

AI Prompt to Check Your User Document

I am a/an _____ major creating a user-facing document that supports my *Informational Report for Non-Expert Readers*. I am uploading my draft. Please check my draft against the criteria below. **Do not rewrite my draft.** For each item, tell me whether the draft **Meets** the criterion or **Needs Revision**, and give specific, actionable suggestions if it needs revision.

Check my draft for these criteria:

1. **Project Focus:** My User Document focuses on a user-facing document related to the subject of my informational report. Examples of User Documents are step-by-step instructions, decision guides, flowcharts, learning aids, troubleshooting guides, quick-start reference guides, and how-to guides.
2. **Audience & Accessibility:** My User Document is appropriate for non-expert readers. My audience needs no special knowledge to understand the instructions and complete the activities in the document. All information is clear and accessible.
3. **Introductory Sections:** My User Document includes all required elements and provides a detailed, complete beginning to the document (**required elements:** clear title that identifies the topic of the document and uses "How to..." phrasing or a gerund phrase (-ing verb). The document includes the date to indicate currency and version context. The introduction to the document states the task and scope, describes audience knowledge or background needs, explains the purpose or outcome of the task, indicates when to use the instructions, and provides an overview to the task. The document provides relevant general notices (danger, warning, caution, and note, as appropriate).
4. **Terminology & Background:** My User Document defines all unfamiliar terms and explains concepts that are needed to understand the procedure.
5. **Equipment & Supplies:** My User Document provides a complete list of tools, equipment, and consumables for the task. It includes specifications such as brand, size, amount, or type.
6. **Directions & Step Quality:** My User Document uses clear, complete, correctly formatted steps. If the steps must be done in order, I use a numbered list. If the steps can be done in any order, I use a bulleted list. If there is more than one option for the steps, I use bulleted options with "or." If there are nested steps, I use indented substeps (a, b, c...). If the steps offer general guidance or the use of steps doesn't fit, I use stepless instructions. I use active verbs throughout and add visuals to support the steps.

7. **Conclusion & Troubleshooting:** My User Document summarizes the process, provides troubleshooting guidance, and lists contact info.
8. **Visuals:** The User Document includes **4 or more** useful visuals. All visuals are identified with two-part captions (For instance, Figure 1: Wind Turbine on Working Ranch). The User Document refers directly to the visuals in the text with clear explanation and context. The proposal does NOT use clipart.
9. **Documentation (as needed):** The User Document includes all sources with consistent formatting. It uses the documentation format that is preferred by my discipline (e.g., engineers use IEEE).
10. **Cover Memo:** My cover memo explains the audience and purpose for the User Document and explains the connection between the User Document and the report topic. My cover memo uses the memo title "Memo" or "Memorandum" (without the quotation marks). It uses the memo headings (to, from, subject, date) followed by the body of the memo. The memo subject is clear and specific. The message does NOT include a greeting (or salutation), a closing, or a clear signature block. The message has a clean and professional appearance.
11. **Document Design & CRAP Principles:** The User Document uses strong document design and formatting. It includes headings, which contrast well with the rest of the text. Paragraphs are single-spaced. An additional line is skipped between paragraphs. The document uses lists, horizontal rules, and boxes effectively. The document design uses easily readable fonts, paragraph chunking, and other formatting elements effectively to increase readability. It takes advantage of CRAP design principles (Contrast, Repetition, Alignment, Proximity) consistently.
12. **Tone & Plain Language:** The User Document uses a clear, objective, professional tone and plain language throughout. It does not use jargon or overly complicated language without clear and complete explanation of the terms and concepts. It is reader-friendly and easy to understand.

How to respond:

- For each criteria, write: **Meets** or **Needs Revision**, followed by 1–3 specific revision suggestions that point to exact locations (page/section/heading) in my draft.
- Do **not** rewrite my sentences; give **revision suggestions only**.
- End with a brief summary: my top 3 priority fixes before submission.