

Professional Formatting Checklist for Technical Research Reports

Document Structure

- Title page includes report title, author(s), affiliation(s), date, and contact information.
- Abstract or Executive Summary present, concise, and outlining key findings.
- Table of Contents automatically generated and properly updated.
- List of figures and tables included (if applicable).
- Main body organized into clear, logical sections (Introduction, Methods, Results, Discussion, Conclusion).
- References or Bibliography section complete and follows a recognized citation style.
- Appendices for supplementary material (if needed).

Page Layout & Typography

- Margins set uniformly (recommended: 1" on all sides).
- Consistent font family and size (e.g., 11-12pt for body, larger for headings).
- Line spacing appropriate (e.g., 1.15–1.5 for readability).
- Headings clearly distinguishable by size and weight, used hierarchically.
- Pages correctly numbered and in correct sequence.
- Paragraph style consistent (indentation or spacing between paragraphs).

Figures, Tables & Equations

- Each figure and table has a clear, descriptive caption.
- All figures and tables are referenced in the text.
- Consistent formatting for all figures/tables (e.g., borders, alignment, font).
- Equations centered, numbered, and variables defined on first use.
- Images and graphics are high-resolution and legible at print size.

Language, Style, and Consistency

- Consistent use of terminology, abbreviations, and units throughout.
- Spelling and grammar checked thoroughly.
- Third-person, formal, and objective tone maintained.
- Technical jargon explained on first use (or included in Glossary).
- Consistent tense use in each section (present for discussion, past for methods/results).

Referencing & Citations

- All sources cited consistently using specified citation style (APA, IEEE, etc.).
- In-text citations match reference list entries.

- No missing or orphan citations/references.

Important Notes

- Follow the specific formatting guidelines provided by your institution, journal, or conference.
- Always proofread the final document for structural and typographical errors.
- Maintain clarity and conciseness to improve the report's readability and impact.
- Keep digital copies of your sources and drafts for reference and revision.
- Use styles and templates within your word processor for greater formatting consistency.