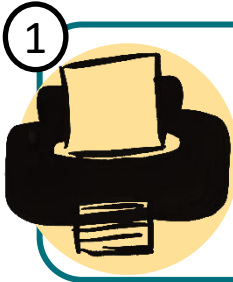# Proofreading tips

It can be difficult to see the mistakes in our own work – we are familiar with it and know what's coming next.   Try to disrupt that familiarity.

1 **Print it out** – perhaps in a different typeface.

2 **Recognise your faults**

Get to know the errors you tend to make. Look over your feedback on previous work and make a personal checklist to use.

3 **Back to front**

Read your writing backwards from the last sentence to the first - a sentence at a time. This makes you look at each sentence more closely.

4 **Leave a gap**

A few days, or even a few hours, after you last read it will make it less familiar.

5 **Listen to your writing**

Use speech-to-text software.

Sometimes we hear mistakes we miss when we read the text. Good for checking flow and punctuation.

- Read portions out loud to yourself.
- Ask a friend to read parts of the text to you,

6 **Change location**

Proofreading in a different and less familiar space can make you see the text anew.

7 **Use a ruler**

Force yourself to read line by line to guide your proofreading.

8 **Use all of the tools**

Switch on your software's built-in **spelling & grammar settings** – you might not agree, but it will make you look again at what you have written.

a b c ✓

- Editor settings
- Proofing language setting – English (U.K.)
- Add specialist words to the dictionary

You can't rely on a spell checker to pick up everything; e.g. it won't identify an incorrect choice of words that sound alike (bare and bear).