

The Prompt Ladder

Same person. Same trip. Different ask. The only thing that changed between Level 1 and Level 4 is what you told Claude.

LEVEL 1 the drive-by	plan a trip to italy → a generic top-10 list that could be for anyone on earth
LEVEL 2 + context	My wife and I have 9 days in late September, flying into Rome. About \$4k after flights. We love food and history, hate crowds. Plan a trip. → an itinerary actually shaped around you
LEVEL 3 + format	...hate crowds. Lay it out as a day-by-day table with where we sleep each night and a rough daily budget. → a table you can actually book from
LEVEL 4 + follow-up	...daily budget. Before you plan anything, ask me the five questions that would most change the itinerary. Then plan, and flag anything I should book now. → Claude interviews you first — the answer fits like it was tailored, because it was

CONTEXT

Who's asking, for whom, and why. The stuff in your head that isn't in the question.

FORMAT

What the answer should look like — a table, a draft, 150 words, a certain tone.

FOLLOW-UP

Invite questions. "Ask me first," "then flag what to book now." Answers, tailored.

BEFORE YOU HIT ENTER

- ☐ Did I say who this is for and why I need it? ☐ Did I describe what the output should look like? ☐ Did I tell Claude what to ask or do next?

YOU CAN'T BREAK ANYTHING. THERE'S NO WRONG QUESTION.

BUILT WITH CLAUDE