# Screen Design Heuristics

Based on Shelly, Cashman & Rosenblatt (2007*), System Analysis and Design*

## Input Screen Design Heuristics

1. Do not allow edit access to screen locations where data is not to be entered.
2. Provide a descriptive caption for every field; include required or maximum field size.
3. Display a sample format if a user must enter values in a field in a specific format.
4. Require an ending keystroke for every field.
5. Do not require users to type leading zeroes for numeric fields.
6. Do not require users to type trailing zeroes for numbers that include decimals.
7. Display default values so operators can press the ENTER key to accept the suggested value.
8. Whenever possible, provide a list of acceptable values for fields.
9. Provide meaningful error messages in response to entry of an illegal field value.
10. Provide a (safe) way to cancel data entry without inserting the current record.
11. Allow users to confirm the accuracy of input data before entering it.
12. Provide a means for users to move among fields on the form.
13. If possible, design the screen form layout to match the layout of the source document

## Output Screen Design Heuristics

1. Design for the eventual presentation method (i.e. print, fax, e-mail, web page, etc.)
2. Label all elements clearly
3. Fields should be displayed and grouped in a logical order
4. Include report headers and footers
5. Include page headers and footers
6. Centre align column headings
7. Provide sufficient column spacing (Gestalt)