

Proofreading and Editing Tips

- Read your paper out loud – this forces you to read every word and will help pick up quirky phrasing.
- Read your paper backwards – this helps you focus on the spelling of words.
- Use a spell checker and grammar checker as a first screening, but do not depend on them. It will not catch errors such as writing ‘four’ instead of ‘for’.
- Check for the proper usage of words:
 - “they’re,” “their,” and “there”
 - “two,” “too,” and “to”
 - “your” and “you’re”
 - “wear” and “where”
 - “affect” and “effect”
- Have someone else read it. Ask your campus library coordinator for help.
- Don’t proof read for all types of errors at one time. This is just too difficult and you will miss things.
- Print your paper and read it that way. Proofreading from a computer screen is more difficult.
- Double check proper names.
- Double check little words such as “or,” “of,” “it,” and “is”. These are easily interchanged and can be hard to find.
- Ask yourself who, what, when, where, why, and how when reading for content. Does the text answer all the questions you think it should?
- Count the number of steps in a list to make sure they are all there.
- Check for font size and style changes.
- Make sure all paragraphs are indented 5 spaces.