

How to proofread your English

(A checklist for non-native speakers)

Ask yourself these questions whenever you check your writing:

- Do your subject and verb agree?** A good way to check this is to circle the subjects and underline the verbs in each sentence. For example, if the subject is *she* (3rd person), the verb needs an -s at the end to match it. This can get tricky if you have multiple subjects or use infinitives, so check carefully. If you have two independent clauses, check both!
- Are you using the correct verb tense?** Remember that the tense you're writing in should be consistent throughout. If your story is about something that happened yesterday, the verbs should be in past tense. Typically, you want the tense to be the same within a sentence or paragraph. If you change tense midway, be sure you have a good reason.
- Are you using the correct word form?** Many English words can be used in different forms. If you are using a word like an adjective (beautiful), be sure it is the correct adjective form - not an adverb (beautifully) or noun form (beauty).
- Do you have any run-on sentences?** A run-on sentence is one that has too many independent clauses without the right connecting words (so, because, and) to bring them together. Example: *I like teaching English it is really interesting.*
- Do you have any sentence fragments?** A sentence fragment is missing a necessary part, like the subject or the verb. Example: *I really English because it's so interesting.* (There should be a verb before *English*.)
- Is your punctuation correct?** Check that you have periods, question marks, commas, and apostrophes in the correct places to show the end of a sentence, different thought groups, and possession in your writing.
- Is your capitalization correct?** Check that you use a capital letter to start a new sentence and for proper nouns.
- Is your spelling correct?** Always use a spell-checker on everything you write!

If this list isn't enough, here are two more resources to help you write English more effectively.

Use Grammarly. If you want to save time, I highly recommend the [Grammarly](#) app. It will check all your writing in any application on your computer and gives advice based on frequent mistakes to help you improve.

Get professional help. If you're writing for a client or your website, get an English coach to look over your work before you share it with your audience. Getting professional feedback can help you and your work to shine!

For more free tips on using English to share your creativity, [join The Studio](#) and learn with us!

