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## J.S. Mill: On Liberty

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### ASSIGNMENT CHECKLIST

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#### 1. CONTENTS:

- (a) Organization of the summary: Make sure your summary is not a “narration”, give first the general structure, then focus on each part of that structure, then focus on more details of each part, and so on. Of course you only have 500 words so it’s up to you to select those points that you think are more important, and leave out those that you think are only of secondary importance. Make sure you also give some logical and argumentative structure to your summary, not just one bullet point after another. I know it’s hard to write summaries like that, but that’s what you should aspire to, even if you won’t necessarily achieve it this course;
- (b) Make sure you don’t just give your opinions in the critical section of your assignment. You need to argue for and substantiate all your opinions;
- (c) If you claim “some people think”, “some scholars argue”, etc. you need to provide a citation, or at least specify who says so and so;
- (d) Focus on a few points, even better just one point, in your critical section. Don’t pose too many questions that you cannot possibly answer or at least analyze in only 500 words.

#### 2. LANGUAGE:

- (a) For common expressions use Google as a first source of reference, it is not an authority, but it is an initial help. Enclose your search string within quotation marks, that is “...”, and check the search count, which normally appears under the search bar;
- (b) Capitalization: Common nouns don’t start with a capital letter in English;
- (c) Use auto-correct when possible;
- (d) There is no comma between a subject with its verb, and the that-clause which follows. E.g. “Mill believes, that the no harm principles is...”, “One must consider, that the best way to argue against Mill is on his own ground assumptions” Both sentences do not want a comma after the verb;
- (e) Contractions: they are fine for informal writing, if you write me an email or in similar situations; in fact, you will notice that I use them when commenting on your assignments. But your papers are formal writing, so you should avoid both typos and contractions. Here is the official take on contractions by what is probably the most authoritative source, at least for American English, the APA: <http://www.elpsvt.edu/janosik/apastyle.pdf>. The Cambridge guide to English (Brit. En.) is more ambiguous but essentially the point is the same, if you’re writing formally, don’t use contractions. You can find several colleges which suggest the same to their students: <http://physics.gac.edu/~huber/misc/wricheck.htm> — <http://classweb.gmu.edu/biologyresources/writingguide/PracticalTips.htm> — [http://www2.ivcc.edu/rambo/tip\\_formal\\_writing\\_voice.htm](http://www2.ivcc.edu/rambo/tip_formal_writing_voice.htm)