

Introductions and Conclusions

Introductions: The Beginning

The beginning of your paper is likely to be your introduction. In this first paragraph, your goal is usually to hook the audience's attention, introduce your topic, and state your thesis. However, just because it is the first paragraph of your essay doesn't mean it should be the first paragraph you write. After all, sometimes it can be difficult to write an introduction for a paper that you haven't written yet. If you find yourself getting stuck on the introduction, perhaps write your thesis at the top of your page for reference and begin writing your body paragraphs. Once you have written your body paragraphs, you might find it easier to introduce those body paragraphs with your introduction.

There are many ways to start your introduction, but the goal is always to encourage your audience to keep reading.

- You could start with a question that you then answer in your introduction or thesis.
- You could tell a short story or highlight a personal experience that relates to your topic. Remember, you don't want it to be too long!
- You could use a quote or a definition.
- You could state a fact or a statistic.

Again, you want to use this part of your paper to hook your audience and get them interested in your topic. Once you've done this, you can transition to your [thesis statement](#).

Tips and Tricks for Introductions

- If you're having trouble starting your introduction, come back to it at the end of your writing process.
- Sometimes it can be much easier to write your body paragraphs before writing your introduction.
- Avoid using the words "in this essay I will..." in your introduction

Conclusions: The End

Your conclusion will come at the end of your paper. With this paragraph, your goal is to wrap up everything that you've said so far without leaving any loose ends, which means you want to avoid bringing up any new information or arguments at this point. Within your conclusion, it is best to restate your thesis, summarize the key points of your essay, and end with a bang. This can mean a call to action, an answer to a question presented in the introduction, going back to your story, or connecting back to your introduction in some other way. Doing this essentially "bookends" your essay and makes for a neater, more organized paper.

If you are having trouble with your conclusion, try thinking of it as almost a mirror of your introduction. You obviously don't want it to be exactly the same, but it will contain a similar pattern and contents.

Tips and Tricks for Conclusions

- Connect what you said at the beginning to what you're saying at the end—think of it as two puzzle pieces that fit together.
- Zoom out with your conclusion to connect the point of your paper to a larger issue or idea.
- Other ways to end your conclusion with a bang are to warn the reader of some kind of consequence, or to predict some kind of result.
- Remember, if you are summarizing your main points in your conclusion, you don't want to repeat them word for word! Write them out in a new, refreshing way that keeps the reader engaged.
- Try not to use the words “in conclusion,” “in closing” or “to summarize...”
- Keep in mind that the body of your paper is for new ideas! Neither the introduction nor conclusion are places to put the evidence supporting your thesis.