

## Lists

A series of words, phrases, or names that are grouped together for a reason.

Carrots  
Onions  
Garlic  
Toilet paper.

What kind of list is this?

Probably not ingredients...This is a shopping list.

All the items are connected because you need to buy them! No-one enjoys running low on loo roll!

I went to a farm and saw:

Cows  
Sheep  
Pigs  
Chickens

Vertical lists can be shown using numbers, letters or bullet points.

The type of list used should present information to the reader in a way that is easy to understand and that won't interrupt the flow of your writing.

Horizontal lists are most commonly used in stories and essays. They are separated using commas and most of the time, when it comes to the last item on the list, you should separate it using "and."

Lists aren't just practical or factual they can also be used to emphasise a point.

In Jackie Kay's poem, 'Old Tongue', she lists the words the speaker had to stop using when they moved to England as a child:

"Words fell off my tongue: eedyit, dreich, wabbit, crabbit, stummer, teuchter, heidbanger"

This list draws attention to the rich diversity of words the speaker used to use that have now fallen away from her vocabulary, and suggests the scale of her loss.

The list is written in italics, to emphasise that they are spoken words and to reflect the difference between English and Scots words.

By listing her old, Scots words, Kay encourages us to experience them together and hear their distinctive sounds, just as the speaker would remember them.

Whether practical, factual, or even poetic, the list of reasons to use lists in your writing is endless.