PatGPT

Professional headshots with ChatGPT

Turn a blurry midnight selfie into a studio-quality LinkedIn photo in minutes, with the exact prompt I used and a head-to-head against Gemini.

Want a professional headshot for LinkedIn or your socials, but don't want to spend the time hunting for the perfect background and lighting, or the money on a photographer? AI's got you covered. Here's how I used ChatGPT to give my LinkedIn profile a professional-grade headshot.

01 Upload a photo of your face

Go to ChatGPT and upload a photo of yourself. It doesn't need to be great, but decent lighting on your face and a plain background help. To prove how good AI is at this, I used a pretty bad photo: a selfie taken in the middle of the night, with a blurry street behind me.

Face the light
Stand facing a window in daylight. Avoid overhead lights that shadow your eyes.

Plain background
A blank wall works best. Busy backgrounds make the AI work harder.

Camera at eye level
Hold the phone straight ahead, not below your chin. Use the back camera if you can.

Nothing covering your face
No sunglasses, hats or hair over your eyes, so your features are preserved accurately.

02 Paste the prompt

Once your photo is uploaded, paste the prompt below.

> **Make it yours.** This prompt is a starting point, not a rulebook. Every part can be customised: swap the **background colour** to match your brand, change the **outfit**, dial the **smile** up or down, or change the **framing**. The parts highlighted in orange are the easiest to change, and there's a table of ready-made swaps right after the prompt.

PROMPT · PROFESSIONAL HEADSHOT

Create a photorealistic, professional personal-brand headshot using the uploaded reference photo to accurately preserve the subject's identity, facial features, hairstyle, beard, skin texture, and proportions.

Composition
Tight head-and-shoulders portrait, face centred, looking directly at the camera, head very slightly tilted, shoulders relaxed. Natural, confident expression with a subtle, genuine closed-mouth smile. Hair fully visible, shoulders partially visible. Straightforward portrait framing suitable for a social media profile picture or creator avatar.

Background
A perfectly seamless, solid, vibrant orange studio backdrop, approximately hex **#F47721**. Completely flat and uniform in colour, with no gradients, texture, objects, patterns, or visible corners.

Lighting
Professional studio lighting with a large, soft, diffused key light positioned near the camera, gentle frontal fill light, and subtle, balanced hair separation. The face must be evenly illuminated from forehead to chin, with consistent exposure across both sides of the face. Soft, natural shadows only. No harsh directional shadows, blown highlights, dark eye sockets, orange colour cast on the skin, or uneven lighting across the background.

Photography
Realistic skin texture, naturally rendered eyes, detailed individual hair strands, accurate beard texture, neutral and natural skin tones, sharp facial focus, flattering but realistic colour grading. Simulate a high-quality full-frame camera with an 85mm portrait lens at approximately f/4. Professional commercial portrait photography, crisp details, natural proportions.

Wardrobe
Simple, plain **black crew-neck T-shirt** without logos, graphics, jewellery changes, or distracting details. Preserve the subject's existing jewellery where visible in the reference.

Overall aesthetic
Modern, minimal, polished creator-brand headshot. Warm and inviting, visually striking against orange, but clean and professional rather than cinematic. Photographically realistic, not AI-looking.

Constraints
Preserve the identity of the reference subject. Do not reshape the face, enlarge the eyes, smooth the skin excessively, alter the hairline, or change the beard. No text, watermarks, props, artificial bokeh, film grain, heavy orange colour grading, or exaggerated smile.

MAKE IT YOURS: EASY SWAPS

Want…	Replace this part with
Corporate / LinkedIn	`Background: solid light grey (#D9D9D9) · Wardrobe: navy blazer over a white shirt`
Creative / startup	`Background: deep charcoal (#2B2B2B) · Wardrobe: plain black crew-neck`
Outdoor, natural	`Background: softly blurred greenery in natural daylight (drop "no artificial bokeh")`
Bigger smile	`Expression: warm, natural smile showing teeth`
No beard in reference	`Remove the beard references from Photography and Constraints`

03 The results



BEFORE

The midnight selfie I uploaded: dark, blurry street behind me.



AFTER · CHATGPT

Same face, studio lighting, clean orange backdrop.

04 ChatGPT vs Gemini

ChatGPT can have stricter usage limits on chats with images, so it's tempting to switch to another tool. Gemini is a very good image generator with more generous limits, so I gave it the exact same photo and prompt.



CHATGPT · WINNER

Looks like me. Natural, polished, professional.



GEMINI

Looks a little off, and my blue eyes came out green.

In my opinion, Gemini's result looks a little off, and it changed my natural blue eyes to green, which is a dealbreaker for a photo that's meant to be you. It's much less professional than

ChatGPT's. If you hit your ChatGPT limit, my advice is to wait until it resets rather than settle. **Stick with ChatGPT for career and professional headshots.**

05 Before you post it

- **It should still look like you.** If someone meeting you for an interview or coffee wouldn't recognise you, regenerate. Check eye colour, hairline and face shape especially.
- **Zoom in.** Look for the usual AI tells: odd earrings, warped collars, strange teeth or melting hair at the edges.
- **Think about your photo.** You're uploading your face to an AI company, so check the app's data settings if that matters to you.

Key points

- **ChatGPT works best** for realistic, professional headshots, in my opinion.
- Start with a **decent base photo**: good lighting and a plain background. Mine was neither, which shows how well ChatGPT handles this.
- Use the **structured prompt** and tweak the background, outfit and expression to suit your style.
- If you hit your limit, **wait for it to reset** rather than switching to a tool that changes your face.

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