

So we went in the house and it was spooky and I mean spooky but Brad just kept right on going and he said he wasn't scared because he had been in haunted houses before even if they weren't quite like this one though I wasn't sure I believed him because I didn't think he had really been in a haunted house but then...

Whew! Take a breath now and then. Don't let ands, buts, because and so thens hook together so many clauses and phrases that your reader passes out from lack of oxygen. Punctuatel Breathel Dividel



TIPS FOR MAKING CONVENTIONS STRONGER

WAIT!

Wait to edit (if you can) till your final draft is at least 2-3 days old. You will see errors much more clearly. Don't do ANY editing until your final draft is finished. You might cut a whole paragraph from your first draft. Why edit it?



GET 'EM ONE BY ONE.

Look for one kind of error at a time. You can usually find grammatical errors by reading aloud. Look next for missing punctuation at the ends of sentences. Now, paragraphs-do you have any? Do they begin in the right spots? Use a highlighter pen to mark words you need to check for spelling. OR, use the spell checker on your computer. But don't trust it totally! Ewe could halve encore wrecked words that where steal words and the computer wood never ketch them.

BEGIN IN THE MIDDLE.

When you edit, don't ALWAYS begin at the beginning. Go through it once beginning in the middle. Once from the start of the final paragraph. That way, you'll cover each part when you're fresh.

ASK A TRUSTED FRIEND.

Got a friend who is a good editor, who has a proofreader's eye? Ask that person to help you once you've found all the errors you can find to spot what you've missed. Trade off. Maybe you can put your proofreader's eye to work for your friend, too!

KEEP WRITING TOOLS HANDY.

Get a good dictionary, spelling list, handbook with punctuation and grammar tips-whatever you need to make your work look as you want it to look. Have these things handy before you begin to edit so you won't have to get up and hunt for them. Who wants to do that?

READ S-L-O-W-L-Y.

Lots of little stuff gets missed when you read too quickly. Slow down. Look. Take your time. Read aloud. Editing is like looking for clues. You have to look carefully and look in the corners or you'll miss things.

