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Parallax Consultancy – Ten Top Tips for Fiction Writing

1. **Understand Your Story** – Generate an awareness of what your story is doing, where it is going and the effects you want to achieve. You can do this beforehand, during you're writing and when you're working through drafts as your story evolves.
2. **Narrative Voice** – Develop a strong narrative voice that is consistent (unless you intentionally do otherwise) and guides the reader through your story.
3. **Characterisation** – If your main characters are “flat”, make them “rounded”. Your main characters should come alive and seem real.
4. **Dialogue** – Does all your dialogue reveal something, advance the story or perform other roles in your fiction writing? Make sure it does and that your dialogue appears authentic. Also, present and punctuate your dialogue appropriately.
5. **Structure** – Structure your story beyond a beginning, middle and end. Make sure your individual scenes are in the most effective order, that each part connects to and flows with others around it, and that all the parts work together to make your story complete.
6. **Fiction Ingredients** – Include ingredients of fiction that are suitable for your story but also ensure there is an appropriate balance between them. Fiction ingredients can include plot, conflict, theme and setting. These should work with other elements of fiction that you're crafting such as tone, point of view, imagery, mood and style. All the different ingredients, elements and strands of your fiction should appear harmonious.

7. **Language** – Make your vocabulary and sentence structures suitable for your story, characters, point of view and narrative voice. Avoid abstractions and passive sentences unless you're using them intentionally for a specific purpose.
8. **Learn the Rules Break Rules** – Learn the rules of fiction writing and learn when it's effective to break them. For example, breaking a rule of dialogue can help writers characterise a fictional character.
9. **Editing and Rewriting** – Engage in creative editing as well as creative writing. Write and rewrite until you're satisfied with your short story or novel.
10. **Feedback** – Have someone read your fiction writing and offer you feedback. This should be someone who has experience analysing fiction and is capable of offering you constructive feedback.



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