



HOT TREE
EDITING

PRE-EDIT CHECKLIST

Following these few steps may save you time and money. Not only that, but by ensuring your manuscript is as error free as you can make it means your editor can focus on those trickier issues and errors.

Spell check

Use your integrated spell check to find and correct all simple errors. HTE use M-W (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/>) for US English and OED (<https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/>) for UK/AU/CA English.

Dictionary

Use the dictionary to verify word meanings. This especially means when writing, drafting, and proofing, do not assume a thesaurus suggestion is correct. M-W and OED are perfect online reference points. They're also free.

Grammar Check

Use grammar check to flag grammar and usage issues. **Warning!** Grammar check is not always right, so don't simply change all those squiggly green lines. HTE consult a style guide when necessary — *Chicago Manual of Style*.

Punctuation

Have you punctuated correctly? If you are unsure of any item, look it up in a style guide.

Overused Words, Phrases, and Repetition

Use the Find function to search for common of overused words and phrases, and substitute appropriate synonyms.

Look out for these words. Can you replace them with direct phrases and delete completely?

- got/get
- like
- there is/are/was/were
- it is/was
- very
- started
- began
- really
- just
- heard/hear
- saw/see



- felt
- maybe
- slightly
- a bit
- that

Passive Voice

Can you eliminate passive voice? Rather than, "The call was made by Samantha," write "Samantha made the call."

Filler

Remove inessential detail and/or scenes that do not push your plot forward. Ask yourself the following three questions:

1. If deleted, will the reader still be able to follow the story? If yes, you have filler!
2. What is different by the end of this scene? If nothing, it's filler!
3. What/Who does this scene affect? If nothing/nobody, you've guessed it, it's filler.

Read,

Read,

And Read Again!

Read your manuscript entirely through. Consider, is your plot clear and have you tied up all loose ends? By carrying out your own read-through, you can make sure you haven't left out key plot developments or other essential information. A couple of great ways for a final read-through include reading it aloud or listening to your manuscript being read to you via a text-to-speech app.

You're now ready to send in your manuscript for editing.
Congratulations!

