



Revision and Editing Strategies

Revision vs. Editing: Know the Difference

Revision	Editing
• Happens <u>first</u> • Focuses on ideas, argument, organization, and evidence • Answers: “Does this paper say what I want it to say?”	• Happens <u>after revision</u> • Focuses on grammar, punctuation, style, and formatting • Answers: “Is this paper clear and correct?”

Part I: Revision Strategies

1. Revisit the Assignment

Before revising, ask yourself:

- Have I answered the prompt completely?
- Am I addressing the required texts, sources, or themes?
- Have I met length and formatting requirements?

2. Strengthen Your Thesis

Remember that a strong thesis:

- Makes a claim
- Is specific
- Can be debated
- Guides the paper

3. Check Overall Organization

Are these clear and ordered properly:

- Introduction
- Thesis
- Topic sentences
- Conclusion

Ask yourself: Does the argument progress logically? Does each paragraph contribute to the thesis? Are any paragraphs repetitive or off-topic?

Tip: After drafting, check for ***repetition, missing steps in reasoning, and/or tangents***.

4. Improve Paragraph Structure

A strong analytical paragraph often includes:

- Topic sentence
- Context
- Evidence
- Analysis
- Connection to thesis

5. Develop Analysis and Evaluate Source Use

To develop analysis, use the “So What?” Test for every quotation or example.

- Why is it significant?
- How does it support my argument

Common Mistake: *Too much summary, not enough analysis.*

To evaluate source use, ask yourself:

- Have I integrated quotations smoothly?
- Have I cited sources correctly?
- Do I explain every quotation?

Part II: Editing Strategies

1. Read Aloud

Reading aloud helps identify:

- Awkward phrasing
- Missing words
- Repetition
- Run-on sentences

Tip: *If a sentence is difficult to read aloud, revise it.*

2. Check for Clarity

Ask yourself:

- Is the subject of each sentence clear?
- Can a reader follow my reasoning?
- Are key terms defined?

Replace Vague Language: Instead of words like: “Things,” “stuff,” “aspects,” or “interesting,” **use precise** language.

3. Eliminate Wordiness

Look for unnecessary phrases such as:

- Due to the fact that
- In order to
- It is important to note that

4. Check Sentence Variety

- Mix short sentences with medium-length sentences and complex analytical sentences.
- Avoid multiple sentences that begin the same way.

5. Proofread for Common Errors

Grammar: Subject–verb agreement; pronoun consistency; verb tense consistency

Punctuation: Comma splices; run-on sentences; missing commas after introductory phrases

Mechanics: Spelling; capitalization; formatting

Revision & Editing Checklist

Before you begin your final draft, use the revision and editing checklist below to evaluate your paper carefully.

In academic writing, the strongest papers do more than describe texts—they make an argument about them.

- During **revision**, focus on strengthening your claim, developing your analysis, and showing readers why your interpretation matters.
- Use the **editing** part of the checklist to help you catch common grammatical errors, improve the clarity and effectiveness of your writing, and ensure your paper meets the assignment's expectations before you submit it.

Revision (Big Picture)	Editing (Final Polish)
Assignment	Clarity
• Fully responds to the assignment prompt • Addresses all required texts/sources • Meets length and formatting requirements	• Ideas are clear and easy to follow • Key terms are defined when needed • Avoids vague words (things, stuff, interesting, etc.)
Thesis & Argument	Style
• Thesis is clear, specific, and arguable • Argument goes beyond summary • Analysis explains <i>why</i> evidence matters ("So What?") • Every paragraph supports the thesis	• Language is concise and precise • Unnecessary words or phrases removed • Sentence beginnings and lengths vary • Academic tone is appropriate

Organization	Grammar & Mechanics
• Introduction leads to the thesis • Ideas progress logically • Topic sentences guide each paragraph • Conclusion reinforces the argument	• Subject–verb agreement • Consistent verb tense and pronouns • Correct punctuation and commas • Spelling and capitalization checked
Evidence & Development	Documentation
• Evidence is relevant and integrated smoothly • Every quotation or example is explained • Sources are cited appropriately • Paragraphs include context, evidence, analysis, and connection to the thesis	• Quotations formatted correctly • In-text citations are correct • Works Cited/References page is complete • Formatting follows assignment guidelines (MLA/APA/Chicago, fonts, spacing, margins)