

General Tips for Writing Academic Papers

1. **Begin writing your paper as early as you can.** Remember you need to spend more time working on your assignment than other students. Give yourself enough time to research, plan, write, revise, and rewrite.
2. **Decide on a specific research question or argument.** Find a question or an argument that you can investigate and find evidence to prove or explain in your paper. Also, it will help you write a well focused thesis statement.
3. **Research the topic and find valid dependable resources to use in your paper.** You can use the library university resources which contain a variety of types of scholarly information. Also, it will enable you to use different search engines until you find the information you need to develop your ideas.
4. **Make sure you take notes and bibliographic information of the resources you chose to use in your paper.** Write your notes using your own words. Include the name of the author, title of the work, the publication information, and the page numbers. Indicate whether the words you are using are quoted, summarized or paraphrased.
5. **Avoid plagiarism.** This means do not use other writers' ideas as if they were your own. You have to document every borrowed idea by citing the original source and writing a reference list. There are rules for borrowing ideas that are explained by different writing styles. If you cheat by stealing other peoples' ideas, you will put yourself at risk of being expelled or punished severely.
6. **Make sure your paper has the three essential parts of the essay.** Your paper should include
 - an introduction which provides a general idea about the topic and introduces the topic in an interesting way. Also, it includes the thesis statement that expresses the aim or the focus of your paper.
 - the body paragraphs that will develop your thesis statement.
 - a conclusion that could be a restatement, a summary, or a final idea that closes the discussions.
7. **Revise and edit your paper.** You should revise your paper several times for ideas, organization, unity, coherence, grammar mistakes, sentence structure, mechanics, and spelling.
8. **Format your paper following the writing style your instructor demands.** There are many writing styles such as MLA, APA, and others. Follow the assigned style.