

# AI Project Kickstart Checklist

Use this checklist to confidently scope, design, and launch your next AI project. Each section helps you validate assumptions, identify risks, and ensure measurable outcomes.

## 1. Problem Framing

- Define the business problem and success metrics (cost reduction, speed, accuracy, etc.).
- Validate that AI is the appropriate approach for the problem.
- Align stakeholders on desired outcomes, constraints, and risk tolerance.

## 2. Data Readiness

- Identify all relevant data sources (structured, unstructured, internal, external).
- Assess data quality, labeling consistency, and accessibility.
- Plan for cleaning, enrichment, version control, and refresh cadence.

## 3. Retrieval & Architecture

- Select the right retrieval approach (vector database, embeddings, keyword search).
- Design the pipeline for chunking, tagging, and data versioning.
- Create an architecture diagram linking data → model → evaluation → output.

## 4. Model Selection & Evaluation

- Choose a model family (open-source, proprietary, fine-tuned, or API-based).
- Develop an evaluation harness using golden datasets and metrics.
- Track measurable KPIs: accuracy, latency, cost, and satisfaction.

## 5. Governance & Risk

- Confirm compliance with data privacy, licensing, and security policies.
- Establish human-in-the-loop review processes for critical workflows.
- Monitor model drift, cost anomalies, and performance degradation.

## 6. Launch Plan (30 / 60 / 90)

- 30 Days — Proof of concept: validate ROI and collect feedback.
- 60 Days — Integrate evaluation, refine prompts, improve reliability.
- 90 Days — Deploy pilot with observability, alerts, and continuous improvement.

