

Academic Paper General Format:

- I. **Abstract** (150-200 words unless specified)
 - a. Short, clear and concise summation of the entire paper. Provide enough of a preview that a typical reader will know whether or not they wish to read the paper. Reveal the purpose and conclusions of the paper. Include your motivation to write the paper, problem being addressed, your new approach to the topic, and your conclusion.

- II. **Introduction**
 - a. Mostly follow an ‘inverted pyramid’ structure: start broad and narrow down to a specific research question. Reveal some broad knowledge of the overall topic and *quickly* focus on the point.

- III. **Lit Review, Background, History, Experimental Procedures or Methodology**
 - a. Secondary research papers: this section would provide the necessary background or history for understanding the discussion to come.
 - b. Primary research papers: provides detailed descriptions of the experiment design.
 - i. Justify the research by either showing that the writer has done their homework and/or has a clear understanding of research methods.

- IV. **Results**
 - a. Primary research: catalogues the results of the experiment in a clear and unbiased way.

- V. **Argument, Critique, or Discussion**
 - a. This section is the “heart” of the paper – where the writer finally makes the major point or claim the previous sections have led the reader to expect. Usually be the longest part of the paper, should include a thorough and well-supported argument, critique or discussion. In papers that rely on primary research, the discussion should posit precise and reasonable interpretations of the results.

- VI. **Conclusion**
 - a. Reinforce the major claims or interpretation in a way that indicates the significance of the major claim / interpretation beyond the scope of the paper but within the parameters of the field. Include any complications the study illustrates or suggest further research the study indicates is necessary.

- VII. **Bibliography or Works Cited or References**
 - a. Follow the citation style required by the conference or journal. [Tool: easybib.com]

Remember, not all academic papers require all of these sections.

You should always consult the requirements of a specific field, academic journal or professor before making final decisions about the layout and organization of your paper. 😊