How to describe your app idea to AI

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The quality of what AI builds depends on the quality of what you tell it. That is not about fancy prompt tricks. It is about being clear in the same way you'd be clear with a new team member on their first day.

This guide shows what to include when you describe an app idea, with before and after examples. It works with any AI tool, and it is exactly how to get the best results from the crew in **Social Butterfly AI™**.

The six things to include

1. Who it's for. Name a real person, not "everyone." "Busy parents in my neighborhood who need last-minute babysitters" beats "parents."

2. The problem. What is hard, slow or annoying today? Use their words. "I text five sitters and wait an hour for answers."

3. What the first version must do. Three to five things, no more. "Parents post a time. Sitters see open requests. A sitter can accept. Both get a confirmation screen."

4. What can wait. Saying what's out is as useful as saying what's in. "No payments, ratings or chat in version one."

5. What it saves and who can see it. "Each parent sees only their own requests. Sitters see open requests, not parents' addresses until they accept." This one sentence prevents many security problems.

6. The vibe. How should it feel? "Warm, simple, big buttons, works one-handed on a phone."

Before and after

Before: "Make me an app for my salon."

After: "An online booking page for my two-chair hair salon in Houston. Clients pick a service, a stylist and an open time, and leave their name and phone number. Stylists sign in to see their own appointments for the week. Version one does not need payments or reminders. Clients should never see other clients' details. Style: calm, modern, soft pinks, easy on a phone."

The second description gives the AI a target, a boundary and a security rule. The first one forces it to guess, and you pay for every guess with a rebuild.

Mistakes that waste time and credits

- **Asking for everything at once.** Big first versions are harder to get right. Start small, launch, then add.
- **Changing many things in one request.** In a preview, ask for one change at a time. It's clearer and easier to check.
- **Describing screens before the problem.** Start with who and why. Layout comes later.
- **Leaving out who can see what.** If you don't say, the AI has to assume.
- **Skipping the plan.** Read the plan before anything is built. Fixing words in a plan is quick; fixing code means another round of changes.

How the crew uses your description

In Social Butterfly AI™ you don't need to get it perfect in one message. You start in **Team Chat**, and **The Extractor** asks follow-up questions until your **Vision Core** (problem, solution, audience, vibe) is clear. **Social Butterfly** turns that into a **PRD**. **The Architect** turns the PRD into a plan that lists what's in, what's not in the first version, what it saves and who can see it, and a **Done means...** list of simple checks.

Nothing is built until you tap **Approve this plan**. That is the moment to compare the plan with the six points above.

A template you can copy

"I want to build [what] for [who]. Today they [problem]. The first version must let them [3 to 5 actions]. It does not need [what can wait] yet. [Who] can see [what]; [who] cannot. It should feel [vibe]."

For more ready-to-use prompts, see the AI prompt guide for founders and the Prompt Engineering Playbook. Moving an app you made in Firebase Studio? Start with our Firebase Studio alternative guide. To find the problem in your customers' own words, see How to Turn Customer Pain Points into a Profitable Business Idea (the Pain to Profit™ class guide).

Frequently asked questions

How long should my description be?

A short paragraph is plenty to start. The six points above usually fit in five to eight sentences.

Do I need technical words?

No. Plain words work best. Say "clients only see their own bookings," not a database term.

What if I don't know what the first version should do?

Say so. Ask the crew to suggest the smallest useful version, then pick from it.

Can I attach a sketch or screenshot?

Yes. In Team Chat you can attach an image so the crew can see it.

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