

10 Fixes to Help You Add More *Tension* to Your Thriller

This is an extra resource to go along with the original article:
[How to Write a Thriller](#)

Here are 10 unique ways to increase the level of anticipation in your novel:

1. **Change the point of view.** If you've written in the third person, switch to the first person to give the reader insight into a character. The easiest way to do this is through journal entries or letters from the character.
2. **Under-developed characters often lead to weak stories.** Create a character bible so that you can learn more about your main characters. [Here's a guide to learning more about your characters.](#)
3. **Use shorter, choppiier sentences.** Short sentences are easy (and quick) to read, which naturally increases the pace. It also can create a sense of breathless anticipation, which will make your story feel tighter.
4. **Arrange your story so that it's front-loaded with action.** Don't set the scene, jump right into it and then pull back to give insight into characters, motives and stakes.
5. **Plan your plot so that there is a steady stream of conflict.** Don't ease up. It's a good idea to outline your plot so that you introduce a new conflict before you've resolved an old one.
6. **Delete any scene that doesn't move the story forward.** Period.
7. **Get rid of flashbacks unless they're absolutely necessary to tell the story.** Flashbacks have no stakes because it's already done.
8. **Give each character a goal for every scene.** You don't have to express to the reader what that goal is, but it's important that you know it.
9. **Let the reader know more than the protagonist.** If the reader can see the cliff before the protagonist, they'll be more invested with each step.
10. **Don't go without action for too long.** Ideally, you should alternate between exposition and action to keep the pace steady.