How to Navigate Tracked Changes.

If this is your first time opening a document with Tracked Changes, take a breath. It can look intense at first—but nothing has been permanently changed.

Before you begin reviewing edits, I recommend saving a new version of your manuscript (for example: Title_FINAL Review Copy). That way, you always have a backup of the original file.

What Tracked Changes is (*and isn't*).

Tracked Changes allows me to suggest edits without permanently altering your original text. You can:

- Accept an edit
- Reject an edit
- Leave an edit untouched

Nothing becomes final unless you choose it. Tracked Changes is not a record of mistakes or a judgment on your writing. It's simply a way to show changes clearly and transparently.

What you may see when you open your file.

- Colored or red text: suggested additions
- Text with a line through it: suggested deletions
- Comments in the right-hand margin: explanations or notes

Seeing all of this at once can feel overwhelming. That's completely normal—and Word gives you options to make it easier to read.

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Change the "View" (*highly recommended*).

At the top of Word, click on the Review tab in the ribbon. Look for the dropdown menu that says *All Markup*.

You'll then see three main options:
- *All Markup*: shows every edit and comment (this is the default and the busiest view).
- *Simple Markup*: shows a cleaner version with fewer visible changes.
- *No Markup*: shows how the document will look once edits are accepted.

If *All Markup* feels like too much, switch to *Simple Markup*. Many writers prefer to read their manuscript this way first. You can change views at any time.

How to 'Accept' or 'Reject' changes.

Still under the Review tab, you'll see buttons labeled *Accept* and *Reject*.
To review changes individually:
1. Click directly on a suggested edit in the text.
2. Click Accept or Reject.

You can also:
- Use the arrows next to *Accept/Reject* to move through changes one by one.
- Choose Accept All Changes once you feel confident and ready.

There's no rush. Many writers read through the manuscript first and decide later.

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Comments (*and what to do with them*).

You'll see comments in the right-hand margin. These are from me and they will:

- Explain why I suggested an edit.
- Point out patterns or recurring issues.
- Offer clarification where helpful.

Comments are meant to add context, not create extra work for you.
Because this is a final-stage edit, you don't need to respond to comments in the document or send the file back to me. Many writers simply read the comments, review the edits, and move forward.
If a comment raises a question, concern, or "Can we talk about this?" moment, please reach out to me by email. That's the best place for questions and keeps communication clear and simple.

Think of comments as guidance, not homework.

When You're Finished Reviewing Edits

Once you've worked through the suggestions and feel confident in your decisions:

1. Go to the Review tab.
2. Click Accept ⇝ Accept All Changes (if you're ready to finalize everything).
3. In the Review tab, click Track Changes to turn it off.
4. Change the view to No Markup to confirm your manuscript looks clean.

That's it. Your document now reflects your final version and is ready for formatting or publication.

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A note from me to you:

You **cannot** break anything by clicking around. You **won't accidentally publish** with edits showing. You don't need to understand everything immediately. **Take your time.** Questions are expected—especially if this is your first time working with an editor.

If you feel unsure at any point, please email me at **susan@finelineproofs.com.** I'm happy to clarify an edit or explain a suggestion.

~Susan

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