

**Here's a handy cheat sheet of things you might want to keep in mind while editing:**

Cut your adverbs and make your verbs stronger.

Rework any clichés.

Eliminate filler words and phrases, such as “currently”, “that”, and “in order to.”

Refer to people as “who” not “that.”

Cut repetitious words and/or phrases.

Divide long, hard-to-read sentences into two or more shorter sentences.

Fix any inadvertent double negatives in long, complex sentences.

Hyphenate modifying words.

Minimize use of “very” and “really.”

Beware of overusing passive voice/passive verb structures (is/was/-ing verbs).

Double check the definitions of any words you're not 100% sure you know.

Determine and weed out any words, actions, or punctuation that you personally overuse as filler, such as characters smiling or taking deep breaths, ellipses in the middle or end of dialogue, exclamation points, etc.

Replace general words with specific ones, such as “thing(s)” or “stuff.”

Cut unnecessary chit-chat from dialogue; limit conversations to substance that moves your story forward.

Limit distinctive dialogue quirks or movements to a single character; don't give “signature” details to more than one person unless there's a reason (child emulating a parent or older sibling, etc.).

**From the Aerogramme Studio blog: Link ["Polish your prose"](#).**

***The list is from a guest post by literary agent [Nephele Tempest](#).***