



**PROOF
READING**

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PROOF READING

The term 'proof' means to prove that the copy or document is correct. Read the document in a critical and detached manner, avoid becoming interested in the subject matter. Use a green pen which clearly shows against the text and illustrations. Give special care to words set in capitals, since these are more difficult to read than lowercase.

Draw an imaginary line through the centre of the page and place corrections either side of the line. All readers' marks are symbols - no words are used. The symbols conform to the British Standard 5261 and are internationally recognised in Europe. All symbols occur in pairs, one is placed in the margin and the other in the text. The most common symbol used in the text is a caret mark (^), this indicates omission of a character.

A copyholder maybe used for large amounts of copy. The reader will have the copy read to him by a copyholder. Today this has been superseded by using a tape-recorder. After a proof has been read, it should be signed and dated by the reader. If the words 'show revise' are added this indicates that another proof must be submitted to the reader after the corrections have been made. It is normally written when there is a large amount of corrections or if the copy is of a technical nature.

Give the proof a minimum of 2 readings:

- (1) To check all obvious errors:
 - Wrong spelling
 - Keyboard errors
 - Deviations from the house style
- (2) For the purpose of ensuring proof and copy agree:
 - Typeface
 - Point size
 - Line length

Do Not Rely On The Spell Checker

Using the spell checker in a DTP or word processing application may not be reliable for 2 reasons:

- Most spell checkers use an American dictionary to check words. It does not recognise 'colour' instead it changes it to 'color'.
- It only checks what has been typed. If there is a word missing or if the word 'is' has been typed instead of 'if' it will not recognise the mistake.

A spell checker should be used as a first task to see if there are any obvious spelling mistakes. Some spell checkers will also highlight errors in the use of grammar. This can be useful to see if a sentence or phrase can be improved.

It is far better to have the page read by another person or the customer and also have the page checked with the customer's copy.

QUESTIONS ON PROOF READING

- (1) What does the term 'proof' mean?
- (2) What colour pen is used for marking errors?
- (3) What words are difficult to read?
- (4) Proof Readers' Marks are symbols which occur in pairs, where are they placed?
- (5) After a proof has been read what should be done next?
- (6) Why would a proof reader write 'show revise' on a proof?
- (7) How many times should a proof be read before it is signed and dated?
- (8) Why should you not rely on a spell checker?