



# Positive Points

## Editorial Services



## SELF-EDITING CHECKLIST

- GIVE IT A REST**  
Allow your manuscript to sit in the drawer for a while—it will give your brain a chance to rest and your manuscript a chance to mature.
- IDENTIFY YOUR CRUTCHES AND YOUR COMMON MISTAKES—THEN ELIMINATE THEM**  
Work out which words and phrases you rely a lot on, and which mistakes you tend to make over and over, then keep a careful eye out for these when editing.
- READ IT ALOUD—AND BACKWARDS!**  
Reading your manuscript aloud will make errors much more obvious. When you've done a few passes, read it from the end to the start so you're focusing on the words and not the plot.
- DO DIFFERENT THINGS ON DIFFERENT PASSES**  
Each time you read through your manuscript, pick a new thing to focus on—plot, characterisation, typos, word usage, etc. That doesn't mean you can't correct other things during that particular pass, but it gives you greater focus.
- CHECK FOR REPETITION**  
Not just repeated sections, but over-used words or repetitive sentence rhythms. Try not to use the same descriptive phrases twice.
- ELIMINATE UNNECESSARY WORDS**  
For every single word, ask yourself: "is this word strictly necessary to understand the sentence?" If it's not, remove it. If you think you've removed all the unnecessary words—check again! This will make your writing much tighter.
- AVOID CLICHES**  
Check your work thoroughly for clichés. They're not as evil as some people think, but they are not a replacement for imagination or good writing. Be careful you don't have too many!
- USE SOFTWARE, BUT DON'T RELY ON IT**  
There is loads of great software out there that promises to check your work for errors. They're useful, and they can help, but they're no replacement for a human eye. Take them for what they are, make use of them, then check it again yourself.

