A PRACTICAL GUIDE

The Freelance Editor's Scope Sheet

A step-by-step guide to defining work, setting revision limits, and handling late-fee clauses so you can publish and deliver your PDF instantly

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ABOUT THIS GUIDE

What this is

This guide is for freelance editors and proofreaders.

It is a practical method, not a promise of a result. It contains no invented statistics, no fake customers, and no guarantees. The words were drafted with AI assistance.

Use the checklist at the end on a real piece of work this week.

1. Define the Project Scope Clearly

Start every contract with a concise scope paragraph. List the document type (e.g., blog post, manuscript, marketing copy), word count or page range, and the specific services you will provide—proofreading, line editing, substantive editing, or a combination. Include any style guides, reference materials, or formatting standards the client must supply. State the expected turnaround time in business days and note any milestones for larger projects, such as a first-pass edit followed by a final polish. By spelling out exactly what is included, you prevent scope creep and give the client a concrete expectation of deliverables.

2. Set Revision Limits Up Front

Specify the number of revision rounds you will allow in the contract—typically one or two full revisions after the initial delivery. Define what constitutes a revision: changes to wording, grammar, and punctuation are covered, while major restructuring or new content requests are not. Include a brief example of a permissible revision versus an out-of-scope request. If the client exceeds the agreed rounds, outline the additional hourly rate or a flat fee for extra work. This clause protects your time and makes it easy to negotiate any needed extensions without ambiguity.

3. Write a Late-Fee Clause That Works

State the payment schedule clearly: a deposit (e.g., 30 % of the total) due before work begins, the balance due upon delivery. Then add a late-fee provision: if payment is not received within five business days of the invoice date, a 5 % surcharge is applied for each subsequent week. Mention acceptable payment methods and any discounts for early payment, if you wish to offer them. By including a straightforward late-fee clause, you encourage timely payment and have a documented basis for collecting overdue amounts without appearing aggressive.

4. Prepare the PDF for Instant Delivery

Use a reliable PDF creator such as Adobe Acrobat or a free alternative like LibreOffice to convert your final document. Embed all fonts and set the file to open at 100 % zoom to ensure consistent appearance across devices. Add a clickable table of contents for easy navigation. Before publishing, run a final spell-check and verify that all hyperlinks work. Save the file with a clear naming convention—e.g., FreelanceEditorScopeSheet_v1.pdf—and upload it to a secure file-sharing service that provides a direct download link. Test the link on multiple browsers to confirm instant access for buyers.

5. Market and Sell the Guide Efficiently

Create a one-page sales landing page that highlights the five key benefits of the guide: clarity, protection, faster payment, professional presentation, and repeatable workflow. Use bullet points and a short testimonial placeholder (you can replace it later with real feedback). Add a prominent “Buy Now” button that triggers an automated checkout via a platform like Gumroad or Payhip, which can deliver the PDF link immediately after purchase. Set the price based on the value you provide and the market rate for similar resources. Track sales with the platform’s analytics to refine your messaging over time.

USE THIS

Checklist

- [ ] Write a concise scope paragraph that lists document type, word count, and services provided
- [ ] Specify the exact number of revision rounds and what changes are covered
- [ ] Include a clear payment schedule and a late-fee clause with percentages and timelines
- [ ] Create a PDF with embedded fonts, a clickable table of contents, and test the download link
- [ ] Set up an automated checkout page that delivers the PDF instantly after purchase

Where this came from

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