



10 Tips for Improving Your Paper

1. Begin the writing process as soon as possible -- the day you receive the assignment.
2. Brainstorm several potential topics and make a list of words which come to mind related to the topic. For each word that you list, provide yourself with an example to illustrate the point.
3. Study and research your topic to see what has been written on the topic. This may generate other ideas regarding your approach to the topic.
4. Cluster supporting ideas for each topic and create an outline to reflect a logical grouping of these ideas to the topic.
5. Discuss the topic, thesis, and outline of your paper with your professor to be sure that your paper satisfies the purpose of the assignment.
6. Free write using whatever technology (computers, tape recorder, pen and paper) that helps you. Focus on ideas and their development, not grammar, or spelling at this stage. After you free write, generate three sentences that summarize three points which you intend to make regarding the topic. Use the sentences to begin separate paragraphs that cover each point in depth.
7. Use charts, timelines, index cards, and graphics to organize your free writing, and begin writing the first draft.
8. After you complete your first draft, read your paper aloud. This will help you to identify areas of your paper which may need further clarification, or supporting information.
9. Create a personal checklist of your common writing and grammatical errors. Edit and proofread your paper carefully using your personal checklist.
10. Be sure to accurately document all information used as references for your ideas and information on the topic. Check with your professor to be sure that you follow the appropriate format for citing this information.