

6 Steps to Self-Edit Grammar and Punctuation

While editing your essay, it is important to take time in the self-editing process to revise and check your grammar and punctuation. Many easy marks are lost in assignments because of grammar mistakes, and by following the steps below these errors are easy to fix!

1. Take a break from writing before you begin to edit your work.

Come back to your editing once an hour or day has passed. Giving yourself time away from writing will help you see your work from a fresh perspective.

2. Read your writing out loud.

Reading your work out loud will help you to hear awkward phrasings and redundancies in your writing. Sometimes hearing how different your writing sounds when it's read out loud can help you catch mistakes that you didn't see when just looking at it on the page.

3. Ask a friend or peer to read your writing.

A new reader brings a fresh pair of eyes to your writing. This pair of eyes can see grammar and punctuation errors more easily because they weren't the ones engrossed with the writing and their minds are clear.

4. Look at your main information and revise that first.

It is important to look at your main argument (your thesis) and how the rest of your paper supports it. Sometimes your grammar and punctuation blocks and obstructs your reader from understanding your main argument because of phrasing. Have you provided enough description? Have you explained your supporting details and do they relate back to your argument? Are your sentences clear? Once your argument is sound, it is easy to revise the rest of your paper.

5. Check your sentence structure.

Are your sentences varied lengths and structures? Have you fixed run-ons, comma splices, and fragments? Are your modifiers clear? Have you checked your wordiness and removed unnecessary words such as *like*, *really*, or *a lot*?

6. Check your grammar use is appropriate.

Are your verbs in the right tense form (past vs. present)? Are your pronouns clear and used correctly? Are your quotes cited and quoted correctly? Is your spelling correct? Have you used commas, semi colons, dashes, and quotation marks properly?