

GUIDE

How to edit AI drafts so they sound like you

A practical editing pass for AI drafts: cut the filler, restore your specifics, fix the facts and read it aloud before you publish.

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AI drafts read smooth and say little. The fix is not to discard them; it is to edit them like a junior writer's work: cut, specify, verify and voice. Here is a pass you can run in about twenty minutes per piece.

1. Cut the filler first

AI text leans on hedges and throat-clearing: "it is important to note", "in today's fast-paced world", "delve into", "unlock the power of". Delete every sentence that would survive unchanged in a different company's article. If a paragraph only restates its heading, cut it.

2. Add what only you know

Generic text is the main tell. Add one concrete detail per section: a real number with its source, a client example, a mistake you made, an opinion you hold. Google's people-first guidance asks whether content shows first-hand expertise. Your specifics are what make a page useful instead of interchangeable.

3. Check every fact

AI models predict words; they do not look things up. Verify names, dates, prices, statistics and quotes against a source you opened. Fix product claims against the vendor's own page. This step is not optional for anything you publish or send.

4. Fix the rhythm

AI sentences cluster at one length. Break long ones. Merge choppy ones. Read the draft aloud; where you stumble, rewrite. Short sentences for hard points, longer ones for explanation.

5. Match your voice

If the tool offers a brand voice or style feature, train it on a piece you wrote yourself. Otherwise, keep a short style note: words you use, words you ban, how you open a paragraph. Apply it in the edit, not just the prompt.

6. Check the SEO fields too

Google's generative AI guidance extends the review to titles, meta descriptions, structured data and image alt text. These get generated too, and they get published without a second look more often than body text.

When the draft is beyond repair

Some prompts produce mush no edit fixes. That is a signal about the prompt or the tool, not about you. Tighten the brief: audience, length, the one thing the reader should do next. If a second draft is still generic, the tool may be wrong for this job. Compare others in the same category on this site.

Sources

All sources below were fetched and checked on 2026-11-13. That is the access date, not a claim about publication date.

- Google Search Central: Creating helpful, reliable, people-first content, accessed 2026-11-13.
- Google Search Central: Google Search's guidance on using generative AI content on your website, page last updated 2026-10-01, accessed 2026-11-13.

Frequently asked questions

How much editing does an AI draft need?

Plan on a real editing pass for every draft. Cut generic sentences, check every fact and read the result aloud. The amount of work depends on the tool and the prompt, not on the marketing.

Can editing remove the 'AI smell'?

Mostly, yes, if you add specifics only you know: your examples, your numbers, your opinion. Generic phrasing is the tell; concrete detail is the fix.

Sources

developers.google.com — https://developers.google.com/search/docs/fundamentals/creating-helpful-content
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