

How to use Gemini Skills (and move your Gems over)

Skills start rolling out in the Gemini app on October 13, 2026, and Google is phasing out Gems in their favour. Here is what a skill is, how to make one in three ways, how to call it with a slash, and how to move a Gem over before it goes.

WHAT THIS ADDS

Most coverage treats Skills as a rename of Gems. The useful difference for a small business is that a skill works inside the chat you are already in: you type a slash, pick it, and keep going, and you can stack several in one prompt (say, your follow-up email skill plus your brand voice skill). Write your recurring instructions once, the way you would brief a new hire, and stop pasting the same paragraph into every chat. Skills are available without a Google AI subscription.

What is changing, and when

On September 30, 2026 Google announced **skills** for the Gemini app and Google Workspace: reusable custom instructions that guide Gemini, which will eventually replace Gems for task-specific instructions.

- **Gemini app:** a gradual rollout starts **October 13, 2026** and is expected to finish by mid-November 2026.
- **Workspace apps** (Docs, Gmail, Drive and more, for business editions): started October 5, 2026 for Rapid Release domains; Scheduled Release domains start October 19.
- **Gems, personal accounts:** Google's help center says Gems transition to skills starting in November 2026. The Workspace announcement says Gems move to the Gemini app's Settings panel on November 17, 2026, where you can still create, edit and use them for now.
- **Gems, work and school accounts:** no sooner than March 1, 2027 for business and enterprise, and no sooner than June 1, 2027 for education.
- When Gems are removed, Google says it will automatically recreate them as skills, including supported files.

What a skill is

A skill is a saved set of instructions with a name and a description. Write it once and Gemini follows it whenever you call it, or on its own when the skill fits what you asked.

- **Inline:** you call a skill inside the chat you are already in. No switching to a separate Gem.

- **Stackable:** you can use several skills in one chat or task.
- **Automatic:** Gemini can use a turned-on skill by itself when it is relevant.
- **Open format:** skills use the open SKILL.md standard, so you can bring in skills from other platforms by uploading the file.
- **Free:** Google's help center says skills are available without a Google AI subscription.

Check you have access

- **A personal Google Account.** For now skills in the Gemini app are not available with a work or school account.
- **18 or over.**
- **Keep Activity turned on** in Gemini.
- **Where:** the Gemini web app at gemini.google.com, the Gemini mobile app and the Gemini app on Mac. Uploading a SKILL.md file works only on the web app and the Mac app for now.
- **Patience.** The rollout is gradual from October 13 to mid-November, so Skills may not show up for you on day one.

Make a skill in three ways

On a computer, go to **gemini.google.com** (or open the Gemini app on a Mac). In the sidebar, click **Settings**, then **Skills**. Then pick one:

1. **Create with Gemini.** Click **Create with Gemini** at the top and describe what you want. Follow the chat. You can also just ask in any chat: `Create a skill based on these instructions: ...` and Gemini saves it to your Skills page.
2. **Start from a template.** Under **Recommended**, click a template, edit its name, description and instructions, then click **Create**. Or click **Create manually** for a blank one.
3. **Upload a skill file.** Click **Upload** and choose a `SKILL.md` file, or a folder or .zip with a SKILL.md in its main folder. Review it and click **Create**.

Upload rules: the skill name inside SKILL.md must be lowercase with hyphens (for example `client-follow-up`), files must be plain text, PDF or images (no .docx or .xlsx), the total must be under 100 MB, and scripts cannot reach the internet. Remove hidden files like .DS_Store before you upload.

Use a skill with a slash

1. Open any chat in Gemini.
2. Type `/` (or `@` if you have the updated shortcut) and pick your skill.
3. Type the rest of your request and send.

To stack skills, pick more than one before you send. To turn a skill on or off, or delete it, go to **Settings > Skills**; you cannot do that from inside a chat. You can make as many skills as you want, but only 100 can be active at a time.

Example: a client follow-up skill

Create a skill manually with these fields, then call it with `/client-follow-up` and paste your notes.

Name: `client-follow-up`

Description: Turns my rough meeting notes into a short follow-up email to a client.

Instructions:

You write follow-up emails for a small business owner.

- Use only the facts in the notes. Never invent prices, dates or promises.
- Open by thanking the client for one specific thing from the notes.
- List next steps with who does what and by when.
- Keep it under 120 words, friendly and plain. No buzzwords.
- End with one clear question or call to action.
- Sign off with my first name only.

Stack it with a second skill that holds your brand voice (words you use, words you never use) so every draft sounds like you.

Move a Gem to a skill now

Google will convert Gems automatically, but you can do it yourself today:

1. Go to gemini.google.com, open the sidebar, click **Gems**, then **Edit** next to the Gem. If it has files under Knowledge, download each one into a folder named like the skill, lowercase with hyphens.
2. In a new tab, go to **Settings > Skills**, click **Create manually**, paste the Gem's name, description and instructions, and click **Create**.
3. If the Gem had files: on the Skills page, hover the skill, click **Skill actions > Download** to get a .zip with its SKILL.md, put that SKILL.md in your folder, then **Skill actions > Replace skill** and upload the folder.

Limits to know

- Skills do not yet work with Canvas, Deep Research, Create video, Create music or Guided learning.
- Skills have no chat list of their own like Gems had; their chats appear in the side panel.
- Skills in the Gemini app and skills in Workspace do not sync. Create them separately in each.
- Sharing skills, and adding Google Drive files and Gemini notebooks, are listed by Google as coming in the coming weeks.
- Reference files can only be added by uploading them with the skill, and to update files you re-upload the skill.

DO THIS

When Skills shows up (rolling out from October 13), go to gemini.google.com > Settings > Skills.

Make your first skill from the one paragraph you paste most often, then call it in any chat by typing a slash. If you use Gems, move your best one over now with Create manually. It is free on a personal Google Account.

What Fynl.io is

One portal a small business runs itself on, instead of five subscriptions that do not talk to each other.

- A CRM and pipeline that shows every lead and where it stopped
- A calendar clients can book straight into
- Quotes, contracts and invoices, with deposits taken up front
- A website and form builder, so the enquiry lands in the same place
- Your Gmail connected, so the whole thread sits on the contact
- Automations for the follow-up you keep forgetting to send

The AI runs on **your own Claude or ChatGPT key** — no markup on it. No SMS or phone calls yet. \$49/month per business, \$149 Agency, and we move your contacts over for you.

Fynl.io is where the notes come from. Your CRM, calendar, quotes and email all live in one portal, so the meeting notes or job details you feed a follow-up skill are already in one place. Copy them out, run your skill, and send the email from the same portal.

Sources

- Google Workspace Updates: Introducing skills in the Gemini app and Workspace, plus what's next for Gems (September 30, 2026) — <https://workspaceupdates.googleblog.com/2026/09/skills-gemini-app-workspace.html>
- Gemini Apps Help: Create and use skills in Gemini Apps — <https://support.google.com/gemini/answer/17094296>
- Gemini Apps Help: About the transition from Gems to skills — <https://support.google.com/gemini/answer/18560919>
- Google Workspace Studio Help: Skills in Workspace — <https://support.google.com/workspace-studio/answer/17307546>