

13 AI terms. One clear picture.

Start with the job each part does. Keep this nearby when you try a new AI tool.

01 MODEL & TRAINING

LLM

The language engine: reads a question and generates a reply. Tools give it extra abilities.

Multimodal

Works with more than one kind of information, such as text, images or audio.

RLHF

Human feedback helps guide training and shape how a model responds.

Fine-tuning

Additional training with examples changes an existing model for a particular job.

02 INFORMATION & TOOLS

Prompt engineering

Clear tasks, useful context and a requested format; test and improve the instructions.

Knowledge base

A collection of policies, notes and other useful information. The document shelf.

RAG

Find relevant information and give it to the model before it answers.

MCP

A shared protocol for AI apps to connect with tools and context. Permissions still matter.

03 GETTING WORK DONE

AI agent

Uses a model and tools to choose steps toward a goal, adapting to what it finds.

Workflow automation

Runs steps arranged in advance. A workflow can include an agent for one step.

Harness

Software around an agent: tools, task state, permissions, checks and stopping rules.

04 THE BIGGER PICTURE

AGI

Broad AI capability across different work. Definitions and measurements differ.

ASI

Hypothetical AI exceeding human abilities across a broad range of tasks.

Three questions worth asking

1. What can it understand?

2. What can it look up?

3. What can it do?

Fine-tuning changes the model. A knowledge base stores information. RAG brings information into an answer. Useful does not mean infallible: check sources, outputs and permissions. AGI is debated; ASI is hypothetical.