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10/10 Skills to Be Un-replaceable by AI

The ten habits that keep you valuable while AI gets better at everything else, each one with the exact first step to take today, a prompt to paste where it helps, and the reason it works.

None of these ten skills need a course, a certificate, or a single line of code. They're habits and skills, and every one of them makes you the person in the room who gets more out of AI than the people around you. That's the whole game now. The tools are the same for everyone. The skills aren't.

Each skill below gets three things: what it is in plain words, why it matters, and where to start today. Where a prompt helps, it's there to copy. Pick two this week. Add one a week after that. In ten weeks you'll have the whole list, and you'll notice the difference long before then.

The 10 skills you need to stay relevant in the AI era

1. Fact-check it

AI can lie and hallucinate. Check before you believe.

2. Learn one new thing a day

Small counts. Daily beats big.

3. Treat AI like a new hire

Background, an example of good, and the standard you expect.

4. Use it as your tutor

It never gets tired of your questions.

5. Describe the tool you wish you had

Then see if AI builds it.

6. Automate the tedious things

Free up time for your family and what you love.

7. Let AI draft first

Editing is faster than starting.

8. Know which tool for which task

Claude for documents, ChatGPT for images, Perplexity for research.

9. Have AI poke holes in your ideas

Find your blind spots. Judgment is the one thing AI can't replace.

10. Pay it forward

Teach everybody around you.

SKILL 1 Fact-Check It Before You Believe It

What it is. AI can lie and hallucinate. It doesn't know it's wrong when it's wrong, and it says the made-up thing in the same confident voice as the true thing. A date, a statistic, a quote, a law, a name. If you're going to repeat it to someone else, check it first.

Why it matters. The person who catches the wrong number before it goes out is worth more than the person who typed the prompt. Every tool gets this wrong sometimes. The habit of checking is what separates someone AI helps from someone AI embarrasses.

Where to start. Add this line to any request where facts matter, and make it a reflex:

PROMPT

Before you answer, hold yourself to this: if you are not certain a fact, number, date, name, quote, or source is true, say "not sure" instead of guessing. At the end of your answer, list every claim I should double-check before I repeat it to anyone, and tell me where I'd check each one. Never invent a source or a statistic to fill a gap. If the honest answer is "I don't know," say that.

Then verify the two or three things it flags. A quick search, the original document, the actual website. Two minutes, and you're the one who never gets caught out.

SKILL 2 Learn Something New Every Day

What it is. One thing, with AI, every day. Even something small. How a Roth IRA works. What a word in your kid's homework means. Why your sourdough won't rise. One question, one answer, one thing you didn't know yesterday.

Why it matters. Nobody feels the difference on day three. Everybody feels it on day ninety. A year of one small thing a day is 365 things, and the people who do this quietly become the most interesting person at the table.

Where to start. Tonight, before you put the phone down, ask AI one question you've wondered about and never looked up. Tomorrow, another. If you want a nudge, paste this once:

PROMPT

Every time I say "today's thing," teach me one useful thing I probably don't know, in under 150 words, then ask me one question to check I got it. Vary the subject: money, health, history, how everyday things work, words.

SKILL 3 Treat AI Like a New Hire

What it is. A smart new hire on their first day knows a lot in general and nothing about you. You wouldn't say "write the newsletter" and walk away. You'd give them the background, show them an example of what good looks like, and tell them the standard you expect. AI is exactly the same, and most people skip all three.

Why it matters. This is the difference between a generic answer and one that fits. Every "AI doesn't get me" complaint is a briefing that never happened.

Where to start. Let it interview you the way a good new hire would on their first morning. Paste this above any task that matters:

PROMPT

Treat this like your first day working for me. Before you do the task below, interview me the way a sharp new hire would, one question at a time: what's the background and who is this for, what does a good version look like (ask me for an example if I haven't given one), what experience or knowledge do I already have that you should build on, and what's the standard you'll be held to (length, tone, what to leave out, what would make me reject it). Keep going until you're confident you can do it the way I want. Then do it.

The task: [what you want done].

Try it once today on a real task and read the result next to what you'd have gotten without it. You won't go back.

SKILL 4 Use It as Your Lifelong Tutor

What it is. A tutor that's available at 11pm, never sighs, never makes you feel slow, and will explain the same thing five different ways until one of them lands.

Why it matters. Most of us stopped learning hard things because asking felt embarrassing or the explanation came once and moved on. That excuse is gone. Whatever you've been meaning to understand, taxes, a language, how your car works, the thing your doctor said, it's one conversation away.

Where to start. Pick the one thing you've been avoiding. Then:

PROMPT

Teach me [the subject, for example: how a Roth IRA works, or how to read my car's warning lights] like I'm new to it. Go one idea at a time. After each idea, ask me a question to check I understood before moving on. If I get it wrong, explain it a different way. Don't move on until I get it.

Fifteen minutes. Stop when you want. It picks up where you left off tomorrow if you keep the same chat.

SKILL 5 Describe the Tool You Wish You Had

What it is. When you're stuck on something, describe the little tool that would fix it, in plain words, and see if AI builds it. A tip calculator that splits by person. A page that counts down to your trip. A form your customers fill in. A checklist that resets every Monday.

Why it matters. People who can describe a tool now get the tool. That used to require a developer and a budget. Now it requires a sentence and ten minutes.

Where to start. In Claude or ChatGPT, say what you want the way you'd describe it to a friend:

PROMPT

Build me a simple [tool] I can open in my browser. It should [what it does, in two or three plain sentences]. Keep it to one page, make it work the second I open it, and don't ask me to install anything.

You'll get a file you open with a double-click. If it isn't right, say what's wrong in plain words and it fixes it. Start with something small enough that you'll use it this week.

SKILL 6 Automate the Tedious Things

What it is. The stuff you do the same way every time: sorting the inbox, the weekly reminder text, turning receipts into a spreadsheet, the Monday summary. AI can run those on a schedule without you, and the hours come back to your family and the things you love to do.

Why it matters. Nobody misses the tedious things. Everybody misses the evening.

Where to start. Make a list of three things you did this week that you also did last week the same way. Pick the one you dread most. Then describe it once:

PROMPT

Here's a task I do every [week/day]: [describe it step by step, the way you'd explain it to someone covering for you]. Turn this into instructions you can follow on your own, and tell me what you'd need from me (files, access, a folder) to run it without me.

Both Claude and ChatGPT can put a task on a schedule on their paid plans. Start by running it by hand with the instructions above. Once it works twice, schedule it.

SKILL 7 Let AI Draft the First Version of Anything

What it is. The email, the post, the plan, the awkward text, the meal list. Never start from a blank page again. Let AI write the first version, then edit. Your job becomes editing, which is faster than starting.

Why it matters. Starting is the expensive part. Every writer knows it. Editing something that's 70 percent right takes a few minutes. Producing the first 70 percent from nothing takes the hour you don't have.

Where to start. Next time you open a blank message and stare at it, paste this instead:

PROMPT

Write a first draft of [what it is: the email, the post, the plan] for [who's going to read it and what they need from it]. Rough is fine, I'm going to edit it, so don't polish. Get the structure and the main points down, mark any spot where you had to guess with [?] so I can fill it in, and keep it to [length]. Match this voice: [paste something you wrote that sounds like you]. Then give me one line at the end on what you'd tighten if this were your final draft.

Then fix what's wrong, cut what's extra, and send. The draft wasn't the finished product. It was the thing that got you moving, and the [?] marks show you exactly where your judgment is still needed.

SKILL 8 Know Which Tool for Which Task

What it is. Each tool is best at something, and the people who know which one to open save themselves an hour of fighting the wrong one.

Why it matters. Using one tool for everything is like using one kitchen knife for everything. You can, and you'll cut yourself.

Where to start. Tape this to your monitor for a week:

The short version

Claude

Writing and documents. Emails, reports, anything long, anything that has to sound like a person. Reading a PDF and answering questions about it. Building a small tool from a description.

ChatGPT

Images. Making one, editing one, turning a photo into something else. Also good for quick answers and voice conversations on your phone.

Perplexity

Research. When you need current information with the sources shown, so you can click through and check. Comparing options, finding out what's true this month.

None of them is wrong for the others. But start with the one built for the job and you'll get there faster. For the longer list, seventeen tools across six jobs, the one I use for each, see [AI Tools for Every Task, September 2026](#).

SKILL 9 Have AI Poke Holes in Your Ideas

What it is. Before you send the proposal, quit the job, raise the price, or book the trip, hand the idea to AI and ask it to find what's wrong with it. Where your blind spots are. What you're missing. Great judgment is the one thing AI can't replace, and this is how you sharpen yours.

Why it matters. AI is agreeable by default. It will cheer for a bad idea if you let it. Ask it to argue the other side and it becomes the most useful critic you'll ever have, because it doesn't care about your feelings and it's read everything.

Where to start. Paste your idea, then:

PROMPT

Poke holes in this. Tell me the three biggest ways it could go wrong, the assumption I'm making that I haven't checked, and the question someone who disagrees with me would ask first. Don't soften it. Then tell me what would have to be true for this to work.

Read it, decide, and notice that the decision is still yours. That's the skill.

SKILL 10 Pay It Forward

What it is. Teach everybody around you how to use AI. Your parents, your coworkers, your kids, the friend who says "I don't get it." Show them one thing.

Why it matters. Teaching is how you find out whether you know something. And the person everyone comes to for help is the person nobody replaces.

Where to start. This week, show one person one thing from this list. Your mom, the tutor prompt, so she can finally ask all the questions she was embarrassed to ask. The friend who dreads writing, the draft-first trick. The coworker who repeats everything he reads online, the fact-check line. Five minutes, and you've handed someone back an hour of their week. Here's what happens to you: you learn it twice as well by explaining it, you become the person people come to, and the people around you get better, which makes everything you do together easier. That's not a small thing. It's how you build a life where AI made you more valuable to the people you love, not less. Then do it again next week.

WHERE TO START, IF YOU'RE STARTING TODAY

Start with skill 3 and skill 7. Treat AI like a new hire, and let it draft first. Within a week you'll feel it: the answers fit you, the blank page stops being scary, and the hour you used to spend starting things goes back to your evening. Then add skill 1, because by then you'll have something worth checking. And when one of these clicks for you, do skill 10 and show one person. You get sharper, they get faster, and you become the person in the room who knows how this works. You can do this. Every one of these is a habit, and habits are built one day at a time.

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