

Checklist: Supporting Characters

Use this checklist to develop your supporting characters and ensure they truly enrich your story. Go through each question and mark *Yes* or *No* to see where a character might need more depth — or where you can simplify.

Cluster A: Before Writing

Question	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
I know what role each supporting character plays (mirror, challenger, observer, mood setter).		
Every supporting character has their own small goal or motivation.		
I can clearly explain why each character is in the story.		
I understand the difference between a supporting character and a background extra.		
I've defined how each supporting character relates to the protagonist.		

Cluster B: While Writing

Question	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Each scene features characters who act, not just stand around.		
I use supporting characters to reflect or contrast the protagonist's emotions or themes.		
I show their attitude through subtle gestures or small actions, not only through dialogue.		
Supporting characters help shape pacing, tone, or tension in the scene.		
I've checked whether any recurring character lacks purpose — and revised or combined them.		
Extras and minor roles contribute to the realism and credibility of the story world.		

Cluster C: During Revision

Question	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
For each character, I can answer: What do they want in this scene?		
Every character changes something — the plot, the mood, or the reader's view of the protagonist.		
I've removed any character who adds nothing to the story.		
Supporting characters enhance, not overshadow, the main storyline.		
Each character shows a clear attitude or point of view, even in small moments.		
My supporting cast is distinct and recognizable, but not exaggerated.		



Evaluation

- **Many Yes answers overall** → Your supporting cast feels real, purposeful, and adds depth to the story.
- **Strong Yes in writing, weaker in revision** → Review your scenes: Where do characters act without real consequence?
- **Mostly No** → Simplify and sharpen. Combine or cut characters until each has a clear reason to exist.

Reflection

Ask yourself:

- Which supporting character surprises you most — and why?
- Do they reveal something the protagonist can't see yet?
- How does a scene change if you remove or strengthen them?

Stories come alive when every character has meaning — even those who only appear for a moment.

For more insights, read the related article:

 [Supporting Characters That Make an Impact: How to Bring Every Scene to Life](#)

