

Twenty most common errors

From research by Robert Connors, Andrea Lunsford, and Karen Lunsford.

- 1) Wrong word
- 2) Missing comma after an introductory element
- 3) Incomplete or missing documentation
- 4) Vague pronoun reference
- 5) Spelling (including homonyms)
- 6) Mechanical error with a quotation
- 7) Unnecessary comma
- 8) Unnecessary and missing capitalization
- 9) Missing word
- 10) Faulty sentence structure
- 11) Missing comma with a nonrestrictive element
- 12) Unnecessary shift in verb tense
- 13) Missing comma in a compound sentence
- 14) Unnecessary or missing apostrophe (including its/it's)
- 15) Fused (run-on) sentence
- 16) Comma splice
- 17) Lack of pronoun-antecedent agreement
- 18) Poorly integrated quotation
- 19) Unnecessary or missing hyphen
- 20) Sentence fragment

See <http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/easywriter3e/20errors/> for a slightly older list which explains each error in detail. *PSM* covers many of these problems as well.

Original research:

Connors, Robert J., and Andrea Lunsford. Frequency of Formal Errors in Current College Writing, or Ma and Pa Kettle Do Research. *College Composition and Communication* 39.4 (1988): 395-409.

Lunsford, Andrea A., and Lunsford Karen J. Mistakes are a fact of life: A national comparative study. *CCC: College Composition and Communication*. Forthcoming.