MARY CREATES AI

AI Tools Checklist

A practical checklist for choosing AI tools that solve real business problems, save time, and support smarter ways of working.

Making AI Simple. Creating Smarter Businesses.
Practical AI. Real Results.

Use this checklist before adopting a new AI tool. The goal is not to collect more technology - it is to choose tools that are useful, manageable, secure, and connected to a clear business need.

Best for: small businesses, entrepreneurs, startups, professionals, teams, educators, and organizations beginning or improving their use of AI.

1. Start With the Problem

Before looking at features, define what you actually want to improve. A useful AI tool should connect to a real task, bottleneck, or opportunity.

- **I can name the task or problem** I want the tool to help with.
- **I know who will use it** and what they need from it.
- **I can describe the current process** without AI.
- **I know what improvement would look like** - for example, less repetitive work, faster drafting, clearer information, or better organization.
- **I am not choosing the tool only because it is popular.**

Quick rule: Start with the problem, not the technology.

2. Check the Practical Fit

- **Ease of use:** Can the intended user learn it without unnecessary complexity?
- **Time saved:** Is it likely to reduce repetitive or time-consuming work?
- **Quality:** Does it produce useful results that can be reviewed and improved?
- **Workflow fit:** Can it work alongside the tools and processes already in use?
- **Cost:** Is the price reasonable for the value it may create?
- **Scalability:** Could the tool still be useful as the business or team grows?

3. Review Safety, Privacy & Control

AI can be useful without being given every piece of information you have. Be deliberate about what you enter, upload, connect, or automate.

- **Data awareness:** I understand what information the tool asks me to provide.
- **Privacy:** I will avoid entering confidential, sensitive, or personally identifiable information unless its use is appropriate and authorized.
- **Human oversight:** Important outputs will be checked by a person before they are used or shared.
- **Accuracy:** I will verify important facts, calculations, claims, and recommendations.
- **Permissions:** If the tool connects to other systems, I understand what it can access.
- **Account security:** I will use appropriate passwords, access controls, and organizational policies.

AI should support human judgment - not replace responsible review.

4. Test Before You Commit

- Choose **one small, low-risk task** for the first test.
- Use a **clear prompt or instruction** and keep a copy of what worked.
- Compare the AI-assisted result with the current way of doing the task.
- Record what improved and what still required human correction.
- Decide whether to **keep, adjust, replace, or stop using** the tool.

AI Tool Evaluation Worksheet

Use one worksheet for each tool you are considering.

Tool name	_____
Business problem it should solve	_____
Main user / team	_____
Task to test first	_____
Expected time or effort saved	_____
Cost / plan	_____
Information the tool may access	_____
Human review required	_____

Decision

- **KEEP:** The tool is useful, manageable, and worth continuing.
- **ADJUST:** The tool may work with better prompts, training, settings, or a narrower use case.
- **REPLACE:** Another tool may fit the need better.
- **STOP:** The tool does not provide enough value or introduces unnecessary risk or complexity.

A Simple AI Toolkit Map

You do not need every category. Choose only what supports your work.

Category	Possible use
Writing & communication	Drafting, rewriting, summarizing, brainstorming
Research & knowledge	Finding, organizing, and working with information
Productivity	Notes, planning, task support, document workflows
Content & marketing	Ideas, campaigns, social content, customer communication
Automation	Connecting repeatable steps and reducing manual handoffs
Customer support	FAQs, knowledge assistance, response drafting
Data & analysis	Exploring information, patterns, reports, and decisions
Training & education	Learning support, practice, explanations, structured materials

A smaller toolkit that people understand and actually use is often more valuable than a long list of disconnected AI tools.

Your next action

Choose one business task this week. Define the problem, select one suitable AI tool, test it on a small task, review the result, and record what you learned.

Before You Adopt Any AI Tool

- The tool solves a **specific problem**.
- The intended user can **understand and use it**.
- The expected benefit is worth the **time and cost**.
- Privacy, security, and access have been considered.
- Important outputs will receive **human review**.
- The tool has been tested on a **small real task**.
- There is a clear decision to keep, adjust, replace, or stop.

Need help choosing or implementing AI?

Mary Creates AI helps businesses, professionals, organizations, and learning communities use AI in practical, understandable ways.

- **AI Training & Workshops**
- **Custom GPT & Knowledge Base Development**
- **Business Automation**
- **Healthcare AI Solutions**

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Important: This checklist is an educational resource. AI tools and their features, policies, pricing, and data practices can change. Review the current terms and requirements of any tool before using it for business or sensitive work.