

Proofreading Checklist for Research Paper

MLA Formatting

1) Is the **heading** correct?

Your name
Teacher Name
Course Name
Due date

2) Is the entire essay in **MLA format**?

- double-spacing throughout with *no extra spaces* anywhere
- 1-inch margins on all 4 sides
- 12-point Times New Roman font or a comparably-sized font

3) Have you placed **the titles of articles in quotation marks**, and **the titles of books, magazines, newspapers, and websites in italics**?

Ex.: In her article **"How Technology is Changing the World,"** Mary Shaller explains that...

Ex.: Mary Shaller of ***The New York Times*** explains that...

Organization

4) **Three Main Sections** - Is the research paper properly **organized into three main sections** (i.e., some version of *Background, Current Importance, and My Position*), and is **each section labeled** with a *centered subheading*?

Quotations and Evidence

5) Are all **quotations incorporated smoothly**, in a way that makes clear sense to the reader?

Is each quotation punctuated and cited correctly, as well?

Citations and Works Cited Page

6) For every piece of information in your paper that is *not common knowledge*, do you clearly cite its source (either in-text or parenthetically), and does this citation correspond properly to the author/title of an entry in your Works Cited page?

7) For every sentence that ends with a parenthetical citation, do you place the period after the citation?

Ex.: Robe-Dawg once declared, "Wisdom can take a lifetime to acquire" **(Orcutt).**

Correctness

8) Are all **capitalization rules** followed—including capitalizing the pronoun “I” and all proper nouns and proper adjectives?

9) Are there any of these **major sentence-errors** that seriously distract the reader?

- **Run-On Sentence (ROS)** – Two independent clauses joined with no punctuation at all

INCORRECT: Almost no one goes out to eat anymore it is simply too expensive.

My father lost his job during the recession however, my family supported him through that difficult time.

- **Comma-Splice (CS)** – Two independent clauses joined with only a comma by itself (a comma *isn't strong enough* to do this by itself).

INCORRECT: Almost no one goes out to eat anymore, it is simply too expensive.

My father lost his job during the recession, however, my family supported him through that difficult time.

One way to fix a comma-splice is to use a **semicolon (;)** to join two related independent clauses

CORRECT: Almost no one goes out to eat anymore; it is simply too expensive.

My father lost his job during the recession; however, my family supported him through that difficult time.

- **Rambling Sentence (Rambl)** – Multiple clauses and phrases strung together into a rambling sentence that goes on too long or in too confusing a fashion
- **Fragment (FRAG)** – a group of words that looks like a sentence but does not express a complete thought

10) Are there any **AWKWARD sentences**, or sentences that are clumsy or difficult to understand?

11) **Word Choice** – Are there any **imprecise words** (words that are too vague, such as “things” or “stuff”) or **inappropriate words** (words that are “slangy” or too informal for your audience)?

12) Are there any **spelling** errors?