

# USU Extension Writer’s Resource

Use the following checklist to determine document readiness before submitting your document via the [Extension project request form](#) for HTML publishing. This checklist is not comprehensive and only identifies common issues our editors often observe in submissions. Addressing these items can enhance document professionalism and increase accessibility for readers. If you have questions about the publishing process, please contact Andrea Snarr at [andrea.snarr@usu.edu](mailto:andrea.snarr@usu.edu).

## 1. Style: Clarity, Brevity, and Consistency

Checklist	Examples	
	Instead of this	Do this
✓ Use active voice whenever possible.	My first trip to Boston will always be remembered by me.	I will always remember my first trip to Boston.
✓ Avoid “alphabet soup.” ✓ Avoid unnecessary acronyms and “jargon-laden gobbledeygook.”	In order to bring the proposed recreational plan (RP) to completion (i.e., plan finish date of 8/22); to evaluate existing recreation sites by the BLM; and to include applicable facilities such as tables and/or fireplaces, etc. in the proposed new recreational plan, it will be necessary to receive photographs of all appurtenances and facilities located within the park area, including sites AJB680, & BQR240.	To complete the recreational plan, we will need pictures of all camping facilities in the park.
✓ Eliminate unnecessary words.	Based on the fact that... Despite the fact that... In the event that... At the present time... Until such a time as...	Because Although If Now Until
✓ Make lists parallel. One option: Beginning with verbs aids clarity.	The group will do the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They will look for outcomes that might be possible.</li> <li>• Manage any delays when they first appear.</li> <li>• When issues arise with the project, they will fix anything before we go to production.</li> </ul>	The group will do the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Predict possible outcomes.</li> <li>• Manage delays in service.</li> <li>• Solve issues before production.</li> </ul>

✓ Reduce nominalizations.	Through the examination of the facts, we determined that...	We examined the facts and determined...
✓ Use clear and defined sentences.	The practice of revision would improve our writing.	Revision improves writing.
✓ Reduce redundancy.	Important essentials... Joint cooperation... Combine together...	Essential Cooperation Combine
✓ Apply ✓ consistency.		If a word warrants capitalization, capitalize it throughout the document.

## 2. Integrity

- Do not plagiarize. Give credit to others' work in written ideas, photographs, charts, or other supporting material. The Extension publishing process includes a plagiarism check.
- Use APA style for reference lists and in-text citation (APA 7<sup>th</sup> ed., October 2019).

Format	Citation examples
Websites	Last name, F. M. (year, Month, Date). Title of page. Site name. URL  Price, D. (2018, March 23). <i>Laziness does not exist</i> . Medium. <a href="https://humanparts.medium.com/laziness-does-not-exist">https://humanparts.medium.com/laziness-does-not-exist</a>
Journals and Periodicals	Author, A. A., Author, B. B., & Author, C. C. (Year). Title of article. <i>Title of Periodical</i> , volume number(issue number), pages. <a href="https://doi.org/xx.xxx/yyyy">https://doi.org/xx.xxx/yyyy</a>  Scruton, R. (1996). The eclipse of listening. <i>The New Criterion</i> , 15(3), 5–13.
Books	Author, A. A. (Year of publication). <i>Title of work: Capital letter also for subtitle</i> . Publisher Name.  Stoneman, R. (2008). <i>Alexander the Great: A life in legend</i> . Yale University Press.

## 3. Formatting

- Use and assign headings and subheadings to help organize your ideas effectively. Formatting helps with document accessibility and aids HTML publishing. It also forces effective organization. Reference and consider applying the styles found in the MS Word styling.
- Consult APA 7<sup>th</sup> ed. to learn to create effective tables and figures and captions.
- Avoid using full justification. It makes documents difficult to read and disrupts spacing.
- Use updated EEO/civil rights statements found on the [Extension Marketing](#) website.

## 4. Punctuation and Grammar

Checklist	Examples	
	Instead of this	Do this
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Use a hyphen to link words in a compound adjective and to avoid ambiguity.</li> <li>✓ Do not use a hyphen in compounds formed by an adverb ending in -ly plus an adjective or participle. The meaning is clear with -ly alone.</li> </ul>	<p>Loose knit group The story is a re-creation.</p> <p>Largely-irrelevant Frequently-used</p>	<p>Loose-knit group The park is for recreation.</p> <p>Largely irrelevant Frequently used</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Ensure subjects agree with verbs.</li> </ul>	<p>Each have received the information.</p> <p>Everyone turns in their report on Monday.</p> <p>Listen to the person and let them know you understand.</p>	<p>Each has received the information.</p> <p>All engineers turn in their report on Monday.</p> <p>Listen to the person and let her know you understand.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Use one space after periods</li> <li>✓ before beginning a new sentence.</li> </ul>	<p>A percentage provides storage. We use another room for meetings.</p>	<p>A percentage provides storage. We use another room for meetings.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Do not capitalize job descriptions, and lowercase formal titles that appear on their own or following a name. (Note the use of <i>Ph.D.</i> or <i>doctorate</i> instead of <i>Dr.</i>, unless referring to a medical physician.)</li> </ul>	<p>As a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, Jacob Jones, PhD, LMFT, and a Director of Therapy Services, spoke to us</p>	<p>Jacob Jones, who holds a doctorate, spoke. (preferred)</p> <p>Jacob Jones, Ph.D., spoke.</p>

## 5. Tips for Success

- Run grammar and spell checks that come with your word processor.
- Install and use [Grammarly](#), a free, online writing tool that helps you eliminate simple errors and even address style and tone issues.
- Read the document aloud, and use a hard copy to proof. You will catch many errors using these tricks. Asking others to review the document helps as well.
- After writing, put the document away for a while, and then come back later to revise.

## 6. Understand and Use FastTrack for Peer Review

- See the infographic on page 4 for more information.

# USU Extension FastTrack Review & Editing Process | At a Glance

