

PATTERNS OF ERROR

Rutgers University Writing Centers
Plangere Writing Center ♦ Livingston Writing Center ♦ Douglass/Cook Writing Center

One aspect of your writing that may be giving you problems is errors in grammar, spelling, and citation format. This sheet will help you to practice finding and fixing those errors.

1. Reread all the papers you have with your instructor's comments. Look particularly at the comments about errors in grammar, spelling, and citation format.
2. Group the errors you have made into types. List below every kind of error you have made more than twice this semester. You do not have to know the technical names of these errors. Just describe them as well as you can. You can copy down an example if that would be clearer.
 - a) Errors with sentences:
 - b) Errors with verbs:
 - c) Errors with apostrophe and plural s:
 - d) Spelling errors:
 - e) Errors with commas:
 - f) Errors with periods:
 - g) Errors with quotation marks, indentation, page numbers:
 - h) Other errors:
 - i) Describe here the errors you still have questions about:

3. Make SURE to ask your tutor or your teacher about these errors. You can also look them up in a grammar book in the library or in the Writing Center.
4. Get out a rough draft, midterm, or other piece of new writing that has no comments yet. Starting from the LAST sentence in the essay, read through the essay backward sentence by sentence, looking for the errors you have listed above. Mark each error you find.
5. Fix the errors you can fix. Ask your teacher, your tutor, or another student to look at the paper and see if you missed any errors and to help you fix the ones you do not know how to fix.

You should keep this sheet to remind yourself of the kinds of errors you tend to make and how to fix them. BEFORE you hand in your next paper, use this sheet to check for these errors!