



## RA ACIG Levels of Edit

### Establish Levels of Edit

We established levels of edit for our publications by weighting the criteria on the editors' checklist. A light edit has the fewest editing criteria, a heavy or full edit has the most. A medium edit strikes a balance.

See attached editors' checklist.

### Our Levels of Edit

We established these levels by adapting the new JPL levels of edit and Judith Tarutz's informal approach to the levels of edit. We're using editing estimates from Jean Hollis Weber, whose work in this area borrows from JoAnn Hackos and Carolyn Rude.

- **Light edit** - includes typical proofreading, conformance to style guidelines, and checking for errors in headings, tables, figures, and references.<sup>(1)</sup>

Our most basic edit is a combination of Tarutz's first and second levels, turning pages and skimming. This includes the superficial look of the text, and spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors.<sup>(2)</sup>

A light edit is estimated as 8...10 pages per hour.<sup>(4)</sup>

- **Medium edit** - includes proofreading edit, plus basic grammar and punctuation errors, word usage errors, overly complex sentence structure, and overly complex (long) procedures.<sup>(1)</sup>

We liken this to Tarutz's third level, skimming and comparing. This includes internal consistency and cross-references, as well as those criteria covered in a light edit.<sup>(2)</sup>

A medium edit is estimated as 4...6 pages per hour.<sup>(4)</sup>

- **Full edit** - includes proofreading and grammar edit, plus rewriting to improve sentence and paragraph structure, and overall document organization.<sup>(1)</sup>

We see this as Tarutz’s fourth level, reading. This includes reading for writing style, such as wording, transitions, and usage, as well as those criteria covered in a light and medium edit.<sup>(2) (3)</sup>

A full or heavy edit is estimated as 1...2 pages per hour.<sup>(4)</sup>

## Estimated Hours to Edit

Below are typical page counts provided by Technical Communication supervisors. Apply the formula, page count x pph, depending on level of edit, to any page count or type of publication. Online help may differ slightly.

Type of Edit (pages per hour)	Estimated Hours to Edit			
	Installation Instructions (20 pgs)	Release Notes (2 pgs)	Manuals (176 pgs)	Selection Guide (96 pgs)
<b>Light Edit</b> (8...10 pph)	2...2.5	0.2...0.25	17.6...22	9.6...12
<b>Medium Edit</b> (4...6 pph)	3.33...5	0.33...0.5	29.33...44	16...24
<b>Full Edit</b> (1...2 pph)	10...20	1...2	88...176	48...96

As a broad guideline, RA ACIG editors will give first-review publications a medium edit and final-review publications a light edit. With their supervisor’s approval, developers may request another level of edit.

Based on recent editing workload, these estimated hours are within range for best-case productivity.

We will monitor the accuracy of these estimates for the next six months to validate if they are accurate for RA ACIG editing projects; workload/resources will be evaluated in September 2006.

<sup>(1)</sup> Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL), The Levels of Edit (1996)

<sup>(2)</sup> Judith A. Tarutz, Technical Editing (1992)

<sup>(3)</sup> Tarutz has a fifth level, analyzing, and a sixth level, testing and using.

<sup>(4)</sup> Jean Hollis Weber, How Long Does Editing Take? (2001)