

How to Copyedit in LaTeX?

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The authors welcome feedback on this working paper. Please send all inquiries to atammaro@urban.org.

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Editing in LaTeX

As far as mechanics go, substantively editing and copyediting in LaTeX isn't too different from editing in Microsoft Word. The interface, along with the small bit of coding involved, are the obvious differences, but the benefits exist there too; Overleaf's you-see-what-you-get model takes the guess work out of organizing and manually styling long, citation-heavy reports, and the small learning curve quickly is quickly outweighed by the benefits of removing tedium from an editing job.

Getting Started on Overleaf

Overleaf, the online program used to more easily edit a LaTeX-based project, has a selection of guides that explains everything from getting started to finding a template to organizing a large project. You'll need an account, and once you're logged in, you'll see your projects organized on the left-hand side, along with tags for different projects, if you choose to use them. All projects are listed in the middle.

Once you select the project and go into the editor, depending on how your author has organized their paper, you'll find the outlined version on the left-most panel. Documents might be split by front matter, main body, figures, and references or other distinct parts.

The middle panel is where you'll edit. Before you begin, make sure you have editing permissions from the author, and make sure tracked changes is on.

You can choose to edit either the source code or the rich text (though editing in rich text doesn't support tracked changes yet). Comments can be left for queries, though don't forget to hit "enter" after typing them, otherwise they follow you up and down the document. Multiple people can be editing at once, which helps with version control issues, though, as always, communication facilitates more efficient work. Overleaf's interface includes a comment section, though the "history" tab also specifically notes which sections have been changed and when.

Coding between Panels

At first, the code can seem intimidating, as can navigating between sections of your document. Any changes made to references will automatically and comprehensively change each instance of that reference in the body text, as will changes to figure and

table callout numbers. There are few instances where I needed to edit the code; the most frequent edit was to citations, specifically `\citep`, which creates your usual author-date citation, and `\citet`, which will just include the year, to match Chicago's two forms.

Using Chicago Manual Style

The Chicago Manual of Style also contains info on editing in LaTeX, specifically 12.2 and figure 12.3 for LaTeX as a tool for coding equations. Overleaf also has a template that comes with the Chicago Manual of Style Online's citation style built in, taking some of the burden off an editor to enforce style rules.

Saving the Project

There's no need to save manually, as any changes are automatically saved and recorded in the "history" tab, but you can choose to recompile the PDF to see your changes reflected in their final form. Doing this frequently is helpful in case you get an error message.

Handling Errors

Almost all these error messages are Google-able. One of the big benefits to LaTeX and Overleaf is that odds are very good someone has already encountered this error, along with its solution. In my experience, errors occur when I take the liberty of messing with the code, and with the internet's help, I've been able to solve all of them.

Depending on the template and the code set you're using, there may be even more specific information available. Consider asking your authors too; depending on their field, they may have experience working in specific templates or with specific code sets.