

General Proofreading guide

1. Spelling
2. Formatting
 - titles (check for character/word count)
 - paragraph indents
 - fonts (document, figure legends, figures)
 - margins
 - tables
 - spacing between paragraphs
(pts. before and after: Format>Paragraph>Spacing)
3. Methods
 - SI units for time: h, min, s (no periods-check journal, or make consistent)
 - XX °C (1 space between number and degrees Celsius)
 - Company names (check websites for correct spelling, capitalization)
 - Greek symbols: μ (mc in medical/clinical journals), β , γ , θ , etc., unless spelled out for searching purposes (TNF-alpha, interferon-gamma, etc.)
4. Figure references in text, make sure they agree with figure
5. References-make sure the title seems appropriate to text
6. References-check that all are in the same format, same spacing, italicization, period at end.
7. Figure legends-define all abbreviations used in figure
8. Figures-check labels are consistent with figure legends and text
9. Placement of figures, legends, and text
10. Acknowledgements

Spacing, punctuation, and other things to check

1. Spacing between sentences (Use “show nonprinting characters button, ¶¶): 1 space (I’ve checked on multiple typography sites—most fonts automatically adjust spacing, so two spaces seem to be no longer necessary. Be consistent throughout.)
Use the “Edit>Find>Advanced Find and Replace” to replace all double spaces with single spaces.
2. Spacing after colons, semicolons: 1 space
3. Commas after transitional phrases and setting off dependent clauses:
 - As a result,
 - However,
 - Therefore,
 - In summary,
 - To investigate, examine, etc...,
 - In agreement with previous results,
 - ...X caused Y, suggesting/implying that...
4. Hyphens in adjective-noun expressions:
 - wild-type channels vs. the channels were wild type
 - voltage-gated calcium channels vs. the channels are voltage gated
5. Acronyms
 - Define acronyms at first usage
 - Use acronyms consistently throughout
6. Consistency with serial commas (X, Y, and Z versus X, Y and Z)
[The former tends to be less ambiguous: *To my parents, Ayn Rand, and God* (three separate entities) vs. *To my parents, Ayn Rand and God* (are the parents Ayn Rand and God?)]
7. Consistency of Fig, Fig. (with period), or Figure (check journal)
8. “On the other hand” is only correct when preceded by “on the one hand”
9. Consistency with numbered lists (1, 2 and 3; a, b and c; ii, ii and iii, etc.)
10. “As, since, because” (according to the Council of Science Editors, *Scientific Style and Format Manual*)
 - as: only use in temporal sense (“As we were completing the paper, ...”)
 - since: usually temporal sense; its use in a causal sense may be ambiguous (“Since the initial finding was validated, the larger question has been largely examined.”)
 - because: causal relation
11. Gene names: *italics*; protein names: no italics (unless standard for field is different)

12. Italicize genus species: *Homo sapiens* or *H. sapiens*