

Getting Started with Vibe Coding

Build real tools with AI. No coding experience needed.

You don't need to understand how the engine works to drive the car. Just drive the damn thing.

This guide gets you from zero to your first working app in under 30 minutes. No terminal. No GitHub. No coding experience. Just a browser and a Google account.

We're not building your dream project today. We're building a toy - something small and fun - just to prove this actually works. The complex stuff comes later.

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The Philosophy

Every vibe coding course starts wrong. They all want you to plan your million pound idea first. Work out the market. Define your business model.

All of that matters. But not for your first project.

For your first project, you just need to open a free tool, type a sentence, and see what happens.

Three Rules

1. Remove Friction

Free tools. Zero setup. No deployment headaches. No extra accounts to create.

2. Toy Projects First

Start small. Build silly, fun, useful little tools. Get the feel for the process.

3. NOT Your \$1M App

Complex apps need auth, backends, databases. We'll get there. Not today.

Think of it like giving a science kit to a kid. You're not asking them to sequence a genome. Just have fun.

What You Need

A Google account. That's it.

- * A laptop or desktop computer
- * A browser (Chrome, Firefox, Safari - anything)
- * A free account on Google AI Studio
- * About 30 minutes

That's it. No terminal. No GitHub. No coding experience. Just you and a browser.

The Tools

Tool	Type	Cost	Best For
Google AI Studio (Build)	Browser	Free	Getting started, zero cost
Lovable	Browser	Paid	Best one-shot app generation
Replit	Browser	Free tier	Quick experiments
v0 by Vercel	Browser	Free tier	Beautiful React components
Bolt.new	Browser	Free tier	StackBlitz-powered, fast iteration

We're using Google AI Studio Build Mode today. It's free and has everything you need.

Your First Build

Follow these steps. Takes about 10 minutes.

1. Go to aistudio.google.com

Sign in with your Google account. Ignore the main screen - it's overwhelming.

2. Click 'Build' on the left menu

This opens Build Mode - a chat interface with a live preview panel. This is NOT the main AI Studio. It's hidden in the left menu. That's the one you want.

3. Describe what you want in plain English

Don't tell it how to build it. Don't mention programming languages or frameworks. Just say what you want. Describe it like you'd describe it to a person.

4. Hit Build and wait

It'll take 30-60 seconds. You'll see your app appear in the preview panel on the right side.

5. Play with it

Click around. Try it out. Put in real numbers. Does it work? Brilliant. Does something look off? That's the next step.

6. Fix what's broken

Screenshot the problem OR copy the error message. Paste it into the chat. Say 'fix this'. It will.

7. Repeat steps 5-6 until happy

This is the entire workflow. Prompt. Preview. Feedback. Repeat.

The Vibe Coding Loop

This is the entire workflow. You don't need to understand the code.

Step	What You Do	Example
1. Prompt	Describe what you want	'Build me a tip calculator'
2. Preview	Check the output	Click around, test it
3. Feedback	Tell it what to change	'Make the button bigger'
4. Repeat	Keep refining	Until it does what you need

Why the Preview Pane Matters

The preview pane is the killer feature. Without it, you'd have to download the code, install things, run terminal commands, and deploy it yourself just to see what you built. With it, you type what you want and see it instantly.

This is why we start with Google AI Studio Build Mode (or Lovable) instead of Claude Code or Cursor. Those are more powerful, but they don't have this instant preview. We'll get to them later.

Your Starting Prompt

```
Build me a [YOUR INDUSTRY] calculator that [DOES ONE SPECIFIC THING]. It should have a clean, modern design with input fields and a calculate button. Show the result clearly.
```

Bonus Challenge

Customise the colours and add your business name to the header.

When Things Break

(And they will. That's normal.)

Your first project will have bugs. Things will break. The chart will get cut off. A button won't work. The layout will look weird. That's the process.

Method 1: The Error Message

1. Something breaks or shows an error
2. Copy the error message or console log
3. Paste it straight back into the chat
4. Say 'fix this' and let the AI handle it

Method 2: The Screenshot

1. Something doesn't look right but there's no error
2. Take a screenshot of the broken bit
3. Drag the screenshot into the chat
4. Say 'the dates at the bottom are cut off' (or whatever is wrong)
5. The AI can see your screenshot and fix the visual problem

You don't need to understand the error. The AI does.

Level Up: Plan First

Once you've built a toy and seen how this works, here's how to build something real. The secret is planning outside the vibe coding tool first.

Step 1: Talk to Claude (or ChatGPT, Gemini)

- * Say: "Interview me about the app I want to build"
- * Answer its questions about features, users, goals
- * Then ask: "Write me a full plan for a vibe coding tool"

Step 2: Feed it to Build Mode

- * Copy the full plan Claude gave you
- * Paste it into Google AI Studio Build Mode
- * Much better output than a vague prompt
- * The AI builds from a clear spec, not a guess

Better plan in = better app out. Every time.

What We've Ignored (On Purpose)

These are all important. All learnable. But not needed for your first build:

Topic	What It Is	When You'll Need It
Authentication	User logins, passwords, OAuth	When you build for others
Backend / Database	Storing data, APIs, server logic	When you need persistence
Deployment	Putting it live on the internet	When you want to share it

Start Building Today

1. Open Google AI Studio (aistudio.google.com)
2. Switch to Build Mode (click 'Build' in the left menu)
3. Describe a simple tool you want in plain English
4. Preview it, tweak it, repeat
5. When ready for something bigger: plan first with Claude, then build

Pro Tips

- * Don't try to build your dream project first. Build a toy.
- * Use plain English. Don't mention programming languages.
- * When it breaks, screenshot the problem and paste it into chat.
- * You can also copy error messages from the console log.
- * If you're stuck, start a new chat and describe it differently.
- * Publish it! Google AI Studio lets you share a link instantly.

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The people who are building right now are going to be so far ahead in 12 months it won't even be close.