

## Proofreading Suggestions for Students

1. For initial drafts, concentrate only on getting your ideas down on paper.
2. While writing an early draft, put a question mark in the margin if you can't think of a word or remember the correct spelling, then check it later so you don't interrupt your flow of ideas. If you don't know a word, you can also write it in your first language (if you are bilingual) and look it up later.
3. Use a good English-English dictionary to check the meaning or spelling of any problematic words.
4. Take a break between writing your paper and proofreading your paper. After you have finished a draft, put it away at least overnight; with some time away from your paper, you will be able to approach proofreading with a fresh mind and attitude.
5. Before you begin to proofread your draft, check your previous papers to see what kinds of errors your teacher pointed out.
6. If you are not sure what to focus on when proofreading, ask your teacher to help you establish some clear priorities.
7. Make a grammar review card for your common errors. For example, if you tend to write a lot of sentence fragments, make a review card that includes a sentence with a fragment and the corrected version. Also, describe in your own words what a sentence fragment is and the best way to correct this error. Keep your stack of grammar review cards by your side as you proofread so you can easily refer to them when necessary.
8. After you have decided upon your proofreading priorities, focus on only one error at a time so you won't get distracted or overwhelmed.
9. Read your paper several times, once for each error type, then take a short break after finishing each error to reward and refresh yourself.