

# How to Write a Paper Like Your Life Depended on it: A Step-By-Step Guide to Fast, Clear Writing

## How to use this guide:

Print off a copy before writing a paper. Check off each step as you go. If you follow the instructions, your paper will be in great shape.

### Phase 1: Pre-Plan

- Identify your topic.
- Identify your main point in a sentence (thesis).
- Write bullet points of your top 3 (or more) main points.
- Write bullet points of 2-5 supporting details for each point.
- (Optional) Write a conclusion in bullet point format.

### Phase 2: Write

- Write your thesis sentence out. This is a rough draft, so simple is fine.
- Using your plan, write the body paragraphs as quickly as possible, ignoring your mistakes as you go. The goal: get your thoughts onto the paper quickly -- mistakes and all.
- Write a conclusion.
- Write an introduction (note: do not write this first -- it's better when it's written after your paper).

### Phase 3: Edit

- Read your paper aloud making corrections as you go. If you make a correction, go back and start reading at the beginning of the paragraph so that you know your correction still makes sense.
- Check for the following:
  - Clarity (this is always our most important idea)
  - Spelling errors ([dictionary.com](http://dictionary.com) for correcting words)
  - Overused words ([thesaurus.com](http://thesaurus.com) for other words)
  - Grammatical errors (wrong words, run-on sentences, wrong punctuation, etc.)
- Read through again for smooth flow, adding transitions as necessary.
- Have a friend read for clarity and any obvious mistakes.

### Phase 4: Have a party