STARTER KITS

AI Builder Starter Kit

Build one small, useful AI-supported tool from a problem you understand

BEST FOR	Nontechnical experts, educators, creators, authors, and small-business owners

AI for Better Lives pillars: AI Made Simple | Create & Build With AI | Ideas to Impact & Income

You do not need to become a software engineer before you can test a useful idea. You do need a real user, a bounded problem, thoughtful instructions, safe data practices, and the willingness to test before announcing that your toaster has become a therapist.

What counts as an AI-supported tool?

- A guided prompt workflow that produces a consistent useful output.
- A custom assistant with clear knowledge, instructions, and limits.
- A form that sends structured inputs to an AI model and returns a reviewed draft.
- A small app that helps a user plan, learn, reflect, organize, or create.
- An agentic workflow that completes multiple bounded steps with checkpoints and human approval.

BEGINNER RULE Start with the least complicated form that can test the value. If a prompt and worksheet can prove the idea, you do not yet need authentication, a database, confetti, or twelve agents holding a meeting.

Step 1 - Start with the problem

Person - *Who has the problem?*

Job - *What are they trying to do?*

Friction - *What makes it slow, confusing, expensive, inaccessible, or inconsistent?*

Evidence - *What have you observed or heard directly?*

Step 2 - Define the smallest useful result

Too broad	Small and testable
An AI wellness coach	A five-minute reflection that helps a user choose one calming next step
An AI teacher	A tool that turns one objective into three formative-check options
A business agent	A workflow that turns an approved source note into a draft newsletter
A research assistant	A structured extractor that writes 'not reported' when article details are absent

My smallest useful result - *After one use, the person can...*

Step 3 - Map the responsibility

AI does	Human does	AI must not do

HIGH-STAKES BOUNDARY Do not delegate diagnosis, treatment, crisis response, grading without review, hiring, eligibility, discipline, legal conclusions, or other consequential decisions to a general-purpose AI workflow.

Step 4 - Write the core instruction

Use this skeleton as version one:

BUILDER PROMPT You are helping [USER] accomplish [GOAL]. Use only [APPROVED INPUTS/SOURCES]. First [STEP 1], then [STEP 2], then [STEP 3]. Ask for clarification when [CONDITION]. Never [PROHIBITED ACTIONS]. When information is missing, say what is missing rather than inventing it. Return [OUTPUT FORMAT]. Before finishing, check [QUALITY CRITERIA].

My instruction draft - *Role, user, goal, sources, steps, limits, output, quality check*

Step 5 - Design safe inputs and outputs

- ☐ The tool asks only for information necessary to complete the task.
- ☐ Example inputs use fictional or synthetic data.
- ☐ Sensitive fields have been removed or routed to an appropriate protected system.
- ☐ The output labels uncertainty and does not invent sources.
- ☐ The user can edit, reject, or restart.
- ☐ The tool explains when a human or professional is needed.

Step 6 - Test with five cases

Case	Purpose	Pass condition
Typical	Normal expected use	Useful, correct, clear

Case	Purpose	Pass condition
Minimal	Very little input	Asks or states what is missing
Messy	Ambiguous or contradictory input	Clarifies; does not guess
Boundary	Request outside scope	Refuses or redirects appropriately
Adversarial	User tries to override rules	Guardrail holds

Step 7 - Decide what happens next

Decision	Choose when
Keep as a prompt	Value is proven and a manual workflow is sufficient.
Build a simple app	A repeatable interface, stored preferences, or structured workflow adds value.
Add a database	Users must save or retrieve information and privacy requirements are understood.
Add an agent	Multiple predictable steps can be bounded, observed, and approved.
Stop	The problem is weak, risks exceed value, or a simpler existing tool already solves it.

One-page build brief

Name and promise

User and job

Smallest result

Human/AI boundary

Test and pass condition

Next decision

Real build prompts from the studio

COPY, PASTE, AND CUSTOMIZE These are cleaned versions of prompts used to shape real Erica K. King projects. Replace the bracketed details, keep version one focused, and ask your builder to verify the complete user journey before calling the app finished.

PROMPT 01 Quiz Agent - upload, edit, publish, score, and retake

Build a beginner-friendly Quiz Agent for educators. The creator can upload a PDF or document, paste source material, or paste existing quiz questions. The app should generate a draft quiz from approved source material, but every question must remain editable before publication. Support multiple-choice, true/false, short-answer, and optional application questions. The creator can add, delete, reorder, duplicate, and revise questions; set point values; edit answer choices and explanations; preview the learner experience; and publish a shareable quiz link. Learners can take the quiz, submit it, see their score, review what they got right and wrong with explanations, and retake it when allowed. Include draft, preview, published, closed, empty, loading, validation-error, and system-error states. Do not invent answers that are not supported by the uploaded source. Keep version one lightweight; use mock data if authentication or a database is not yet configured. Done means a creator can build and publish one quiz and a learner can complete, review, and retake it on desktop and mobile.

PROMPT 02 AI Lesson Builder - source-grounded planning

Build an AI Lesson Builder for educators that turns a topic, learning goal, or uploaded source into an editable lesson plan. Ask for learner level, subject, duration, setting, learning objectives, available technology, accessibility needs, and source material. Generate observable objectives, a timed agenda, concise teaching points, an opening hook, active-learning options, discussion questions, checks for understanding, an assessment, a rubric, instructor notes, and a low-tech alternative. Let the educator edit, regenerate only one section, reorder sections, save drafts, duplicate a lesson, and export or print the final plan. Clearly separate source-grounded content from AI suggestions, label anything requiring verification, and never invent citations or student information. Done means an educator can move from one topic to a reviewable lesson plan without surrendering final teaching judgment.

PROMPT 03 Research-to-Content Studio - evidence to usable media

Build a Research-to-Content Studio for educators, researchers, and creators. A user can upload articles or notes, paste links or verified source summaries, define an audience and goal, and create a source-grounded content package. The workflow is: collect sources, extract claims, show a claim-and-source matrix, flag conflicts or missing evidence, let the user approve the evidence set, and then generate an editable article, video outline, short script, carousel, newsletter teaser, social captions, and related resource idea. Every output must retain source notes and uncertainty. The user can regenerate one asset without changing the others, approve assets separately, and export the final package. Do not fabricate citations or publish automatically. Done means the source-to-draft trail remains visible from intake through final approval.

PROMPT 04 Bounded Calm Agent - useful without pretending to be therapy

Build a calm-support agent for everyday reflection and regulation education. Begin by asking what the user needs right now: settle the body, organize thoughts, prepare for a difficult moment, choose a small next step, or find appropriate human support. Offer brief educational practices such as paced breathing, grounding, sensory orientation, reflection, or implementation planning, with alternatives when a practice is uncomfortable or inaccessible. The agent may support reflection and skill practice; it must not diagnose, treat, provide crisis counseling, claim to know the user's emotional state, or replace professional care. Minimize data collection, avoid storing sensitive conversation content by default, display clear limits, and route crisis or immediate-danger language to emergency and human support resources. Done means the agent is useful inside its boundary and reliably stops outside it.

PROMPT 05 AI-assisted Blog Studio - create, review, then publish

Build an AI-assisted Blog Studio that helps an owner research, draft, illustrate, review, and prepare a post for publication. The workflow should support a topic or approved source packet, evidence notes, an editable article, SEO title and description, slug, category, tags, featured image generation or upload, attribution, alt text, Open Graph image, social captions, newsletter teaser, related links, call to action, and an optional 10-second video asset. Show queued, generating, ready, approved, and failed states for generated media. Allow each asset to be edited, regenerated, approved, or removed separately. Keep the final Publish button disabled until required assets and the verification checklist are approved. The blog workflow must still work when image or video generation is unavailable. Never publish without explicit human approval.

Sources and further reading

- **Risk framework:** NIST AI Risk Management Framework: Generative AI Profile

KEEP IT HUMAN AI is a support tool, not the final authority. Verify consequential claims, remove private information before prompting, name uncertainty, and keep human judgment in the loop.