

Prompt or Skill?

Prompts are reps. Skills are technique. A prompt gets one thing done. A skill writes the method down so it works the same way every time, for you and for the next person. Most prompts should stay prompts. The few that shouldn't are the ones you keep retyping.

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STAY WITH A PROMPT WHEN ...

It's a one-off.

If you won't do this again next month, a skill is overhead. Type it, take the result, move on.

Still learning what's good.

A skill freezes a method. Freeze it too early and you freeze the wrong one. Iterate in chat first.

The steps change every time.

If the sequence depends on the situation, there's nothing stable to write down yet. A skill needs a method, not a mood.

WRITE A SKILL WHEN ...

Same brief, third time.

The third time is the signal. That's when the method is stable enough to leave your head.

A sequence and a standard.

Gather, check, format, hand over. Work with a fixed order and a quality bar belongs in a file, not in your memory.

Others need the same result.

A skill is how your method leaves your laptop. If the team should produce it the same way, write it down once.



THE THREE-QUESTION TEST

Before you write a skill

Run this before you write a single line. Two times yes: write the skill. Three times yes: share it.

RULES

- „1. Will I do this again, more than twice?
2. Does it have a fixed sequence and a quality bar?
3. Should a colleague get the same result without asking me?“

THE ANATOMY OF A SKILL THAT WORKS

The trigger line.

The most important sentence in the file: the agent reads the description and decides whether the skill fits. Say what it does and when, in words people type. Too vague, it never fires. Too broad, it fires on everything.

Method, not knowledge.

A skill holds how, not what: steps, order, output format, quality bar. Reference material and templates go into companion files. If it reads like a wiki page, it's a wiki page with a header.

One finished example.

Show one real output the way you want it. One example beats three paragraphs of description.

Done criteria, stop rules.

Write down when the job is finished, and where the skill must stop and ask: before sending, before deleting, before anything outside its scope. A skill that just sends is a skill nobody will share.

The skill skeleton

Copy it, fill in the brackets, save it as a plain-text file in a folder of the same name. The name and description fields are part of the format — keep them in English.

```
""
name: [lowercase-with-hyphens]
description: [What it does. Use when the user asks for ..., mentions ..., or needs ...]
---
Goal: [one sentence]
Steps: 1. [gather] 2. [check] 3. [produce]
Output: [format, length]
Done means: [criteria]
Stop and ask before: [sending, deleting]
Example: [one result]"
```

Prompts are reps. Skills are technique.

The prompt you keep retyping is a skill you haven't written. And once it's a file, it has an owner: put a name and a date on it, and share it again when it changes.