

Proofreading Checklist

Nothing beats a professional proofreader, but if you have to proof your own work, use these tips to catch as many edits as possible.

Get Ready

- Take your time. Give yourself fifteen minutes per page.
- Use fresh eyes. After you write, set your document aside for a while before you attempt to proof it.

Get Set

- Use spell check and grammar tools—with caution. They won't catch everything and sometimes their suggested corrections are wrong.
- Change your perspective. Print the document or change margins, layout, or window size. With words moving and changing lines, you read differently and catch more.
- Refer to a dictionary and style guide. Record style decisions as you go in a style sheet.

Proofread

- Proofread in chunks:
 - Headings
 - Graphics
 - Captions
 - Callouts
 - Lists
- Read out loud—two senses are better than one.
- Read line by line, using a piece of paper to cover up the text below the line you're reading.
- Watch for common mistakes:
 - Homophones (e.g., their and there, it's and its, merry and marry)
 - Typos (e.g., manger for manager)
 - Missing or wrong punctuation (e.g., This sentence is a question?)
 - Missing or duplicated words
 - Subject-verb disagreement
 - Comma splices (i.e., using a comma where you need a period)
- Watch for inconsistencies:
 - Capitalization (e.g., We want to Thank you for reading.)
 - Changing acronyms
 - Formatting (e.g., font size, spacing, margins, pagination)
 - Headers, footers, and page numbering