

Formatting Checklist PDF – Detailed Guide

Overview

A comprehensive, step-by-step checklist to ensure **polished, publication-ready formatting** for book reviews at any level. Covers structure, citations, visuals, and submission readiness.

Pre-Writing Setup

- Confirm required citation style (MLA, APA, Chicago).
- Set document formatting *before* writing:
 - Font: Times New Roman 12pt / Arial 11pt
 - Margins: 1 inch all sides
 - Line spacing: Double (academic) / Single (consumer)
 - Alignment: Left
 - Paragraph indent: 0.5 inches (or block spacing)
- Insert header with last name + page numbers (if required).
- Create placeholder for Works Cited/References.

Structural Checklist

Introduction

- Engaging hook (question, quote, fact).
- Full bibliographic info (author, title, year, genre).
- Brief context (1–2 sentences).
- Clear thesis statement (previews evaluation).
- Word count within limit (see template).

Summary Section

- Only 15–25% of total length.
- No spoilers.
- Covers: genre, setting, main characters, central conflict.
- Written in present tense.
- Uses neutral, objective language.

Evaluation Section

- 60–70% of total length.
- Organized by criteria, not plot.
- Each paragraph has:
 - Topic sentence
 - Evidence (quotes with page numbers)
 - Analysis
 - Connection to thesis
- Balances strengths and weaknesses.
- Uses formal, academic tone (for academic reviews).

Recommendation

- Identifies target audience.
- Mentions who might not enjoy.
- Includes comparative context.
- Clear overall judgment.

Conclusion

- Synthesizes points without repetition.

- Reinforces thesis.
- Ends memorably.
- No new evidence or arguments.

Citation & Academic Formatting

In-Text Citations

- Every quote has a citation.
- Page numbers included (academic).
- Correct format for style:
 - MLA: (Author Page)
 - APA: (Author, Year, p. Page)
 - Chicago: footnote number.
- Signal phrases used effectively (e.g., “According to Morrison...”).

References Page

- Title matches style:
 - MLA: “Works Cited”
 - APA: “References”
 - Chicago: “Bibliography”
- Alphabetical by author last name.
- Hanging indent applied.
- Double-spaced throughout.
- All sources from in-text citations listed.
- Correct formatting for:

- Books
- Articles
- Websites
- Chapters in edited volumes

Visual Formatting

- Title centered, not bolded/underlined.
- Book titles italicized throughout.
- Article/chapter titles in quotation marks.
- Headers/footers correct (name, page numbers).
- No decorative fonts or colors (unless allowed).
- Paragraph spacing consistent.
- Block quotes (if used) formatted correctly:
 - Indented 0.5 inches from left
 - No quotation marks
 - Citation after period

Language & Style

- Academic tone maintained (if required).
- First-person minimized in academic reviews.
- Present tense used for plot description.
- Active voice preferred.
- Transition words between paragraphs.
- Varied sentence structure.

- No contractions in academic work (can't → cannot).
- Proofread for grammar, spelling, punctuation.

Pre-Submission Final Check

- Word count within required range.
- File named correctly (e.g., LastName_BookReview.docx).
- Print preview checked for layout issues.
- All hyperlinks (if any) tested and working.
- Plagiarism check completed.
- Assignment rubric reviewed against submission.

Common Errors to Avoid

- **✗** Using “I think” or “In my opinion” in academic reviews
- **✗** Forgetting to italicize book titles
- **✗** Missing page numbers in citations
- **✗** Summary too long (>25%)
- **✗** Informal language in academic context
- **✗** Inconsistent tense
- **✗** No thesis statement
- **✗** Bibliography not alphabetical
- **✗** Single-spacing when double required