Proofreading Quick Guide

- Proofreading is the last step of writing any strong academic paper.
- Revise your paper first using the Revision Quick Guide; if you proofread and then revise, you may spend time perfecting the grammar of a paragraph that you later need to remove.
- Read through your paper multiple times looking for different errors each time.

Micro Level Editing ~ Editing for Language

Micro level concerns are the lowest order concerns for a paper. Proofread your sentences to make them clear and easy to read.

Read Aloud
- One of the most valuable tools for proofreading and catching grammatical errors is reading aloud.
- Read each section of your paper aloud to yourself slowly, listening for any errors that your eyes may have skimmed over when reading silently.
- Read your paper a second time from end to beginning. When reading beginning to end, your brain understands what should come next and may fill in missing information. Reading backward trains your brain to focus on one sentence at a time to catch sentence-level errors such as missing words and commas.
- Keep a list of patterns of error such as confusing their and there or incorrectly using articles. Look especially for the errors on your list when correcting future papers.

- Consider the Audience/Tone

Academic papers are formal, so avoid conversational language that you might use with a friend such as contractions, biased language, and first and second person. Also use the most formal language available (for example, use the word “mother” instead of “mom”).

- Double Check APA Formatting

Double-check your headers, page numbers, cover page formatting, references and in-text citations are properly formatted according to APA and/or any special instructions in your guidelines.
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## Proofreading Checklist

The most common errors to check for when proofreading include:

### Grammar
- Subject-verb agreement
- Commas
- Sentence fragments
- Periods
- Missing articles (a, an, the)
- Missing words
- Run-on sentences
- Incorrect prepositions (on, off, above, etc.)
- Pronoun reference

### Style
- Passive voice (change to active voice)
- Informal language
- First and second person (I, you, we, our, etc.)
- Contractions
- Capitalization—proper names capitalized but interventions/theories are not

### Spelling
- Always run spellcheck!
- Commonly confused words such as there and their

### APA Formatting
- In-text citations
- References page entries
- Header
- Section headings and subheadings
- Cover page
- Margins
- Spacing
- Modifications from the professor or assignment guidelines