

The Flatness Check

Seven tells, nine repairs, and the two numbers that settle an argument in thirty seconds.

You are not checking whether your text looks AI written. You are checking whether it is **flat**. Run this on one chapter at a time, with your Voiceprint open beside you.

CHAPTER UNDER REVIEW

Chapter	Date
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THE SEVEN TELLS

TELL	WHAT TO LOOK FOR	COUNT
☐ One. Simile saturation.	The most reliable tell. One in five sentences carrying a simile or metaphor is the signature of generated prose. About one in fifty reads like a person.	
☐ Two. The triad.	Three adjectives, three examples, three clauses, over and over. It reads as rhetorically complete, which is exactly why models produce it and why it flattens.	
☐ Three. Rhythm uniformity.	Write down the word count of each sentence on a page. Human writing under pressure gives wild variance: 6, 31, 4, 19, 22, 3. Over edited writing converges: 17, 19, 16, 21, 18.	
☐ Four. Contraction collapse.	Count contractions per thousand words against your corpus. The measured drift is thirty one percent, and it is the easiest of all of them to fix.	
☐ Five. Comma creep.	Commas per sentence against your baseline. Sixty seven percent is the measured drift. Most added commas mark a hedging subordinate clause. Cut the clause, not just the comma.	
☐ Six. The vocabulary tells.	Search for: delve, landscape, navigate, tapestry, testament, crucial, robust, realm, foster, myriad, plethora, seamless, elevate, unlock, harness, leverage, journey.	
☐ Seven. The missing specific.	The hardest, because it is an absence. Where a name, a number, a year or a thing that happened should be, and is not.	

THE NINE REPAIRS

REPAIR	HOW
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☐	Add the specific.	The name, the number, the year, the thing that happened. First move, always. Fixes more than the other eight combined.
ODINBOOKS.ORG/AI		AN AUTHOR'S GUIDE TO AI-ASSISTED WRITING
☐	Break the rhythm.	Put a four word sentence in. Then a long one. Deliberately.
☐	Restore the contraction.	Read it aloud. Contract what you would contract.
☐	Cut the third item.	Reduce triads to two.
☐	Use your own odd word.	Every writer overuses a few words slightly wrong. Yours are in Section 1 of your Voiceprint. Put them back where they were sanded out.
☐	Invert something.	Subordinate clause first. Start with the object. Any deviation from standard order, once or twice a page.
☐	Address the reader.	Move from description to direct address. Almost no generated prose reaches for second person unprompted.
☐	Say the thing you were hedging.	Find the qualified sentence and remove the qualifier. Most hedges are nerves, not uncertainty.
☐	Cut the transition.	Delete Moreover, Furthermore, Additionally, In conclusion. Then read what is left.

THE TWO NUMBERS

Contractions per 1,000 words	This chapter _____	Corpus baseline _____
Commas per sentence	This chapter _____	Corpus baseline _____

These are the two largest measured drifts and the two easiest to check. Counting settles it in thirty seconds.

THE READ ALOUD

The whole book, out loud, before you publish. Not a seventh pass and not an alternative to the six. It uses no model at all, and it is the last work you do before the file goes to a formatter. Where you stumble, the sentence is wrong. Where you get bored, the reader has already left. Where you find yourself performing rather than talking, the passage has drifted.

☐ Read aloud, complete Date _____ Passages marked _____