

Proofreader Cheat Sheet

How can I be a good proofreader?

Read like you normally would, simply highlight any issues you encounter. Email those highlights to the author.

What do you mean when you say highlight an issue?

Highlight the entire sentence (or at least 8 words) and add a two-letter comment with the highlight.

eBook – Highlighting the whole sentence or at least 8 words guarantees the author can find the location.

Paper – A single highlighted word can be easily missed when flipping through a stack of paper.

Do I have to use the two-letter comments?

No, you may spell it all out. The two-letter comments help you more quickly get back to reading.

What are the two-letter comments?

| | |
|-----------|--|
| TP | Typo |
| MW | Missing word. You don't usually need to say which one. It is usually obvious. |
| HM | Homonym – You wrote the wrong version of a word such as there, their, they're. |
| SS | Sentence structure. Or "sentence sucks" and needs to be rewritten. |
| PU | Punctuation. |
| IB | I'm bored. Highlight the sentence you are one when you realize you're bored. |
| WS | Who is speaking? Use this in dialog where the speaker is not obvious. |
| PC | Politically Correct - You may offend someone with this. Please explain. |
| IC | I'm confused with the story line. Describe. If a single sentence is confusing, use SS instead. |
| PP | Plot Problem. Describe what you think the problem is. |
| SI | Scene Issue – there is an issue with a scene. |
| OI | Other issue. Something else is wrong. Please describe. |

* Yes, you can type them either upper- or lowercase.

What are some examples of how to highlight?

Example 1 – Missing word

- Highlighted: He tried pull away but couldn't.
- Comment: mw

Example 2 – A scene issue

- Highlight: Alexis pulled out of the parking lot.
- Comment: SI – She already drove out of the parking lot a few paragraphs ago.

Example 3 – Multiple issues such as both a typo and use of an incorrect homonym

- Highlight: shirt that flared in the front, exposing naval.
- Comment: MW HM – exposing her navel

What else can I do to help as a proofreader?

Read every page. Front matter, including the Title page, Copyright, Dedication, Other works, Table of contents, etc. The back matter, including Thank You page, Acknowledgments, About the Author, Ads, etc.

What is the best way I can help the author?

- ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ Write an honest review on the books page on Amazon. Write at least two paragraphs. An author you are reading for may ask for you to post your review to other sites.