



Gems, skills and personalisation

Teach Gemini how you work and get ready for the Gems-to-skills move on

17 November

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How to use this handout

This handout gathers, in written and ordered form, everything covered in the lesson. You do not need to memorise it: it is there so you can find things again calmly, later, when the lesson is over and a question is left hanging.

GOAL

Tell personal context, Gems and skills apart, create a tailor-made assistant and a reusable skill, and know what changes when Gems move to skills.

What you will be able to do

- Set up memory and personal instructions in Personal context.
- Create a Gem with a name, description and well-written instructions.
- Create a skill and call it with the / bar.
- Prepare your Gems for the move to skills planned from 17 November 2026.

1. Three ways to be understood better

Repeating the same things to Gemini every day is like explaining to the barman again that you want your coffee with a drop of milk. Better if it already knows.

Gemini has three levels of personalisation, each with a different job. It is worth understanding them before using them, because something changes in November.

Level	What it is	Comparison
Personal context	Memory of your chats and fixed instructions, valid in every conversation.	The barman who knows how you like your coffee.
Gems	An assistant specialised in one task, with its own instructions.	An expert colleague in just one thing.
Skills	Reusable instructions that Gemini uses when needed or that you call yourself.	The recipes of a cookbook.

The three levels of personalisation.

Three ways to be understood

Context

Memory and always-valid rules

Gems

Assistant for one task

Skills

Reusable recipes

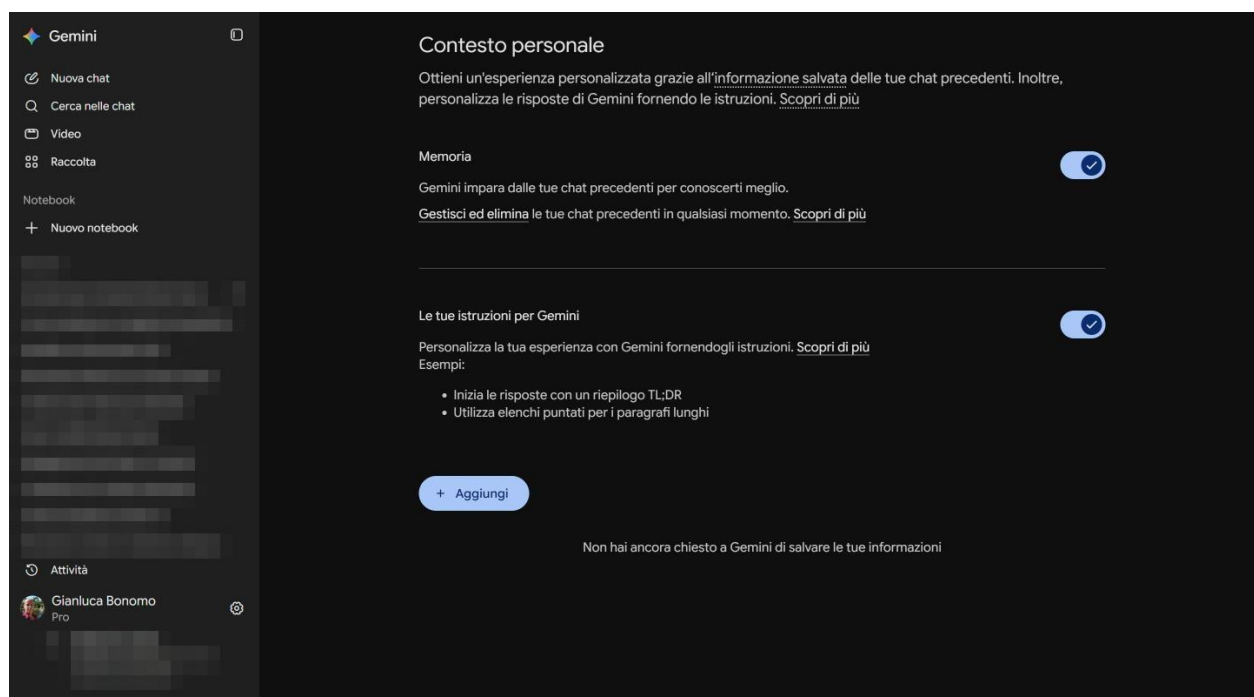
The three levels of personalisation

17 NOVEMBER 2026

Google has announced that from **17 November 2026** Gems start to be automatically turned into skills. We talk about it later, with the screenshot of the notice.

2. Personal context: memory and instructions

From the settings menu choose **Contesto personale** (Personal context). The page has two blocks, each with its own switch.



The Personal context page: Memoria (Memory) and Le tue istruzioni per Gemini (Your instructions for Gemini). Interface in Italian.

- **Memory:** Gemini learns from your previous chats to get to know you better. With the Gestisci ed elimina (Manage and delete) link you can review and delete past conversations.
- **Your instructions for Gemini:** fixed rules you want to apply always. For example, the page itself suggests: «Start answers with a TL;DR summary» or «Use bullet lists for long paragraphs». The **Aggiungi** (Add) button is for writing new ones.

INSTRUCTIONS I USE

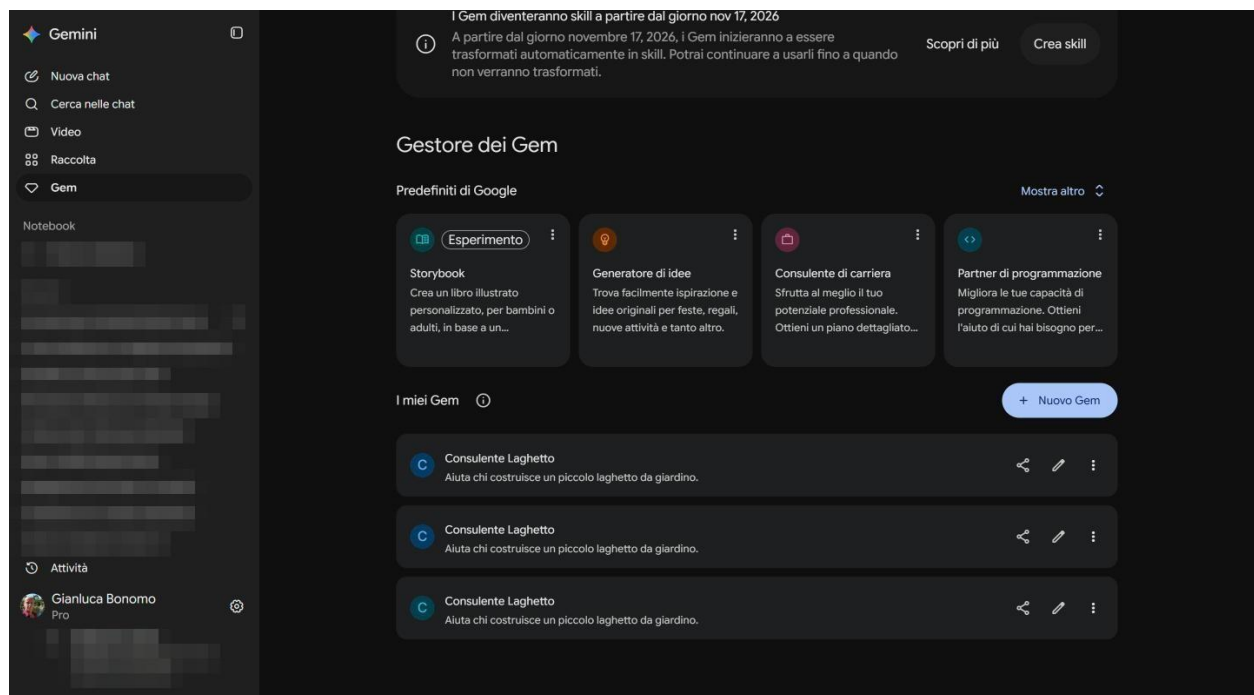
«Answer me in simple language, with short sentences. Explain every difficult word the first time you use it. If you are not sure of a fact, tell me instead of inventing.»

THINK BEFORE TURNING MEMORY ON

Memory is handy but it remembers: if you use it for personal things, remember you can switch it off or delete it whenever you want. On a work computer, or with other people's data, it is usually better to keep it off.

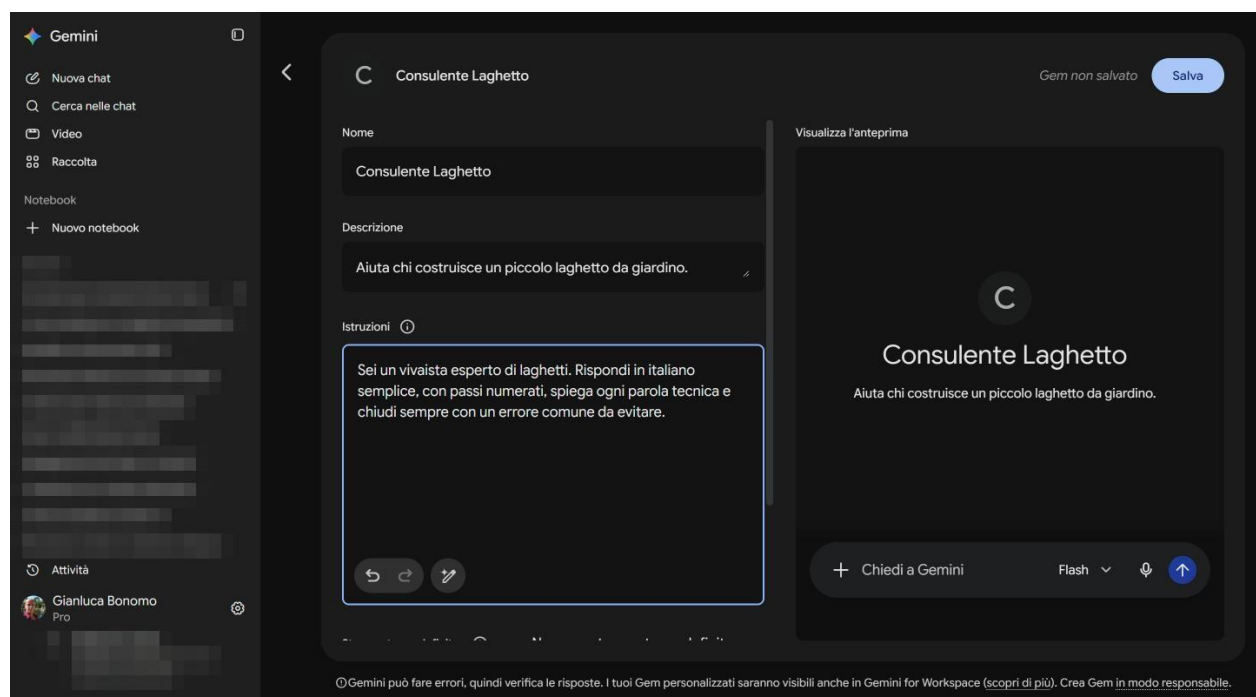
3. Gems: tailor-made assistants

A **Gem** is a version of Gemini with ready instructions for a task. Instead of writing every time «you are a nurseryman, answer with numbered steps...», you write it once and then call the Gem.



The Gem manager, with the notice about the move to skills, Google's default Gems and my Gems.

In the **Gem manager** you find two sections: the **Google defaults** (Storybook, Idea generator, Career advisor, Programming partner and others) and **My Gems**. To create one click **Nuovo Gem** (New Gem).



A Gem's editor: name, description, instructions and, on the right, the preview.

3.1 The editor fields

- **Name** and **Description**: they help you recognise it.
- **Instructions**: the heart of the Gem. Under the box there are undo and redo buttons and a button with a wand, which helps you rework the text.
- **Default tool**: you can attach a tool (for example images or Deep Research) or leave «No default tool».
- **Knowledge**: files the Gem can refer to, such as a manual of yours.
- **Preview**: on the right a small chat to test.

3.2 How to write good instructions

The best instructions have four parts, which you can remember as **who, what, how, in what form**. This is the Gem I wrote for the course (in Italian, translated here):

You are a nurseryman expert in garden ponds. Answer in simple Italian, with numbered steps, explain every technical word and always end with a common mistake to avoid.

Instructions of the Gem «Consulente Laghetto» (translated)

Part	In the instructions above
Who (role)	«You are a nurseryman expert in garden ponds.»
What (task)	Helping someone who builds a pond (also written in the description).
How (rules)	«Answer in simple language, explain every technical word.»
In what form	«With numbered steps» and «end with a common mistake to avoid.»

The four parts of good instructions.

TESTING IN THE PREVIEW CAN SAVE COPIES

During my test for this course I discovered that, when writing in the preview chat, the Gem was **saved several times**: every message created a copy, and I had to delete them by hand. The advice: **save the Gem once**, then test it with **Avvia chat** (Start chat), and check the Gem manager now and then to remove duplicates.

4. From 17 November Gems become skills

At the top of the Gem manager, on 7 October 2026 (the day I checked), there is a notice worth reading calmly.

Gems will become skills starting from 17 November 2026. From 17 November 2026, Gems will begin to be automatically turned into skills. You will be able to keep using them until they are converted.

Notice in the Gem manager, 7 October 2026 (translated from Italian)

What does it mean? That the instructions you wrote in your Gems will not be lost, but will change home: from separate assistants to **skills** that Gemini uses when needed. I do not know the detail of every step: the page says the conversion **starts** on 17 November and that until then you can keep using Gems.

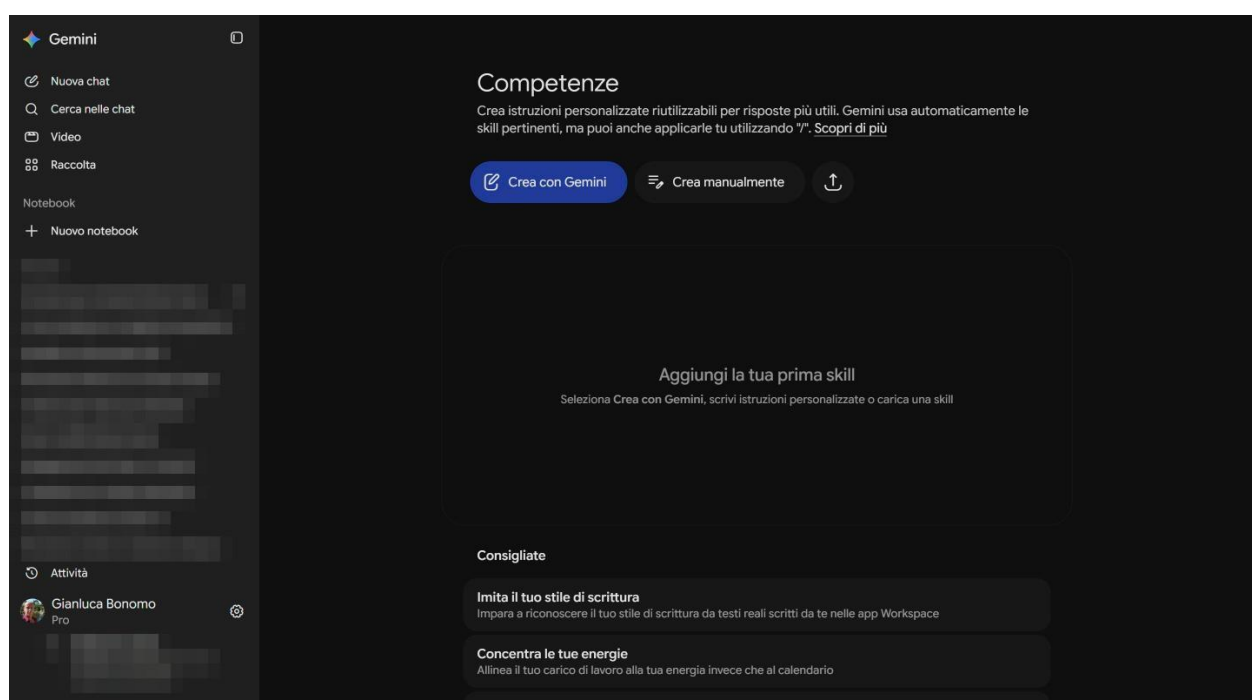
1. **Copy the instructions** of your important Gems into a document of your own (for example in Google Docs).
2. **Try skills right now**, so there are no surprises in November: the Scopri di più (Learn more) and Crea skill (Create skill) buttons in the notice lead to the new feature.
3. **After 17 November** open the Manager and the Skills page and check everything works as before.

THE IDEA IN ONE LINE

The instructions are yours and will not be lost: only the container changes. A copy in a document keeps you safe.

5. Skills

From the settings menu choose **Competenze** (Skills). The page explains it like this: you can create **reusable custom instructions** for more useful answers, Gemini automatically uses the relevant skills, but you can also apply them yourself by typing **/** in the box.



The Skills page: Create with Gemini, Create manually, upload a skill, and the recommended ones.

- **Crea con Gemini** (Create with Gemini): describe in words what you want and Gemini writes the skill.
- **Crea manualmente** (Create manually): you write the instructions.
- **The upload button**: import a skill you already have.
- **Recommended**: ready examples, such as «Imitate your writing style» (it learns from texts you wrote in Workspace apps) and «Focus your energy».

5.1 How to write a good skill

A skill is like a **recipe**: it has a title, says when to use it, the steps and the result. For the pond you could write:

SKILL «WATER PLANT SHEET»

When: when I ask for information about a pond plant.

Steps: 1) give the common and the scientific name; 2) state depth, exposure and hardiness; 3) list the three most common mistakes.

Form: a sheet of at most 120 words, with a title and three points.

To call it by hand just type **/** and choose the name. Otherwise Gemini uses it on its own when the request looks like the case.

6. Which one to choose

If you want...	Use
Gemini to always answer in a certain way (simple, in Italian, with a summary)	Instructions in Personal context
An assistant to call for a precise task, while Gems remain active	A Gem
A reusable procedure that Gemini applies when needed	A skill

How to choose the right level.

The practical advice: **write the instructions once, in a document of your own**, and then paste them where needed. If one day Google changes the name of the containers, you already have everything in order.

Hands-on exercise

Thirty minutes to build, in order, the three levels.

1. Open Settings, then Personal context: read the two switches and write one or two fixed instructions with the Add button.
2. Open the Gem manager and read the 17 November 2026 notice. If you already have Gems, copy their instructions into a document.
3. Create a new Gem for a task you do often: write who, what, how, in what form. Save it only once and test it with Start chat.
4. Open Skills and choose Create with Gemini: describe a procedure you repeat often and let Gemini write the skill.
5. In a new chat type / and call the skill. Then ask the same thing without the /: notice whether Gemini uses it on its own.
6. Check the Gem manager to remove any duplicates.

WATCH OUT

Are the important instructions also saved in a document of your own?

Did you test the skill both with and without the /?

Questions that come up in class

Do I lose my Gems on 17 November?

According to Google's notice, Gems start being turned into skills from that day and you can use them until they are converted. To stay calm, copy the important instructions into a document of your own.

What is the difference between a Gem and a skill?

A Gem is a separate assistant you call. A skill is a reusable instruction that Gemini can use on its own when needed, or that you call with the / bar.

Is memory compulsory?

No: it has a switch. You can turn it off and delete past chats from the Personal context page.

Can I share a Gem?

Yes, the editor has a Share button. If you attached files as knowledge, their titles will be visible, and you will be asked separately whether to share the contents.

How many instructions should I write?

Few and clear. Four or five well-written lines work better than a page of contradictory rules.

Glossary

Term	What it means
Gem	A tailor-made assistant, with ready instructions for a task.
Instructions	The text that tells a Gem or a skill how to behave.
Knowledge	The files a Gem can refer to.
Personal context	Memory and fixed instructions valid in every conversation.
Skill	A reusable instruction, used by Gemini when needed or called with the / bar.

Further reading

Gemini on the web: Gem manager, editor, Skills, Personal context – author's screenshots and tests, 7 October 2026

Google's notice in the Gem manager about the move from Gems to skills – visible on 7 October 2026, with the date 17 November 2026

WATCH OUT

Data checked on 7 October 2026. The date of 17 November 2026 is the one given by Google in the notice: after that day, check how your Gems have been converted. Details and entries may change. Labels are shown in Italian as on screen, with an English gloss.