

# A GUIDE TO WRITING WELL

You may be a student fresh out of high school starting your first year of college or a student returning to school after an extended period away. Either way, you may be feeling apprehensive about all the writing ahead of you. Here is a guide with tips and tricks to help you keep calm and write on successfully!

Sometimes stress over academic writing can be alleviated simply by finding good environments and times to work in and a preferred medium with which to work.

## CHOOSE THE BEST ENVIRONMENT, TIME, AND MEDIUM

1. **Find out if you work better in noise or quiet.** If you work better with noise, try listening to music; on the other hand, if you find that you focus more in quiet environments, consider writing in the library or in an interior room in your residence with the door shut.
2. **Experiment to see what time(s) you write best.** Leverage whichever times you have the most motivation to write so that you can write efficiently. Consider organizing other flexible priorities around these times.

**Example:** If your best writing time is in the afternoon and you have young children, you can try setting up daily naps or quiet times for them so that you can focus solely on your assignments for a while.

3. **Figure out the medium with which you prefer to write.** If you prefer writing out your ideas on paper, consider note-taking, outlining, and planning key ideas in a notebook before typing them into a MS Word document. If you enjoy tech and online tools, try using RefWorks to organize your citations, Grammarly to check your grammar, or MS Word's read-aloud tool to help you proofread your work prior to submission.

**NOTE:** Regent students have access to [Microsoft 365](#) for free. Librarians from the [Regent University library](#) can also provide you with additional information on using RefWorks, a citation management system..

## BE CONFIDENT!

1. **Do not let a blank page intimidate you.** Jump right into the assignment by:
  - Creating a title and formatting your header or title page
  - Doing research
  - Taking notes
  - Determining your purpose for writing
    - This purpose is your claim and will eventually develop into the first part of your thesis statement.

2. **Do not fret!** For formatting or writing concerns, the Writing Lab is here to support you. You are also welcome to look over the resources available on our [Academic Coaching website](#).
3. **Make a plan.** Sometimes, one of the best ways to stay calm and confident is to simply make a plan. Consider purchasing a weekly planner or using an online calendar to document your day-by-day action plan.

**Example:** “I plan to work on my thesis statement and the first two paragraphs for my paper today, then write my next two paragraphs tomorrow.”

4. **Gather inspiration.** Gather inspiration for your topic by doing research and engaging with your assigned reading. For additional tips, peruse the UWL’s “[Brainstorming Successfully](#)” resource.

**NOTE:** The [Academic Coaching main website](#) has several resources available for reading skills. Academic coaches can also work with you to strengthen your reading comprehension and increase your reading speed.

5. **Start early, so you are not stressed by time.** Starting early gives you more time to check and polish your work, take breaks to recharge, and properly cite your sources so that you can avoid committing [accidental plagiarism](#).
6. **Do not pressure yourself to find perfection.** No one is perfect. Practice makes better (not perfect), so keep writing! Save the editing stages for last and simply focus on getting all your points down and your intro, body, and conclusion paragraphs written.
7. **Be confident but also there is no shame in asking for help.** Regent’s professors and the academic and life coaches are always ready to offer encouragement, support, and suggestions.

## MOST IMPORTANTLY

**Remember for whom you are writing.** God has brought you to Regent, and He wants to work through you to accomplish great things (*English Standard Version*, Eph. 2.10). So, give writing your all. Let Jesus shine through your broken pieces and draw you closer to Him. If you feel that writing is not your best strength, that is alright—“His power is made perfect in weakness” (2 Cor. 12.9). Rely on Him, work hard, and give all the glory to the One who formed you and created you with a purpose (Eph. 2.10).

### Work Cited

*English Standard Version Bible*. Crossway, 2001, [www.esv.org/](http://www.esv.org/).

**PRACTICE NOW**