



## Writing Centre

### Proofreading Tips

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Proofreading is the final step in the writing process. This is when you correct errors in grammar, formatting, spelling, and punctuation.

#### Preparing to Proofread

Before you proofread, make sure that:

- ✓ The assignment is complete.
- ✓ You have rested since the last revision.

Remember, larger issues (e.g., introduction, thesis, and conclusion) should already be resolved when you proofread.

- **Read Slowly.** Don't rush through the draft. Try using a metronome to read at a steady pace. This will make you slow down and notice any errors.
- **Read Aloud.** Many errors are easier to hear than they are to see. Use your ears to identify mistakes.
- **Pause for Punctuation.** Pause for a second when you see a punctuation mark like a comma, period, semicolon, or hyphen. This will help you "hear" if the pause belongs there.
- **Limit Concerns.** Don't try to check for all possible errors at once! Instead, read the draft several times, and check for a different kind of error each time. For instance, check the paper for comma errors, and then read it again for missing semicolons.
- **Use a Resource.** The Writing Centre has many resources to help you find a specific kind of error. For instance, if checking for article errors, use our *Articles* resource!
- **Take Breaks.** Just like any aspect of writing, we proofread more effectively after a rest. Eat a snack, drink some water, or go for a walk to give your brain a boost.
- **Change the Appearance.** When we get used to seeing an error, it stops looking like an error. Changing the text size or font, adding a background color, zooming your screen in or out, or printing your draft can help you see your writing with fresh eyes.
- **Use a spell-checking program.** Free software such as Grammarly can help you remove basic grammar and spelling errors. However, be sure to review each suggestion rather than accepting everything – these programs make mistakes, too!
- **Ask someone else to read it.** Ask a friend, roommate, or study buddy to read the paper aloud. Listen for places where they stumble or slow down – these sentences may need to be revised.