

# QuillBot

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## QuillBot



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#### IDENTICAL

Text that is exactly the same.

#### MINOR CHANGES

Text that is nearly identical, yet a different form of the word is used. (i.e 'slow' becomes 'slowly')

#### PARAPHRASED

Text that has similar meaning, yet different words are used to convey the same message.

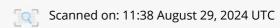
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How to Write a Research Paper: A Step by Step Writing Guide

# How to Write a Research Paper: A Step by Step Writing Guide

Published on July 2, 2024 by Hannah Skaggs. Revised on August 23, 2024.

A research paper explores and evaluates previously and newly gathered information on a topic, then offers evidence for an argument. It follows academic writing standards, and virtually every college student will write at least one. Research papers are also integral to scientific fields, among others, as the most reliable way to share knowledge.

The results are categorized and analysed in the next chapter.



Free Grammar Checker

#### **≡** Table of contents

- 1. How to write a research paper in 7 steps:
- 2. How QuillBot tools can help
- Frequently asked questions about how to write a research paper

# How to write a research paper in 7 steps:

So you're sitting at your computer, staring at a blank document. Now what? How do you write a research paper?

Here are the 7 steps you need to take in order to write a stellar academic research paper.

- 1. Understand your goal
- 2. Choose your topic
- 3. Research your topic
- 4. Build an outline and thesis statement
- 5. Write your first draft
- 6. Cite your sources
- 7. Edit and proofread

## 1. Understand your goal

Trying to write a research paper without understanding the guidelines is like trying to bake a cake without following a recipe. You're likely to use the wrong ingredients and techniques and therefore get poor results.

Instead, closely examine the requirements of the assignment:

- Rubric and assignment instructions—provided by your instructor
- Required components and length—abstract, literature review,
   reference list, etc.
- Style guide for citations and body text—MLA, APA, CMOS, AMA, or other
- Formatting requirements—double spacing, margins, etc. (often depend on style guide)
- Deadline and how to submit—date and time, file format, etc.

You might find it helpful to create a checklist that you can use to review your work in step 7. If you have any questions after looking over these elements, ask your instructor before you go any further. It will save you the time and effort of redoing everything later. Once you understand your goal the next steps in writing a research paper are as follows.

## 2. Choose your topic

If you haven't been assigned a topic for your research paper, you'll need to choose one. These are some questions you can ask yourself to narrow it down:

- What am I interested in? Choosing a topic you like will make the work easier.
- What specific aspect of this topic can I focus on? A good research paper topic is not so general that you can't say something new about it, but not so specific that you can't find quality information on it.
- Will I have enough material to work with? You need to be able to discuss evidence both for and against your position.
- What question(s) do I want to answer? This question will help you focus your research, and its answer might even be your main idea. It's a good idea to add a few sub-research questions that you might dig into.
- What unique perspective can I offer? Think about what topic gives you a chance to add new ideas to the existing research.

To answer the above, you may need to spend some time glancing through the available studies and resources online or in a library, depending on your potential topic(s). Don't forget to write down any sources that you look through so you can properly cite them later on.

## 3. Research your topic

Once you've settled on a topic your next in how to write a research paper is, to begin the preliminary research. You can take a deeper dive into some sources you examined while choosing your topic.

Look for data and evidence that answer the questions you developed

in step 2. Critically examine a variety of reputable sources that both support and contradict your own view.

As you conduct research, remember to record citation information, including direct quotes and page numbers. You may be tempted to leave that task for later and just focus on gathering information from further research, but if you do, you'll regret it. You're already looking at the sources now; why waste time making a second trip?

Failing to cite a source used in your research paper means that you've plagiarized the uncited work, which can lead to a number of consequences, academic and otherwise.

## 4. Build an outline and thesis statement

You've collected all the information you need in your research paper, and now it's time to organize it to take the reader on a journey from uninformed to informed.

Writing a research paper outline is like turn-by-turn GPS directions that guide the reader to the conclusion you reached during your research. Chart your course before you start writing so you can organize your paper cohesively and avoid missing anything.

A useful outline breaks your research paper into sections with a logical flow. It can include as much or as little detail as you need to organize your thoughts and evidence, but it should include the key points you plan to cover and any relevant information that you don't want to miss.

Your thesis statement is like the address of the destination. As part of the research paper's introduction (and included in the outline), it broadly tells the reader where you're going in the paper. In the thesis statement, you answer the question that inspired your research and summarize your main points in a sentence or two.

## 5. Write your first draft

Now that you've outlined what you'll say, put words on the page. Yes, it's that simple. Ignore the urge to censor your thoughts or revise your phrasing and focus on getting your ideas down.