A little help from AI this winter

You've probably heard plenty about artificial intelligence, or AI. But if you're still wondering what you would actually use it for, a few everyday examples might help.

You don't need to understand how it works or be particularly confident with technology. If you can type a question, you can give it a try.

Getting started

ChatGPT and **Microsoft Copilot** both have free versions you can use on a computer, tablet or smartphone. Some features have limits, but there's no need to pay a subscription to get started. Use their official websites or apps: www.chatgpt.com or www.copilot.com.

Once you've opened one, type as though you were asking a real person a question. There are no special commands to learn.

Something warm for dinner

With the Algarve evenings turning cooler, a little inspiration in the kitchen can be welcome. Try asking:

"Suggest five easy winter dinners for two, using ingredients available in Portuguese supermarkets. Include soups and a shopping list, and keep the budget around €50."

Tell it your food likes or dislikes and anything you already have in the cupboard. The cost will be an estimate, but the ideas can save some head-scratching.

Help with Portuguese

After many years in Portugal, writing a message in Portuguese can take a while.

"Write a polite message in European Portuguese asking someone to service my air conditioning for winter heating. Include the English translation."

Always specify **European Portuguese**. You can also ask it to explain a notice or an unfamiliar phrase. Remember, try not to include personal details and always remember to get personal professional help with anything involving contracts, tax or legal obligations.

Making the most of a winter's day

Have visitors coming, or fancy getting out yourself? Ask:

"Suggest a gentle afternoon out near Lagos in December, with somewhere for lunch, limited walking and an indoor option if it rains."

Mention your starting town, interests and any mobility needs. Check opening hours directly, as winter arrangements may differ.

For the weather, ask it to search for the latest forecast for your town and show its sources. Check official warnings directly before travelling.

A patient helping hand

AI can also help draft a letter, explain a confusing message or make a long email easier to understand.

If the answer sounds complicated, simply type: “Please explain that in plain English, one step at a time.”

You can ask again as often as you like. There’s no need to apologise, it’s very patient!

Keep a little common sense handy

Remember, AI can sound certain but still be wrong.

Check important information, and don’t treat it as a substitute for a doctor, accountant or solicitor. Never share passwords, bank details or private information about other people.

Start with something small, perhaps a soup recipe or a message you’ve been putting off writing.

It won’t fix that blocked drain, but it might help you find the words to ask someone who can.

If you’d like to discuss how AI could help you in your daily life or any other computer related issue - please contact me:

Email: info@stevendunwell.com

Phone: 00351 936 387 512

Website: www.stevendunwell.com

Facebook: StevenLagosIT