

# Writing Effective Conclusions

## Why Are Conclusions Important?

Conclusions ultimately help the reader see why your information and analysis should matter to them. Just as introductions help give the first impression of your topic and overall writing, effective conclusions leave your reader with a good final impression and leaves them with a new perspective on your topic that they can think about. Conclusions also give you a chance to bring your thoughts together and bring a sense of closure to your paper.

## Strategies to Try

- **Answer the "So what?" question:** Why should your reader care about the information you have provided? Answer this question.
  - Ex: It is important to know about skin cancer so that you can take measures to prevent it. This also allows you to recognize the signs of potentially cancerous lesions and have them checked out by a physician before the cancer spreads to other areas.
- **Synthesize, not summarize:** Do not just simply repeat the thesis statement and ideas presented in your paper. Instead, show the readers how those ideas and the support and examples you used come together.
  - Ex: While social media can help users connect to other people, it can also lead to loneliness. Limiting face-to-face communication only leaves us with brief "snapshots" of our friends' best selves. This can lead to us feeling alone and unable to share our struggles or measure up to others. Ultimately, relying on online connections can lead to isolation, loneliness, and potentially further mental health problems.

- **Propose a possible solution or further questions to consider:** Help the reader apply the information you have provided to their own life. What can they do about this issue? You may also point to the broader implications of this topic; what are the "ripple effects" of this issue?
  - Ex: While it may seem impossible to counteract global warming, there are many simple ways a person can limit their impact on climate change. Using energy-efficient appliances at home; reusing or recycling products whenever possible; and using alternate forms of transportation, such as riding a bike or walking, can all easy ways to help reduce one's carbon footprint. While these actions may seem small, their effects can add up quickly and can help make a positive impact on protecting the environment so that we and future generations can enjoy it.

### Things to Avoid

- Stating your thesis for the first time in the conclusion. This should be in your introduction.
- Repeating your thesis statement in your conclusion.
- Introducing a new idea or sub-topic in your conclusion. All ideas should be included in the body of your paper.
- Including new evidence (statistics, data, examples. Again, this should be in the body of your paper.
- Focusing on a minor point in your essay.
- Abruptly stopping after the last body paragraph of your paper and tacking on one concluding sentence to the last paragraph.
- Leaving out a conclusion altogether.

## Resources

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hall. "Conclusions." *The Writing Center*, 2023, [writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/conclusions/](https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/conclusions/)