

Write a Research Paper

Oskar Blakstad579.2K reads

A Guide on How to Write Academic Papers

This guide aims to help you write a research paper.

This guide contains an overview on writing academic papers such as the term paper, thesis, research paper or other academic essays written in the format of the research paper.

We have tried to integrate thoughts from the APA-format and the MLA-format.



The banner features a bright orange background. At the top center is a white icon of a flask with a flame, followed by the word "EXPLORABLE" in a white, sans-serif font. Below this, the phrase "Quiz Time!" is written in a white, cursive font. Underneath, there are three white-bordered boxes, each containing a different image and a quiz title. The first box shows a pair of red roller skates on a wooden deck, with the text "Quiz: Psychology 101 Part 2". The second box shows a fan of colorful pens, also with the text "Quiz: Psychology 101 Part 2". The third box shows a Ferris wheel at sunset, with the text "Quiz: Flags in Europe". To the right of these boxes is a white arrow pointing right with the text "See all quizzes =>".

General Overview

Many students wonder about the [writing process](#) [1] itself. The [outline of the academic paper](#) [2] is very similar for most branches of science.

[Creating an extended outline](#) [3] may help structure your thoughts, especially for longer papers. Here are a few [samples outlines for research papers](#) [4].

We have also created a couple of articles with general [tips](#) [5] and [help](#) [6] on research papers.

When writing a scientific paper, you will need to adjust to the [academic format](#) [7]. The [APA writing style](#) [8] is one example of an academic standard frequently used.

By the way, here is another great resources on how to write a research paper.

Preparing to Write a Research Paper

Usually, the purpose of a research paper is known before writing it. It can be formulated as a [research paper question](#) [9], a [thesis statement](#) [10] or a [hypothesis statement](#) [11].

If you do not know what to write about, you will have to look for [ideas for research paper topics](#) [12].

Structure of a Research Paper

The [structure of a research paper](#) [13] might seem quite stiff, but it serves a purpose: It will help find information you are looking for easily and also help structure your thoughts and communication.

Here is an [example of a research paper](#) [14]. Here's another [sample research paper](#) [15].

An empiric paper frequently follows this structure:

- [Title](#) [16]
- [Abstract](#) [17]
- [Introduction](#) [18]
- [Methodology](#) [19]
- [Results](#) [20]
- [Discussion](#) [21]
- [Conclusion](#) [22]
- [References](#) [23]

Additional Parts for Some Academic Papers

The following parts *may* be acceptable to include in some scientific standards, but may be inappropriate for other standards.

- [Table of Contents](#) [24] (Usually placed right before or right after the abstract)
- [Acknowledgments](#) [25] (Sometimes placed before the abstract and sometimes at the end of a paper)
- [Appendices](#) [26] (Placement: After all the other parts)

Other Technical Issues

When correcting papers, we have been surprised by the many students struggling with [intext citations](#) [27]. Although the standards are somewhat different, citations in the text should not be too difficult to master. The most used standards for referencing in research papers are [APA-standard](#) [28] and [MLA-standard](#) [29].

Some paper formats allow you to include [footnotes](#) [30] in the text, while some do not allow footnotes.

Authors frequently want to include [tables](#) [31] and [figures](#) [32] in the text.

Sometimes the format or standard prohibits the authors from entering tables and figures directly into the text (where you want your table). Sometimes they have to be included after the main text.

Standards and Formats

Please observe that most scientific fields (and paper formats) have their own specific rules and standards of

writing.

You will have to check with your faculty or school to know exactly how to write the paper - the guide is meant as an overview of academic papers in general.

Publish Articles

Publication of your article can be a very time-consuming process.

After writing the academic paper, the researchers [submit it to a journal](#) [33]. Typically you start with the most regarded journal and then work yourself down the list, until a journal accepts the article.

[Scientific journals](#) [34] use [peer review process](#) [35], which is a panel of other researchers (most likely in the same field) who review the work, to ensure that the quality of the paper.

[Publication bias](#) [36] is a well known phenomenon, as the [peer review process](#) [35] often rejects "null results". A [journal rejection](#) [37] does not necessarily mean that you do not have a chance to resubmit the journal though.

- [Advantages of peer reviews](#) [38]
- [Disadvantages of peer reviews](#) [39]

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