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A Quick Checklist for Argument

This checklist will help you analyze the structure of your argument as you plan and as you revise. If you are checking a draft, you don't have to copy from it word-for-word: a brief paraphrase will do. But do write complete sentences, not just topics or phrases.

1. Do your reasons or subclaims "add up" to a strong case for the main claim?
2. Can you think of any other reasons that support the main claim? If so, add them.
3. Are the reasons or subclaims in the best order? If not, reorder them.
4. Will readers recognize the principle of order for your reasons or subclaims? If not, add a transitional word or phrase to signal that order.
5. Does the evidence under each reason or subclaim in fact support it?
6. Is there enough evidence for each reason or subclaim?
7. Is there other evidence that would support a reason or subclaim?