

# Checklist: Writing Romance Novels

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This checklist helps you plan your romance story in a structured way, execute it clearly, and refine it with purpose. Go through each question and mark *yes* or *no* to identify where there is still room for improvement.

## Section A: Before You Start Writing

Question	Yes []	No []
I have clearly defined my subgenre/setting (including expectations regarding pacing, conflict, and tone).		
I understand my target audience and make deliberate choices about tone.		
I have decided on the narrative perspective (first person / third person / close POV) and POV setup (single/dual/multiple) – including a clear rationale.		
My protagonists have clear desires, fears, and boundaries, and I know what their everyday lives look like.		
I can explain in one sentence why these characters fall in love (values, dialogue chemistry, respect, shared experiences).		

## Section B: While Writing

Question	Yes []	No []
I show characters falling in love through actions, gestures, and decisions—not through statements (“X was in love”).		
I build small intimacy before big intimacy (trust, vulnerability, respecting boundaries).		
My obstacles are grounded in character and come with real stakes (not just a “misunderstanding that could be solved with one conversation”).		
I use subtext in dialogue (what remains unsaid) instead of forcing romantic impact through adjectives.		
I structure my scenes around the six key moments (meeting → first intimate moment → confession → separation → proof of love → reunion).		
In emotional scenes, I rely on physical reactions, timing, atmosphere, and measured inner perspective (no repetitive inner monologues).		

## Section C: During Revision

Question	Yes []	No []
Each key romance scene clearly answers: What does each character want—and what is at stake?		
I have checked whether the chemistry between the characters is grounded in concrete moments—not just “because the genre requires it.”		
The conflict arc feels realistic: external and internal conflicts escalate in a believable way.		



I have reviewed “show, don’t tell”: repetitions like “he/she felt” are reduced and replaced with observable actions.		
Intimacy and steamy scenes serve a clear purpose and fit the overall tone of the book.		
Tone, spice level, and character reactions are consistent (no surprises in the wrong place, no out-of-character moments).		

## Evaluation

- **Many “yes” across all section** → Your romance novel fits your target audience, follows genre conventions, and evokes strong emotions.
- **Many “yes” while writing, but fewer during revision** → Review your scenes more closely: Is the romance convincing? Do the conflicts feel realistic? Are you assuming too much?
- **Many “no”** → Refocus: revisit your subgenre/target audience, character motivations, and conflicts, then refine and expand your scenes.

## Personal Reflection

Ask yourself:

- Which scene makes you feel the most invested—and what specific detail makes the difference?
- Are there scenes where the romance develops too quickly or doesn’t feel logically grounded?
- Are the steamy scenes essential to the story?
- How does a scene change if you adjust its tone?

How to write romance stories that truly resonate with your readers.

**For more in-depth tips, see the related article:**

[How to Write Romance: The Best Tips for Emotional Love Stories](#)

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