

Content Revision Checklist

The following checklist includes some of the most important considerations for creating and revising an effective, concise, and polished paper.

THE PAPER

- fits the assignment as outlined by your instructor
- has a clear, logical point that is supported in each paragraph
- gives necessary background information
- moves smoothly from one idea to the next, using transitions where needed
- acknowledges different viewpoints
- is directed to a specific audience and uses language and information appropriately

OVERALL ORGANIZATION

THE INTRODUCTION

- grabs the reader's attention
- introduces the topic of your paper
- gives general discussion that leads into your thesis
- engages the reader

THE THESIS

- sets forth the main idea or argument of your paper
- focuses or sets limits on your topic
- indicates the organization of your paper
- is clear and concise

EACH BODY PARAGRAPH

- has a topic sentence, supporting details, and a concluding sentence
- contains only one main idea
- supports the thesis
- uses transitions or the repetition of key words to indicate shifts in topic between paragraphs

THE CONCLUSION

- briefly summarizes your main points
- explains the significance or application of the ideas discussed
- provides the reader with a sense of closure

PARAGRAPH ORGANIZATION

THE TOPIC SENTENCE

- introduces the main idea of the paragraph
- ties back to the thesis
- is clear and concise
- can act as a transition between paragraphs

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THE SUPPORTING DETAILS

- are logical and rational
- avoid overly offensive, emotional, or judgmental statements
- support the topic sentence
- maintain a logical order
- include your own analysis, explaining how the research relates to your topic

THE CONCLUDING SENTENCE

- restates the main idea of the paragraph
- ties supporting details together

SENTENCES

EACH SENTENCE

- is written clearly, not being overly complex or vague
- has a subject and a verb that agree with each other
- shows parallelism (ex. John loves swimming, playing games, and running)
- uses concrete, specific words instead of general ones when possible
- avoids vague or sexist pronoun reference
- is concise

THE PARAGRAPH

- is not too short to fully develop your idea
- is not so long that a reader would get lost in it
- uses specific details and analysis to support your argument
- is balanced: quotes do not crowd out your own statements
- contains sentences of varied length and structure that don't all sound the same

GENERAL

- Both you and the computer have spell-checked your paper.
- Word endings *-es*, *-s*, *-'s*, and *-s'* have all been used correctly.
- Homonyms such as *there*, *their*, and *they're* have been used correctly.
- Beginnings of sentences and proper nouns have been capitalized.
- Sources have been cited correctly.
- The paper is formatted correctly.
- The draft has been read aloud one last time before it is turned in to check for unclear, unsupported, or grammatically incorrect wording.
- You have received feedback from a friend, family member, classmate, or writing tutor.