

# REVISING VS. PROOFREADING

- Students often use the terms “revision” and “proofreading” interchangeably, but they are actually different processes. Revision deals with organization, audience, and focus. Proofreading deals with surface errors.

## Revision deals with...

- Reading for the big picture and trying to see your writing as readers see it.
- Recognizing your paper’s organization (or lack of it): is your information presented logically? Do you jump from one idea to the next or does it seem to flow naturally? Do you use subheadings?
- Sharpening your introduction and thesis statement: is it clear from your introduction what your paper will cover and/or argue? Do you follow through on what you promise in the intro and with your thesis?
- Adding details and examples: did you fully explain your main points? Are your reasons and examples adequate to support your thesis?
- Eliminating unnecessary details: did you include anything that might throw the reader off or lead to confusion? Did you repeat yourself? Keep in mind that re-stating a key point is effective.

## Proofreading deals with...

- Reading s-l-o-w-l-y. Donotrussthroughit.
- Rewriting awkward or unclear sentences
- Correcting punctuation, grammatical, and mechanical errors
- Correcting spelling mistakes
- Formatting citations, cover sheets, footnotes, and references correctly

## Remember...

- Revision usually occurs after you finish a rough draft of your paper. You may go through several rounds of revision before you’re ready to proofread.
- Revision should be done **prior to** proofreading. Revision tackles the biggest issues first. If you proofread first, you may spend time polishing text that won’t make it into the final paper.
- Students are sometimes tempted to fix grammar or spelling problems without considering issues like order, transitions, and introductions/conclusions. Remember: proofreading is just **one part** of the overall revision process.
- It’s not a good idea to rely on spell-check or grammar-check. They make mistakes two.

# REVISING AND PROOFREADING

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## **Guidelines for Proofreading**

For most people, learning grammar is the first step in learning to write. Rules of grammar are the foundation for clear sentences, and clear sentences lead directly to good writing.

## **Using Transitions**

Transition words or phrases are needed in writing to guide the reader through your discussion or argument.

## **Dealing with Organizational Problems**

In your writing you must make your ideas not only clear for yourself, but also for your readers. Being organized is a matter of balancing your ideas and how you convey them to your readers.

## **Guidelines for Revising**

Revision can be thought of as the process of reviewing your rough draft and making changes that bring it to a final draft.

# GUIDELINES FOR REVISING

## • Revision is...

- The process of reviewing your rough draft and making changes to organization and development that move it closer to a final draft.
- A process that checks for readability, logic, and clarity.
- A process that includes evaluating, adding, deleting, replacing, and moving items in your paper.
- A process that helps you see your paper as readers do.

## What steps should I take to revise my paper?

5. Wait at least an hour after writing your paper before you begin revising it. Wait even longer, up to a day or two, if you can.
6. Think BIG. At this stage, do not worry about minor errors. Focus on the overall organization and flow of your paper.
7. As you read, keep asking yourself, "Will this make sense to readers? What does this say (is it clear?), and what does it do (to help readers follow it)?"
8. Ask yourself, "Does what I wrote meet the requirements of the assignment I was given?"
9. If you have a thesis statement, identify it. Ask yourself, "Does my thesis and the sentences that follow it tell my readers what my paper is about (topic), how I will talk about this topic (focus), and why I am writing about it (purpose)?"