

# How to Use Microsoft's Copilot AI, and 10 Things to Try Right Away

By Lance Whitney, pcmag.com, Updated March 7, 2024

Copilot and ChatGPT share a lot of similarities, but Microsoft's chatbot offers certain advantages on its own. Here's how to take it for a spin and check out its most compelling features. [ChatGPT](#) has prompted a lot of companies to try to get in on the AI act. One of those is Microsoft, which has its own AI-infused chatbot known as [Copilot](#) (previously [Bing Chat](#)). Available directly in Windows, on the web, as a sidebar in the Edge browser, and as a mobile app, Copilot will answer questions and perform tasks, potentially proving more helpful than OpenAI's own tool.

So what can Copilot do for you? Well, it can generate different types of content, from poems to songs to stories to reports. It will analyze uploaded photos, artwork, and other images. Copilot's Designer image creator will create a logo, drawing, or other image based on your text. Through the Edge sidebar, Copilot can also provide insights on your current web page in the browser. And it can expand its skillset through Copilot GPTs and [plugins](#).

The basic version of Copilot is free. For \$20 a month, [Copilot Pro](#) offers a few additional perks, the most useful being its [integration with Microsoft 365](#). That means you can tap into AI to help you create, edit, and analyze your work in Word, Excel, PowerPoint, OneNote, and Outlook.

Is Copilot better than ChatGPT? Both chatbots continue to grow and advance, and they have a lot in common. Copilot runs a customized version of [GPT-4](#), and Microsoft itself has [invested billions](#) in ChatGPT creator OpenAI. But since the basic versions of both tools are free, why not see what Microsoft's chatbot can do?

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## How to Access Microsoft Copilot

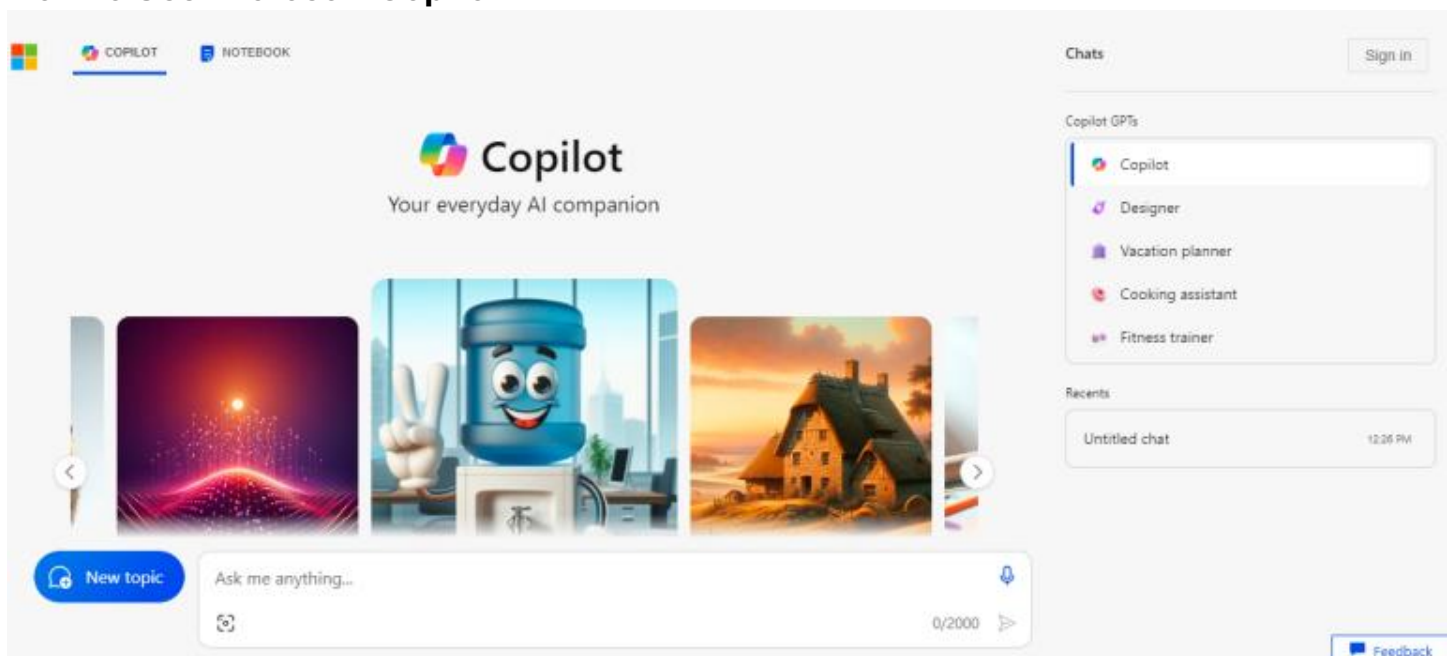
You can access Copilot directly in [Windows 11](#) and [most iterations](#) of Windows 10. If it's rolled out to your PC, just click the **Copilot** icon on the Taskbar, and it opens in a sidebar on the right.

To use Copilot on the web, head to the [Copilot website](#) on any browser. However, Microsoft Edge has a unique integration that allows you to interact with the chatbot through a sidebar; just launch Edge and click the Copilot icon in the upper right. You can also run it on your mobile device by downloading the Copilot app for [iOS/iPadOS](#) or [Android](#).

Once you have the AI chatbot up and ready to use, take a look at some features that can improve your experience.

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## How to Use Microsoft Copilot

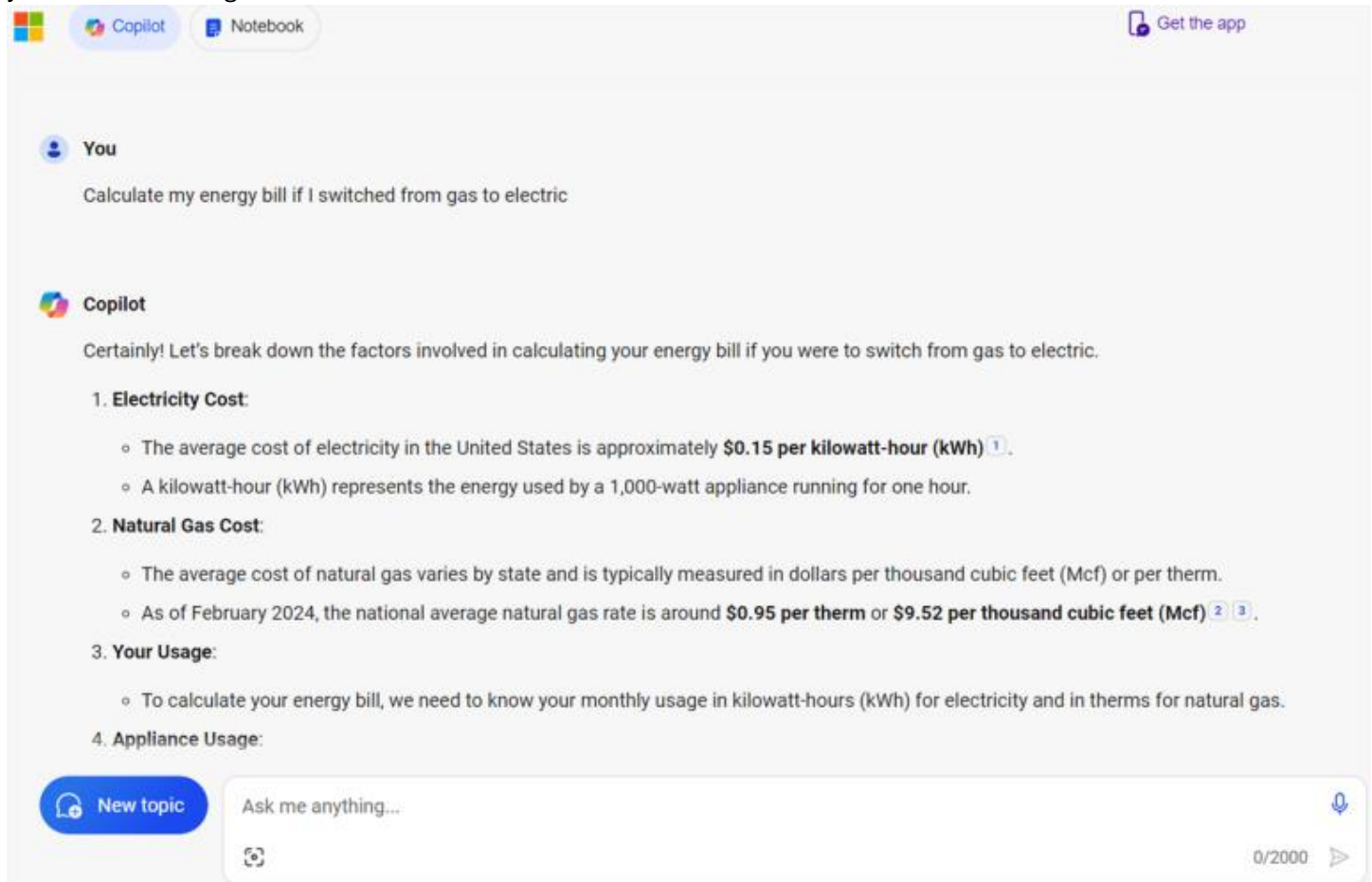


(Credit: PCMag / Microsoft)

You interact with Copilot in much the same way you do with ChatGPT, but Microsoft's tool offers a few more options. Open Copilot and use the **Ask me anything** text box to enter your request. If you don't know what to ask,

Copilot offers several suggested questions. On the web, for instance, you can sift through a carousel of suggested prompts.

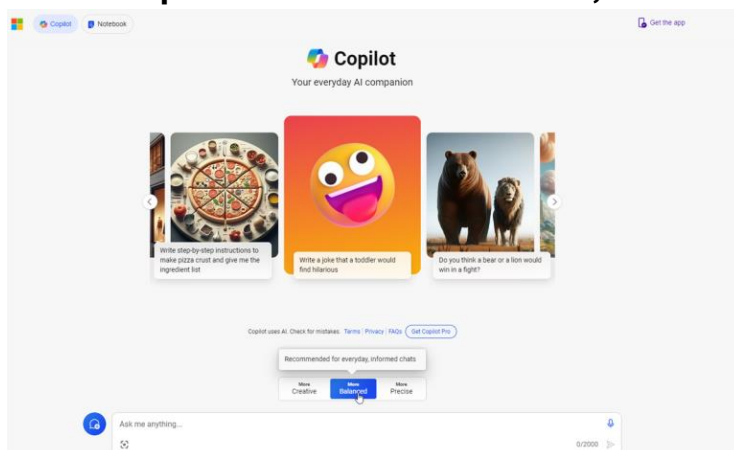
When Copilot responds to one of your requests, it typically suggests follow-up questions that you can ask if you want to delve deeper into related areas. Click one of the follow-up questions to submit it. When using external sources to generate a response, Copilot will list and link to the sources used. Click on a specific online source if you wish to investigate it further.



(Credit: Lance Whitney / Microsoft)

To ask a different question that is unrelated to a previous request, click the blue **New Topic** button and compose your new question. If you want to get more out of your time with Copilot, take a look at our suggestions on what to try next.

## 1. Tell Copilot to Get More Creative, Precise, or Balanced



(Credit: Lance Whitney / Microsoft)

Microsoft allows you to customize Copilot's conversation style. At the start of a new conversation, you can choose between three styles to set the tone of the chatbot:

- **More Creative** makes the responses more original and imaginative.
- **More Precise** means the responses will be more accurate and brief.
- **More Balanced** will attempt to strike a balance between the two.

Experiment with all three, though you may want to keep it at the Balanced level to start.

## 2. Approve, Download, or Share a Response

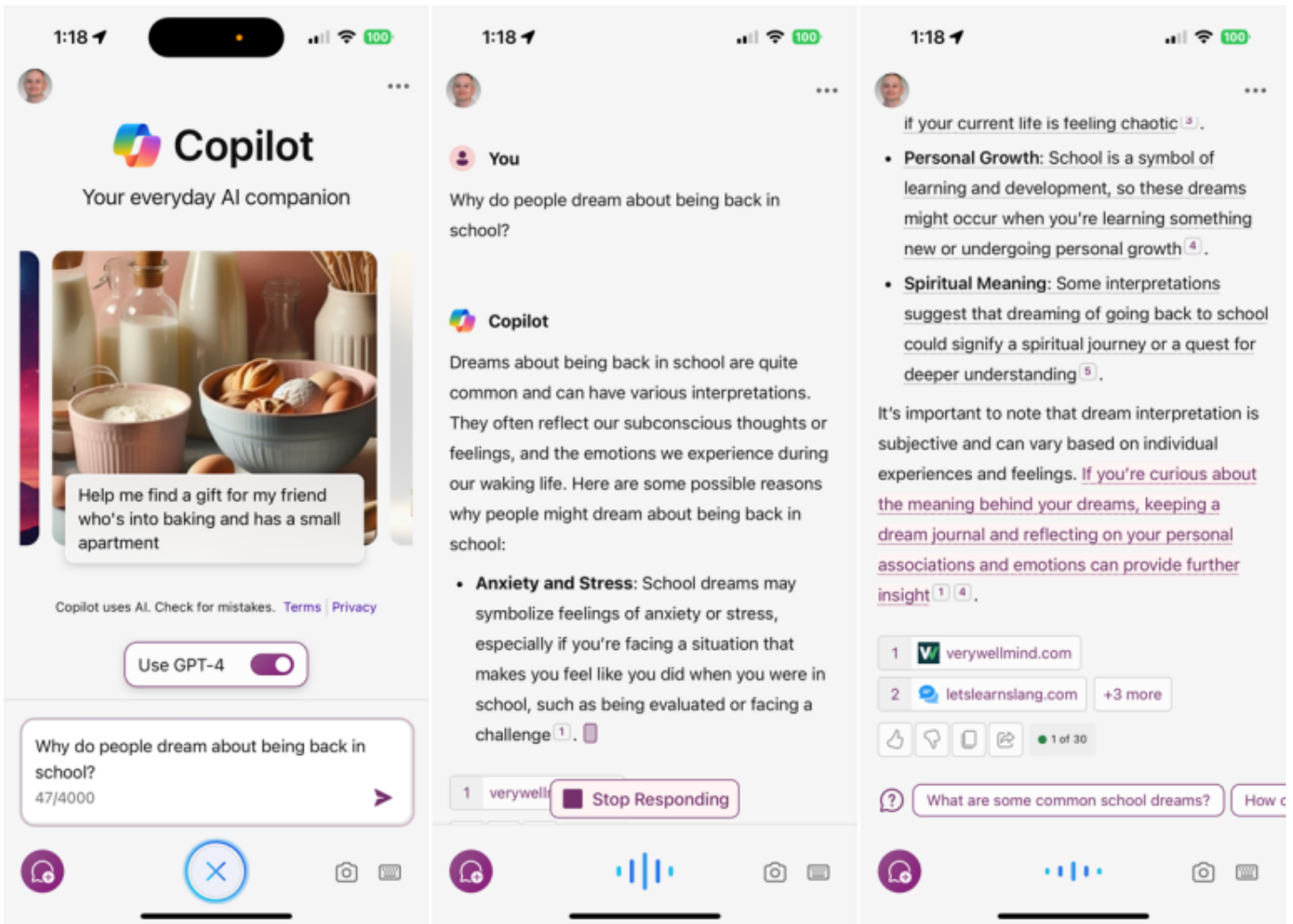
The screenshot shows the Microsoft Copilot interface. At the top, there are buttons for 'Copilot' and 'Notebook', and a 'Get the app' button. Below this, a text response reads: 'more accurate estimate. Additionally, consider other factors like environmental impact and convenience when deciding between gas and electric.' Below the text is a sun icon and a row of 'Learn more' links: 1. [inchcalculator.com](#), 2. [chooseenergy.com](#), 3. [inspirecleanenergy.com](#), 4. [consumeraffairs.com](#), and '+19 more'. A red box highlights a set of interactive icons: a thumbs up, a thumbs down, a document icon, a download icon, a share icon, and a speaker icon, followed by a '1 of 30' indicator. Below the icons is a horizontal bar chart comparing energy usage in 'Sep 2021' (dark blue) and 'Sep 2020' (light blue) for various states. The x-axis is labeled 'Sep 2021, Sep 2020' and ranges from 0 to 25. The y-axis lists states: Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, and Arkansas. The data points are: Alabama (12.41, 12.79), Alaska (22.54, 22.14), Arizona (13.16, 12.65), and Arkansas (9.99, 10.73). Below the chart are two question prompts: 'What is the environmental impact of gas vs electric?' and 'How do I calculate my monthly usage in therms?'. At the bottom, there is a text input field with the placeholder 'Ask me anything...', a microphone icon, and a character count '0/2000'.

STATE	SEP 2021	SEP 2020
Alabama	12.41	12.79
Alaska	22.54	22.14
Arizona	13.16	12.65
Arkansas	9.99	10.73

(Credit: Lance Whitney / Microsoft)

When Copilot responds to your prompts, several icons appear below its answer. From these icons, you can approve or reject what the AI has to say; copy text or export it as a Word document, PDF, or text file; and share the answer with someone else or hear it read aloud.

## 3. Have an Actual Conversation with Microsoft Copilot



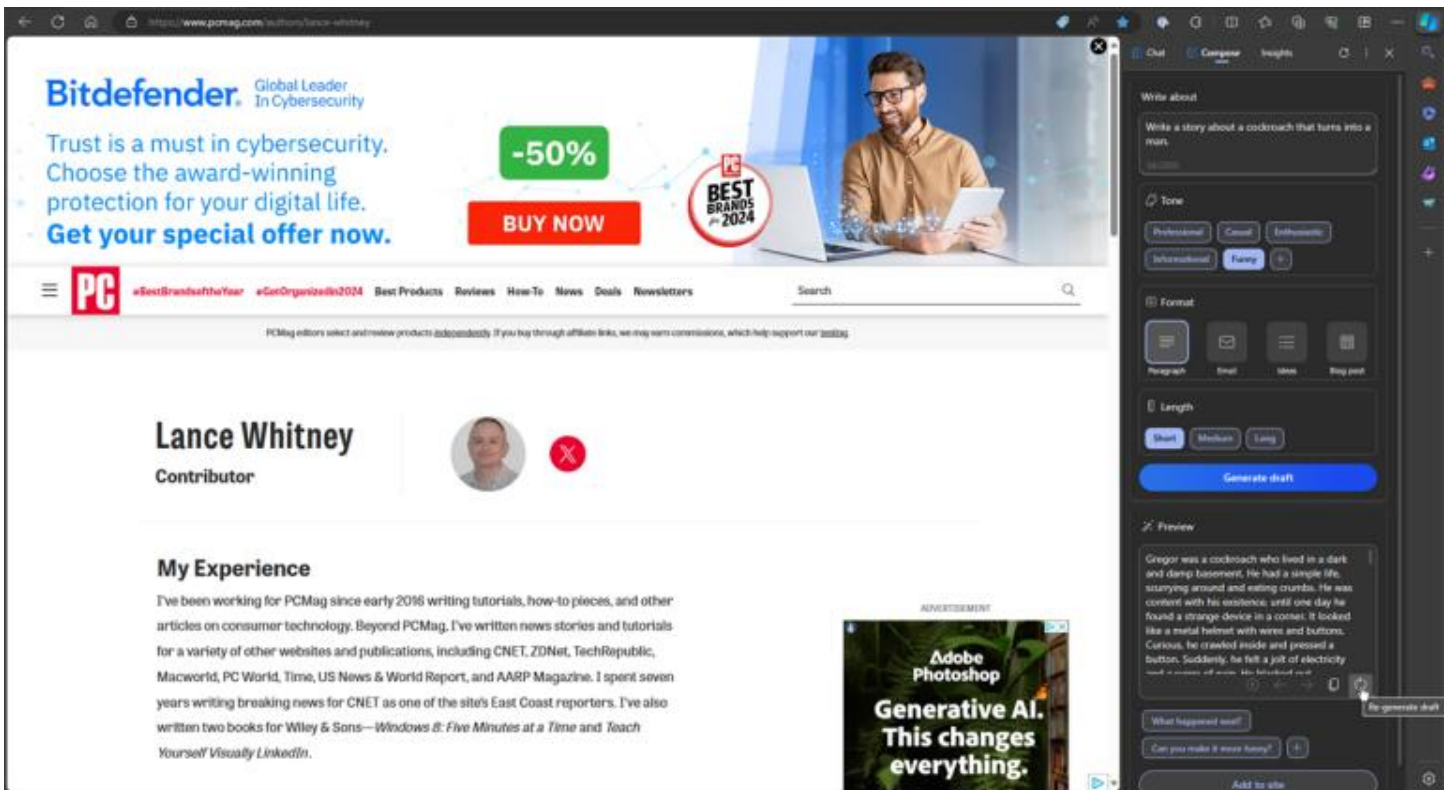
(Credit: Lance Whitney / Microsoft)

In Windows, at the website, or in the mobile app, you can use your voice to talk with Microsoft's AI. Tap the microphone icon at the bottom of the screen. Speak your query and then submit it. Copilot will display and speak the results. Click or tap the audio level icon to stop the narration.

#### 4. Let Copilot Flex Its Creative Muscles

Besides conversing with Copilot, you can also ask it to create content. This can be something creative like a poem, song, or story, or a more practical use, like a report, essay, or computer code. In Windows, on the website, or with the mobile app, just type a request for the content you want. You can ask it to be long or short, funny or serious, professional or casual.

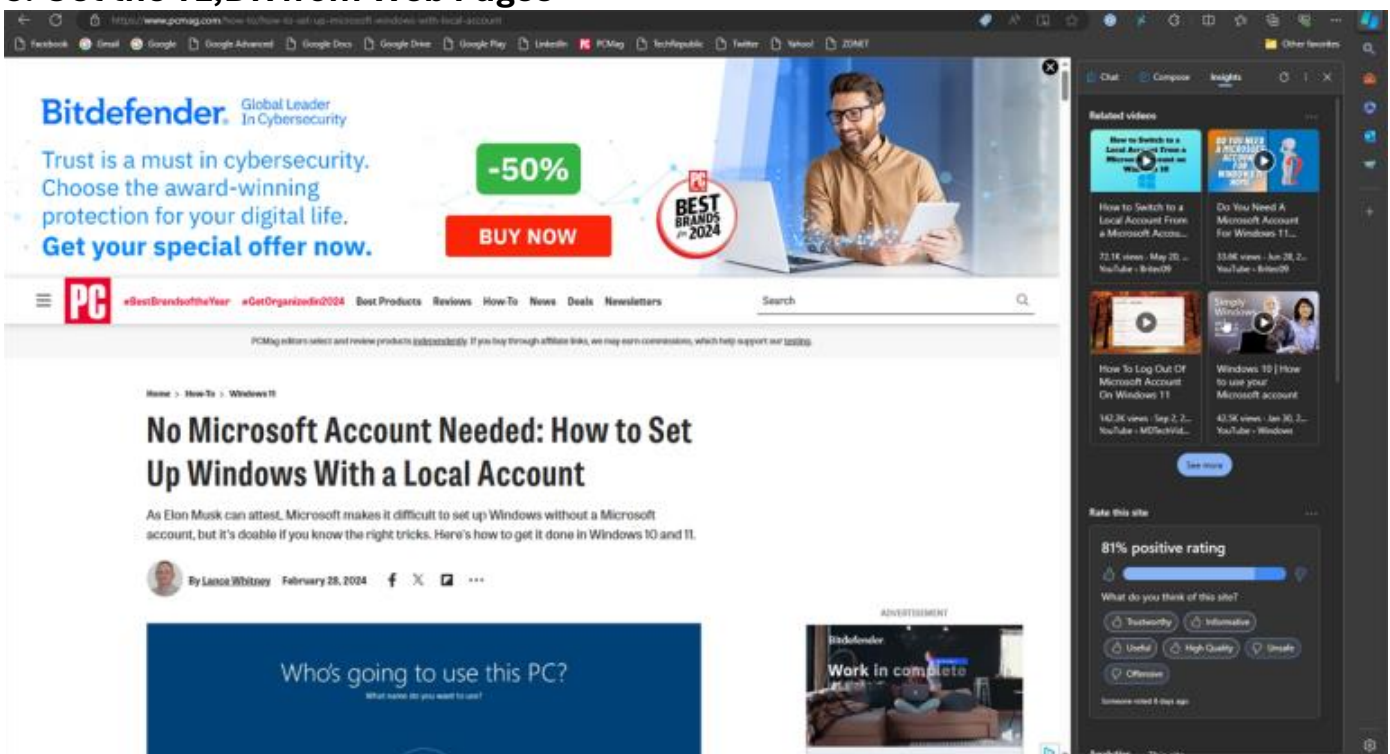




(Credit: Lance Whitney / Microsoft)

You'll sometimes get better results by using the Copilot sidebar in Edge. Click **Compose**, then type your request at the prompt. Choose a specific tone, format, and length and submit your request. Copilot's response appears in the Preview window. From there, you can copy and paste it elsewhere or regenerate it to give the AI another attempt if you didn't like the first draft.

## 5. Get the TL;DR from Web Pages

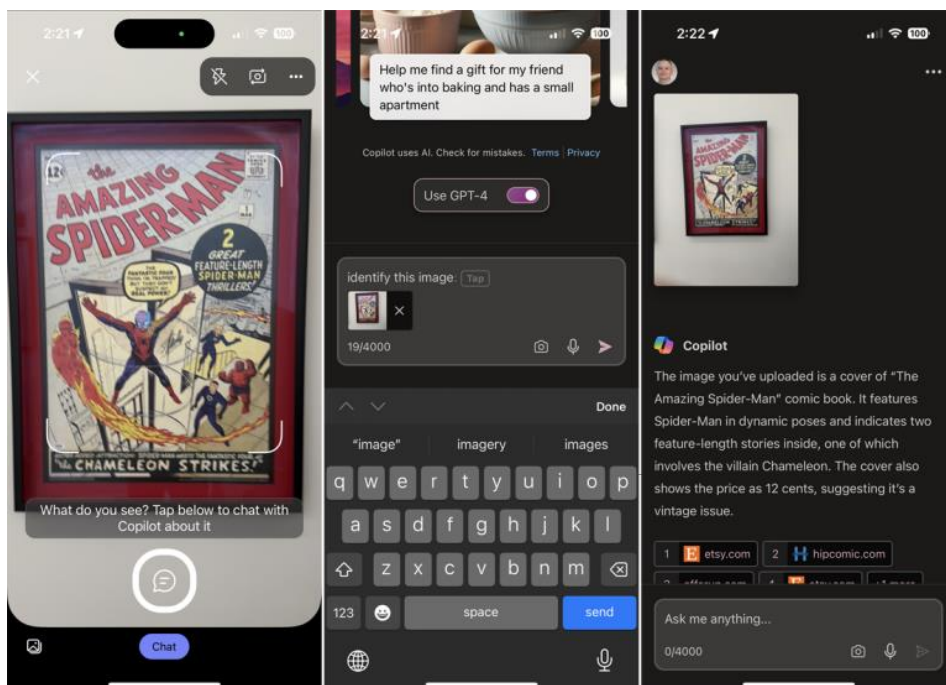
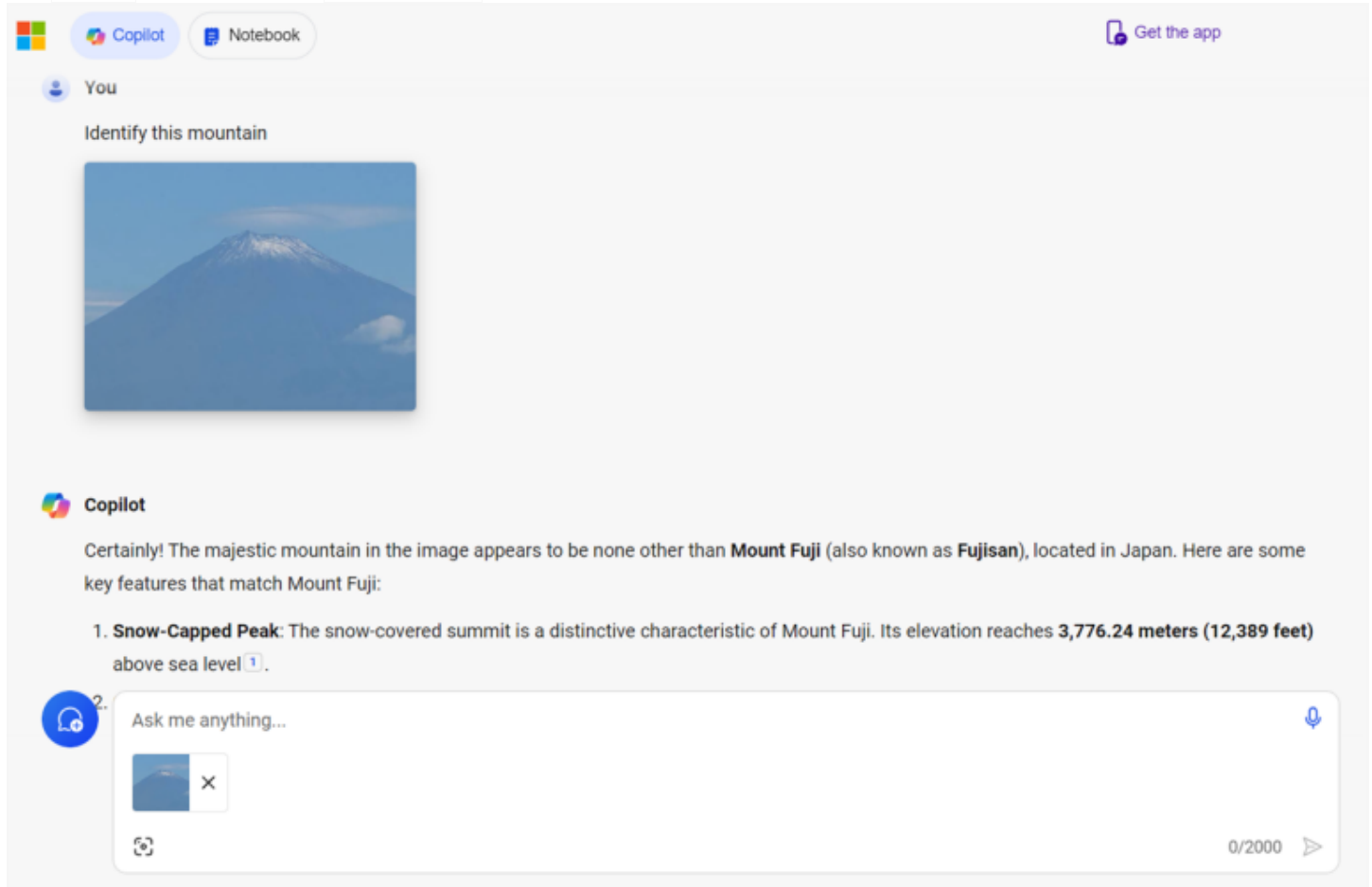


(Credit: Lance Whitney / Microsoft)

Looking for key details or a synopsis on a specific web page? Here's another trick you can perform with the Copilot sidebar in Edge. Open to the page you want to analyze, then open the sidebar and click the Insights heading. Wait a second or two, and the AI displays key points from the page as well as related links, articles, and videos.

## 6. Analyze an Image

You can also take a photo or upload an image to Copilot and have the AI analyze it. In Windows, at the Edge sidebar, or from the website, click the **Image** icon and select **Upload from this device**. To take a new photo, tap the **Image** icon and select **Take a Photo**.

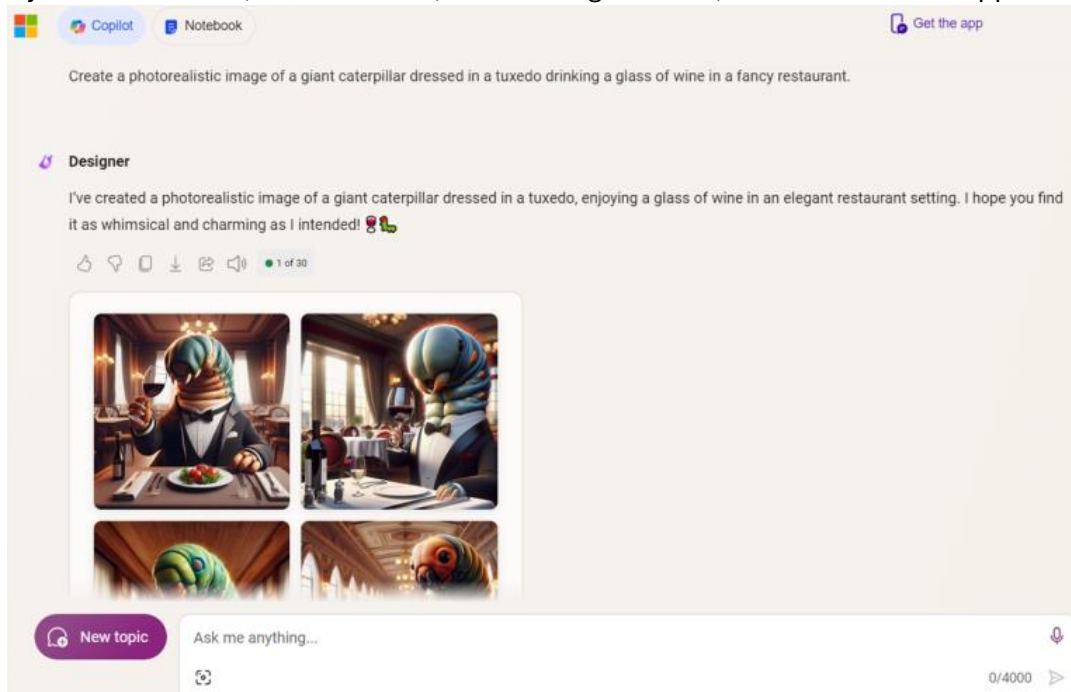


( For the mobile app, tap the **Camera** icon in the prompt, then choose the **Images** icon to view your photo library. Pick the image, and its thumbnail appears in the prompt. You can then enter your query. To submit a new picture from your camera, tap the **Camera** icon in the mobile app and take the photo. The image will appear in the prompt ready to send.

(Credit: Lance Whitney / Apple)

## 7. Create Your Own Image

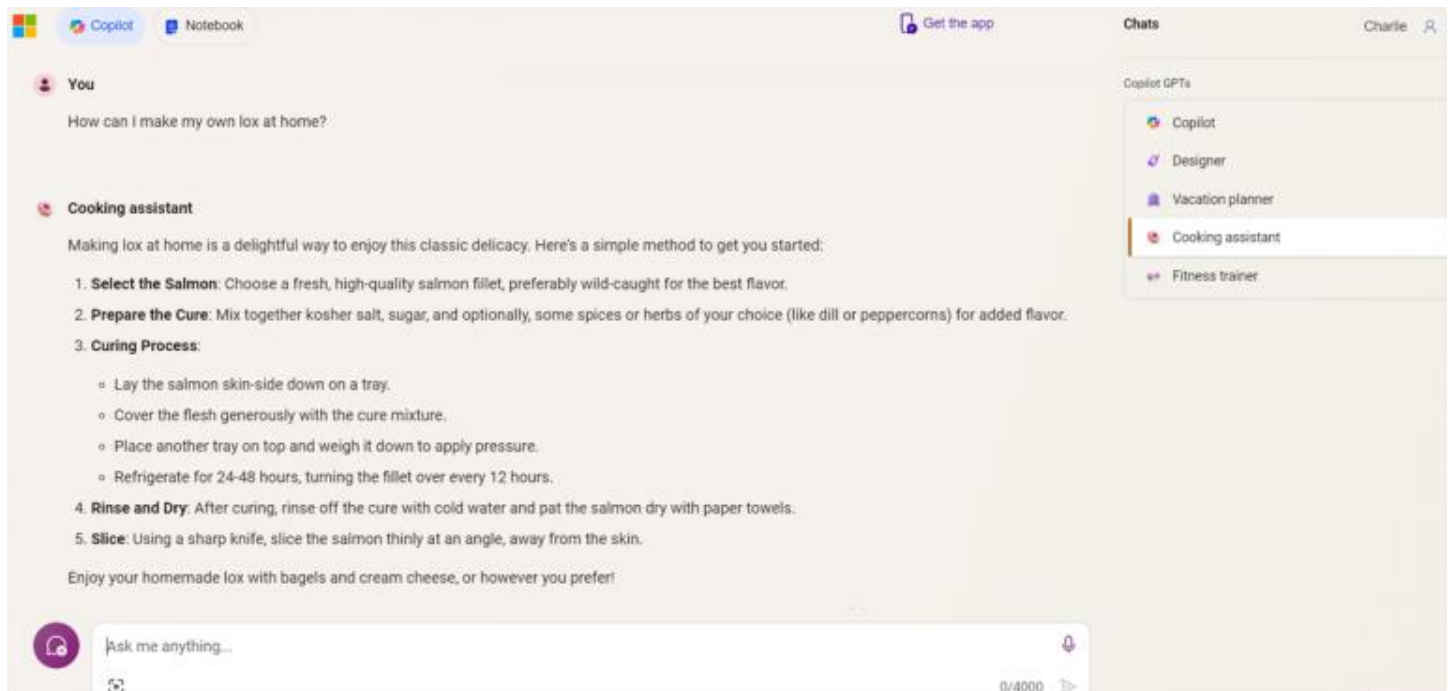
Image creation is another skill offered by Copilot, courtesy of its Designer feature. Using [OpenAI's DALL-E 3](#), Designer will generate photos, drawings, logos, and [other types of images](#) based on the text you submit. You can try this in Windows, at the website, with the Edge sidebar, or with the mobile app.



(Credit: Lance Whitney / Microsoft)

Describe the type of image you want at the prompt, including the style; for example, photorealistic or anime. Add any details and submit your request. In response, Copilot displays four images. Select a specific image, and you're able to choose a different style and even edit it.

## 8. Get Extra Help With GPTs



(Credit: Lance Whitney / Microsoft)

By itself, Copilot will serve up a lot of useful general information, but you can use it for more specific requests via [GPTs](#). At the Copilot website, click the **Chats** heading at the upper right. In the section below, you'll find Copilot GPTs for such skills as Designer, Vacation planner, Cooking assistant, and fitness trainer. Select the GPT you want and submit a question related to the topic.

## 9. Access Specific Services Through Plugins

List some inexpensive but good hotels in the Covent Garden area of London?

**Copilot**  
Using:

Covent Garden is a district in London, on the eastern fringes of the West End, between St Martin's Lane and Drury Lane. It is associated with the former fruit-and-vegetable market in the central square, now a popular shopping and tourist site, and with the Royal Opera House, itself known as "Covent Garden".

If you are looking for some inexpensive but good hotels in the Covent Garden area of London, I have found some options for you using Kayak. Here are five hotels that have at least three stars, free breakfast and free cancellation, and are close to the Covent Garden landmark. The prices are for a five-night stay from March 10 to March 15, 2024, for two adults.

Hotel name	Number of hotel stars	Review sentiment	Review score	Number of reviews	Top amenities	Freebies	Nightly price	Booking URL
The Tower Hotel	4	Good	7.8	21323	Fitness, Kitchen/	Free breakfast, Free	\$289	7

**Plugins**

- Kayak** (Toggle on)  
Search flights, stays & rental cars or get recommendations where you can go on your budget.
- Klarna** (Toggle on)  
Search and compare prices from thousands of online shops. Only available in the US.
- OpenTable** (Toggle on)  
Provides restaurant recommendations, with a direct link to book.

(Credit: Lance Whitney / Microsoft)

To use a [plugin](#), click the Plugins heading at the right. The current lineup includes options like Instacart, Kayak, Klarna, Shop, and Suno. Beyond the default plugin for Search, you can choose to incorporate up to three at a time into your requests. After selecting the ones you want to use, type your question at the prompt, and Copilot will use one of the plugins to find and generate the necessary information.

## 10. Get Information or Launch Apps on Your PC

Settings - Bluetooth & other devices

Turn on Bluetooth even faster  
To turn Bluetooth on or off without opening Settings, open Action Center and select the Bluetooth icon.

Related settings  
Bluetooth and devices  
Sound settings  
Display settings  
More Bluetooth options  
Send or receive files via Bluetooth

Help from the web  
Receiving files over Bluetooth  
Receiving Bluetooth shares  
Using Bluetooth connections  
Setting this over Bluetooth

Use help  
View feedback

**Copilot**  
Turn on Bluetooth  
Sure, would you like me to turn on Bluetooth for you?

Use Windows Settings  
You can enable Bluetooth by following these steps:  
1. Click on the Windows icon on the bottom left corner of your screen.  
2. Type "Bluetooth" in the search bar and select "Bluetooth and other device settings".  
3. Toggle the switch to turn on Bluetooth.  
Alternatively, I can help you enable Bluetooth by presenting a dialogue box. If you would like to proceed with this option, please let me know.

Turn on Bluetooth  
I turned on Bluetooth. You can change this anytime here or in Settings.

(Credit: Lance Whitney / Microsoft)

Using the Copilot built into Windows, you can get help with certain features, settings, and apps. For example, tell Copilot to turn battery saver on or off, show the Bluetooth page, launch the screen magnifier, show all the nearby Wi-Fi networks, or empty the Recycle Bin. Just type your request at the prompt in the Copilot sidebar.