

# Types of Fallacies in Argumentative Essays

## 1 Ad hominem

An ad hominem fallacy is one that attempts to invalidate an opponent's position based on a personal trait or fact about the opponent rather than through logic.

**Example:** Katherine is a bad choice for mayor because she didn't grow up in this town.

## 2 Red herring

A red herring is an attempt to shift focus from the debate at hand by introducing an irrelevant point.

**Example:** Losing a tooth can be scary, but have you heard about the Tooth Fairy?

## 3 Straw man

A straw man argument is one that argues against a hyperbolic, inaccurate version of the opposition rather than their actual argument.

**Example:** Erin thinks we need to stop using all plastics, right now, to save the planet from climate change.

## 5 Slippery slope

With a slippery slope fallacy, the arguer claims a specific series of events will follow one starting point, typically with no supporting evidence for this chain of events.

**Example:** If we make an exception for Bijal's service dog, then other people will want to bring their dogs. Then everybody will bring their dog, and before you know it, our restaurant will be overrun with dogs, their slobber, their hair, and all the noise they make, and nobody will want to eat here anymore.

## 6 Hasty generalization

A hasty generalization is a statement made after considering just one or a few examples rather than relying on more extensive research to back up the claim. It's important to keep in mind that what constitutes sufficient research depends on the issue at hand and the statement being made about it.

**Example:** I felt nauseated both times I ate pizza from Georgio's, so I must be allergic to something in pizza.

# Types of Fallacies in Argumentative Essays

## 7 Appeal to authority

In an [appeal to authority](#), the arguer claims an authority figure's expertise to support a claim despite this expertise being irrelevant or overstated.

**Example:** If you want to be healthy, you need to stop drinking coffee. I read it on a fitness blog.

## 8 False dilemma

A false dilemma, also known as a false dichotomy, claims there are only two options in a given situation. Often, these two options are extreme opposites of each other, failing to acknowledge that other, more reasonable, options exist.

**Example:** If you don't support my decision, you were never really my friend.

## 9 Bandwagon fallacy

With the bandwagon fallacy, the arguer claims that a certain action is the right thing to do because it's popular.

**Example:** Of course it's fine to wait until the last minute to write your paper. Everybody does it!

## 10 Appeal to ignorance

An [appeal to ignorance](#) is a claim that something must be true because it hasn't been proven false. It can also be a claim that something must be false because it hasn't been proven true. This is also known as the burden of proof fallacy.

**Example:** There must be fairies living in our attic because nobody's ever proven that there aren't fairies living in our attic.

## 11 Circular argument

A circular argument is one that uses the same statement as both the premise and the conclusion. No new information or justification is introduced.

**Example:** Peppers are the easiest vegetable to grow because I think peppers are the easiest vegetable to grow.