

HOLLOWAY HOUSE

EDITING & PROOFREADING

Editing Services—What's right for you?

You will often hear “proofreading and editing” referred to together, and sometimes they come as a pair. But while you can proofread without editing, you cannot edit without proofreading—these two are inextricably linked. So, when buying either of these services, it's important to know what you are getting.

Below is a description of services that are typically offered by editors, but admittedly I don't delineate. When I work, I fix what I think needs fixing. If you asked for a proofread only... truth be told, that's impossible. So at a minimum, each project is a “light edit/proofread.” There's always something to fix or point out for the author's consideration, so my process is more about time. And I estimate that with a sample edit.

Editorial proofreading

For ease of reference, I will always refer to this service simply as “proofreading.” Long before the digital age, the original task of proofreading was marking typeset copy word-for-word against a manuscript, identifying deviations for correction, and querying editorial errors. Today, most people who are asking for something to be proofread are really asking for editorial proofreading. It is more extensive than a simple comparison to the original, and the delineation between proofreading and editing is often different, editor to editor. At Holloway House, proofreading includes the following:

- Correcting errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
- Ensuring consistency in spelling, hyphenation, numerals, fonts, and capitalization.
- Adding punctuation when it improves readability and eliminates confusion.
- Correcting incorrect word usage (such as the use of imminent for eminent).

Copy editing

Copy editing adds a level of judgment to the process. After establishing some basic guidelines of the client's own style and/or any style guides to be followed (such as the Chicago Manual of Style), the editing will include:

- Editorial proofreading.
- Improving the flow of text rather than simply ensuring correct usage and grammar.
- Identifying problematic or incorrect vocabulary/word choice and offering alternatives.
- Watching for over-used vocabulary, offering alternatives that improve the message while retaining the style of speech.
- Flagging inappropriate figures of speech.
- Enforcing consistent style and tone in a multi-author manuscript.
- Changing passive voice to active voice, if requested.
- Flagging ambiguous or incorrect statements.
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Substantive editing

The key differences between copy editing and substantive editing are the levels of judgment and rewriting involved. In substantive editing, the editor's services can include any or all of the following:

- Editorial proofreading.
- Copy editing.
- Tracking the continuity of plot, timeline, setting, and character traits, and querying the discrepancies, in fiction manuscripts.
- Smoothing transitions and moving sentences to improve readability.
- Re-writing sentences, moving paragraphs, and/or substituting alternative word choices, rather than simply flagging problems.
- Eliminating wordiness, triteness, and inappropriate jargon.
- Establishing a consistent tone, and focus as specified by the author/client or publisher.

Sample Edit

For prospective clients, be they first-time authors or experienced authors, I perform a sample edit, which gives me the opportunity to determine the amount of work and time needed while also giving the client a chance to see the sorts of things I address. When I return the sample edit, I provide a clear scope of services, project cost, and schedule.

Pricing

“Not to exceed” or hourly

My typical approach for fiction authors is a “not to exceed” price, as described below.

For non-fiction work, unless the scope can be very clearly constrained, I work on an hourly basis, especially if there are citations that need verification, endnotes to be formatted and verified, etc. I can also work on an hourly basis if someone has a quick project, be that promotional copy for launching a book, web content, etc.

When I give an estimate, it is intended as a “not to exceed” price, and it will change for only two reasons. Either the project took less time than estimated, in which case I pass that savings back to the client, charging only actuals, or I encountered unanticipated issues that required more attention than originally thought. I address such issues immediately during the edit and discuss any potential for additional time or cost.

Payment

I invoice clients upon completion of a project and, unless otherwise agreed upon, request payment within 30 days. Some of my clients prefer paying in installments, and I'm open to such arrangements. I accept checks, but also have PayPal, Venmo, and Zelle.

I hope the information above meets with your needs and expectations and prompts you to contact me!

