*Avoid these common fallacies in your own arguments and watch for them in the arguments of others.*

**Examples**

**Slippery Slope:**

* If we ban Hummers because they are bad for the environment eventually the government will ban all cars, so we should not ban Hummers.
* If you don’t let me go to the party, nobody will talk to me ever again!

**Post hoc ergo propter hoc (after this, therefore resulting from it):**  I drank bottled water and now I am sick, so the water must have made me sick.

**Begging the Claim (begging the questions):**  The reason everyone wants the new "Slap Me Silly Elmo" doll is because this is the hottest toy of the season!

* You can’t think about abortion without thinking about the rights of the baby.
* Because of the dark arts she practiced, Ultima was a witch.

**Circular Argument:** The sky is blue because it isn’t any other color.

**False Dichotomy (Either/or):**  We can either stop using cars or destroy the earth.

**Ad hominem:** Green Peace's strategies aren't effective because they are all dirty, lazy hippies.

* Al Gore can’t tell you about the economy because

**Red Herring:** The level of mercury in seafood may be unsafe, but what will fishers do to support their families?

**Straw Man:**  People who don't support the proposed state minimum wage increase hate the poor.

* Democrats just want to tax you and take all your money for the government.
* Republicans just want to take away safety nets.

**Moral Equivalence:**  That parking attendant who gave me a ticket is as bad as Hitler.

**Definitions**

**Slippery Slope:** If we don't want Z to occur, A must not be allowed to occur either.

**Post hoc ergo propter hoc (after this, therefore resulting from it):** If one event chronologically follows another the first event must have caused the second.

**Begging the Claim:** Making a claim that includes

**Circular Argument:** This restates the argument rather than actually proving it.

**False Dichotomy (Either/or):** Reducing an argument to only two sides or choices.

**Ad hominem:** An attack on the character of a person rather than his or her opinions or arguments.

**Red Herring:** Avoiding opposing arguments rather than addressing them, often by bringing up another argument entirely.

**Straw Man:** Oversimplifies an opponent's viewpoint and then attacks that hollow argument.

**Moral Equivalence:** Comparing minor misdeeds with major atrocities.