

Things to Check Before Turning in Your Paper

1. Your first paragraph provides a clear summary of the paper's contents, including the findings.
2. You discuss topics in the order in which you introduce them in the introduction.
3. You use direct quotes sparingly and only when you demonstrate that you understand what the words mean.
4. Your paper flows well between paragraphs.
5. You include only one idea per paragraph.
6. Your concluding paragraph does more than just summarize the paper or repeat the introduction. It says something interesting.
7. You are within the required page limits.
8. You have removed any grammar, punctuation, or word choice errors (such as *that* vs. *which* and *who* vs. *whom*).
9. You cite sources and page numbers even when paraphrasing.
10. Your footnotes or in-text citations are properly formatted.
11. Your reference page is properly formatted.
12. You have avoided sentences starting with "so," "well," and "now."
13. You use formal rather than casual (conversational) language ("legitimate" instead of "legit." Delete "its so cool.").
14. You use correct tenses and they are consistent within the sentence. When referring to author's works, you use the present tense. (Milman argues...).
15. You correctly use semicolons when putting two sentences together to form one (often followed by "however" or "therefore"). "They went to the store; however, no one was there."
16. You properly place commas. As a rule of thumb, commas go where you would pause in reading.
17. If you tend to be wordy, you have edited your writing so that it is concise.
18. You avoid passive language where possible. (Replace "The argument was made by Adams." with "Adams argued...")

Final Formatting and Editing Review

1. Include paper title, your name, date, and professor's name
2. Formatting: 1" to 1.25" margins, Times 12 style (or equivalent), double-spaced
3. Page numbers on each page
4. Spell check and grammar check (optional)
5. Footnotes come after punctuation
6. Quotation marks come before in-text citation: "The dog was red" (Jones 34).
7. Punctuation goes inside quotation marks (except for in-text citations)
8. Correct capitalization: use your readings as a guide of when to capitalize words
9. Check for common spelling errors:
 - it's vs. its. (its = possessive; it's = it is) ("The country had faced its share of trouble.")
 - therefore vs. therefor (most likely, you mean the first one)
 - there vs. their vs. they're.
 - economical = cost efficient; economic = an area of study ("economic change")