

Logical Fallacies: A Beginner's Guide

Which logical fallacy would be your favorite pick from the list below?

Ad Hominem Attack: This is the best logical fallacy, and if you disagree with me, well, you're an idiot.

Appeal To Emotion: See, my mom, she had to work three jobs on account of my dad leaving and refusing to support us, and me with my elephantitis and all, all our money went to doctor's bills so I never was able to get proper schooling. So really, if you look deep down inside yourself, you'll see that my fallacy here is the best.

Appeal To False Authority: Your logical fallacies aren't logical fallacies at all because Einstein said so. Einstein also said that this one is better.

Appeal to Fear: If you don't accept Appeal to Fear as the greatest fallacy, then THE TERRORISTS WILL HAVE WON. Do you want that on your conscience, that THE TERRORISTS WILL HAVE WON because you were a pansy who didn't really think that Appeal to Fear was worth voting for, and you wanted to vote for something else? Of course not, and neither would the people you let die because THE TERRORISTS WILL HAVE WON.

Appeal to Flattery: If you agree with me that Appeal to Flattery is the greatest fallacy, it shows that you are intelligent and good looking and a snappy dresser.

Appeal To Force: If you don't agree that Appeal to Force is the greatest logical fallacy, my two buddies and will simply beat the stuffing out of you.

Appeal To Majority: Most people think that this fallacy is the best, so clearly it is.

Appeal To Novelty: The Appeal to Novelty's a new fallacy, and it blows all your crappy old fallacies out the water! All the cool kids are using it: it's OBVIOUSLY the best.

Appeal To Numbers: Millions think that this fallacy is the best, so clearly it is.

Appeal to Pity: If you don't agree that Appeal to Pity is the greatest fallacy, think how it will hurt the feelings of me and the others who like it!

Appeal To Tradition: We've used Appeal to Tradition for centuries: how can it possibly be wrong?

Argumentum Ad Nauseam: Argumentum ad nauseam is the best logical fallacy. Argumentum ad nauseam is the best logical fallacy. Argumentum ad nauseam is the best logical fallacy. Argumentum ad nauseam is the best logical fallacy. Argumentum ad nauseam is the best logical fallacy. Argumentum ad nauseam is the best logical fallacy. Argumentum ad nauseam is the best logical fallacy. Argumentum ad nauseam is the best logical fallacy.

Bandwagon: It's obvious that Bandwagon is going to win as the greatest fallacy. You wouldn't want to be one of the losers who choose something else, would you?

Begging The Question: Circular reasoning is the best fallacy and is capable of proving anything. Since it can prove anything, it can obviously prove the above statement. Since it can prove the first statement, it must be true. Therefore, circular reasoning is the best fallacy and is capable of proving anything.

Biased Sample: I just did a poll of all the people in the "Biased Sample Fan Club" and 95% of them agree that Biased Sample the best fallacy. Obviously it's going to win.

Burden Of Proof: Can you prove that Burden of Proof isn't the best logical fallacy?

Complex Question: Have you stopped beating your wife and saying Complex Question isn't the best fallacy?

False Dilemma: I've found that either you think False Dilemma is the best fallacy, or you're a terrorist.

False Premise: All of the other fallacies are decent, but clearly not the best as they didn't come from my incredibly large and sexy brain.

Gambler's Fallacy: In all the previous talks about this subject, Gambler's Fallacy lost, so I just know the Gambler's Fallacy is going to win this time because it's the Gambler's Fallacy's turn to win!

Guilt By Association: You know who else preferred those other logical fallacies? *(insert pictures of Hitler, Stalin, and Pol Pot here)*

Non Sequitur: Non Sequitur is the best fallacy because none of my meals so far today have involved asparagus.

Post Hoc/False Cause: Since I've started presuming that correlation equals causation, violent crime has gone down 54%.

Red Herring: They say that to prove your fallacy is the best requires extraordinary evidence, because it's an extraordinary claim. Well, I'd like to note that "Extraordinary claims demand extraordinary evidence" is itself an extraordinary claim.

Relativism: Well maybe all those other fallacies are the best for you, but to me, the relativist fallacy is the greatest logical fallacy ever.

Slippery Slope: If you don't like Slippery Slope arguments, you will do poorly in class, drop out of school, commit crimes, go to prison, and die of AIDS.

Special Pleading: I know that everyone is posting about their favorite fallacies, but Special Pleading is out-and-out the best, so it should just win with no contest.



Notes from M. E. Kabay:

This document was circulating on the 'Net in September 2006. It was sent to me by my cousin, Guy Letourneau, PE but I do not know who wrote it. The list in this version is now alphabetized; I fixed several spelling errors, too.

For a more extensive list, see "A List Of Fallacious Arguments" compiled by Don Lindsay at < <http://www.don-lindsay-archive.org/skeptic/arguments.html#well> >