

Checklist: Self-Editing & Proofreading

Use this checklist to revise your manuscript step by step. It covers two areas: Self-Editing (Content & Style) and Proofreading (Language & Form). Tick Yes or No for each question.

Cluster A: Self-Editing – Scenes & Style

Question	Yes []	No []
Is every scene clearly planned and does it have a purpose?		
Do you use all senses to bring scenes to life?		
Have you applied show, don't tell?		
Is there enough conflict and tension?		
Does every scene move the main plot forward?		
Do you surprise your readers with unexpected twists?		
Are your dialogues vivid and precise?		
Have you cut unnecessary details?		
Do your characters sometimes fail, making them more realistic?		
Does the story stay dynamic rather than static?		

Cluster B: Proofreading – Language & Polish

Question	Yes []	No []
Have you eliminated filler words and weakening expressions?		
Are paragraphs and indentations clearly structured?		
Have you checked spelling according to the correct standard?		
Does the text read smoothly without awkward passages?		
Did you take breaks during proofreading to gain a fresh perspective?		
Did you read the text aloud or have it read to you?		
Did you use different fonts/layouts to avoid blind spots?		
Do you read regularly to strengthen your language skills?		

Evaluation

- Many Yes in Self-Editing → Your text is solid in terms of content and style.
- Many Yes in Proofreading → Your text is formally clean and reader-friendly.
- Many No → Revise further before sending your manuscript to professional editing.

How do I find the right balance in revision?

Ask yourself: Does every scene drive the plot forward? Is your text clear and easy to read? Have you gained enough distance to review it objectively? That's how you create the foundation for a strong manuscript. Further tips can be found in the related magazine article:

> [Checklist: Self-Editing & Proofreading](#)

