



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
Language, punctuation and grammar		
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"/>
Structure		
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"/>
Page design		
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"/>