

MAKING SUCCESSFUL REVISION PLANS

Revising is not editing or proofreading your paper. Rather, revisions involve clarifying ideas by reorganizing sections of your paper, removing unnecessary ideas, or adding in more material. For a more in-depth explanation on how revisions are different from proofreading, see our [Stronger Self-Editor](#) handout!

Make your revision plan on a separate document or sheet of paper so you can have it handy as you revise your paper!

WHAT TO KEEP IN MIND

1. **Revisions are substantial** – Because revisions are meant to be substantial, when making a revision plan you need to be specific and deliberate about what exactly you are revising. For example, in your plan, you would not say, “Revise my thesis to be better.” Instead, you would say, “Revise my thesis so that it meets the requirements for an argumentative essay and makes a specific claim, rather than posing a question to readers.”
2. **Be specific about what needs to be revised** – To be specific in your plan, look for ways to make the argument or claim stronger, revisit what the goals for your assignment are to check if your writing is on-topic, look for areas that need more clarity or detail (i.e. adding in more examples), and check to see that the thesis statement meets the goals for the assignment and matches the rest of the paper. Essentially, being specific will help you create actionable steps that make the revision process much easier.
3. **Synthesize** – If you received feedback from peers, the Writing Lab, or a professor, be sure to synthesize all of your comments. Take note of comments that recur the most. You do not need to implement all feedback, just the feedback that makes the most sense for you to use.

SAMPLE REVISION PLAN

In this sample revision plan, the student is working on a narrative essay for their English class. Notice how the student clearly labeled what they were working on at the top of their plan and how specific the student gets within the plan. That specificity will help later when the student revises their paper because each point in the plan creates an actionable step. Within your own plan, you should not include notes for fixing grammar, spelling, or punctuation because these items are saved for your proofreading step, which comes after you finish your revisions. If you need to fix your in-text citations, you can make a note of that in your plan because that is a substantial fix.

WEEK 10 NARRATIVE ESSAY REVISION PLAN:

1. I need to re-read the assignment prompt and rubric to make sure that my paper meets all the basic requirements for a narrative essay.
2. Does my personal narrative detail a time that I faced a challenge and give readers a preview of how my identity was shaped by that challenge?
3. Revise thesis so that it clearly presents my challenge—I could change the thesis:
 - a. ORIGINAL: That event was almost a disaster.
 - b. NEW: Being an exchange student during my sophomore year of college was almost a disaster, but instead the challenge propelled my growth.
4. I received a lot of comments from professors and peers saying I am not showing enough and doing too much telling. I need to use more specific and concrete words to describe my emotions throughout the story; paragraph 3 is the most problematic and conveys very little emotion.
 - a. Use a thesaurus to find stronger words and think about actions to replace short descriptions of my emotions.
5. In paragraph 2, I need to give another example of why being an exchange student was difficult at first because that will set up how my character was developed through the experience.
 - a. Go back to my notes page where I did a rough narration of my memory of that semester to find a good example.

PRACTICE NOW