

How Do I Write a Compare-Contrast Essay?

An Essay Map

There are two common ways of organizing the body of a compare-contrast essay: **whole-to-whole** or **part-to-part**. After formulating an acceptable working thesis, it is important to decide which organization best suits your argument.

- In a **whole-to-whole** format argument, you discuss Subject A first; then you discuss Subject B, relating it back to Subject A.
 - This format works best for short essays with few points of comparison (3-6 pages).
- In a **part-to-part** format argument, you choose two Subjects and several topics of analysis (parts); discuss Subjects A and B together in relation to each part.
 - This format works best for longer comparisons (6 or more pages).

Use this essay map to help you get started, and to decide which structure best suits your argument. Most likely you will need to adjust the number of subject and/or topic categories to accommodate your argument.

Thesis statement / main argument:		
Subjects/ Topics	Subject A:	Subject B:
Topic 1:		
Topic 2:		
Topic 3:		
Topic 4:		
<p>Style Tip:</p> <p>When writing a compare-contrast essay, don't let yourself to be tempted to merely or simply list differences and similarities between your subjects. Remember that you are making an argument; your writing style should demonstrate the development of your ideas. Employing simple transitional terms can help smooth your style.</p> <p>Some useful terms :</p> <p>Whereas A..., B ... , While both A and B are..., only B..., Nevertheless, although, on the contrary, despite, however, similarly, on the other hand, in the same way</p>		