HOW TO USE THIS TEMPLATE 

[Template last updated November 2024](https://pavilion.dinfos.edu/Template/Article/2601755/diy-editing-checklist/)

Customize this pre-filled checklist to reflect your most common errors. Fill in the brackets with the appropriate information. Refine each category by adding and deleting items based on your own writing style needs. **Remove any bracket symbols and gray boxes when finished.** The categories include:

* Purpose & audience – reflects an understanding of the intended audience and purpose of the product
* Organization & clarity – conveys intended ideas through fluent and clear wording and phrasing
* Content – contributes to the product’s effectiveness
* Mechanics – ensures language is polished and professional
* Other – to be determined by you, the writer

[Writer’s Name] Copy Editing Checklist

[Date]

# Purpose & audience

* Effectively communicates the commander’s intent.
* Engages audience for the intended purpose.
* Language and tone resonate with audience’s interests.
* [Insert additional item(s).]

# Organization & clarity

* Logical structure and organization.
* No unnecessary words.
* Prepositional phrases do not obscure the main subject and action of a sentence.
* Limited expletive constructions. (These constructions obscure the main subject and action of a sentence by using the word “there” or “it” as a filler for the real subject, e.g., there are,” “there is,” “it is,” or “it was,” etc.).
* No vague nouns (e.g., “factor,” “aspect,” “area,” “consideration,” “degree,” etc.).
* No unnecessarily inflated words (e.g., “a majority of,” “at all times,” “as a result of,” “in order to,” etc.).
* No adjective stacking.
* No jargon unfamiliar to audience.
* [Insert additional item(s).]

# Content

* No violations of security, policy or propriety.
* No inaccurate information.
* [Insert additional item(s).]

# Mechanics

* Verbs in sequence are parallel.
* No sentence fragments.
* No instances of passive voice when active voice is more appropriate.
* No misplaced modifiers.
* Verbs agree with subjects (singular or plural) and nouns track as singular or plural across sentences.
* Verbs are consistent in tense (e.g., past or present).
* Commas:
* No comma between time, date and place.
* No comma before the “and” in a series (i.e., no Oxford comma).
* No comma splices (i.e., a comma alone is not strong enough to join two independent clauses).
* Apostrophes:
* Form possessive nouns.
* Form contractions.
* Show plural of upper and lowercase letters (e.g., Oakland A’s, B’s, c’s, d’s, z’s, etc.).
* No apostrophe to show plurals of numbers, symbols (e.g., 1s, #s, etc.).
* All words are correctly spelled.
* Correct forms of homophones (e.g., to, too and two) are used.
* [Insert additional item(s).]

# Other

* [Insert additional item(s).]