

# The Writing Center @ EOU

## The Final Step: Proofreading

### Take a Step Back

Like revising and editing, the first thing you should do before proofreading is step away from your writing and give yourself a rest. If you have time, sleep on it and come back the next day. If not, give it at least 30 minutes before returning to work. Looking at it with rested eyes will help you see mistakes you might otherwise pass over while your writing is fresh in your mind.

### Don't Be Afraid to Go Over Your Paper Multiple Times

Read your paper frontwards. Read your paper backwards sentence by sentence. Read it backwards word by word. Read your paper in your head. Read it aloud. Read it slowly.

### Identify and Assess all of Your Verbs

Go through your paper inspecting all of your verbs. Look for areas where you used passive voice. In addition, check for subject-verb agreement and that all of your verbs are in parallel tenses.

### Inspect Direct Quotations

Review all of the instances where you include text directly from one of your sources. Go back and verify that your quotation is presented exactly as it is written in the original source.

### **Useful Tips**

- Make full revisions and edits before beginning to proofread.
- Go to a quiet place where you can focus on proofreading.
- If you are having trouble focusing on single sentence, use a blank piece of paper to cover everything except the line you are working on.
- Each time you read through your paper look for different errors.
- Inspect your paper for mistakes you have commonly made in the past.
- Use a printed copy for proofreading.

References: Purdue Online Writing Lab, Writing@CSU Guide, Gustavus Adolphus College, University of Minnesota Center for Writing, The Writing Center @ The University of Wisconsin-Madison, Grand Valley State University

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