

10 Common Writing Mistakes

This is an extra resource to go along with the original article:

[Top 10 Mistakes I've Made as a Writer](#)

1. **Head hopping** - Head hopping happens when you change from one character's perspective to another, or from first person POV to third person. It's different from third-person omniscient because head hopping gets inside of the person's head instead of maintaining a distance. Head hopping is confusing for the reader.
2. **Too much dialogue** - Dialogue should move the story forward. If you include every single "hello" and "goodbye" in dialogue, it can slow the pace of the story, and it's simply unnecessary.
3. **Too much description** - Lengthy descriptions can also slow the story. Give the basics and allow the reader to imagine the rest, especially when it comes to describing the physical features of your main characters.
4. **Starting too early in the story** - Start as soon as you can to the inciting incident. This is the event when everything changes for your protagonist.
5. **Giving the backstory** - Backstory, like description and dialogue, can slow the pace. Avoid backstory unless it's necessary for characterization and plot.
6. **A perfect protagonist** - The best protagonists are flawed in some way. That's what makes them compelling, human, and unpredictable. You don't want the reader to know exactly what the protagonist will do.
7. **Not killing your darlings** - We all have favorite characters and scenes, but sometimes, they don't serve the story. Be willing to kill those characters to move your story forward.
8. **Telling the reader isn't showing them** - Don't give bullet points or conclusions, instead describe what your characters are doing and how they're doing it. This allows your reader to draw their own conclusions.
9. **Not inserting conflict** - Conflict should be present on every page and within every scene. Make sure that the reader knows what's at stake on each page.
10. **Editing while writing** - Editing and writing require different sides of your brain. Don't try to edit while writing because it will slow the process. Plus, you'll have to edit later, so the process of editing while writing is redundant and ineffective.