

Research Paper Outline Template

Creating an outline for your paper is one of the most important steps to creating a clear and well-organized paper. An outline helps you organize all of your ideas in a logical order and streamlines writing your paper. This outline is a template to help you get started, and can be adapted to fit your needs and the length of/number of topics in your paper.

Key Terms to Understand:

- **Introduction:** Your introduction provides your reader with a road map to your paper. It tells them what your topic is and what your main argument is, as well as introducing some of the main points you will be making.
- **Thesis:** Your thesis tells your reader what your main argument is for the paper; it tells them what you are trying to convince them of, or the lesson you would like them to learn. Your thesis should be concise, take a clear stance, and be argumentative. Your thesis statement is one of the most important parts of your paper! Without a thesis statement, you do not have an academic paper.
- **Points:** Your points will be the main ideas you will introduce to support your thesis. If your thesis is your main argument, then your points are your supporting arguments. You should be able to support each of your main points with evidence.
- **Evidence:** Your evidence is the research you will use to support each of your main points. It is important to make sure that all of your evidence is related to your main thesis. Evidence is where you will likely be citing work from other sources.
- **Intro statement / Topic sentence:** An intro statement goes at the beginning of your paper (the first sentence of the intro) and introduces the topic of your paper. It should be interesting and grab your readers attention. Similarly, a topic sentence goes at the beginning of each paragraph and introduces what you will be discussing in that paragraph. Each paragraph should have a topic sentence, and each topic sentence should relate directly to your thesis statement.
- **Conclusion:** Your conclusion comes at the end of your paper and wraps up all of your main points and arguments. In some ways, your conclusion is an inverse of your introduction. Your conclusion should include a restatement of your thesis, a summary of your main points, and concluding statement.
- **Concluding statement:** A concluding statement(s) is the very end of your paper. It is similar to your introductory statement, but instead of introducing your reader to your topic, it should provide them with your final thoughts and takeaways. A concluding statement usually also provides suggestions for the future, such as for future research that needs to be conducted. Make sure the concluding statement is relevant to your paper, and ties to your thesis statement.

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Intro Statement:		
Point 1:		
Point 2:		
Point 3:		
Thesis Statement:		
Point 1: (Topic Sentence)		
Evidence 1:		Source:
Evidence 2:		Source:
Evidence 3:		Source:
Point 2: (Topic Sentence)		
Evidence 1:		Source:
Evidence 2:		Source:
Evidence 3:		Source:
Point 3: (Topic Sentence)		
Evidence 1:		Source:
Evidence 2:		Source:
Evidence 3:		Source:
Conclusion: Restate Thesis		
Point 1:		
Point 2:		
Point 3:		
Concluding Statement:		