

Standards in Proofreading and Tips on Self-editing

Editing your work can be expensive and most authors don't have unlimited budgets!

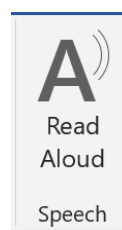
According to the Society for Editors and Proofreaders,

“An experienced professional proofreader, **reading a copy-edited typescript**, should be able to spot and deal appropriately with at least 80% of all errors but at least 90% of typos – other things being equal.”

In that case, it's possible or even likely that 10% of errors remain in your work after you have commissioned a proofreader. If there were 500 errors in your work to start with, there could be 50 left, but if there were only 100 in the copy-edited work you gave to the proofreader, you might just be left with 10. The more eyes that see the copy, the less mistakes should remain.

Here are some tips for finding the errors in your work before you send it off to your proofreader:

- Change the font size to make your copy larger
- Read it aloud yourself. Or, in Word, select Review, then Read Aloud. In Vellum, use the 'text to speech' feature in the Edit menu
- Use Word's spell check
- Print it out on hard copy and read that
- Carry out several checks at intervals. You will detect more errors if you let time elapse between writing and re-reading your copy



Don't forget that proofreading should be the final step before formatting. Proofreading is not about the craft of writing.