

REVISION AND EDITING

Good writers know that writing doesn't end with the first draft. A strong paper requires polish and attention to detail, which involves going back over the draft and making changes to better communicate your points.

There are two ways to review your work:

Revision	Editing
-Focuses on improving larger scale issues (thesis statements, logic of argument, etc.)	-Focuses on minor changes to spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc.
-Considers changes to ideas and arguments	-Looks at errors in communicating existing ideas.
-Views writing as a work in progress	-Views writing as an almost finished product

Once you finish your first draft, keep the following in mind as you reread your paper:

Revising Your Paper's Structure

Central Idea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have I clearly communicated my main argument? Have I clearly stated this argument in my thesis?
Supporting Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have I developed my main points with convincing examples that support my thesis? Have I left out any important info? Do I need to eliminate any unnecessary info? Have I included citations and/or correctly cited all quotations/paraphrases?
Audience and Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have I defined all terms and provided all necessary context to follow my argument? Have I accomplished the purpose listed in my assignment instructions?
Paragraphs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are my paragraphs organized in a way that readers can easily follow? Have I included a strong introduction and conclusion?

Editing Your Paper's Spelling, Grammar, and Punctuation

- Sentence Fragments
- Run-on Sentences
- Tenses
- Subject-Verb Agreement
- Active vs. Passive Voice
- Wordiness and Repetition
- Misspellings
- Incorrect Punctuation

Tips for Better Editing

Editing and revising are time-consuming, but they are worth it to ensure your final draft is the best it can be:

- Finish your first draft a few days before your deadline – Taking a break and coming back to revise with a fresh set of eyes will make it easier to notice when your argument is unclear or disorganized.
- Don't revise everything all at once – Read your paper through a few times, looking for something different each time (e.g., Read 1: thesis and argument; Read 2: proper paragraphs; Read 3: grammar).
- Read slowly and carefully – It's easy to miss errors when you read too fast.
- Read out loud – Our brains tend to autocorrect errors when we read in our heads. But if you read out loud, you are more likely to catch when a word is wrong or when a sentence sounds awkward.

The Role of an Editor

Perhaps the biggest challenge with self-editing is that what sounds clear to you *might not sound clear to someone else*. This is where editors are useful! Editors look at your paper with a neutral eye and may see things that you miss. But if you want to use an editor (or edit for someone else), you need to make sure they are editing in a legitimate way.



Here are three of the most common types of legitimate editors:

Peer Editors

- Where you ask a friend or family member to offer their insights on your paper's structure and grammar.

Professional Editors

- Where you pay a professional editor or service to review your paper. Professional editors typically charge by the page or the word. **NOTE:** Some professors and/or editing services require that you get permission from your professor before using a professional editor.

Writing and Tutoring Services

- Where you make an appointment with one of our Consultants to receive feedback and instruction on your writing.

Legitimate Editing

Using editors can be a great way to improve your writing, but you must be careful. **An editor should NOT make direct changes to your paper or rewrite it for you.** Instead, editors should limit themselves to flagging issues or areas of concern. If you use an editor, or if you offer to edit for someone else, keep the following in mind:

Editing Do's

- **Ask clarifying questions** that get the writer to rethink their ideas.
- **Point out** arguments in the paper that are **unclear or illogical**.
- **Identify** where quotations/paraphrases are not cited or cited incorrectly.
- **Address structural AND grammatical issues** in your revisions.
- **Retain** the author's **original wording** whenever possible.

Editing Don'ts

- **Provide exact wordings** of how something should be changed.
- **Give** the writer **a more coherent argument**.
- **Fix** errors in citation for the author.
- **Only focus on grammar issues** or make grammatical changes for the author.
- **Rewrite** sentences or sections for the author.

Overediting and Academic Integrity

Editing is good, but too much is a problem. Tyndale's Academic Integrity Policy states that plagiarism includes "Submitting academic work which has been written, rewritten or **substantially edited** by another person" (<https://www.tyndale.ca/academics/policies/academic-integrity-policy>). Your work must remain your own.

- If one of your assignments doesn't sound like it is written in your "voice," your professor may ask you questions about your writing process and, if necessary, follow the steps outlined in Tyndale's Academic Integrity Policy.
- This is why editors should only offer questions or general suggestions instead of exact changes or rewrites. This forces you to make your own changes and maintains academic integrity.