**Definition** Good error messages are important, but the best designs carefully prevent problems from occurring in the first place. Either eliminate error-prone conditions, or check for them and present users with a confirmation option before they commit to the action.

There are two types of errors: slips and mistakes.

- **Slips** are unconscious errors caused by inattention.
- **Mistakes** are conscious errors based on a mismatch between the user’s mental model and the design.

**Tip:** Prioritize your effort: Prevent high-cost errors first, then little frustrations.

**Tip:** Avoid slips by providing helpful *constraints* and good defaults.

**Tip:** Prevent mistakes by removing memory burdens, supporting undo, and warning your users.

1. **Guard rails**
   Guard rails on curvy mountain roads prevent drivers from falling off of cliffs.

2. **Airline confirmation**
   The confirmation page before checking out on airline websites gives users another chance to review the flight details.

3. **Date selection on calendar**
   Offer good defaults and set boundaries when people book services by dates. Grey out unavailable options.