

Types of Editing

Many writers hire professional editors to go over their manuscripts before submission. This is especially true during the preliminary stages of a writer's career; every grammatical error and spelling mistake can mean a rejection letter. What you might not know, however, is that there are three basic types of editing, and you'll need to determine which of those your manuscript needs.

Proofreading

The first type of editing for which you might hire an editor is proofreading. This is the simplest form of editing and is also usually the cheapest. Proofreading is for writers who don't need help with sentence structure or the content of the book itself, but need someone to simply go over the text for basic grammatical and spelling errors.

It usually takes an editor about two weeks to proofread a full-length manuscript. The purpose of proofreading is to have someone who has never read your manuscript go over each word for errors that might have escaped your attention, which will happen at least a few times in a full-length manuscript.

Line Editing

The second type of editing most editors offer is line editing, which is a little more detailed than proofreading. If your manuscript has plot holes, limited characterization, factual errors or syntactical problems, line editing is probably more your style.

The purpose of line editing is to tie together loose ends in your manuscript and to make sure that the story flows properly. For non-fiction, line editing will catch factual errors and will also help to separate chapters and paragraphs so that they make more sense.

Substantive Editing

The final service most editors offer is substantive editing, which is even more detailed than line editing. A substantive edit involves the rearranging, deleting, adding and rewording of entire pages and chapters. Some editors call substantive editing a "Ghostwriting/Editing Blend".