

The long-form brief checklist

Run this before you send a brief, and again before you publish the article.

1. Before you speak the brief

- ☐ I have stated a thesis, not a topic.

- ☐ I have named the reader precisely, including what they are carrying.

- ☐ I have named the emotion underneath the subject.

- ☐ I have one real, specific personal moment to include.

- ☐ I have listed the frameworks I want borrowed into the piece.

- ☐ My voice file is attached or pasted in.

2. Reading the draft

- ☐ The opening turns on something already circulating, it does not set a generic scene.

- ☐ My claim is stated, not hedged.

- ☐ Every figure and attributed idea is verified.

- ☐ Reflexive counterpoints are cut, genuine ones kept.

- ☐ I have read it aloud and rewritten every sentence I stumbled on.

- ☐ Each section leaves the reader somewhere new.

- ☐ The closing lands on a short line, it does not trail off.

3. Iterating

- ☐ I am expanding sections, not regenerating the article.

- ☐ Each instruction names the section, the type of depth, and the idea to develop.

- ☐ Research questions are asked directly, and I decide what enters the piece.

- ☐ I have deleted the competent sentences that are not mine.

- ☐ New usable phrasing has been added to the voice file.

4. Before publishing

- ☐ The title makes a claim or names a tension.

- ☐ An italic deck states the territory.

- ☐ Section headers carry the argument on their own.

- ☐ Paragraphs are two to four sentences, with deliberate one-line breaks.

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- ☐ Citations are verified and support the claim made.
 - ☐ A closing question invites the reader's experience.
 - ☐ Any offer sits after the value has been delivered.
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Rule of thumb: the brief carries what only you know. The draft is raw material. The edit is where the voice returns.