

## WHAT NOT TO DO: REVISING

Sure, looking at what to do is helpful, but sometimes looking at what not to do can be of even greater help. So, what shouldn't you do when revising a paper?

In general, while revising:

- Don't wait until the end. Revising should happen throughout the writing process.
- Don't mistake revising for proofreading; revising is much bigger.
- Don't focus on small picture concerns, such as grammar, spelling, or sentence level mistakes. Focus on larger picture concerns, such as the coherence of your argument, organization, and the strength of your thesis.
- Don't procrastinate on revision; major things may change, and you don't want to make major changes when doing final editing.
- *Don't be afraid to omit portions that are irrelevant to the main point*, even if they are well-written or interesting portions.
- Don't forget to reread the assignment prompt. You may have missed something.
- Don't be the only person who looks at it. Another set of eyes helps.
- Don't insert all of the citations at the end. You will miss some.
- Don't revise your vocabulary simply to sound smarter. Revise your vocabulary for simplicity and clarity.
- Avoid only revising immediately after finishing; having a gap between writing and revising gives you a fresh perspective.
- Don't assume that you're mostly done and don't need to add more body paragraphs.
- Don't be afraid to change your thesis.
- *Don't be afraid to change the organization.*
- Avoid pointless revisions. If you spend an hour revising the style of a paragraph that later gets entirely removed, you will regret it.
- Don't forget to ensure proper citation and documentation have been given.
- Don't forget to ensure the paper is properly formatted. If formatted incorrectly, you will lose credibility as an author.
- Avoid revising once and calling it a day. Multiple revisions will shape better writing.
- Don't be afraid to take it to the Rhetoric Center.