

STEPS FOR REVISING AND EDITING

There is a difference between **revising** and **editing**: **in revision, you deal with the underlying meaning and structure of your essay; in editing you deal with its surface.**

ALWAYS revise and edit your paper. Start early so you will have the time you need. Read your paper out loud to yourself. NEVER turn in a first draft if you can help it.

REVISION CHECKLIST: After your first draft is complete, begin to revise. Examine the following things:

1. **Purpose:** what is the essay's purpose? Does that purpose conform to the assignment? Is it consistent throughout the assignment?
2. **Thesis:** what is the thesis of the essay? Is it clear? Does the paper match the thesis?
3. **Structure:** What are the main points of the paper? How well does each support the thesis?
4. **Development:** How well do details, examples, and other evidence support your main point?
5. **Tone:** What is the tone of the paper? Is it appropriate for purpose, topic, and audience?
6. **Unity:** What does each sentence and paragraph contribute to the thesis? Are there digressions that need to be cut?
7. **Coherence:** How clearly and smoothly does the paper "flow?"
8. **Title, introduction, and conclusion:** How accurate and interesting is the title? How well does the introduction engage the reader's attention? How effective is the conclusion in providing a sense of completion?

CHECKLIST FOR EDITING: After you have revised your paper, begin the editing process. Look at the following things:

1. **Clarity:** How well do words and sentences convey their intended meanings? Check for clear modifiers, vague pronoun references, and complete sentences.
2. **Effectiveness:** How well do the words and sentences engage and direct the reader's attention? Is the writing choppy? Check especially for smooth transitions, a consistent, appropriate tone, and appropriate word usage.
3. **Correctness:** How little or how much do surface errors interfere with clarity and effectiveness? Check especially for spelling errors and typographical errors, subject/verb agreement, consistency with verb tenses, comma usage, and possessives.

IF YOU ARE UNSURE WHAT THESE TERMS MEAN, LOOK THEM UP IN LITTLE, BROWN OR ANY ENGLISH HANDBOOK.