

Quinnipiac University The Learning Center



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Tips To Remember While Writing a Paper



List of Priorities:

- 1-Make sure you understand the assignment.
- 2-Think of possible topics to fulfill the assignment.
- 3-Begin researching and taking notes on materials available.
- 4-Organize notes and begin to focus your topic area.
- 5-Formulate thesis statement ideas.
- 6-Weed out irrelevant information.
- 7-Find further support for the thesis and fill in any gaps.
- 8-Create an outline.
- 9-Write a rough draft.
- 10-Check and be sure you have completed the 4 I's.
- 11-Edit and Revise several times on your own and with peers.
- 12-Utilize resources such as the Learning Center to prepare your assignment for the professor.
- 13-Hand in your A+ paper (or at least a B!).

Tip #1

Make Sure You Understand The Assignment

- Read instructions carefully and see if there are any areas which are ambiguous or confusing to you.
- Check with the professor or a tutor to make sure you understand the assignment clearly and completely.
- Write down ideas and instructions you receive right away, just in case you don't start immediately.



Tip #2

Think Of Possible Topics To Fulfill The Assignment

- If you have the option to pick your own topic, try to make it interesting to you.
- Always think of many ideas, so more avenues are open to you later after researching.
- If the topics are decided by the professor, choose the ones that you seem most comfortable with, or seem to have the most information available.

Tip #3

Begin Researching and Taking Notes on Materials Available

- Go to the library or search online for pertinent information if necessary.
- Check with your professor for references he may have available and be willing to loan or those he may have put on reserve in the library.
- Write down notes that are pertinent to your topics.
- Be sure to write down sources you may want to use later and page numbers.
- Quote all materials in your notes, so you don't accidentally "borrow" another writer's words later, when you begin writing your paper.

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Tip #4

Organize Your Notes and Begin to Focus Your Topic Area

- As you gain more information, begin to narrow the focus of your search.
- Organize notes into subtopics and evaluate which area has more information available.
- Narrow your topic field based on this information.
- Begin to develop potential thesis statements based on your topic areas.



Tip #5

Formulate Your Thesis Statement Ideas

- Decide on one topic area and develop your thesis based on one point or issue that can be argued.
- Feel free to edit and alter the thesis to more appropriately fit the information you develop in the body of your essay.
- Remember to create a thoughtful and detailed thesis.
- Do not make your thesis too long.
- The main thing to do is GET TO THE POINT.

Tip #6

Weed Out Irrelevant Information

- After developing a thesis and focusing your topic even more, you should be able to dispose of or set aside some of the excess information.
- Realize that all of the research you have collected will not necessarily make it into the essay.
- Feel free to set the information aside so you can find it if needed later.
- Weeding out excess or irrelevant information will make it easier to find what you need and develop the body of your essay.

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Tip #7

Find Further Support For the Thesis and Fill In Any Gaps

- After you have weeded out irrelevant information, you may find it necessary to do further research.
- There may be holes in your argument, and further information or resources may be able to make your argument more “bullet-proof.”
- Feel free to take notes and write down those “juicy” quotes that will aid you in writing your essay.
- Once you feel you have enough information to support your argument and offer detail to your essay, continue to the next step.

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Tip #8

Create an Outline

- Once you have enough information to begin, start to create a general outline and order to your essay.
- Use your thesis and the main points you wish to cover as a skeleton for your ideas.
- Insert quotes where you believe they will occur in the written body.
- Write down ideas and the order you believe your argument should follow.
- Once the outline is detailed and in order, move on to step 9.

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Tip #9

Write a Rough Draft

- Be prepared and realize that this step will be the most time consuming.
- Writing a rough draft is not a one step process—you may need to write several drafts before you feel satisfied.
- Remember that it is okay to scrap some ideas and change others that you had entered in your outline.
- Rough drafts are just that—rough! Feel free to make all the changes you want.
- Use the Bedford Handbook for assistance with quoting, paraphrasing, and grammar. For the Quinnipiac reference to the Bedford Handbook [Click Here](#).

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Tip #10

If References Are Used Check To Be Sure You Have Completed the 4 I's

- ***Introduce*** all quotes, paraphrases, and summaries with a signal phrase.
- ***Identify*** the authority or source from which the quote was taken.
- ***Integrate*** the quote into your writing, making sure to maintain paragraph “flow.”
- ***Interpret*** the references with your own words and explanations. Also, make sure you have properly used MLA format, or a proper referencing technique asked for by your professor, to cite all references.

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Tip #11

Edit and Revise Several Times on Your Own and With Peers

- After you have made a rough draft you are somewhat satisfied with, the next step is to EDIT, EDIT, EDIT!
- Use a friend or roommate to read over your paper
- Have a tutor look over your paper.
- Remember to look not only for grammatical, spelling and punctuation errors, but also awkwardness, wordiness, or areas that require more work or information.
- Have someone read over your paper after revisions to make sure that is still “flows” or has continuity.
- • Use the [Quinnipiac Assessment Criteria](#) to evaluate your essay.

Tip #12

Utilize Resources Such As the Learning Center To Prepare Your Assignment

- Make sure that you have properly cited all quotes and have someone check the essay over for you.
- Use a writing tutor's expertise to put the final touches on your paper.
- If your professor offers office hours before the essay is due, ask him or her to look it over for you and offer feedback.
- If a professor allows you to hand in an essay early to have it graded before the final due date—go for it! Hand it in, so that you may have a second chance to make revisions before the final due date.
- Before you hand it in, make sure you give it one last look-over, to be sure it is ready and there are no typographical errors that might diminish the quality of your writing.

Tip #13

Hand In Your A+ Paper (Or at Least a B!)

- When you know you have worked hard, researched completely, written an organized essay, edited, revised, and made the final touches, it is time to hand in the paper.
- If you have done all you possibly can, there is no more to do.
- Hand it in and await your grade, but be sure to hand it in on time. You wouldn't want to be penalized for a late paper, or have your hard work thrown out the window and not be accepted, so get it in ON TIME!
- Remember that writing is a learning experience—the only way to learn to how to write, is to WRITE!
- If you don't get the grade you want, then work on improving before the next paper is due.
- Come to the Learning Center, ask your professor how to improve, or put more effort in next time!

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Remember, that at any time during the writing process there are ways to get help! The Learning Center Tutors can help you brainstorm, outline, and edit. They can also offer tips on research methods and work cited pages. Use all resources available to you and start early so you don't have to rush. Only time and hard work will produce an A+ paper!

For More Help Click Here



Need More Help?

Check out these websites that may offer you more assistance:

Electronic Sources Website:

<http://www.bedfordsmartins.com/online/cite5.html#1>

Research Papers:

<http://www.researchpaper.com>

http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_ressteps.html

Purdue University Website:

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/general/index.html>

The English Pages:

<http://www.awl.com/englishpages>

Avoiding Plagiarism:

http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_plagiar.html

How To Paraphrase, Summarize, and Quote:

http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_quotprsum.html

http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_paraphr.html

Research and Documentation:

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/index.html>

The Quinnipiac University Academic Integrity:

<http://www.quinnipiac.edu/academicintegrity.xml>

When using any source online or text be sure to cite it! Also, do your own work—professors WILL KNOW the difference!

