

Suggestions for Proofreading

Proofreading is examining one's text carefully to find and correct typographical errors and mistakes in grammar, punctuation, and spelling. *Editing* is proofreading with the additional step of checking for clarity of meaning and consideration of content. Here are some tips.

Before Proofreading

- ❖ **Be sure you've revised the larger parts of your text.** Don't make corrections at the sentence and word level if you still need to work on the focus, organization, and development of the whole paper, of sections, or of paragraphs.
- ❖ **Set your text aside for a while** between writing and proofing (15 minutes, a day, or a week—depending on the length and/or complexity of the project). Some distance from the text will help you see mistakes more easily and keep the reviewing process fresh.
- ❖ **Know what to look for.** From the comments of your instructor, peers, or Writing Center tutors, make a list of issues you need to watch for.

While Proofreading

- ❖ **Read out loud** or have another read your work aloud to you. You may hear issues that are missed when reading silently.
- ❖ **Use a blank sheet of paper to cover up the lines below the one you're reading.** This technique isolates one line at a time and keeps you from skipping ahead of possible mistakes.
- ❖ If you tend to make many mistakes, **check separately for each kind of error.** For instance, read through once to check for fragments; read through again to make sure it is all written in the correct tense; read once more to confirm the entire paper is written in third-person point of view.
- ❖ **Use the search and replace tool** once you recognize a consistent error. For example, if you often wrote *are* for *our*, search and replace (find next rather than replace all) can be helpful.