A guide to proofreading symbols, from The No-Nonsense Proofreading Course.

www.proofreading-course.com
Proof reader’s marks, what they look like and how to use them.
Also known as a ‘caret’, this mark instructs the typesetter to insert matter into the text.
The mark is used in the margin, followed by the matter to be inserted, and in the copy itself, indicating the point of insertion.
This is a deletion mark.
It is placed in the margin, with the characters or words to be deleted struck through in the text itself.
Delete and close up space.

Words or characters in the text should be highlighted using one of the following marks...
or stet
Ignore proof reader's remarks.

Put a broken line under the comments to be disregarded.
This indicates that something requires querying.

Circle the matter in the text which requires attention.

You can write details of the query in the margin.
This indicates that the wrong font has been used.

Circle the incorrect words or characters in the text.

(Sometimes ‘w.f.’ is used in the margin instead of the circled ‘x’).
This instructs the typesetter to change underscored text to italic.
This instructs the typesetter to change underscored text from italic to roman (plain, ‘unitalicised’ type).
This instructs the typesetter to change triple-underscored text from lower case to capital letters.
This instructs the typesetter to change underscored text from lowercase to ‘small’ capitals.
This instructs the typesetter to change double- or triple-underscored text from capitals or small capitals to lower case.
This instructs the typesetter to change wavy-underscored text to bold.
This instructs the typesetter to insert superscripted matter or superscript circled matter.

In the margin, place the matter to be superscripted above the superscript proof reader’s mark.
This instructs the typesetter to insert subscripted matter or to subscript circled matter.

In the margin, place the matter to be subscripted below the subscript proof reader’s mark.
When requesting a full stop (period) or colon to be inserted, always place them in a circle so they aren’t mistaken for accidental marks.
Insert an apostrophe. Use caret to indicate location in copy.
Insert single or double quotation marks. Use caret to indicate location in copy.
Insert hyphen, em dash or en dash. Use caret to indicate location in copy.
Insert slash.
Use caret to indicate location in copy.
Insert paragraph break. Place mark between the words or characters where you want the break to occur.
Remove paragraph break. Use mark to effectively join the paragraphs together.
Indent text. Use mark to indicate how far you wish the text to be indented.
Remove indent.
Range text left or right. Bracket text to be ranged
Centre text.
Bracket text to be centred
Increase space between words or characters. Use caret to indicate where the space is to be inserted.
Decrease space between words or characters.
Increase space between lines. Mark should ‘stretch’ from margin and into the space to be increased.
Decrease space between lines. Mark should ‘stretch’ from margin and into the space to be decreased.
Remove space between words or characters and close-up text.

To be used like this...
To find out more about how you can improve your proofreading skills or even become a professional proofreader, visit: www.proofreading-course.com