

Revising, Part 1: Revising and Edits General Information

Purpose: This group of activities will lead you through the final steps in the writing process: the editing and revision steps. Although these activities are designed for and address a research paper that is nearing completion of the drafting stage, it is worth noting that many writers choose to undergo editing and revision even when while in their drafting stage.

Consider this: What's the difference between editing and revising? Editing tends to refer to corrections made to the sentence level grammatical, sentence structural, and mechanical aspects of writing. It can also refer to formatting corrections. Revisions, on the other hand, deal with changes to the paper overall, particularly about the organizational structure, arguments, evidence, focus, and voice of the work. Rather than thinking of revisions as “corrections,” it may be wiser to think of these changes as strengthening, expanding on, and clarifying ideas within the paper.

So which goes first?

For this kind of paper, as well as all manuscripts, we recommend starting with revision's larger concerns and then moving to final edits afterward. Why? Firstly, because during the revision process, entire sections might be added, removed, or significantly changes. Paragraphs, pages, or sections might shift, making it important to add in or take out transitional sentences or sources that no longer make sense, causing you to redo grammatical and mechanical changes. Secondly, your instructor may require significant additions to or changes to your paper before or after your final submission. These revisions may undo your careful sentence and grammar changes. However, this is not to say that you should do *no* editing before providing your paper to an instructor for feedback; we simply suggest that you be fully aware of the process that might occur.

Pre-Revising

Part 0: “PREvision” – Determine all of your points and make sure that they're in the order that you want. Consider your work as a whole. Imagine that you are explaining it to three people, and then jot down the following bits of information:

	Your Instructor	An Expert in Your Field Who You Met Today	A close relation who knows nothing about your work.
What is the main topic of my work?			
What is the secondary topic of my work?			
What is my main argument/hypothesis?			

What researchers and sources do I mainly use to make my arguments?			
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