

The Ultimate Proofreading Checklist

Proofreading Your OWN Copy

Things to have handy:

- 1) Your company's style/brand guidelines
- 2) A pen and paper to make notes

STEP 1: Producing a First Best Attempt

- Rid yourself of distractions - close Facebook and Twitter!
- Ensure you have thoroughly revised and edited your work.
- Only once you have completed a **first best attempt**, should you then proofread your own copy. This means...

STEP 2: Spell Checking Your Copy

- Use the spell check function in Microsoft products. To do this go to 'Review' > 'Check Document'.
- Ensure you have set the correct language version. To do this go to 'Review' > 'Check Document' > 'Settings' > 'Language'.
- Use Grammarly. This free tool can be used for emails, messages, documents and even on social platforms.

STEP 3: Formatting & Presentation

- Pay attention to the consistency of capitalisation, alignment, page breaking, copy and line spacing, use of colour, numbering and dates, font sizes and type and brand guidelines.

The Ultimate Proofreading Checklist

Proofreading Your OWN Copy

Things to have handy:

- 1) Your company's style/brand guidelines
- 2) A pen and paper to make notes

STEP 4: A Final Read Of The Copy: Top Tips

- Read the copy slowly, focus on each word individually and pause at every use of punctuation.
- Print your work and go through it with a highlighter. Looking at a screen for long periods of time can make you blind to obvious errors.
- Read your copy out loud to ensure it reads naturally. There is also a 'Read Aloud' feature available in Microsoft Office products.
- Read the copy backwards. It can help you to see your words differently and make errors stand out.
- If time permits, revisit the content in a few hours with fresh eyes.
- Use the search function (Ctrl+F) to actively seek mistakes you're likely to make.
- Curate common mistakes you repeatedly make and produce your own checklist. Refer back to this checklist.

STEP 5: Questions To Consider

- Does the copy adhere to the company's tone of voice?
- Are brand names written correctly?
- Are relevant links included?