

Essay Writing Checklist

- Use this to help you write your draft for an essay using APA formatting

APA Formatting	✓
1. Is there a title page and is it formatted in APA?	
2. Are all of the pages numbered , including the title page?	
3. Are there multiple paragraphs (1 intro, several body, 1 conclusion), are they roughly similar lengths, and are they clearly separated?	
4. Is there a reference list on a separate page and is it formatted in APA? - Last names in alphabetical order, date of publication, title of article, title of source (journal, newspaper, book, etc.), DOI or URL (if it's an electronic source) - Are all the subsequent lines indented by 5 spaces (this is called a 'hanging indent')?	
5. Check all the in-text citations . Is every source in the body of the essay included in the reference list ? Is the spelling correct? Is the year correct?	
6. Is the font in Times New Roman, 12-point (or Calibri, 11-point), and are the lines double-spaced ?	
7. Are the margins 1" (normal), and is the essay body text aligned left ? (Do not 'justify' your text to centre.)	
Grammar	✓
1. Subject-Verb Agreement Read every sentence and look for the subject and verb. Do they agree (match)?	
2. Articles and Nouns Look for nouns. Are they countable or uncountable ? If they are countable and <i>singular</i> , do they have an article (a/an/the)? Are they <i>uncountable</i> , without an "s"? If they are <i>countable</i> , then is it a general noun, which should always have an "s".	
3. Word Form Look at the word forms that you used. Remember, if you used an adjective, it should be modifying a noun. If you used an adverb, it should be modifying a verb, and so on.	
4. Verb Tense Look at your verbs. Are they in the correct tense? Check your use of 'past tense', 'continuous tense', and 'present tense'. Need a refresher? http://www.englishpage.com/verbpage/verbtenseintro.html	
5. Prepositions Are you missing any prepositions? If you used them, are they used correctly? If you're not sure, you can look at this list of verb-preposition collocations : http://www.eslgold.com/grammar/verb_preposition_collocations.html	

<p>6. Spelling</p> <p>Are your words and names spelled correctly?</p>	
<p>7. Wrong Word Choice</p> <p>Did you use your dictionary to choose a synonym? Did you already know the word that the dictionary suggested? If not, then you should NOT use it in your essay. Simple and clear is best!</p>	
<p>8. Missing Words</p> <p>Did you have any missing words in your essay?</p>	
<p>9. Punctuation</p> <p>Did you punctuate properly? Look at your clauses and see how they are joined. If your subordinating conjunction (“If”) comes at the <i>beginning</i> of your sentence, you should use a comma between the clauses. A ‘comma splice’ is when you have joined two independent sentences with only a comma. This is incorrect! Remember, you need to use a comma with a FANBOYS (Google search it) to join two independent sentences.</p>	
<p>Content & Structure</p>	
<p>1. Does your introduction include a <i>lead-in</i>, <i>background information</i>, and a <i>thesis statement</i>?</p>	
<p>2. Does your thesis statement have a <i>claim</i> and maybe <i>points-of-proof</i> in parallel form?</p>	
<p>3. Does each body paragraph have a topic sentence that clearly states what the main argument is? Is it connected to the claim in your thesis statement?</p>	
<p>4. Does each body paragraph use the PPE (point, proof, explanation) organization method (Google search it)?</p>	
<p>5. Are the ideas in each paragraph clearly stated? If they are confusing, try to rewrite them in a simpler way. Remember, good academic writing is not too wordy. It is clear, concise, and direct.</p>	
<p>6. Did you use APA in-text citations (direct quotations or paraphrases) as your Proof, and do they support your Points well? Are they formatted correctly using a <i>signal phrase</i> and <i>reporting verb</i>?</p>	
<p>7. Is the vocabulary/word choice academic and appropriate? Do not use casual expressions, like “a lot of”</p>	
<p>8. Does your conclusion restate your claim, summarize your main arguments briefly in separate sentences, and provide interesting ending thoughts for the reader?</p>	
<p>9. Did you avoid using contractions? (it’s, doesn’t, etc.). Formal writing uses the full words (it is, does not, etc.).</p>	
<p>10. Point of View: Did you avoid using first person (I, me, my, or we) and second person (you)? Remember, academic writing typically uses third person (he, she, they, it, one, people, students, etc.) because it is more objective and academic! Check with your professor about this if you’re unsure.</p>	