

PROOFREADING

What is proofreading?

Proofreading is the process of reviewing the final draft of a piece of writing to ensure consistency and accuracy in grammar, spelling, punctuation and formatting.

1. GRAMMAR

- Subject-verb agreement. We must check that the subject and the verb agree in number.

Everyone have finished the program. ✗ *Everyone has finished the program.* ✓

- Use full words and avoid informal language or colloquialisms.

I don't understand the situation. ✗ *I do not understand the situation.* ✓

2. SPELLING

- Make sure every word is correct, leaving only one space between words.

The busdriver is very happy. ✗ *The bus driver is very happy.* ✓

- Capital letters. In English we use capital letters for the first word of a sentence, proper nouns, nationalities and languages, days of the week, months and holidays.

Example: *She is in love with that French boy, but she will not see him until February or maybe Easter.*

3. PUNCTUATION

- Commas. Make sure you use commas properly leaving a space after each one.

Henry speaks English, Spanish, French and German. ✓
Henry speaks English,Spanish,French and German. ✗

- Apostrophes. Make sure you use them properly for the possessive and for decades.

Example: *She is Nicole's friend.*

Example: *Women often wore bonnets in the 1800s.* (No apostrophe.)

Example: *Life was different in the '60s.*

3. PUNCTUATION

- Quotation marks and parenthesis. Make sure you open and close them.
- Periods. Do not forget periods at the end of each sentence or paragraph. If there is information in a sentence between parenthesis, the period must be outside of the parenthesis. If the entire sentence is parenthetical, then the period must be inside of the parenthesis.
Example: *I enjoy lunch.* (sometimes).
Example: *I enjoy lunch.* (I enjoy dinner more.)

4. FORMATTING

You must follow the format indicated including font, size of the letter, line spacing, etc.

NUMBERS

Numbers must also be checked before sending any piece of writing.
Should we spell them out or use the numeral?

We must spell out:

- Estimated numbers. *Over one hundred years ago.*
- Centuries and decades. *Twenty-first century.*
- Numbers below 10. *Seven members of the crew.*
- Ordinal numbers. *First British astronaut.*

We must use the numeral:

- Numbers above 100. We found 145 clues.

In English, we use a dot (.) to express decimal numbers and commas to separate thousands.

Example: *The pi number is 3.1416.*

Example: *Oxford has 152,000 inhabitants.*

Finally, the currency symbols must be placed before the number.

Example: *This new car costed me \$90,000.*