Revision Checklist

Subject, Audience, Purpose
1. What’s the most important thing I want to say about my subject?
2. Why do I think the subject is worth writing about?
3. What verb or verbs best explains what I’m trying to do in this paper (tell a story, compare X and Y, describe Z, analyze A, interpret B, take a position about C, summarize D)?
4. What is the professor’s purpose in assigning this paper?
5. Does my first paragraph answer questions 1-4?

Organization (Backwards or Reverse Outlining)
1. How many specific points do I make about my subject? Did I overlap or repeat any points? Did I leave my points out or add some that aren’t relevant to the main idea?
2. Read the assignment again. Did I miss anything?
3. How many paragraphs did I use to talk about each point? Is the paper balanced?
4. Why did I talk about them in this order? Should the order be changed?
5. What job is this paragraph supposed to do? How does it relate to the paragraph before and after it? Choose the right transitions to show the relationship between paragraphs.

Paragraphing (Ask these questions of every paragraph)
1. What’s the topic idea? Will my reader have trouble finding it?
2. Can I substitute better examples, reasons, or details?
3. Do I have enough evidence to support the point of the paragraph?
4. Have I fully explained all of my evidence in relation to the point of the paragraph? Why did I think this evidence “worked”?
5. Does the paragraph begin and end with a main point?
**Sentences (Ask these questions of every sentence)**

1. Does each sentence deal with one important idea? Am I trying to do too much in one sentence?
2. Do I show a relationship from one sentence to another by my choice of transitions?
3. Can my reader “see” what I’m saying? What words could I substitute for “people, things, this/that, aspect”, etc.? Can I add qualifying adjectives and adverbs or find a more lively verb?
4. Is this sentence “fat”? Use concision strategies such as eliminating “which/that clauses” and prepositions. Is every verb close to its subject?
5. Can I combine this sentence with another one? Is every sentence doing some work? Am I repeating myself?

**Things to Check Last**

1. What kinds of grammar or punctuation problems did I have in my last paper? Did I check for those issues here?
2. Have I properly cited all ideas that are not my own?
3. Have I created a bibliography?

– adapted from *A Rhetoric for Writing Teachers* by Erika Lindemann