



5 Questions Before Using AI for Homework

A simple decision-making checklist for students

How this works: Before using AI for homework, ask yourself these 5 questions. If you answer 'Yes' to most of them, you're using AI to learn. If you answer 'No' to most, you're using AI to avoid learning. Print this and keep it near your desk.

💡 **Print this checklist** and stick it on your desk or wall

1

Do I understand what I'm being asked to do?

If you haven't even read the assignment properly or don't know what the task is asking, using AI now means you're skipping the thinking part entirely. Start by understanding the question first.

✓ **YES**

Good—you're using AI to enhance your work

✗ **NO**

Read the task first, then decide

2

Have I tried to solve this myself first?

AI should be a last resort for when you're stuck—not the first thing you turn to. Spend at least 10-15 minutes trying on your own. The struggle is where real learning happens.

✓ **YES**

Perfect—AI is helping you get unstuck

✗ **NO**

Try first, then use AI if needed

3

Am I asking AI to explain, not complete?

There's a big difference between 'Explain how photosynthesis works' and 'Write my essay about photosynthesis.' One helps you learn, the other does the work for you. AI should teach, not replace your thinking.

✓ YES

You're learning—this is the right approach

✗ NO

Rethink your prompt before continuing

4

Will I be able to explain this work in my own words?

If a teacher asks you to explain your homework, could you? If the answer is no, you've let AI do too much. You should understand everything you submit well enough to teach it to someone else.

✓ YES

Great—you've actually learned something

✗ NO

You're not ready to use AI yet

5

Am I following my school's AI policy?

Different schools have different rules. Some allow AI for research but not for final submissions. Some require you to declare when you've used AI. Breaking the rules—even accidentally—can have serious consequences.

✓ YES

You're staying within the boundaries

✗ NO

Check your school's policy first

The Bottom Line

If you answered YES to all 5 questions, you're using AI responsibly to support your learning.

If you answered NO to 2 or more, pause and rethink your approach before using AI.

Remember: AI can help you understand—but it can't learn for you.

them to use it before every AI-assisted task.

More resources at digitalsafetysquad.com/ai-in-schools

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