

An outline is an important tool to help you write in an organized and disciplined fashion. It is the bridge between your ideas and a fully thought-out essay. An outline can help you accomplish the following tasks:

- Begin the writing process by providing a guide for drafting
- Organize your ideas and research, especially if there is a large volume of information and detail
- Present your material in a logical form
- Show the relationships and themes among ideas in your writing
- Construct an ordered overview of your writing
- Move forward creatively, using new ideas and/or new ways of thinking

Once you have chosen a topic, done some research, and identified a preliminary thesis, it is time to construct an outline. Some essays might only need an informal outline with your thesis and some supporting ideas to be developed into paragraphs. More complex projects, like research papers, need a more formally structured outline.

Outline Template

I. Introduction

- a. Opening sentence or hook
- b. Focusing sentences
- c. Opposing opinions & details
- d. Thesis statement

II. Body Paragraph 1

- a. Topic sentence
- b. Evidence
- c. Analysis
- d. Concluding sentence

III. Body Paragraph 2

- a. Topic sentence
- b. Evidence
- c. Analysis
- d. Concluding sentence

IV. Conclusion

- a. Restate thesis
- b. Come to a conclusion or suggest future steps

Below is an example of an outline for an essay promoting the affordability and cultural adaptability of pizza.

Pizza is the Greatest Food (working title)

I. Introduction

- a. Pizza is everywhere in NYC
- b. Who eats pizza in NYC
 - i. Commuters
 - ii. Students
 - iii. Elected officials
- c. Drawbacks of pizza
 - i. Messy
 - ii. Fattening
 - iii. Poor quality
- d. Working Thesis – pizza is affordable and adaptable by many cultures

II. Body Paragraph 1

- a. Pizza is affordable
- b. Compare cost to other fast foods (Source: Alicia Jalowsky)
 - i. Pizza meal - \$2.75
 - ii. Hamburger meal - \$7
- c. Cheaper than other fast food options especially for families
- d. People can count on pizza for an affordable meal

III. Body Paragraph 2

- a. Pizza is culturally adaptable
- b. Origins and variations (Source: Romulus Sallucci)
 - i. Historical background in Italy
 - ii. Variations in different countries
 3. Sweden
 4. Australia
 5. Japan
- c. Allows consumers to connect pizza with their culture
- d. Can reflect one's cultural identity

IV. Conclusion

- a. Pizza is affordable and can be adapted to many cultures
- b. Will improve with more innovative ways to make pizza