



# Writing and design checklist

This checklist offers a quick way for you to review a letter, leaflet, booklet, short report or text on a website page to see if it uses **plain English** and is easy to follow. Not all questions will apply to every document but try to answer 'yes' as much as possible to the questions that do apply.

	Yes	No
<b>Language, punctuation and grammar</b>		
1. Does the document use 'you' and 'we', where possible?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Does it use the active voice most of the time?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Does it keep technical terms and abbreviations to a minimum?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Does it define any necessary terms and abbreviations clearly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Does it keep 'corporate jargon' to a minimum?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Does it avoid Latin and French phrases and Latin abbreviations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Does it use the same term for the same concept throughout?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Does it have an average of 15 to 20 words in each sentence?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Does it use the simplest verb tense possible?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Does it avoid abstract nouns where possible?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Does it use correct punctuation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Do nouns and verbs agree (singular noun with singular verb, for example)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Structure</b>		
13. Does it organise information according to the reader's needs and interests?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Does it use informative headings or questions to break up text?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Does it include a natural flow from one point to the next?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. Are paragraphs relatively short?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. Does it use bullet point lists for detailed or complicated information?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Page design</b>		
18. Does it avoid underlining, groups of italics and unnecessary capital letters?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. Is text in a readable typeface (font), aligned to the left and 1.5 spaced?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. Are images, charts or blocks of colour, if any, clear and relevant to the text?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>