Proofreading Strategies

Adopted from <u>Purdue University On-Line Writing Lab</u>

No matter how many times you read through a "finished" paper, you're likely to miss many of your most frequent errors. The following guide will help you proofread more effectively:

-by giving you some useful general strategies for proofreading well

-by giving you strategies which personalize proofreading so you can identify errors you typically make (You don't need to check for everything. It's more efficient to know your typical problem areas and make several passes through the paper for them.)

-by giving you specific strategies for finding and correcting these errors

GENERAL STRATEGIES

Begin by taking a break. Allow yourself some time between writing and proofing. Even a five-minute break is productive because it will help get some distance from what you have written. The goal is to return with a fresh eye and mind.

The following strategies will help you s-l-o-w-d-o-w-n as you read through a paper and will therefore help you catch mistakes that you might otherwise overlook. As you use these strategies, remember to work slowly. If you read at a normal pace, you won't give your eyes sufficient time to spot errors.

READING ALOUD
Reading a paper aloud encourages you to read every little word.

READING WITH A "COVER"
Sliding a blank sheet of paper down the page as you read encourages you to make a detailed, line-by-line review of the paper.

ROLE-PLAYING
Playing the role of the reader encourages you to see the paper as your audience might.