

Writing a Research Paper

A research paper presents your research question, evidence, analysis, and conclusions in a clear and organized way. Once you have completed your research and gathered reliable information, the next step is turning your work into a well-structured paper.

1. Organize Your Research

Before you begin writing, review the sources, notes, and data you have collected. Identify the information that directly helps answer your research question and organize your main ideas in a logical order.

Creating an outline before writing can make this process much easier.

2. Introduce Your Research

Your introduction should give readers the background they need to understand your topic.

It should:

- Introduce the topic and its importance
- Provide necessary background information
- Clearly state your research question
- Explain what your paper will examine

Keep the introduction focused on preparing the reader for the research that follows.

3. Present Your Research and Analysis

The main body of your paper should present the evidence you found and explain what it means.

Depending on your project, you may include:

- Findings from previous research
- Economic data and statistics
- Graphs or tables
- Comparisons between variables or time periods
- Your interpretation of the evidence

Avoid simply listing facts or statistics. Explain **how the evidence relates to your research question** and why it is important.

4. Cite Your Sources

Whenever you use information from another source, you need to give credit to the original author or organization. This includes ideas, research findings, statistics, data, direct quotations, and information that you paraphrase in your own words.

Your paper should include:

- **In-text citations** throughout the paper to show where specific information came from.
- **A References or Works Cited page** at the end of the paper listing the sources you used.

Make sure your citations follow the required citation style, such as APA or MLA, and use the same style consistently throughout your paper.

Proper citation gives credit to the original source, strengthens the credibility of your research, and allows readers to locate the information you used.

5. Write Your Conclusion

Your conclusion should bring your research together and explain what you learned.

A strong conclusion should:

- Summarize your main findings
- Connect the findings back to your research question
- Explain the significance of your results
- Mention limitations or areas for future research when appropriate

Avoid introducing completely new evidence in the conclusion.

6. Review and Revise

Before submitting or presenting your paper, read through it carefully.

Check that:

- Your research question is clearly addressed
- Your ideas follow a logical order
- Your claims are supported by evidence

- Your sources are properly cited
- Graphs and tables are clearly labeled
- Grammar and spelling have been reviewed

A strong research paper does more than present information—it uses reliable evidence and thoughtful analysis to answer a focused research question.