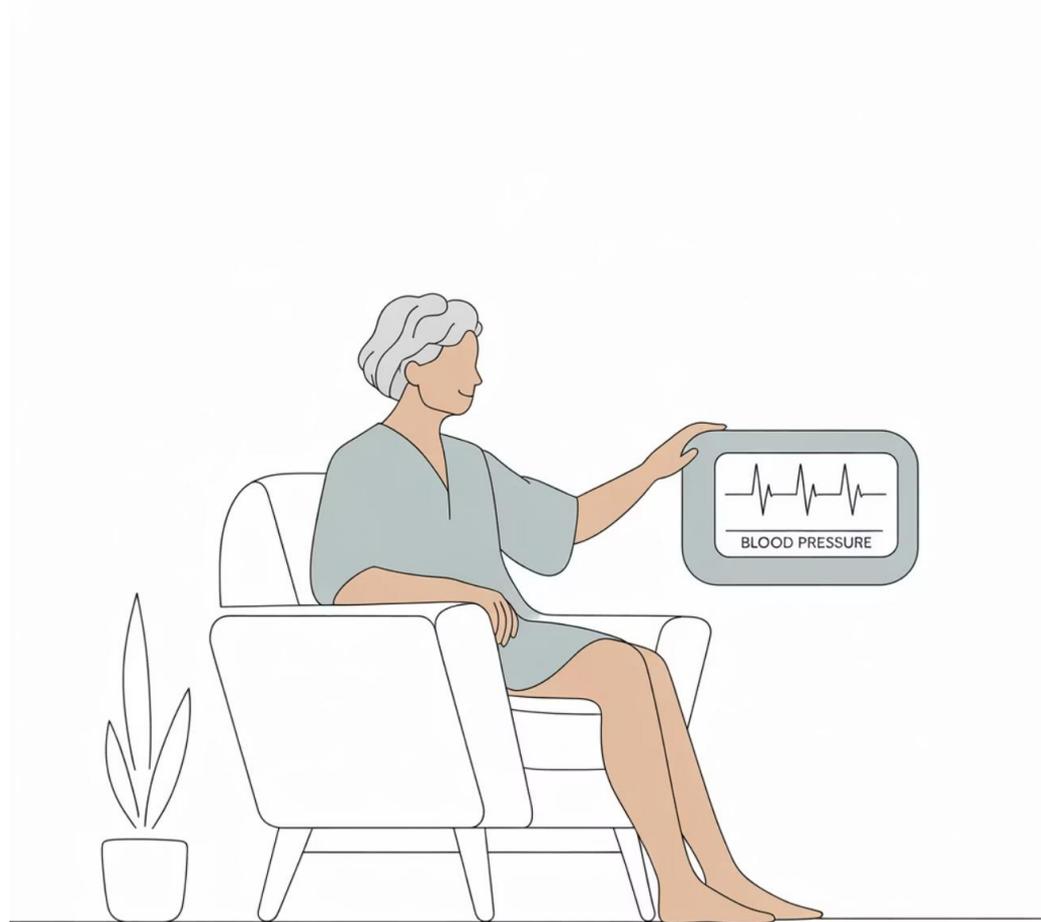
Your lived experience and wisdom remain valuable even when they differ from AI outputs.

Human Connection

While AI can be helpful for many tasks, it should supplement rather than replace meaningful human interactions and relationships.

The choices we make as early adopters of AI technology help shape how these tools develop in the future.

The Future of AI and Aging



AI has tremendous potential to enhance independence and quality of life as we age.

Positive Potential:

- **Healthcare:** AI systems that detect early signs of health issues, manage medications, and coordinate care
- **Independence:** Smart home technology that adapts to changing needs and abilities, supporting aging in place
- **Social Connection:** Tools that help combat isolation through improved communication options and virtual communities
- **Accessibility:** Voice-controlled systems and assistive technologies that adapt to various physical and cognitive needs
- **Personalization:** Services and information tailored to individual preferences, interests, and circumstances

Common Myths vs. Reality

Myth: "AI will replace humans completely"

Reality: AI augments human capabilities but has significant limitations. The most effective approach combines AI's computational power with human judgment, creativity, and emotional intelligence.

Myth: "AI is too complicated for seniors"

Reality: Many AI tools are designed with user-friendly interfaces specifically for non-technical users. With basic guidance, people of all ages can benefit from these technologies.

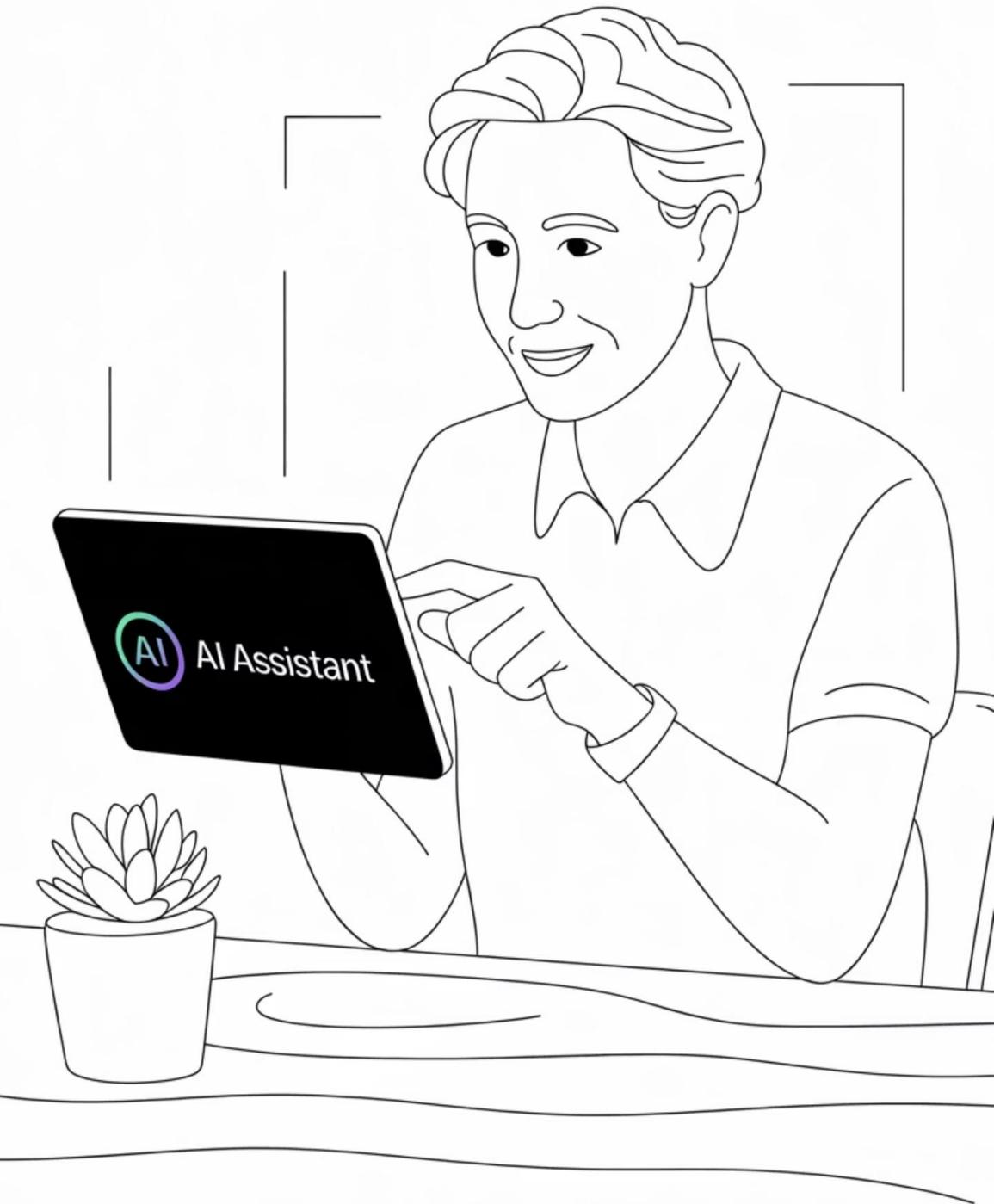
Myth: "All AI information is accurate"

Reality: AI systems make mistakes and can present incorrect information confidently. Critical thinking and verification remain essential skills in the AI age.

Myth: "Learning about AI requires coding skills"

Reality: Using AI tools effectively requires no programming knowledge—just basic digital literacy and a willingness to learn through practice.

Building Confidence with AI



Start Small



Begin with one AI tool that interests you, like ChatGPT or Google Gemini. Ask simple questions about topics you enjoy to get comfortable with the interaction.

Practice Regularly



Schedule short, regular sessions to build familiarity. Try new features gradually as your comfort level increases. Consistency is more important than duration.

Verify Information

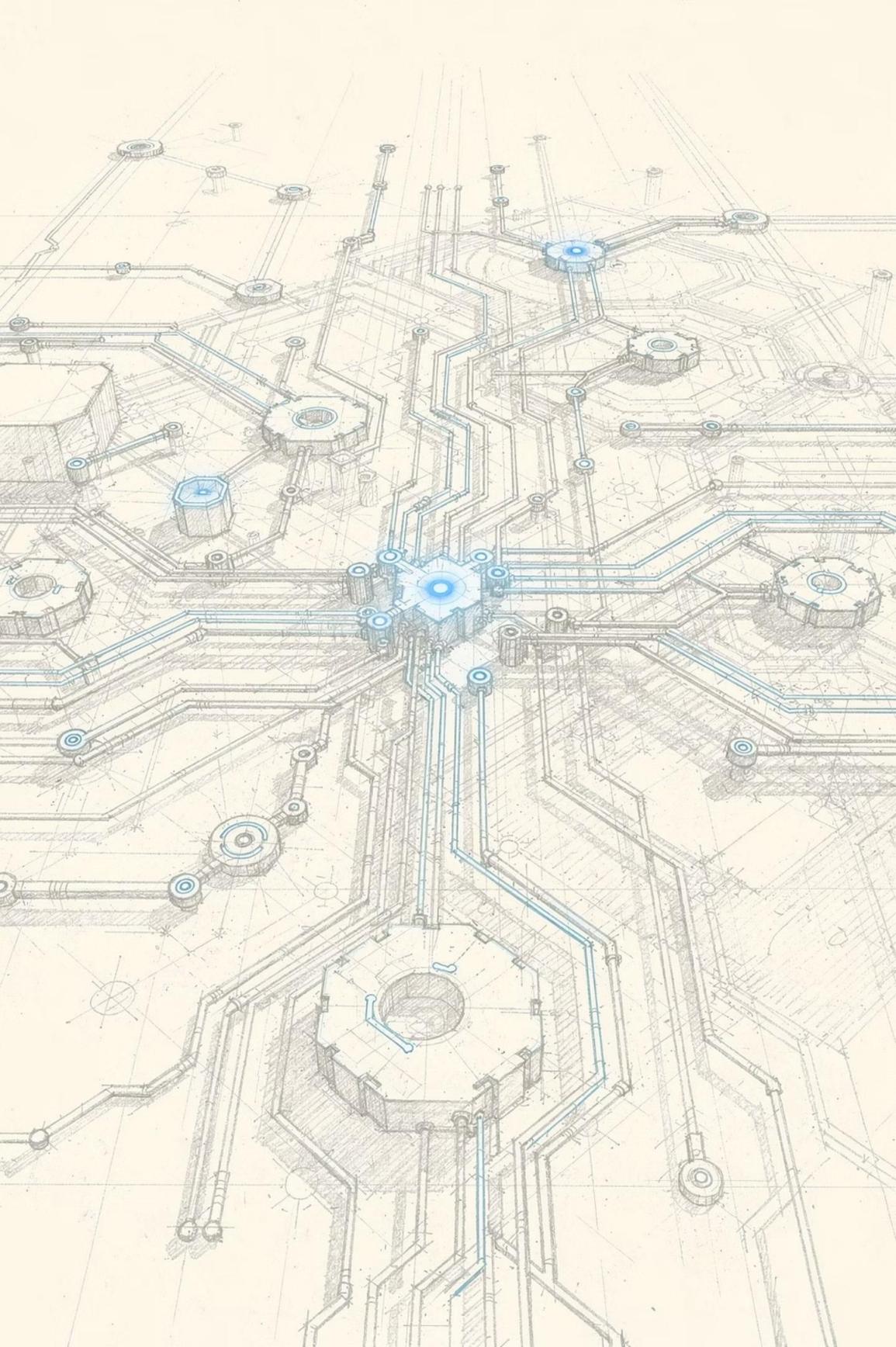


Practice the VERIFY method with AI responses to build good habits. Start with low-stakes topics before relying on AI for more important matters.

Share Your Learning



Teaching someone else what you've learned reinforces your own understanding and builds confidence. Share discoveries with friends or family members.



Openclaw: The Revolutionary Open-Source Software Transforming Digital Innovation

Openclaw is a groundbreaking open-source software platform that's rapidly gaining momentum across the tech community. Built on principles of collaboration and accessibility, it provides developers and organizations with powerful tools to create, deploy, and scale applications without proprietary restrictions. This innovative system combines cutting-edge architecture with user-friendly interfaces, making advanced technology accessible to everyone from seasoned professionals to enthusiastic newcomers. It addresses many aspects of computing and introduces security risks; be informed and aware.

Why Openclaw Matters: Democratizing Technology Access



Empowering Global Communities

Openclaw is breaking down barriers that have long kept powerful software tools in the hands of a privileged few. By eliminating costly licensing fees and proprietary constraints, it enables educational institutions, nonprofits, and developing regions to access enterprise-grade technology.

The ripple effect is profound: students can learn industry-standard tools, small businesses can compete with larger enterprises, and innovators worldwide can contribute to and benefit from collective progress. This democratization of technology isn't just about software—it's about creating opportunities, fostering innovation, and building a more equitable digital future for all.

Creating Your AI Learning Plan

Week 1: Exploration

Try ChatGPT or Google Gemini for basic questions about topics that interest you. Spend 15-20 minutes exploring and getting comfortable with the interface.

1

2

Week 2: Practical Application

Explore NotebookLM with a document you care about—perhaps a family recipe collection, travel guides for an upcoming trip, or health information you want to understand better.

3

Week 3: Critical Thinking

Practice the VERIFY method with AI responses. Choose a topic you know something about and evaluate how accurate the AI's information is by cross-checking with reliable sources.

4

Week 4: Knowledge Sharing

Teach someone else—a friend, family member, or neighbor—what you've learned. Sharing knowledge reinforces your understanding and builds confidence.

Remember, this is a self-paced journey. Take the time you need with each step before moving to the next.

Red Flags Checklist

Be Cautious When:

AI provides medical advice

Always consult healthcare professionals for health concerns rather than relying solely on AI-generated information.

Information lacks sources

If AI can't provide references for its claims, especially for important facts or statistics, verify with reliable sources.

Claims seem too good to be true

Approach extraordinary claims with healthy skepticism, particularly regarding financial opportunities or miracle solutions.

Urgent requests for personal information

Legitimate organizations rarely create artificial urgency. Take time to verify requests through official channels.

Unexpected calls asking for money

Even if the voice sounds exactly like someone you know, hang up and call back on a known number to verify.

AI response contradicts expert consensus

When AI information differs significantly from established expert views, trust the human experts in that field.

Print this checklist and keep it near your computer or phone as a reminder.

Your AI Safety Toolkit

Essential Practices for Staying Safe



Verify information with reliable sources

Cross-check important information from AI with established, trustworthy sources before making decisions or sharing with others.



Use family code words for identity verification

Establish secret phrases that only family members would know to protect against voice cloning and impersonation scams.



Question suspicious communications

Approach unexpected requests for money or information with healthy skepticism, especially those creating a sense of urgency.



Keep learning about new AI developments

Stay informed about emerging technologies and threats through trusted news sources and educational programs.

These practices will help protect not just you, but your entire family and community.

Questions for Family Discussions

Conversation Starters:

These questions can help facilitate meaningful family discussions about technology use and digital safety:

- "What AI tools do you use in your daily life or at school/work?"
- "How can we verify information we find online or through AI?"
- "What should our family code word be for verifying identity?"
- "How might AI help us stay organized as a family?"
- "What boundaries should we set around sharing personal information online?"
- "How can we help each other stay safe from digital scams?"
- "What technology skills would you like to learn from each other?"



These conversations aren't just about safety—they're opportunities to strengthen family bonds and bridge generations through shared learning.

Community and Support

Building Your Network



Online Communities

Join Senior Planet's AI Hub or AARP's online forums to connect with peers who are also learning about AI. These communities provide a space to ask questions, share discoveries, and find encouragement.



Family Connections

Schedule regular technology learning sessions with grandchildren or tech-savvy family members. These intergenerational exchanges benefit everyone—you gain tech skills while sharing your wisdom and experience.



Local Groups

Look for digital literacy meetups at libraries, senior centers, or community colleges. Face-to-face learning groups offer hands-on help and valuable social connections with people in your area.



Peer Learning

Form a study group with classmates from this course or friends with similar interests. Teaching and learning from peers who share your perspective can make the process more enjoyable and effective.

Key Takeaways

AI is a tool - powerful but limited

Artificial intelligence can assist with many tasks but requires human judgment to use effectively. It augments rather than replaces human capabilities and wisdom.

Always verify important information

Use the VERIFY method to cross-check information from multiple reliable sources before making significant decisions or sharing with others.

Stay skeptical of suspicious requests

Approach urgent demands, too-good-to-be-true offers, and unexpected communications with healthy caution, especially those creating emotional pressure.

Keep learning as technology evolves

AI is developing rapidly, but with ongoing curiosity and the foundation you've built, you can adapt to new developments confidently.

Share knowledge with others

By sharing what you've learned, you help protect your family and community while strengthening important relationships across generations.

Your AI Journey Begins Now

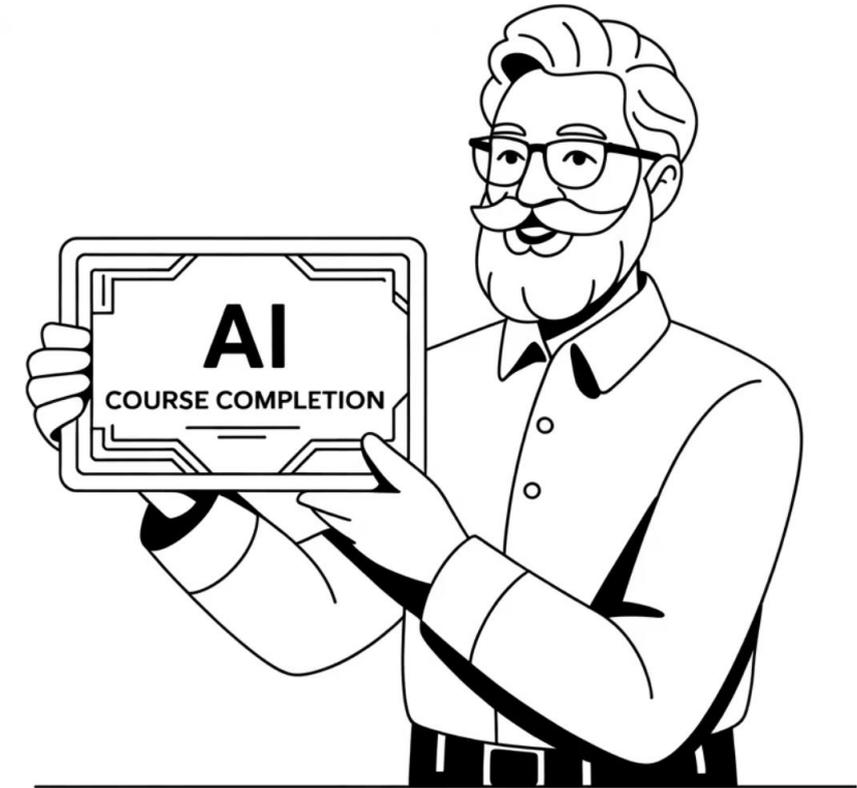
Final Thoughts:

As we conclude our time together, remember that this course is just the beginning of your AI journey. The skills you've developed will serve you well as technology continues to evolve.

AI literacy empowers you to:

- Maintain meaningful connections with younger generations
- Make informed decisions about which technologies to adopt
- Protect yourself and your loved ones from digital threats
- Leverage powerful tools to enhance your daily life

Remember: You don't need to be an expert—just an informed, thoughtful user who approaches technology with both curiosity and healthy skepticism.



In every era, learning new skills keeps our minds sharp and our lives connected.

Your willingness to explore AI demonstrates the same curiosity and adaptability that has served you throughout life.

Questions and Discussion

Thank you for your attention and participation! Now is your opportunity to ask any remaining questions about any aspect of AI we've covered today.

Contact Information

For follow-up questions or additional resources after today's session, please contact:

Email: larry.m.Deschaine@alum.mit.edu
[linkedin.com/in/larrymdeschainepe](https://www.linkedin.com/in/larrymdeschainepe)

