

Appeal to Common Sense

Description: Asserting that your conclusion or facts are just "common sense" when, in fact, they are not. We must argue as to *why* we believe something is common sense if there is any doubt that the belief is not common, rather than just asserting that it is. This is a more specific version of *alleged certainty*.

Logical Form:

It's common sense that X is true.

Therefore, X is true.

Example #1:

It's common sense that if you smack your children, they will stop the bad behavior. So don't tell me not to hit my kids.

Explanation: What is often accepted as "common sense" is often factually incorrect or otherwise problematic. While hitting your kids may stop their current bad behavior, the long-term psychological and behavioral negative effects can outweigh the temporary benefits. Logically speaking, the example simply appeals to "common sense" rather than makes an attempt at a strong argument.

Exception: What is "common sense" to one might not be to another. It is possible one might not accept something that is "common sense," so it could be argued that the error in reasoning falls on the person rejecting the assertion of common sense.

Tip: It's all about good communication. Keep your assumptions to a minimum when attempting to make a persuasive argument.

References:

Facione, P. A., & Facione, N. C. (2007). *Thinking and reasoning in human decision making: the method of argument and heuristic analysis*. California Academic Press.