

Cause and Effect Essay Writing Checklist

Use this comprehensive checklist to guide your writing from the earliest planning stage to final submission. It helps ensure your essay demonstrates clear causation, strong evidence, and logical organization.

✓ Pre-Writing Phase Checklist

- ☐ Topic shows a clear cause-and-effect relationship (not just correlation)
 - ☐ Scope is appropriate for the assignment length and academic level
 - ☐ Assignment type identified (cause-focused, effect-focused, or combined)
 - ☐ Essay structure selected (block or chain)
 - ☐ Purpose and audience clearly understood
 - ☐ Preliminary thesis idea drafted
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✓ Research & Evidence Gathering Checklist

- ☐ Minimum of 7–10 credible sources collected
 - ☐ Sources include peer-reviewed studies, expert opinions, or reliable statistics
 - ☐ Evidence demonstrates causation, not coincidence
 - ☐ Mechanisms explaining *how* causes lead to effects are identified
 - ☐ Alternative explanations or contributing factors noted
 - ☐ Full citation details recorded for each source
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✓ Drafting Phase Checklist

- ☐ Introduction includes a strong hook and clear background context
- ☐ Thesis statement clearly states the cause-and-effect relationship
- ☐ Each body paragraph focuses on one main cause or effect
- ☐ Topic sentences clearly signal cause or effect
- ☐ Evidence is integrated and followed by clear explanation
- ☐ Cause-and-effect transition words used consistently
- ☐ Paragraphs follow chosen structure (block or chain)

✓ Revision Checklist

Content

- ☐ All causes and effects are logically explained and supported
- ☐ Correlation is clearly distinguished from causation
- ☐ Complexity is acknowledged without losing focus
- ☐ Counterarguments or limitations addressed where appropriate

Organization

- ☐ Structure is applied consistently throughout the essay
- ☐ Paragraphs flow logically with clear transitions
- ☐ No unnecessary repetition or digressions

Language

- ☐ Academic tone maintained throughout
- ☐ Sentences are clear, concise, and varied
- ☐ Transition language is accurate and varied

Technical

- ☐ Citations formatted correctly (MLA, APA, or Chicago)
- ☐ Grammar, spelling, and punctuation checked
- ☐ Formatting meets assignment guidelines

✓ Final Submission Checklist

- ☐ Thesis is clear, specific, and aligned with the essay body
- ☐ Conclusion restates the argument and explains significance
- ☐ Word count falls within required range
- ☐ All sources are cited and listed correctly
- ☐ Essay answers the assignment prompt directly
- ☐ Final proofread completed