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University of Texas System

UT Aspire

FAQ

October 2025

Disclaimer: As the UT System's UT Aspire Private Gen AI services evolve, we will continue to update this document. Please check it frequently to see answers to new questions and updates to existing questions as more information becomes available.

How does the UT Aspire work?

UT Aspire leverages advanced models known as Large Language Models (LLMs), which analyze extensive collections of textual data. These models are built using a sophisticated artificial intelligence architecture called "transformer neural networks."

Transformer neural networks analyze relationships between all words in a sentence and, through predictive algorithms and pattern-matching, identify patterns, and predict language sequences.

AI systems such as this can simulate human-like responses, but they do not actually 'think' like you or me, and do not possess true understanding or awareness. Their outputs are based on statistical correlations and can sound correct, but are not factual, so it is essential for users to verify the accuracy of any generated content.

Who is providing the UT Aspire service?

UT Shared Information Services (SIS), a system-level office that provides services and solutions to institutions across the UT System, is sponsoring this service.

UT Aspire was created to provide a secure Generative AI (Gen AI) infrastructure for use across UT System institutions. The goal is to support AI use in a way that keeps your data private. In this context, "private" means that any data you enter, whether it's interaction with the Gen AI model or data you have uploaded, stays within the UT Aspire environment and is not shared outside the environment or made publicly accessible.

Does UT System train UT Aspire?

No, the UT System does not train UT Aspire. Additionally, the UT System does not share any user-specific data or use it to train or improve the AI models.

How was UT Aspire trained?

The UT System did not develop or train the AI models used in the UT Aspire environment. These models (Llama 3.x, Mistral 7.x) were created and trained by the vendor. Their training relied on three primary data sources: publicly accessible data on the internet, data licensed from third-party providers, and input from human reviewers or users during development.

Can I trust the answers that UT Aspire gives me?

UT Aspire is designed to generate helpful responses based on the data it was trained on. However, it cannot verify facts or determine whether the information it provides is factual. Its responses are shaped by patterns in the training data, which may include biased information or inaccuracies. All content generated using UT Aspire should be carefully considered and fact-checked if the prompter is not certain of the content accuracy. AI systems may occasionally produce content that sounds convincing but is actually incorrect, which is referred to as a 'hallucination.' For that reason, it is essential to carefully review and fact-check any critical information it provides.

What is a prompt?

In Generative AI, a prompt is the input you give to communicate with AI. This could be a question, a sentence, or a block of text that you input to tell the AI what kind of response you are looking for. The way you phrase a prompt can shape the quality and relevance of the answer you receive.

Learning how to write clear and effective prompts is a valuable skill, often referred to as *prompt literacy* or *prompt engineering*. For tips and examples, please see our UT Aspire Prompt Literacy document for more detailed information on crafting better prompts.

Why did UT Aspire provide an inaccurate response?

- **Training Data Limitations:** While the model has been trained on extensive datasets, it doesn't have access to every detail or the most up-to-date information. If the information has changed recently or wasn't well represented in the training data, the response may be incomplete or unexpected.

- **Ambiguous Questions:** When a question lacks clarity or detail, the model may interpret it based on assumptions. This can result in responses that don't fully reflect the user's intent.
- **Built-in Biases:** The model has inherent biases resulting from the data it was trained on. Although significant efforts have been made to minimize harmful biases, achieving complete neutrality isn't feasible due to the varied nature of the source data.
- **Lack of True Comprehension:** UT Aspire, like its predecessors, doesn't possess human-like understanding. It operates by recognizing patterns in the input data and generating responses accordingly, which can sometimes result in overly literal or inaccurate interpretations.
- **Limited Coverage of Complex or Specialized Topics:** When dealing with highly technical or specialized subjects, the model may not have sufficient exposure to provide a thorough or reliable response.
- **Confidence Without Certainty:** The model may generate a response even when it's not entirely confident in its accuracy. Unless specifically programmed to acknowledge uncertainty, it doesn't have the capability to say, "I don't know."
- **Pattern-Based Shortcuts:** To streamline its output, the model often relies on patterns it has encountered during training. For example, if the training data frequently encountered statements such as "Most government forms require notarization," it may assert that notarization is required, even in cases where it does not apply to a specific form or agency.
- **Predictive Focus Over Accuracy:** The model's core training goal was to predict the next word in a sequence, not to ensure factual accuracy. This can result in occasional discrepancies between its output and reality.

  If something seems off, it's wise to verify with other sources or ask for clarification.

Who has access to your conversation?

Information collected through this service is protected by multiple safeguards, including adherence to the University of Texas System 165.1 Information Security Organization, Personnel & Privacy Policy.

In some instances, personal information may be disclosed if required by law, or if doing so is necessary to help protect the safety, property, or rights of the University of Texas System, its community members, or guests.

Is my data used to train the AI?

No. The UT System does not use conversations from UT Aspire to train AI models, nor do we share any user-specific data for model improvement. All data processed through UT Aspire remains within the UT System and is not disclosed externally.

Does deleting a chat erase it completely?

Deleting a chat removes it from your view and makes it inaccessible through the interface. However, activity logs generated during use may still retain records for auditing or system monitoring purposes.

What AI models are available in UT Aspire?

Currently, there are a few models available, with Llama 3 being the predominant model. We are continually evaluating models and will make others available as deemed appropriate.

How do I switch between models in UT Aspire?

Refer to the UT Aspire Private Gen AI.mp4 navigation video for more information on switching models.

I've never heard of Llama 3. Why is it used in UT Aspire?

Llama 3 is a publicly available open-source language model that individuals and organizations can use, explore, experiment with, and build upon to create custom tools and applications. Other language models will likely be used in the future as the UT Aspire service grows. Hosted (i.e., cloud) services typically come at a cost.

How can I use UT Aspire for my applications?

This functionality is currently under review as several business cases have been identified. Currently, UT Aspire offers standard chat capabilities ("vanilla" functionality) and does not yet include the advanced features or integrations that some users might expect or desire.

I have a terrific idea that I would like to discuss. Who should I contact?

Whether it's an idea for our UT Aspire Private Gen AI, these FAQs, or the Terms of Service, we want to hear from you. Please contact Scott Bridges, sbridges@utsystem.edu, for more information.

Can I use UT Aspire with internal system information/databases?

No, not currently. This functionality is currently under review as several business cases have been identified. UT Aspire is designed for general purpose use. The utilization of UT specific information and databases is planned for a future phase. See the Terms of Service.

What types of data can I use with the UT Aspire?

Refer to the Terms of Service. Currently, only data considered published under the University of Texas System 165 Information Resources Use and Security Policy may be used in UT Aspire. Published Data refers to data that is created for public consumption and is not restricted from public release based on any State of Texas or Federal law or regulation, or applicable legal agreement. Currently, neither confidential nor controlled data is allowed in the Services. UT SIS continues to work to develop these services and will notify users when other classifications of data may be used.

Why can't I request that my data be deleted?

You may remove chat history from the screen and prevent further retrieval. However, other forms of data are maintained for logging and are only accessible for administrative purposes.

Can I receive notifications on updates and changes to UT Aspire?

Major changes will always be included in the Terms of Service. Please check this FAQ frequently for additional updates and changes.

Does UT Aspire support usage in languages other than English?

Yes, UT Aspire supports multiple languages through its internationalization features.

Revision History

Version	Description	Revision Date
1.0	Initial Version	October 14, 2025