

Even though it is the first section of a paper, the introduction does not have to be the first thing you write. Some people choose to write this last, after their ideas have been organized in the body of the essay, while others choose to write a rough introduction that gets edited once the paper is finished.

What is included in an introduction?

- **A “hook” that interests the reader.** Try a sentence or paragraph that will surprise, interest, or emotionally involve your readers. Some ways of doing so are listed on the back of this page. Here are some examples; tell a story, describe a scene, use a vivid quotation, ask a question, offer an unexpected or unfamiliar fact, make a conflicting statement, open with the opposing viewpoint, or list a series of examples
- **Address a narrowed down topic.** Let your readers know quickly what your focus is, otherwise, you risk losing their attention and interest.
- **Important background.** Most introductions place their topic in some kind of context. If you’re writing about a text (such as a poem, essay, movie, or advertisement), you must name its author and title in your introduction.
- **Announce your thesis.** In academic writing, the introduction’s last sentence usually tells the readers the main point that the writer plans to make. This sentence is known as your thesis. Most readers will

look for a thesis at the end of your introduction, so be careful not to put other thoughts there that might confuse them.

- **Provide a road map.** Many introductions end with a “sentence of division,” often combined with a thesis, telling the reader what the main sections of a paper will cover and what order these will follow.

Things to Avoid:

- Don't expand on your argument or provide specific supporting evidence, examples, or details in the introduction (save these supporting ideas for the body of the essay).
- Don't begin with a dictionary definition. This method is unoriginal, does not provide a relevant context for your essay, and readers are more interested in your definition/ideas than the dictionary's definition.
- Don't be too vague. While big/general ideas are encouraged, don't confuse readers with vague, ambiguous, or unclear ideas.
- Don't provide excessive or irrelevant information. Stay focused.

Sources:

Finchem, David. “Writing an Effective Introduction.” *CCD Writing Center*, July 2017,

www.CCD.edu/Tutoring.

“Introductions.” *ISU Writing Center*, 2016, www.isu.edu/success/writing.

Sources:

Finchem, David. "Writing an Effective Introduction." *CCD Writing Center*, July 2017,
www.CCD.edu/Tutoring.

"Introductions." *ISU Writing Center*, 2016, www.isu.edu/success/writing.