PROOFREADING CHECKLIST EXAMPLES

Chain of Command | Book style sheet wins every debate
Chicago Manual of Style → Merriam-Webster’s 11th → Publisher style guide → Book style sheet

Prepublication Proof
- Double spaces: easiest to spot while in Word with all formatting visible
- Remove bold case and underlining (common publisher request)

First Pass/Second Pass
☐ Match body text to contents by checking:
  - Order and wording of front and back matter
  - Chapter titles, subheadings (don’t forget chapter title references in notes and appendixes)
  - Page numbers
  - Internal references

☐ Check format consistency: capitalization, font size, styling, spacing, etc.
  - Chapter opening pages
  - Call outs, illustrations, tables, charts, hiatus breaks
  - Headings and subheadings
  - Words used as words should be set in italics
  - Consistency in applying rules on when to spell out numbers
  - Footnotes, endnotes, and bibliography correct per CMOS (publisher prefer 16th or 17th?)

☐ Grammar
  - Danglers
  - Antecedent clarity
  - Verb tenses/plurality

☐ Punctuation
  - Ellipses formatted per publisher style or default to CMOS
  - Dashes (two hyphens to em dash, no spaces, en dashes with inclusive numbers)
  - Semicolons and colons correct; commas replaced with these when needed

☐ Spelling (follow Chain of Command)
  - Hyphenated words: correct as is or close up?
  - Compound words: correct as is, hyphenate, or set open?
  - Common misspellings (easiest to spot in prepublication pass in Word)

Format Check/Final Pass
- Bad line/word/page breaks, short lines (<6 characters), short pages (<5 lines), widows
- Stacks (3+ in a row: hyphens, words, prefixes, etc.)
- Running heads; page numbers; chapter and part opener styling
- Tight or loose lines; facing pages with one page running long (>2 lines difference)

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