

Editing and Proofreading Your Paper

An important part of the writing process is editing and proofreading your work. Often it is necessary to edit and proofread more than once to eliminate errors and make the writing as clear as possible. Some techniques for editing and proofreading include:

Read Your Paper Aloud Slowly. Ask Yourself These Questions:

- Did you trip over a word? Maybe you need to re-structure the sentence.
- Did you pause? Maybe you need to add a comma or period.
- Did you get confused? You may need to explain your ideas more clearly.
- Do you have a clear and precise thesis statement with equally clear and precise topic sentences and supporting details?
- Are your ideas well-organized with clear transitions?
- Are you getting your main ideas across to your reader?
- Do you have strong evidence to support your argument?

Have Someone Else Read Your Paper

- Are there spots other people stumble over or are confused about?
- Tell your reader your weaknesses and have him/her look for these types of errors.

Small Chunks

- Try revising your paper one sentence or one paragraph at a time.

Revise Backwards

- Revise the last sentence and work your way to the top, one sentence at a time. This technique helps you to focus on grammar and punctuation.

Organize your feedback, so you can use it to revise.

- Look for patterns
- What comments did your instructor make about your papers? What were your weaknesses? Were there specific things the instructor wanted you to work on?
- Look over your current paper to make sure you are not repeating the same mistakes.

Writer vs. Reader

- Take some time away from your paper and go back to it later. Then you may be able to see it with a fresh mind.
- Try to look at your paper from the reader's perspective rather than your own.
- Pretend you have never seen the paper or topic before. What questions would you have? Are your questions answered in your paper?

Just Grammar

- Read your paper and only focus on grammar. Some common errors involve:

Fragments	Pronoun agreement
Run-on sentences	Modifiers
Subject-verb agreement	Parallelism
Verb tense	

Just Punctuation

- Look over your paper and only focus on your punctuation.

Word Choice (Diction)

- Look over your paper and only focus on your word choice. It should match the purpose of the paper.

Formal vs. informal	Point of view
Purpose	Tone
Audience	

Trim It Up

- Quality is better than quantity. Cut out unnecessary words and be careful not to repeat yourself unnecessarily.

For More Help:

- See the **What Is a Sentence?**, **Sentence Types**, **Combining Sentences**, and **Sentence Fragments** handouts.
- Make an appointment or drop in to see a tutor at the Writing, Reading, and Language Center, HS 150.