

THINGS TO KNOW

1. SHOW, don't tell
2. Avoid *extra* words ("the" is often extra)
3. Kill ~~adjectives~~ Use *active* verbs instead
4. Avoid *passive* voice; the verb forms of "to be" are almost as bad. The subject of the sentence should act, rather than be acted upon.
5. Do not "qualify" statements (It was almost seven and 7/8ths feet long)
6. Use specific details, they lend authenticity, and they are the chocolate chips in a chocolate chip cookie--the cookie is bland without them.
7. No *one-word* sentences at the beginning of a paragraph. (Pain. What is pain?)
8. Do not recycle cliches. (She was *always there for me.*)
9. Watch agreement in tense and number
10. Write *written*- not conversational--English
11. *alot* is not a word. Neither is *alright*.
12. Beware homonyms, esp:there/their/they're
13. Do not b o r e your reader
14. Read more than you do now
15. Should've=should have, *should of* is wrong
16. You cannot go over somebody's house except in a plane,: go over to somebody's house

17. Don't tell the reader what you are going to do; do it. (*In this paper I'm going to describe my Uncle Zeke because he's so interesting.*)
18. Things=that; people=who
19. To check compounds re: use of I or me drop the compound and see which fits (eg. *John and me* vs. *John and I* went to the store.)
20. Just is almost always extra. It is like "like" in spoken English. (*Well* and *So* at the beginnings of sentences are almost as bad.)
21. Your audience should usually be "an educated stranger"
22. Accept=take in, except=leave out
23. Do not use "*you*" in attributing feelings or experience (eg. *When you go to Spain you will love the feeling of romance, the way you like the classical guitar.*)
24. Than=comparison, then=a point in time
25. etc. (is short for et cetera) not ect. Think "ET"
26. There is no such thing as "writer's block." As William Stafford said: "Lower your standards," and start writing, then take out the garbage later.

27. lay/lie, laid /lied, laying/lying: know the difference or embarrass yourself
28. Slang limits you, except in dialogue, avoid it
29. **simple** is better, *always* (simple tenses, simple words, simple declarative sentences)
30. Revise=see again, not copy over to correct
31. Sentences build paragraphs, paragraphs build essays/stories
32. Some *pens* fit your hand better: buy these recycle the rest
33. Save everything you write
34. Start in the middle of action to hook the reader; (only give the background when the reader cares)
35. Stay in one tense unless there's a *reason* to change.
36. Know who's telling the story, stick with her/him!
37. Metaphors are bridges, build some
38. Omit obvious adjectives; only tell the color of the sky if it is not blue
39. "He goes" is not the same as "He says. Honest!
40. **NEVER** stop with one draft. **AND REMEMBER:**
NO PAPER IS FINISHED UNTIL THE AUTHOR SAYS IT IS