

USING AI

How do I turn handwritten notebooks into searchable notes?

DIGITIZE YOUR NOTEBOOKS

1 THE PAIN

Years of your best thinking is trapped in notebooks only you can search – by flipping pages. The knowledge exists; it just can't be found, shared, or used when you actually need it.

2 WHAT THIS SOLVES

- ✓ Your handwriting becomes searchable, taggable text – AI reads it shockingly well.
- ✓ Action items, dates, and key ideas get pulled out instead of staying buried.
- ✓ A crushing backlog becomes a 15-minutes-a-day habit that actually finishes.

WHAT YOU NEED

Do these cards first: Getting Started With AI

Tools: your phone camera + an AI assistant that can look at photos

Extras: good light, and the Notes app on your phone or computer

SOME SETUP FIRST about 15 minutes per batch

3 DO IT YOURSELF – FIVE STEPS

1 Photograph a small batch

Five to ten pages: flat, straight-on, good light. Skip any page you wouldn't want outside your notebook.

2 Attach the photos and paste this message

"Transcribe these handwritten pages exactly. Where you can't read a word, mark it [unclear] – never guess silently. Then give me: (1) the clean transcript, (2) a five-bullet summary, (3) every action item or date you find, and (4) 3-5 tags for filing. Keep my original wording – don't polish my thoughts."

3 Spot-check against the page

Read the transcript next to the photo – especially names, numbers, and anything marked [unclear].

4 File it where you'll find it

Paste into your notes app with the tags – one note per topic or notebook section. Now it's searchable forever.

5 Make it a coffee habit

A few pages each morning. The backlog that felt like 50 hours melts in two weeks of coffees.

★ IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER

- AI reads handwriting well – but **verify names and numbers**.
- **[unclear] is a feature.** Honesty beats a confident guess.
- Your wording is the value – **transcribe first, summarize second**.
- You choose what gets uploaded, page by page.
- **Searchable beats perfect.** Done is the goal.

! WATCH OUT

- ✗ Don't upload pages holding client confidences or sensitive personal details.
- ✗ Don't trust totals, dates, or phone numbers without checking the page.
- ✗ Keep the original notebooks until each batch is verified.

✓ YOU'VE GOT IT WHEN...

You can search one phrase and find the exact notebook page it came from – without touching a shelf.

PHOTO

TRANSCRIPT

TAGS

ROUTINE

TRY IT NOW

Start with one page like –

A page of meeting notes

TRY

A brainstorm with arrows everywhere

TRY

That to-do list from months ago

TRY

A client call log

TRY

A conference notebook

TRY

A whiteboard photo – same trick works

TRY