The Busy Writer's Tips on Mystery and Crime

Checklist 2 – Research

Research Topic or Skill	Your Assessment		
	Works Well	Needs Work	Poor
Have you researched the different categories to find the one that best suits you?			
Have you made a list of essential research for your plot? (e.g. police hierarchy and procedure; courtroom procedure and transcripts; safecracking; cat burglars; sophisticated spying devices and bugs; technology; cars and transport; geographical settings; job descriptions; career responsibilities and so on.)			
Have you organized your browser bookmarks in a way that will allow you to find what you need quickly? (Tip: if you have OneNote packaged with Microsoft Office, you can copy and paste information from the Internet and the URL will be recorded with the information.)			
Have you created a list of experts that you can approach? (Forum contacts; bloggers, webmasters and contributors, local experts willing to chat on the phone, etc.)			
Have you set a time limit for research? (It's possible to get trapped in never-ending research and failing to write the book!)			
Have you researched the criminal justice system as it applies to criminals and sentencing in your novel? (Background for your villain and accomplices; possible custodial sentences.)			
Do you have a notebook to jot down reminders about necessary research as you write? (You can leave a gap in your work and highlight a section with the note 'Research this!' to save stopping the flow of work.)			
Have you done a final run-through of your novel to ensure that you haven't skipped over any necessary research? (Readers are very quick to pick up on any blunders or gaps!)			
Other Aspects of Research:			