

Although a person of authority can set a good example at times, their words aren't justification for anything being a fact. There should be concrete evidence before something is stated as a fact.

This fallacy uses the assumption that the majority is right, and that whatever the majority believes or does, you should too.

This fallacy assumes that one step in a particular direction will culminate into a (usually negative) result later and that it's impossible to stop midway.

“If we allow the government to regulate the economy, then, eventually, we’ll become socialists.”

This statement ignores the possibility that there’s a middle ground where the economy is partially regulated; it goes directly to the most extreme scenario without any evidence that the most extreme scenario is certain to happen.

This fallacy takes the opponent’s argument and creates a weaker version of it that is easily knocked down.

“We should ensure that the police are held accountable for their actions like other citizens.” This statement could be made weaker by saying, “The police are bad.”

By taking out any nuance and simplifying it, the argument is easily knocked down by arguing that the police help catch criminals to keep the public safe. However, this restatement distorts the original argument, and the rebuttal addresses only the distorted restatement.

This fallacy is when someone cherry picks data to suit their argument (ignoring differences) or finds patterns to fit their presumptions (overemphasizing similarities). Clusters of data will almost always occur by random chance, and humans have a tendency to find patterns, but that doesn’t indicate that there actually is a pattern.

“I failed my exam, spilled my coffee on my computer, and b2 ner p wlitq my\$y a

The solution of having the child alternate living with each of the parents doesn't take into consideration which parent the child is more comfortable with or which schooling or housing environment would be more suitable for the child, and it also ignores how the instability of alternating between parents may have a negative effect on the child.

This fallacy is based on the assumption that because there's a fallacy in the argument, the conclusion must be wrong.

“As ‘I should watch the news and try to understand current events because my parents said so’ is an example of ‘appeal to authority,’ the statement is a fallacy, so I shouldn’t watch the news and try to understand current events.”

The statement “I should watch the news and try to understand current events because my parents said so” is a fallacy; however, it doesn't make the statement “I should watch the news and try to understand current events” incorrect. In reality, there is a good reason for doing so: being informed allows us to better understand a situation and make better decisions.

Identification of Fallacies in Arguments

It's important to be able to identify fallacies in both your own arguments and the arguments of others. The following steps are a way to help identify those fallacies:

1. Begin by listing the main points of the argument.
2. Follow by listing the evidence for each main point.
3. Consider whether any fallacies apply to the evidence. (Hint: If it's your own writing, then you can look over old writing to identify fallacies you tend to use. This way you have a better idea of what to watch for.)
4. Here are some questions to keep in mind:

