

Editing Checklist

First, line edit.

- Mark the subject noun and verb in every sentence. Try not to get confused with nouns that are in prepositional phrases or clauses.
 - If a sentence is missing a N and V, then it is a fragment sentence. If a sentence has extraneous Ns and Vs, then it is a run on sentence.
- Make sure each N and V match (NV disagreement problem).
- Go back to the Ns and Vs. How far apart are they? Can you move phrases or clauses around so N and V are closer together?
- Find every “it”. Does the “it” refer to some noun or thing at the beginning of the sentence, or in the previous sentence? If not, delete it.
- Now check it’s vs. it is vs. its (it’s = it is)
- Find words “I” and “we.” Reword.
- Check significant figures in tables and text. Too many? How about leading zeros?
- Find “There is…” and “There are…” sentences. Delete “there is…” for fewer words.
- Find informal or slang phrases. “solved for” “inputted”

Second, edit for sentence, paragraph, and section structure and content.

- Find each topic sentence. Move it to the top of the paragraph and rearrange other sentences if necessary.
- Check tables and figures. Do table titles and figure captions state the purpose of the graphic?
- Check column and row headings, axes, and units. Is the graphic comparing the right things?
- Check bulleted and numbered lists. Is their sentence structure similar?
- In long sentences, is the structure of phrases and clauses similar?
- Do “mile markers” or “road signs” tell reader what is coming next? Ex: “The four reasons for low pressure are…” or “Pressure is low, however, …”
- Is any information not in its proper section? Is new information presented in the Conclusion? If so, edit.
- Select all and do a word count. Subtract 10% to 20% for reduced word count. Now go over report again and try to edit all extraneous words.