

CHEAT SHEET

AI Research Cheat Sheet

Perplexity, NotebookLM, Claude long-context. Research a week's worth in an hour.

Pick the right tool

Perplexity	Live web + citations. Use when you need up-to-date facts, prices, news, comparisons.
NotebookLM	You upload sources (PDFs, YouTube, docs). It answers ONLY from them. Use for study, research papers, book notes.
Claude	Long docs, deep analysis, essays. Paste 100 pages, ask hard questions.
ChatGPT	Brainstorming, drafting, when you don't need citations.

Perplexity — power moves

- Ask a real question, not keywords: *“What are the top 3 AI companies teens are building in 2026?”*
- Use **Focus modes**: Academic (papers), YouTube, Reddit, Social — for source-specific research.
- Add a year: *“...in 2026”* to avoid old results.
- Use **Follow-ups** — they inherit context. Don't re-explain.
- Always click 2-3 citations to verify. AI still gets things wrong.

NotebookLM — power moves

- Upload 3-20 sources (PDFs, Google Docs, websites, YouTube videos).
- Ask **“What do these sources disagree about?”** — it will find contradictions.
- Generate an **Audio Overview** — two AI hosts discuss your sources like a podcast. Great for studying on the go.
- Ask **“Give me a study guide with 15 quiz questions.”**
- Ask **“What's the strongest counter-argument to [claim]?”**

The Research Sandwich (do this every time)

1. Broad scan	Perplexity: <i>"Give me an overview of [TOPIC] in 2026 with the 5 most important points."</i>
2. Go deep	Pick the most interesting point. Ask <i>"Explain [that point] like I'm 14, with an example."</i>
3. Verify	Open 3 citations. Read the actual source. Confirm the AI didn't invent anything.
4. Synthesize	NotebookLM or Claude: upload everything, ask <i>"What are the 3 things I should remember?"</i>
5. Teach it back	Explain to a friend or write a 200-word summary. If you can't, you don't know it.

Copy-paste research prompts

Market map in 30 seconds

Give me a map of the [INDUSTRY] market in Pakistan in 2026.
List the top 5 players, what they do, price range, and
where they are weak. Table format with citations.

Steelman + weakness

For the claim "[PASTE CLAIM]," give me the strongest
supporting evidence AND the strongest counter-argument.
Cite sources for both sides.

Study buddy from PDFs (NotebookLM)

From the uploaded sources, create a 1-page study sheet.
Include: 5 key concepts, 3 formulas or facts I must memorize,
5 quiz questions with answers, and one likely exam question.

Trend spotter

What are the top 5 emerging trends in [FIELD] as of the
last 6 months? For each: one-sentence summary, why it
matters, and one Pakistani startup that could ride it.

Tip — Golden rule: NEVER trust a fact you didn't click through and verify. AI is your research intern, not your professor.