

## Proofreading

Written communication is a big part of online learning. Much of the verbal questioning and discussion you would normally experience in a face to face classroom now shifts online in a variety of written formats. As a result, a good portion of your online coursework will be to take your thoughts and ideas and transfer them into a discussion forum, short answer, project, or essay.



While it is easy and recommended to use the built-in tools in a word processing program to catch spelling and grammar errors, you should not rely solely on technology tools to identify and fix all mistakes.

Proofreading is a strategy that helps you examine your text carefully. Proofreading doesn't have to take a lot of time and can be done effectively with a few simple tips.

1. *Increase the font size or print out your response.* Increasing the font size on your word processor can help you focus on the text while a printout allows you to mark up your document with a highlighter or pen/pencil.
2. *Read out loud your document.* Reading out loud forces you to say each word which increases the chances of you locating a grammar or spelling error.
3. *If time permits, have someone else proofread your paper.* Peer review is a great way to get another fresh set of eyes on your document.
4. *Proofread your response over the course of several hours or days.* After writing your response, take a break and then come back to it. The breaks will help you refocus.
5. Use your program's spelling and grammar checker as your final check after proofreading.

Finally, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's [Writing Center](#) has two additional proofreading strategies that are worth noting:

1. Separate the text into individual sentences. Simply press the return key after every period so that every line begins a new sentence. Then read each sentence separately, looking for grammar, punctuation, or spelling errors.
2. Highlight or circle every punctuation mark. This technique forces you to look at each one while asking yourself if the punctuation mark is correct.