

Tutors will not edit or proofread your writing. They will support you as you learn to do this for yourself. During your tutoring session, these are some of the strategies your tutor may ask YOU to try:

1. **Ask yourself, “Is my essay ready for the proofreading stage?”** You may first need to work with your tutor on clarifying the topic and/or thesis; making sure that your ideas are clear; improving the argument and supporting details; or reorganizing the sentences and paragraphs. Proofreading comes last after these.
2. **Do a grammar, spelling, and word check, use your dictionary and thesaurus, and be suspicious of sentences that online translation tools produce for you.** The thesaurus tool can be useful for suggestion vocabulary, but you will want to check the dictionary to understand new words. Online translation tools can lead you to very poor English, so suspect lots of errors, and use your own knowledge and other reference tools to improve the translation.
3. **Proofread your essay by reading it slowly and silently.** Carefully read your paper before you come for tutoring or at the very start of tutoring. Catch as many errors as you can yourself so that you use the tutor for errors that are harder to catch. Try saying the sentences in your mind as you point to the words with your pencil. Circle places where you think there may be an error and ask your tutor.
4. **Proofread your essay by reading it out loud.** Reading out loud can help you notice problems you don't see when you read silently. Circle places where you think there may be an error and ask your tutor. Your tutor might signal that you missed an error but let you try to spot it and fix it on your own.
5. **Proofread your essay one line at a time.** Use another sheet or two of paper to cover everything except one line to help you focus your attention on the one line you are proofreading.
6. **Proofread your essay backwards.** (Read the last sentence first, then the next-to-last, etc., until you reach the beginning of the essay). This will slow you down and help you see grammatical errors in a sentence without being distracted by its role in your argument.
7. **Read your essay to a partner.** Print out two copies of your essay and give one to your partner. Read your copy out loud at a slow but steady pace. Ask your partner to underline any passages in his or her copy that do not exactly match what s/he heard you read. Your partner should mark his/her copy without interrupting you, so you can maintain your rhythm; the two of you can review the text and discuss the marks after you have finished reading.

8. **Listen to your partner read the essay.** Print out two copies of your essay and give one to your partner. Ask your partner to read his/her copy out loud at a slow but steady pace. Mark any passages on your copy where what the reader says doesn't match what's on the page, or where the reader has any trouble smoothly reading what you've written.
9. **Keep a list of your common errors.** Proofread the essay looking specifically for one kind of error at a time. For example, if you have problems with verb tenses, read the essay and look only at the verbs to make sure you have eliminated all tense problems. Reread the essay several times, once for each common error you notice. Keep a list about the types of errors that YOU tend to make.

My Common Errors & How to Fix Them