

AI Workspaces Compared

Projects, Gems, Notebooks & Agents — how each major AI platform lets you build a persistent, customized workspace for ministry.



The core idea is the same everywhere: instead of starting every AI conversation from scratch, you give the AI your documents, your instructions, and your context up front — and it uses that knowledge every time you chat. It's the difference between a substitute teacher and your own classroom.

FOUR PLATFORMS, ONE CONCEPT



Claude Projects

Anthropic

Free / \$20 mo Pro

Self-contained workspaces with a knowledge base, custom instructions, and organized conversation history. Upload documents once and every chat draws on that context automatically.

- ✓ Upload unlimited files (within context limits)
- ✓ Custom instructions per project
- ✓ RAG for expanded capacity (paid plans)
- ✓ Save AI outputs to knowledge base
- ✓ Search past conversations in project
- ✓ Team sharing with roles (Team/Enterprise)

Best for: Deep document work, writing, research. Free tier includes 5 projects.



ChatGPT Projects

OpenAI

Free / \$20 mo Plus

Workspaces with file uploads, custom instructions, and project-specific memory. Connects to external tools like Gmail, Outlook, Calendar, and SharePoint through Connectors.

- ✓ Upload 20–40 files (varies by plan)
- ✓ Project-specific memory across chats
- ✓ Canvas for doc/code drafting
- ✓ Custom instructions per project
- ✓ Connectors to Gmail, Outlook, SharePoint, etc.
- ✓ Share projects (all tiers, including free)

Best for: Users who want live connections to email/calendar/cloud tools.

Google Gemini Gems

Google

Included with Workspace

Custom AI personas with instructions and file references. Gems live inside the Google Workspace apps you already use — Docs, Sheets, Slides, Drive. Google Drive files auto-update.

- ✓ Upload up to 10 files per Gem
- ✓ Drive files stay current automatically
- ✓ Side panel in Docs, Sheets, Slides, Drive
- ✓ Custom instructions per Gem
- ✓ Premade Gems for common business tasks
- ✓ NotebookLM for deeper document analysis

Best for: Schools and offices already on Google Workspace. Zero additional cost.

Microsoft Copilot

Microsoft

\$30/user/mo + M365

Two approaches: Notebooks gather files, chats, and meeting notes with custom instructions. Agents go further — built with natural language, they can take actions and automate workflows across Microsoft 365.

- ✓ Notebooks with files, links, meeting notes
- ✓ Agent Builder (natural language, no code)
- ✓ Audio overview of notebook content
- ✓ Custom instructions per notebook
- ✓ Agents in Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook
- ✓ Real-time collaboration on shared notebooks

Best for: Organizations deep in Microsoft 365 with budget for the Copilot license.

SIDE-BY-SIDE COMPARISON

FEATURE	CLAUDE	CHATGPT	GEMINI	COPILOT
Free tier available	Yes (5 projects)	Yes (unlimited)	With Workspace	No
Custom instructions	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
File uploads	Unlimited*	20–40	10 per Gem	Via SharePoint
Auto-updating files	Re-upload needed	Re-upload needed	Yes (Drive)	Yes (OneDrive)
External tool connectors	No	Gmail, Outlook, etc.	Full Workspace	Full M365
Team sharing	Team/Enterprise	All tiers	Workspace plans	Yes
Automation / agents	No	Custom GPTs	Workspace Studio	Agent Builder
Best writing quality	★★★	★★★	★★	★★

* Within context window limits; RAG expands capacity up to 10× on paid plans.

GET STARTED IN 15 MINUTES

Pick a platform

1

Already on Google Workspace? Start with Gems. On Microsoft 365? Try Notebooks. Otherwise, Claude or ChatGPT Projects are free to try.

Upload & instruct

2

Upload 1–2 key documents (handbook, newsletter, strategic plan). Write 3 sentences of custom instructions: your role, your audience, your tone.

Have 3 conversations

3

Ask for a real task: draft a newsletter, write discussion questions, summarize a policy. By conversation 3, you'll feel the difference context makes.