

WHAT IS PROOFREADING?

Proofreading is the essential final step in any writing process. After revising to improve content, organization, and other global concerns and after editing to make your meaning as clear as possible, writers proofread to correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, and typographical errors. By carefully proofreading to make sure your writing is error-free and polished, you show readers that you care about your work.

Revising	Editing	Proofreading
content	clarity	spelling
paper structure	style	grammar
paragraph structure	sentence structure	punctuation
source integration	word choice	typographical errors (“typos”)

WHAT TO CHECK WHEN PROOFREADING

Grammar

- run-on sentences
- subject-verb agreement
- sentence fragments *TIP: See our [handout on avoiding sentence fragments](#).*

Punctuation

- misused or omitted punctuation marks *TIP: See our [colons](#), [commas](#), and [semicolons](#) handouts.*

Typographical errors (“typos”)

- misused or omitted words
- improper lack of capitalization or
- stray letters and punctuation marks

Spelling

- misspelled words *TIP: Use spellcheck—but double-check that its suggestions are correct for your meaning.*
- contractions (apostrophe use)
- homophones (e.g., affect/effect, there/they’re/their)

STRATEGIES FOR PROOFREADING

1. **Print your paper.** You are guaranteed to find more errors on a printed paper than on a screen. Slowly and deliberately read each sentence aloud. This pace will give you more time to notice any mistakes.
2. **Focus on one element at a time.** Reviewing your draft to look for just one type of error (grammar, punctuation, typos, or spelling) at a time helps you see individual aspects of your writing more objectively.
3. **Position a guide such as a ruler or blank piece of paper** under each line of your draft as your review it.
4. **Begin at the end.** Beginning with the *last* sentence, read your entire essay one sentence at a time. This will help you focus on sentence-level errors that are easy to miss if you get lost in the flow of the writing.
5. **Schedule a KSU Writing Center appointment.** Our Writing Assistants and Graduate Writing Coaches will help you master these and other proofreading strategies.

VISIT [WRITINGCENTER.KENNESAW.EDU](http://writingcenter.kennesaw.edu) TO MAKE AN APPOINTMENT FOR ONE-ON-ONE ASSISTANCE.
THE KSU WRITING CENTER: NOT BECAUSE YOU CAN'T WRITE . . . BUT BECAUSE YOU DO.