



WRITING CHECKLIST

✓ CHECK YOUR DOCUMENTATION FORMAT

- Have you used one format consistently throughout the paper (APA, MLA, Chicago, etc.)?
- Have you used one reference type consistently throughout your paper (i.e. parenthetical documentation, footnotes or endnotes)?
- Have you consulted a writing handbook or stylesheet for the correct format for your bibliographic and in-text entries?
- Have you formatted your title page or first page as your professor has specified?
- Do your headings and subheadings follow a consistent format throughout the essay?

✓ CHECK THE INTEGRATION OF QUOTES & PARAPHRASES INTO YOUR TEXT

- Do all quotes begin and end with quotation marks?
- Are all paraphrases of the ideas of a source rhetorically separate from your ideas?
- Is your citation information (i.e. author and page number) included and correct?
- Have you introduced each quote or paraphrase so that the reader understands why it is there, who said it and the context within which it was said?
- After the quote or paraphrase, have you explained how it enhances your argument?

✓ CHECK YOUR PARAGRAPHS

- If you have a paragraph that is longer than a page, is there a place where you could break it up into two paragraphs?
- If there is a paragraph that is less than three sentences long, is there a way that you could expand the ideas contained in it by giving an example, or supporting it with quotes, statistics or contextual information?
- Does each paragraph have a topic sentence that explains to the reader the main idea of that paragraph?

✓ CHECK YOUR SENTENCES

- Is each sentence focused? In other words, does it deal with one issue in the main clause which is explained or qualified in one or two dependent clauses?
- Are you trying to put too much information into your sentence? Would it be better to use more than one sentence to express this information?
- Is each sentence coherently linked to the sentence that goes before it? Do you need to use transition words to make that relationship clearer?

- Have you used the passive voice where the active voice would be more precise?
- Is there variety in your sentence structure? (i.e. Do you balance long, complex sentences with short, pithy ones?)

✓ CHECK YOUR WORDS

- Have you used simple words as much as possible?
- Have you avoided slang and clichés?
- Have you used “empty phrases” (i.e. phrases that sound good but don’t add to the meaning of the sentence)?
- Have you repeated yourself unnecessarily?