



# THE WRITERS' STUDIO

at Butler University

## PROOFREADING TIPS

The following proofreading tips can help you locate and correct different kinds of surface-level errors in your writing.

In no particular order...

- Take a break between writing/revising and proofreading (several hours or even days).
- Proofread a printed copy, not just an on-screen copy.
- Print a proofreading draft using a larger font and with extra space between lines (double-spaced or even triple-spaced).
- Create a personalized editing checklist, based on your previous (graded) papers.
- Read your paper more than once, looking for different problems each time (first time looking for typos, second time checking verb tenses, third time...).
- Read your paper out loud to yourself or to someone else who also has a copy.
- Have someone read out loud while you follow along.
- Physically cover up all but the line you're reading.
- Read backwards, word by word or sentence by sentence.
- Point at words as you read them.
- Use your computer's "find" feature to search for likely misspellings or wrong words (example: their/there/they're confusion).
- Circle all verbs, and then check for tense, agreement, mood, etc.
- Read the work out loud exactly as it is typewritten.
- Circle all punctuation and double-check.
- Read the writing sentence-by-sentence, beginning at the conclusion of the work.
- Use the 'word search' feature to locate common usage errors, such as *your/you're*; *It/it's*; *affect/effect*; *could have/could of*
- Read for single features, for example, full sentences, passive voice, unnecessary repetition
- Run spell and grammar check, but evaluate any suggestions you are given