

M A V E R I C K A I

CHATGPT WORK

THE COMPLETE GUIDE

*OpenAI just turned ChatGPT from a chat window into something that actually finishes your work.
Here is everything it can do, and how to set it up today.*

What ChatGPT Work is and how it differs from Chat
Setting up the brand new desktop app (and ChatGPT Classic)
Phone vs browser vs desktop, and why it matters
Plugins, Skills, local files, and Computer Use
Sites, Scheduled Tasks, and the usage catch nobody mentions
25 real things you can delegate to it
An honest ChatGPT Work vs Claude Cowork comparison

2026 Edition

What Just Happened

On July 9, 2026, OpenAI shipped the biggest change to ChatGPT since it launched. It is called **ChatGPT Work**, and if you have a ChatGPT account it is either already in your app or it is about to show up.

Here is the short version. For three years, ChatGPT has been a chat window. You ask, it answers, you copy the answer somewhere else and do the actual work yourself. ChatGPT Work flips that. You give it an outcome and walk away. It gathers information from your apps, plans the steps, does the work, and hands you back a finished spreadsheet, a finished deck, a finished report, or a live website.

Not a draft in a chat box. A file.

5M+

weekly Codex users
behind the engine

1,400+

plugins in the new
unified directory

Hours

how long it stays
on one project

It runs on GPT-5.6, OpenAI's newest model, which launched the same day. And it can stay on one project for hours, breaking it into smaller pieces and working through them on its own.

THE ONE SENTENCE THAT EXPLAINS IT

Chat gives you answers. Work gives you deliverables.

The technology under it is Codex, which used to be OpenAI's coding agent. More than 5 million people use Codex every week, and OpenAI says more than 1 million of them were already using it for work that has nothing to do with software. That is the whole reason ChatGPT Work exists. Regular people were hijacking a developer tool because it was the only thing that could actually finish a job. So OpenAI took that engine, put a normal interface on it, and called it Work.

Chat, Work, and Codex

The new ChatGPT has three modes. This confuses everyone at first, so here it is plainly.

Mode	What it is	Use it for
Chat	The ChatGPT you already know. Fast, conversational, unchanged. Still free.	Quick questions, brainstorming, drafting, explaining something.
Work	The agent. Takes an outcome and produces finished materials.	Research, analysis, documents, spreadsheets, presentations, reports, Sites.
Codex	The developer mode. Desktop only.	Writing code, debugging, running tests, working with repositories.

THE SIMPLE RULE

If you want an **answer**, use Chat. If you want a **thing**, use Work.

How to switch between them

- **On desktop:** click "ChatGPT Work" or "ChatGPT Codex" in the top left corner. For a regular chat, hit the "Quick chat" button in the left sidebar.
- **On mobile:** tap the dropdown at the top of the screen that says "Chat" or "Work" and pick. Codex is not available on mobile.
- **On web:** select Work when you start a conversation.

Getting Set Up

This is where most people get stuck, so go slow.

STEP 1: Get the new desktop app

There is a **brand new ChatGPT desktop app**, and it is not the same app you already have. This is the single most confusing thing about the launch.

The old ChatGPT desktop app you have had on your Mac for the last two years is now called **ChatGPT Classic**. It still works. It still gets model updates and security patches. But the new agent stuff (Work and Codex) lives in the new app only.

If you have...	Do this
The ChatGPT desktop app	Follow the prompt in the app to download the new one, then sign in with the same account. The new app may install alongside the old one. Two ChatGPT icons is normal. Use the one called "ChatGPT", not "ChatGPT Classic".
The Codex app	Just update it like normal. After the update it literally becomes the new ChatGPT desktop app. Your existing Codex tasks and projects stay put.
Nothing installed	Go to chatgpt.com/download , grab it for Mac or Windows, open it, sign in. Done.
No sign of Work at all	The rollout is gradual. Update the app, restart it, check again. If it is still missing, you are in the queue.

STEP 2: Check your plan

In the **desktop app**, Chat, Work, and Codex are available on **every plan, including Free**. It went live globally on Mac and Windows on day one.

On **web and mobile**, it is staged. It started rolling out July 9 to Pro, Enterprise, and Edu, and expanded to Plus and Business over the following days.

TIP

If you want ChatGPT Work today and you are on a cheaper plan, **download the desktop app**. That is the fastest door in, and it is the more powerful version anyway.

STEP 3: Connect your stuff

Empty ChatGPT Work is just a smart intern with no access to anything. The magic only shows up once you connect the tools where your work actually lives. That is the plugins chapter, coming up.

Phone vs Browser vs Desktop

Not all three surfaces are the same. This trips people up constantly, so here is the honest breakdown.

Capability	Phone	Web	Desktop
Start, steer, and review tasks	Yes	Yes	Yes
Connected apps (plugins)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Scheduled Tasks	Yes	Yes	Yes
Projects	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sites	Yes	Yes	Yes
Read files on your computer	No	No	Yes
Built-in browser	No	No	Yes
Computer Use (clicks and types for you)	No	No	Yes
Codex	Remote tab only	No	Yes

Phone is a remote control, not a workshop. Fire off a task on the walk to the coffee shop, check the result at your desk. Web is the same thing with more screen. Both run in the cloud, which means they have no idea what is in your Downloads folder.

Desktop is where ChatGPT Work is actually powerful, and it is not close.

HEADS UP

At launch, **cloud Work threads and desktop Work threads do not sync**. A Work task you start on the web will not appear in desktop Work, and your desktop Work threads and local files stay on that computer. Regular Chat conversations do sync. Expect this to change, but do not count on it yet.

THE RULE

Phone and web for starting and checking. Desktop for the real work.

Your First Task

Do not start with something complicated. OpenAI's own advice is the best advice here: **give it a task you already know well**, so you can judge the output honestly.

Open the desktop app, switch to Work, point it at a folder, and paste this:

YOUR FIRST TASK

```
Take the files in this folder, pull out every
number that looks like a cost, and build me a
spreadsheet with a summary tab showing totals
by category. Ask me if anything is ambiguous.
```

What you will see: it makes a plan, tells you the plan, starts opening files, tells you what it is finding, and stops to ask when it is unsure. When it is done, you get an actual .xlsx file with actual formulas.

The first time it produces a real file instead of a code block you have to copy-paste, something clicks. That is the moment people get it.

How to write a good task

The instinct from three years of chatbots is to write a question. Kill that instinct. Write a **brief**, like you are handing work to a new employee. A good ChatGPT Work prompt has four things:

- **The outcome.** "I want a 10-slide deck" beats "help me with a presentation."
- **The sources.** Point at the folder, the files, the apps, the URLs.
- **The constraints.** Tone, length, format, template, who it is for.
- **The review criteria.** How you will judge whether it is good. This one is the cheat code and almost nobody does it.

Bad

WHAT MOST PEOPLE TYPE

```
Make me a competitor analysis.
```

Good

WHAT YOU SHOULD TYPE

```
Research these five competitors. For each one,
pull their pricing page, their homepage
positioning, and their last three blog posts.
```

```
Build a spreadsheet with one row per competitor
```

and columns for price, target customer, main claim, and weaknesses.

Then write me a one-page summary of where we are losing. Flag anything you are not confident about instead of guessing.

Same tool. Wildly different result.

Staying In Control

This is what separates ChatGPT Work from the demos where an AI goes rogue and books 40 flights. You decide how much rope it gets.

Plan mode

Before it touches anything, ChatGPT gathers context, asks you clarifying questions, and shows you a **step-by-step plan**. You read the plan. You change it or you approve it. Only then does it start working.

Turn this on for anything that matters. It is the cheapest insurance in the product, and it also makes the output better, because the questions it asks force you to actually specify what you want.

Check-ins

You configure when it checks back with you. Every step, at key decision points, or only when it is stuck. Your call.

Action approvals

Anything consequential (sending something, changing something, touching a connected system) can require your sign-off before it happens.

HEADS UP

Everyone's instinct is to turn approvals off after week one because they are annoying. Do not. Keep them on for anything involving money, messages sent as you, or files you cannot recreate. Speed is not the point. Not having to un-send an email to 40,000 people is the point.

Plugins

This is the part people skip, and then they wonder why ChatGPT Work feels underwhelming.

Plugins are how ChatGPT reaches the tools where your work already lives. Slack, Microsoft Teams, Google Drive, SharePoint, Gmail, Outlook, your calendar, your CRM, your project tracker. There are more than 1,400 in the new unified plugin directory.

WHAT CHANGED ON JULY 9

OpenAI migrated the old app directory into the **Plugin directory**. Apps still exist (they are the actual connection to Gmail, Slack, and so on), but plugins are now the wrapper around them. A plugin can bundle **skills** (instructions), **apps** (connections), and **app templates** (setup helpers). Your existing connections still work. Nothing broke.

How to connect one

- Open the plugin directory from the sidebar in ChatGPT web or the desktop app, or go to Settings and then Plugins.
- Pick the plugin you want.
- Hit **Connect**.
- Do the OAuth login (the normal "sign in with Google" flow).

How to actually use them

Automatic: ChatGPT figures out on its own which plugin to reach for. Ask it to prep for a meeting and it will go look at your calendar and email without being told.

Manual: type @ followed by the app name to point it at a specific tool.

POINTING AT SPECIFIC TOOLS

```
@Slack find every message about the Q3 launch
and @GoogleDrive pull the deck we made for it.

Then give me a one-page summary of where the
project actually stands.
```

TIP

Do not connect all 1,400. Connect the four places your work actually lives: your files (Drive or SharePoint), your team chat (Slack or Teams), your email, and your calendar. Those four cover about 80% of what you would ever ask it to do.

HEADS UP

On Business, Enterprise, and Edu plans, your admin controls which plugins are available and what each one is allowed to do. Some are read-only. If a Connect button is greyed out and says "Disabled by admin", that is why.

Skills

This is the feature that turns ChatGPT Work from impressive into genuinely useful, and almost nobody is talking about it.

A skill is a reusable set of instructions that tells ChatGPT how to do a specific task, your way, every single time.

Think about the thing you explain to ChatGPT over and over. Your brand voice. Your report format. The way you like data cleaned. The seven checks you run before publishing. Right now you re-paste that into every chat like an idiot (I did this for a year). A skill saves it once, and ChatGPT pulls it in automatically whenever it is relevant.

How to make one

The easiest way is the dumbest way. Just ask. Every account comes with a built-in **skill-creator** skill that handles it.

BUILD A SKILL IN 30 SECONDS

```
Create a skill that writes my weekly client
update the way I like it. Ask me whatever you
need to know about my format, tone, and the
sections I always include.
```

You can also build one in the Skills editor, upload a skill file, or install one somebody shared with you. Find them all by clicking your profile icon and then **Skills**.

Sharing them

You can share a skill with specific people, with a group, or publish it to your whole workspace so nobody has to rebuild the process. This is how a team stops having eleven different versions of "the report format."

AVAILABILITY HEADS UP

Skills are still in beta and availability keeps moving. They are supported on the business-tier plans (Business, Enterprise, Edu, plus Teachers and Healthcare), and personal skills in Work are available on paid plans other than Free and Go. On Enterprise and Edu they are off by default, so an admin has to switch them on. OpenAI's skills also follow the **Agent Skills** open standard, so a skill from one product can be installed in another. Skills are becoming portable, and that is a bigger deal than it sounds.

HEADS UP

Only upload skills from sources you trust. Skills can contain code. ChatGPT scans uploaded skills and will mark risky ones as "Needs Review" or block them entirely, but a scan is not a substitute for you actually looking at what you are installing.

Files

Three different ways files get into ChatGPT Work, and they behave differently.

1. Uploading files (works everywhere)

The normal thing. Drag a file into the chat. Works on web, mobile, and desktop. Fine for one-offs.

2. Local folders (desktop only)

This is the good one. On the desktop app you can **open a local folder or project and grant ChatGPT access to it**. Not upload. Access. It reads the files in there, works with them, and writes new files back into the folder.

You point it at a messy folder of PDFs and it hands you a clean spreadsheet in the same folder. No uploading, no downloading, no "where did that file go."

- **Grant access only to the folder the task needs.** Do not hand it your entire home directory because you are feeling brave. Make a working folder.
- **Local files and outputs stay on that computer** unless you explicitly move or share them.
- Work on web and mobile **cannot** touch files on your computer. Full stop.

3. Connected apps (works everywhere)

Files in Google Drive, SharePoint, and so on come in through plugins. On desktop, ChatGPT can even open and refine Google Workspace and Microsoft 365 files inside the built-in browser.

The Browser and Computer Use

These two are the "wait, it can do that?" features. Both are **desktop only**.

The built-in browser

The new desktop app has a **real browser inside it**. Not a scraper. An actual browser with tabs, sign-ins, autofill, password management, extensions, and downloads. Open it from the toolbar or hit **Cmd+Shift+B** on Mac, **Ctrl+Shift+B** on Windows.

Here is why it is cool: **you and ChatGPT see the same page**. It works across multiple tabs in one task, downloads files, and waits while you sign in to something. There is an annotation mode where you point at an element on a page, leave a comment, and ask ChatGPT to fix it.

It uses its own browser state, not your Chrome profile. If a task needs your already signed-in Chrome session, your open tabs, or your Chrome extensions, use the **updated Chrome extension** instead, which now puts ChatGPT in Chrome's sidebar.

THIS IS WHAT KILLED ATLAS

OpenAI is sunsetting its standalone Atlas browser and folding what it learned into this. Turns out you did not need a separate browser. You needed a browser inside the assistant.

Computer Use

This is the wild one. **Computer Use lets ChatGPT use your computer on your behalf**. It clicks. It types. It opens apps. It moves files where they need to go. It runs in the background across your apps, tools, and browser while you do something else.

You can use it for a one-time job, or bake it into a scheduled task when the recurring work includes steps on your actual machine.

What it is for: the stuff that has no plugin. The internal dashboard nobody built an integration for. The clunky desktop app your company still uses. The tool that only works if a human clicks through it.

HEADS UP

There is no sandbox between an AI clicking around and your actual computer. Start with low-stakes tasks. Do not point it at banking, health, or anything you cannot undo. Watch it the first few times, like you would watch a new hire.

Sites

Sites is in public beta and it is the sleeper feature of this launch.

You can turn your work into an **interactive site or web app** and share it with a URL. Not a doc. Not a PDF. An actual live page.

What people are building with it:

- Live dashboards
- Project trackers
- Launch calendars
- Prototypes and internal portals
- Interactive reports

And the good part: **ChatGPT can keep them updated as the underlying information changes.** Build a dashboard once, connect it to the tools the data lives in, and it refreshes itself. You can test the Sites you build right inside ChatGPT.

BUILD A LIVE DASHBOARD

```
Build me a Site that shows this week's status:  
open tasks by owner from @Asana, anything I was  
tagged in on @Slack, and this week's calendar.  
  
Keep it simple and readable. Refresh the data  
every time the page is opened.
```

THE REFRAME

If you have ever built a Google Sheet that four people check every Monday, that is a Site now.

Scheduled Tasks

Scheduled Tasks let you ask ChatGPT to do something **once, on a repeating schedule, when an event happens, or continuously as a monitor**. It runs whether you are online or not. You get a push notification or an email when it is done.

Real examples straight from OpenAI, and these are the shape of thing that actually works:

- Review new Slack updates each week and refresh a recurring meeting agenda.
- Check websites and dashboards every morning, summarize what changed, send a report.
- Monitor new customer feedback and turn recurring themes into prioritized product ideas.
- Update a presentation when new feedback arrives by email.
- Turn new Teams and Slack messages into updated docs or slides, then share the important changes with your team.

How to set one up

Just ask.

A MORNING BRIEF THAT RUNS ITSELF

```
Every Monday at 8am, pull my calendar for the
week, check Slack for anything I was tagged in,
and give me a one-page brief. Lead with anything
that needs a decision from me.
```

Manage all of them from the Tasks page (profile icon, then Tasks), where you can edit the name, the instructions, and the schedule, or pause and delete them. There is a cap on active tasks and it varies by plan, so if you cannot create a new one, pause an old one.

HEADS UP

A scheduled task runs when you are not watching. Start with the boring stuff (summaries, briefings, monitoring). Do not schedule anything that sends messages, spends money, or deletes things until you have watched it run manually a few times. Review the outputs. Pause what you are not using.

Projects

A **project** keeps related conversations, files, and instructions in one place. On desktop you can tie a project to a local folder.

The point is context. Instead of re-explaining your client, your product, and your format in every single task, you set it once at the project level and every task inside it inherits that.

If you work on the same handful of things week to week (and everyone does), set up a project per thing. It takes five minutes and it saves you from repeating yourself forever.

DO THIS TODAY

Make one project for the thing you work on most. Put your standing instructions in it: who it is for, what format you want, what to never do. Every task you run inside it gets smarter for free.

25 Things You Can Delegate

Enough theory. These are grouped by who you are. The honest test for whether something belongs here: **is it high-effort, repeatable, and does it end in a file or a decision?** If yes, delegate it. If it is a quick question, just use Chat.

If you run a business

1

Month-end close

Find the source data across your tools, move it into Excel or Sheets, reconcile it, build the slides, check the results. OpenAI's own finance team says this went from days to hours.

2

Competitor teardown

Give it a list of competitors and what to compare. Get back a full dataset showing where you lead and where you lag. Virgin Atlantic did exactly this and cut a weeks-long analysis cycle down to hours.

3

Lead triage

Zapier's head of enterprise marketing built a system that traces every lead across the CRM, call recordings, and email, finds where follow-ups broke down, and rolls it into a weekly exec dashboard. She says it surfaced seven figures in pipeline every month.

4

The monthly board deck

Built automatically from the tools the numbers already live in.

5

Customer feedback into a roadmap

Monitor incoming feedback, cluster the themes, rank them, keep the list live.

6

Invoice and receipt chaos

Point it at the folder. Get a clean expense spreadsheet.

If you are a marketer or creator

7

Research to brief to assets

Customer research becomes a campaign brief becomes the actual assets, in one request, with context carried through every step.

8

Adapt one campaign for five markets

Without rewriting anything from scratch.

9

Content calendar as a live Site

That the whole team can check instead of asking you.

10

Long transcript into everything

Turn one podcast or video into a newsletter, five social posts, and a blog outline, in the formats you already use.

11

Weekly performance report

Pulled from your analytics, on a schedule, in your inbox before you wake up.

12

Landing page research

Have it open the built-in browser, look at 20 competitor pages, and tell you what the actual patterns are.

If you work with data

13

Clean up the ugly spreadsheet

Malformed rows, wrong headers, junk data. It fixes it and hands you a real file.

14

Real statistical work

Outlier detection, cross-tabs, time-series, with charts.

15

A dashboard that refreshes itself

Built as a Site, pulling from your connected tools every time it opens.

16

Reconcile two systems that disagree

And tell you why they disagree.

If you are in sales or ops

17

Meeting prep

Pull the account history, the last three emails, the Slack thread, and the open tickets, and hand you a one-pager before the call.

18

A live account command center

That updates itself as activity changes.

19

Launch readiness checks

RingCentral's R&D efficiency manager automated this and went from supporting one product manager to supporting around 50.

20

Event ops

NVIDIA's GTM manager rebuilt his whole conference workflow. About 40% of his pre-event time used to go to manual number crunching. Now that process runs twice a week automatically.

If you are just a person with a computer

21

Organize the disaster folder

Downloads, Desktop, wherever. Sorted, renamed, deduplicated.

22

Batch rename files

With a consistent date format so you can actually find things.

23

Read the 60-page contract

And tell you what is unusual in it.

24

Voice memo to polished document

Turn a ramble and some scattered notes into something you can send.

25

A morning brief

Your calendar, your important emails, and whatever you asked it to monitor, waiting for you every day at 7am.

The Usage Catch

Here is the part the launch coverage buried, and you need to know it.

ChatGPT Work does not work like a normal subscription feature.

OpenAI is explicit about it. Work "is designed for longer, more involved work than a typical chat request, so usage works differently." Usage varies with the amount of work a task requires, and more complex tasks use more of your plan's included usage. It follows **the same usage structure as Codex**.

Translation: an agent that runs for two hours across twelve tools burns a lot more of your allowance than asking it to write a haiku. Your subscription buys an allowance, and ambitious agent work meters against it.

MAKE WEEK ONE A MEASUREMENT WEEK

There are no published per-task prices. So run **one** real workflow, watch what it costs you in usage, and only then decide whether to put it on a daily schedule. The failure mode is obvious and very easy to hit: get excited, schedule six agentic tasks, and torch your monthly allowance by the 9th.

For teams, Enterprise and Edu admins get spend controls in the Admin Console. They can set workspace defaults, set group limits, create individual overrides for people who need more capacity, and review requests for extra credits.

Safety and Control

ChatGPT Work reads your stuff and takes real actions in the real world. That combination is powerful and it is also where things go wrong.

What OpenAI built in

- **Plan mode, check-ins, and approvals.** You decide what it can access, when it checks in, and what needs your sign-off.
- **Auto-review.** OpenAI's most advanced models review important actions involving connected tools before they happen. In adversarial red teaming, OpenAI reports auto-review blocked 100% of attempts to extract protected data, including attacks the reviewing model had not seen in training. That is a red-team result, not a promise.
- **Enterprise foundation.** Work is built on ChatGPT Enterprise's security, privacy, and compliance base, with a Compliance API for oversight at scale.
- **Website permissions.** The built-in browser asks before using a new site unless you have already allowed it.

What you should do

- Use a **dedicated working folder** instead of granting access to everything.
- Keep **approvals on** for money, sent messages, and irreversible changes.
- **Do not point Computer Use at sensitive apps.** Banking, health, anything personal.
- **Treat web content as untrusted.** A malicious instruction hidden in a webpage or an email is a real attack (it is called prompt injection) and it is the main risk with any agent that reads the internet.
- **Watch for scope creep.** If it starts touching files or sites you did not mention, stop it.

HEADS UP

You are responsible for what it does on your behalf. That is not a legal disclaimer. That is just true.

ChatGPT Work vs Claude Cowork

You have probably heard of the other one. Anthropic shipped **Claude Cowork** earlier this year and it is the same basic idea: an agent that does knowledge work and hands you finished files. Both companies looked at their coding agent, noticed non-developers were using it for everything, and productized that.

I use both. Here is the honest comparison.

	ChatGPT Work	Claude Cowork
Finished files	Sheets, slides, docs, Sites	Sheets, slides, docs, live artifacts
Connects to your apps	1,400+ plugins	Connectors and plugins
Teach it your way	Skills	Skills
Local files	Desktop only	Desktop only
Drives a browser	Built-in browser + Chrome extension	Claude in Chrome
Controls your computer	Computer Use (desktop)	Computer use (research preview, Pro and Max)
Recurring tasks	Scheduled Tasks	Scheduled tasks, run remotely with no device online
Works while laptop is shut	Cloud and scheduled tasks only	Yes, sessions run remotely
Sessions follow you	Cloud and desktop threads do not sync yet	Yes, across desktop, web, mobile
Free tier	Yes, on desktop	No, paid plans only
Shareable live web page	Sites, public URL	Live artifacts, desktop only

Where ChatGPT Work wins

- **Distribution.** It is inside the app hundreds of millions of people already open. Zero new habits. That matters more than any feature.
- **Sites.** Turning work into a live, shareable, self-updating web page with a URL is genuinely ahead. Claude's live artifacts are similar but desktop-only and they live on your machine.
- **The built-in browser.** A real browser inside the app, with tabs, sign-ins, extensions, and annotation mode, beats bolting onto Chrome.
- **Free on desktop.** Chat, Work, and Codex on every desktop plan including Free. Claude Cowork is paid plans only, no exceptions.

Where Claude Cowork wins

- **Sessions run in the cloud and keep going.** Close your laptop and Claude keeps working. Your sessions and files follow your account across desktop, web, and mobile. ChatGPT Work's cloud and desktop threads do not sync at launch, and that is a real gap.
- **Scheduled tasks with no computer at all.** They run remotely with no device online.
- **Sub-agents.** Claude spins up multiple agents working in parallel on different pieces of one job. When it works, it is fast in a way that is hard to describe.
- **Deletion protection.** Claude requires explicit permission before permanently deleting any file, in every mode. Small thing until it is not.
- **Writing quality.** Subjective, and I will get emails about this, but Claude still writes better prose. For anything with a voice, I reach for Claude.
- **Project memory.** Cowork projects remember how you like things done within that workspace.

So which one should you use?

Honestly? Whichever one is already in your life.

If you live in ChatGPT, use ChatGPT Work. The Sites feature and the built-in browser are excellent, the plugin ecosystem is deeper, and you do not have to learn anything new. If you are a Claude person, Cowork's remote sessions and sub-agents are a real advantage.

THE HONEST TAKE

They are about 85% the same product. Anyone telling you one of them is a category killer is selling something. Pick the one whose app you already have open, learn it properly, and get on with your life. The gap between "uses an agent well" and "does not use one at all" is a hundred times bigger than the gap between these two.

8 Mistakes People Make in Week One

1

Treating it like chat

Writing a question instead of a brief. Give it an outcome, sources, constraints, and how you will judge it.

2

Not connecting anything

ChatGPT Work with no plugins is just ChatGPT with extra steps.

3

Using web when they need desktop

Local files, the browser, and Computer Use are desktop only. If you are wondering why it cannot see your folder, that is why.

4

Starting with the hardest thing they have

Start with a task you already know cold so you can actually judge the output.

5

Turning off approvals immediately

The approvals are the product working, not the product being annoying.

6

Scheduling before watching it run once

Run it manually, twice, then schedule it.

7

Ignoring usage

It is metered. Measure your first week before you automate anything.

8

Skiping skills

If you find yourself explaining the same preferences a third time, stop and turn it into a skill.

Quick FAQ

Question	Answer
Do I need to pay?	For the desktop app, no. Chat, Work, and Codex are on every desktop plan including Free. On web and mobile it started with Pro, Enterprise, and Edu, then expanded to Plus and Business.
I do not see Work anywhere.	The rollout is gradual. Update your app and check again. If you are on the old desktop app, you need the new one.
What is ChatGPT Classic?	The old desktop app. It still works and still gets updates, but the new agent features only live in the new app.
Can it see files on my computer?	On desktop, yes, for the folders you give it access to. On web and mobile, no.
Is Codex going away?	No. It is now a mode inside the new desktop app, and it got better: inline diff editing, PR review in the side panel, faster computer use, multi-repo projects.
What happened to Atlas?	OpenAI is sunsetting the standalone browser. Its capabilities moved into the desktop app's built-in browser and an updated Chrome sidebar extension.
What model does it run on?	GPT-5.6, which launched the same day.
Can it work while my laptop is closed?	Cloud tasks and scheduled tasks keep running. Anything needing your local files, desktop apps, or Computer Use needs your computer awake and the app open.
Is my data safe?	Work is built on ChatGPT Enterprise's security and compliance foundation, with an auto-review layer checking important actions before they happen. That said, you are the last line of defense. Do not give it access to things you would not give a new contractor on day one.

The Bottom Line

For three years, "using AI at work" meant a chat window sitting next to the work.

As of July 9, 2026, on the most-used AI product on earth, it means delegating the work itself and getting finished files back.

That is the whole shift. And it is going to separate people fast. Not into "people who use AI" and "people who do not," because everyone uses AI now. It is going to separate the people who learned to **hand off a job** from the people who are still typing questions into a box.

YOUR ACTION PLAN THIS WEEK

1. Download the new ChatGPT desktop app.
2. Connect four tools: files, team chat, email, calendar.
3. Pick one task you do every week and know cold.
4. Write it as a brief, not a question. Turn Plan mode on.
5. Watch what comes back.

That is it. One task. If it is good, you will figure out the rest on your own, I promise.

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Stop typing questions. Start handing off jobs.