



Proof Perfect

It is always good practice to check over any work you have written, especially if it is for presentation or distribution to others. You need to try and ensure that you correct all the typos, spelling and grammatical mistakes. Missed errors within your copy can be hugely frustrating, but read on, we've got some ideas that will help you produce perfect copy every time!

1. **If you are using word processing software always use your spell/grammar checker first.** Make any adjustments, then print out a copy of your work and set it aside.

Spell and grammar checkers are handy but you have a far greater vocabulary than your computer (it may even favour the US spellings of some words), so, do not rely on it - it won't pick up 100% of errors: typos, hyphenations, correctly spelt words in the wrong place, misused and/or missing words.

2. **Wait a good few hours before you reread your work.** If you do not there is a good chance that you'll still be thinking about the contents, rather than being dispassionate and spotting the errors.
3. **Be in the right frame of mind with as few distractions as possible.** If you are thinking of other things, or surrounded by noise and bustle, you will not be able to concentrate fully on the copy; it is detailed work, you need to be fully focussed.
4. **Read your work aloud.** It is amazing how much this helps improve punctuation and pick up on any missing words.
5. **Keep your place with a ruler so you do not skip any lines.** If you leave your work, always mark the place clearly to ensure you begin at the right place on your return.
6. **Keep a dictionary or thesaurus handy** – if in doubt, look it up.
7. **Mark any corrections with a coloured pen and/or highlighter.** This will make them much easier to pick out and you'll be less likely to miss any.
8. **Recheck those numbers.** Add up forwards then backwards to confirm totals, whilst also checking for any misplaced decimal points and commas.

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9. **Read your copy backwards...** Yep, sounds odd, but this will really help you spot any spelling mistakes; it is too easy to start 'reading' the copy, instead of 'proofreading' it.
10. **If your copy is long, with many pages, rest your eyes every 15 minutes or so.** This will give your eyes and brain a break, helping to keep you focussed on the job.
11. **When you feel sure you have found all the errors, pass the copy to a colleague.** Sometimes all it takes is another pair of eyes!

If you have any good proofreading tips let us know, we'll spread the word...



Find the right words and get your message across!

For further information about our work, clients and ability to help you, get in touch.

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