

Planning Your Paper

When preparing to write a paper, it's really useful to not only know how many words are required, which can tell you how many pages are being asked for, but also how you will 'block' out those pages, paragraph for paragraph, so you can be sure everything will fit the space you've been given.

First drafts can always be long, because you are exploring the topic and its experts. In second and final drafts, you trim, condense and streamline your writing so it fits the above formula better.

If you are writing your paper in double-space format, using a typical 12-point font like **Times Roman**, you can fit two or three paragraphs, or about 200 words, on a single page.

So if you are writing a three-page paper that's double-spaced, it will be about six to eight paragraphs total. This is part of why revising and editing your work is important.

Count your introduction, thesis and summary as one paragraph.

Then designate the next paragraph to be your opening argument discussion.

The third paragraph could be where you bring in your first critic.

It's best if you think out how you will break each argument or subject down into pieces, with different critics addressing different pieces.

Keep like with like, so plan to use about 2 paragraphs per argument piece.

Remember to leave about 2 paragraphs for your evaluation of the discussion and conclusion.

