

# Checklist from **Now What**

<i>Before you edit, search for these common errors</i>		
<b>LEARN YOUR WRITING TOOLS</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	1.	Learn how to start a chapter with page breaks.
<input type="checkbox"/>	2.	Learn and use a few basic keyboard shortcuts.
<input type="checkbox"/>	3.	Learn how to set your Styles.
<input type="checkbox"/>	4.	Learn and optimize your editing tool.
<input type="checkbox"/>	5.	Determine what phrase or mark you'll use as a placeholder.
<b>FILL IN THE GAPS</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	6.	Go back and add the idea you came up with halfway through writing your book.
<input type="checkbox"/>	7.	Search for your placeholders. Add the content you skipped or left for later.
<input type="checkbox"/>	8.	Look at the length of each chapter. Are they balanced? Should they be?
<b>KEEP IT FLOWING</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	9.	Search for sentences that begin with "And" using the FIND: MATCH CASE option. Do you need all of them?
<input type="checkbox"/>	10.	Search for "of course" and remove most, if not all.
<input type="checkbox"/>	11.	Search for "So" at the beginning of sentences. (use the FIND: MATCH CASE option). If "So" is not important to the sentence, remove it.
<input type="checkbox"/>	12.	Search for "so" anywhere in a sentence and remove all unnecessary ones.
<input type="checkbox"/>	13.	Search for the word "that" and remove most of them.
<input type="checkbox"/>	14.	Search for other starter words (Additionally, But, Even, However, Or, There, etc.) and remove any that aren't necessary.
<input type="checkbox"/>	15.	Search for filler words (a few, even, in fact, really, even, some, etc.) and remove most of them.
<input type="checkbox"/>	16.	Search for words ending with "ly" and evaluate if the word is necessary.
<input type="checkbox"/>	17.	Search for weak descriptive words (i.e., nice, great, good, etc.). Replace with words that will have a stronger impact.
<input type="checkbox"/>	18.	Search for "it"—is it clear what you're referring to? Look for "it's" and "its" as well.
<input type="checkbox"/>	19.	Search for "this"—is it clear what "this" is?

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<input type="checkbox"/>	20.	Search for the word “I” and rewrite for more “you” language instead.
<input type="checkbox"/>	21.	Search for “he” “she” and “they”—check your biases.
<input type="checkbox"/>	22.	Don’t be too formal. Use contractions (e.g., it’s, you’ll, I’ve).
<input type="checkbox"/>	23.	Search for dashes (–, –, –), parentheses (round brackets), and ellipses (... or 3 periods). Check your emphasis.
<input type="checkbox"/>	24.	Search for “and/or” and simplify the sentence.
<input type="checkbox"/>	25.	Search for paragraphs that are too long.
<b>YOU ARE THE EXPERT</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	26.	Search for qualifiers (I think, I feel, etc.) and remove them.
<input type="checkbox"/>	27.	Review the quotes you use. Are you using a quote instead of your own words?
<b>FORMATTING</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	28.	Confirm that your chapters begin on the next page.
<input type="checkbox"/>	29.	Scan your manuscript and your Table of Contents to see if the sections within each chapter are clearly identified by format.
<input type="checkbox"/>	30.	Change all your straight quotation marks (“ ”) to curly quotes (“ ”).
<input type="checkbox"/>	31.	Search for punctuation outside of the closing quotes (“, ”. ”! ”?).
<input type="checkbox"/>	32.	Search for “–” and “--” and replace with em dashes (—) or en dashes (–) as appropriate.
<input type="checkbox"/>	33.	Decide if you’re going to use the Oxford comma or not. Then do it consistently.
<input type="checkbox"/>	34.	Remove the extra spaces after sentence punctuation.
<input type="checkbox"/>	35.	Review titles and terms. Is the format consistent?
<input type="checkbox"/>	36.	Look at your bulleted items. Are they consistent on indentation, bullet size, line spacing and punctuation?
<input type="checkbox"/>	37.	Search for the numbers 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. Spell them out.
<input type="checkbox"/>	38.	Search for am, AM, a.m., A.M., or any other way you might have typed it. Replace it with your designation of choice.
<input type="checkbox"/>	39.	Then search for pm, PM, p.m., P.M., etc. and write it consistently.

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<input type="checkbox"/>	40.	Check for consistency with how you distinguish terms, explanations, definitions, and steps.
<input type="checkbox"/>	41.	Keep in mind some common words are trademarked and should be indicated as such or replaced with a generic term.
<input type="checkbox"/>	42.	Audit your images for quality and licensing.
<input type="checkbox"/>	43.	Add page numbers. Then check your page numbers!
<input type="checkbox"/>	44.	Complete the information for your endnotes and footnotes.
<b>THE CORRECT WORD</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	45.	Search for “affect” and “effect” and confirm you have used the correct word.
<input type="checkbox"/>	46.	Search for “ensure” and “insure” to confirm correct usage.
<input type="checkbox"/>	47.	Search for “fewer” and “less” and check your usage.
<input type="checkbox"/>	48.	Search for “further” and “farther” and check your usage.
<input type="checkbox"/>	49.	Search for “i.e.” and “e.g.” to confirm your usage.
<input type="checkbox"/>	50.	Search for “it’s” and “its” to confirm proper usage.
<input type="checkbox"/>	51.	Search for “then” and “than” to confirm proper usage.
<input type="checkbox"/>	52.	Search for “there” to confirm place or point.
<input type="checkbox"/>	53.	Search for “their” and confirm possession
<input type="checkbox"/>	54.	Then search for “they’re” to ensure correct usage.
<input type="checkbox"/>	55.	Search for “too” to confirm you have the correct number of o’s.
<input type="checkbox"/>	56.	Search for “two” and confirm you’re counting.
<input type="checkbox"/>	57.	Verify correct usage of “to” either by searching or as you read through your manuscript.
<input type="checkbox"/>	58.	Search for “unique” and remove any adjective or qualifier you added.
<input type="checkbox"/>	59.	Search for “your” and “you’re” to confirm proper usage.
<input type="checkbox"/>	60.	Search for “yeah” to confirm you didn’t mean “yay” in celebration.
<input type="checkbox"/>	61.	Be aware of spelling preferences for you and your reading audience.

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<input type="checkbox"/>	62.	Search for words ending in “wards” and remove the s as appropriate.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	63.	Search for common words you routinely spell incorrectly as one word (or two words). Add these words to the list at the end of this checklist. (A few of my words: a lot, all right, overused, no one)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	64.	Add words that should be hyphenated to your list of words to check.	
<b>AI EDITOR REVIEW</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/>	65.	Look for “and” connecting two thoughts that could be turned into two simpler sentences. Simplify them!	
<input type="checkbox"/>	66.	Look for passive sentences. Can you rewrite them to make them more active?	
<input type="checkbox"/>	67.	Search for short-hand spelling of words (e.g., thru, btw, Rx, xmas, ppl, &). Spell them out!	
<b>AS YOU READ</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/>	68.	Read for <i>I, me, we, us,</i> and <i>you</i> consistency within each paragraph.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	69.	Look for assumptions, biases, and stereotypes.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	70.	Be on the lookout for overused words. Add these words to your list to check each time.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	71.	Double check that you answered your readers’ questions.	
<b>YOUR LIST OF WORDS TO CHECK</b>			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> </ul>



[Your First Draft is Complete,  
Now What?](#)