

## APSU Writing Center

### How to Start Writing

#### Writing a Paper

You can do this! Don't let an assignment sheet or word count scare you. Starting is often the hardest part, but you can overcome procrastination.

- It's okay to start writing in the middle and come back to your introduction or thesis later.
- The thesis statement is just the main idea of your paper. It can change as you write.
- Sometimes, writing anything that comes to mind, even a few words, can help your ideas flow.

#### Steps to Get Started

1. Pick a topic that interests you if one isn't assigned.
2. Set a timer for 10 minutes.
3. Write everything you know or want to know about the topic. Don't worry about organization yet.
4. Look over what you wrote and choose three main points to focus on.
5. Create an Outline.
  - a. List your three main points and add a few details under each one.
6. Reread the assignment sheet.
  - a. Make sure your outline matches the assignment requirements.

#### Research and Resources

- Search your university library databases for sources on your topic.
- Ask yourself: Do these sources fit my three focus areas? Do they inspire a new perspective?
- For each helpful source, save:
  - URL
  - Title
  - Author or citation
  - Notes about what is useful

#### How to Overcome Procrastination

- **If you're busy:** Talk about your assignment out loud with a friend or classmate.
- **If you're alone:** Explain your ideas to yourself out loud.
- **If you need more ideas:** Listen to a podcast or video on the topic.
- **Use a timer:** Set a timer for 10 minutes and write in the morning, afternoon, or night. Even small steps like jotting down ideas or doing a bit of research will add up over time.

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References

Johns Hopkins University Academic Support. (2025). *Overcoming Procrastination*.

<https://academicsupport.jhu.edu/resources/study-aids/overcoming-procrastination/>

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Princeton University. <https://mcgraw.princeton.edu/undergraduates/resources/resource-library/understanding-and-overcoming-procrastination>

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