

# How to Write a Paper Under a Time Crunch

## An Overview

### **Step 1: Relax Your Mind (15 Minutes)**

Before you get started on this paper, I want you to relax your mind. This doesn't mean grabbing a beer. It means calming yourself down and focusing your mind on the paper topic. You have one night to finish this paper, and you can do it. Turn on some classical music if it helps you stay relaxed and focused.

### **Step 2: Develop a Great Thesis Statement (45 minutes)**

Alright, once you're relaxed it's time to focus your attention on writing a great thesis statement. Your thesis statement is what will keep your research and writing on topic. This is the most important part of your paper. Spend some time reading thesis statements in [Google Scholar](#) or whatever journal article database you have access to.

Use whatever you find as a springboard for writing your own argument. Make sure to save citations and quotes from any relevant journal articles you find.

### **Step 3: Write a Killer Introduction (15 minutes)**

The way to start your paper with a bang is with a great introduction. You need an introduction that not only grabs the attention of your professor, but focuses the paper on the topic at hand. You should have one or two intro sentences, and then jump right into your thesis statement. If you can't think of an introduction, simply use your thesis statement.

### **Step 4: Defend Your Thesis in a Brainstorming Session (30 minutes)**

You should brainstorm a bunch of reasons why your thesis statement is true. Brainstorm for 30-minutes and think of every reason why your professor should be convinced of your claim. Write down the key arguments because those become your supporting paragraphs. Each argument is a mini-thesis that helps you support your paper.

### **Step 5: Start Your Research to Defend Your Thesis (2 hours)**

Professors sometimes will give you a minimum number of references they want to see in your bibliography. That should be your minimum too, so make sure to list more than what's required. Log into your college's library database and start researching your topic.

This is the part that most people waste time, so give yourself just two hours to copy and paste your citations into your paper. Try to organize the quotations within an appropriate argument (from step 4). More than likely, you'll find more arguments for your topic when researching. So add these arguments to your list.

### **Step 6: Time to Write (4 to 5 hours)**

Select your best arguments (with supportive references) and use them as the introduction

for your supporting paragraphs. Convince your professor that your thesis is true with strong arguments leading each paragraph. Write as if your professor was right there, and make sure to think of possible weak spots in your argument. You want to write a flawless paper, so keep your argument tight.

It's easy to get stuck when you first begin to write, so don't worry much about your sentence structure and argument process. Focus more on getting all your ideas down on the page. Just start writing, and use your main arguments as writing prompts.

### **Step 7: Think of Critics Would Say About Your Thesis (1 hour)**

If you have time, make sure to cite what critics might say about your arguments. By responding to what critics say, you're strengthening your paper by revealing that you understand other points of view. This shows you've spent some time thinking about the topic, and are prepared to answer objections.

### **Step 8: Summarize Your Thesis At the End (30 minutes)**

When you've completed your paper, wrap it up by restating your thesis (with some support). Make sure to leave your professor with something to think about at the end of your paper.

### **Step 9: Cut the Fat (1 hour)**

When you're ready to edit, it's time to eliminate everything that doesn't support your thesis. Cut out passive verbs (to-be) and rely on action-oriented words whenever possible. Eliminate any sentences or paragraphs that slow down your paper or weaken your main argument. Make sure your arguments are clear and easily understood.