100 Writing Prompts

A collection of starting points for articles, personal essays, opinion pieces and short fiction. Choose a prompt, write a small first version and follow the details that interest you.

Five ways to begin

- 20 lifestyle prompts about ordinary places, choices and routines.
- 20 technology prompts about tools, interfaces and the people using them.
- 20 reflection prompts for thoughtful personal writing.
- 20 opinion prompts for precise claims and fair arguments.
- 20 storytelling prompts for original fictional scenes.

What comes with each prompt

Every prompt includes a focused writing task and an optional mini challenge. The challenge gives you a constraint to try; it is not a requirement or a test.

Use the PDF for reading and printing, or the complete plain-text edition in your preferred app. You can publish and sell your original writing inspired by these prompts under the supplied single-user licence. Do not redistribute the collection itself.

Edition 1.0 | English | 100 original prompts

The PDF is a reading and printing document, not a fillable form. The text edition provides a simple alternative for copying a prompt into your own working file.

Lifestyle prompts

001 The object you keep moving

Choose an everyday object that never seems to have a permanent place. Follow it through one ordinary day and use its journey to explore how a household actually works. Focus on decisions and habits rather than judging the people who live there.

Optional challenge: Tell the opening through three physical details.

002 A route with two versions

Walk a familiar route at a different time, or recall two occasions carefully. Describe what changes in its sounds, pace and purpose. Build an article around the contrast and identify what you would need to observe again before making a wider claim.

Optional challenge: Write two openings for two different readers.

003 The meal assembled from leftovers

Write about the choices involved in turning what is already available into a meal. Explore memory, convenience or creativity without presenting one household’s approach as the right one for everyone. Include one specific decision that changed the result.

Optional challenge: Use no food adjectives in the first paragraph.

004 A small queue

Observe a queue in a public place without identifying strangers. Describe its informal rules: who moves first, how people hold a place and what happens when someone is uncertain. What does this small system reveal about cooperation?

Optional challenge: Use one observed action instead of a generalisation.

005 A useful repair

Choose a modest repair you made, watched or could research. Explain what made the item worth keeping and what the repair required. Separate a personal account from a how-to guide so readers do not mistake untested steps for instructions.

Optional challenge: Draft both a personal and a practical headline.

Storytelling prompts

081 The returned key

Write a fictional scene in which a character receives a key they returned years ago. Keep the setting ordinary and let the first explanation be plausible. Reveal character through what they decide to check before using it.

Optional challenge: End the scene before the key opens anything.

082 The wrong instruction card

A fictional character follows an instruction card intended for a different task. Write the moment they realise the mismatch. Let the mistake produce a useful discovery or an awkward conversation rather than a disaster.

Optional challenge: Show the realisation through an action, not an explanation.

083 Two people and one seat

Write a fictional encounter in which two people have reasonable claims to the same seat. Give each a practical reason for needing it. Build tension through the negotiation and resolve it without making either person foolish.

Optional challenge: Use dialogue for at least half the scene.

084 A message delayed

A fictional character receives an ordinary message much later than intended. Explore how its meaning has changed with time. Keep the message itself simple and let the surrounding circumstances carry the emotional weight.

Optional challenge: Reveal the original date only after the first paragraph.

085 The temporary caretaker

Write about a fictional person asked to look after something unremarkable for a week. The responsibility changes one small part of their routine. Build the story around what they notice, rather than making the object secretly valuable.

Optional challenge: Choose an object that cannot speak or move itself.