Term Paper Writing: Elements and documentation

Introduction
Different courses may have different requirements for the writing of a term paper. You need to find them out and comply with them. This website introduces some common principles and elements for a proper term paper. Samples of standard format of English and Chinese documentation are provided for your reference.

1. Components of a Term Paper
2. Guidelines for Preliminaries
3. Guidelines for Text
4. Guidelines for Reference Materials
1. Components of a Term Paper

i. Preliminaries
   a. Title Page
   b. Abstract (if required)
   c. Table of Contents (if required)

ii. Text
   a. Introduction
   b. Main Body (Chapters or Sections)
   c. Conclusion

iii. Reference Materials
   a. Parenthetical Documentation
   b. Notes (if any)
   c. Appendix (if any)
   d. English References
   e. Chinese References
2. Guidelines for Preliminaries

2.1. Title Page
A title page contains:
   i. the title of your paper
   ii. your name and student number
   iii. the course name and code,
   iv. the instructor’s name
   v. the due date

2.2. Abstract
An abstract is a brief summary of the main ideas of your term paper usually in about 100 to 200 words. The main elements are as follows:
   i. a short statement of your research nature or subject
   ii. a brief description of your general theoretical approach and research methods
   iii. a short summary of your main arguments and research findings

2.3. Table of Contents
A table of contents provides an analytical outline of your paper with the sequence of your presentation. A table of contents should list out:
   i. the heading of every division of the paper
   ii. the subheadings of every subsection within the divisions (if any)
   iii. page number for every division and subsection
3. Guidelines for Text

3.1. Introduction

An introduction should be an interesting opening to show the main theme and specific topics of your paper. An introduction usually forms through:

i. a concise and complete statement of your research question or the general purpose of your term paper.
ii. a justification for your study (the significance)
iii. a background to your research question and a review of the relevant literatures on it (literature review)
iv. a brief statement of the sources of data, the procedure or methods of analysis (methodology)
v. a preview of the organization of the paper

3.2. Main Body (Chapters or Sections)

Since the topics of term papers are so diverse, it is impossible to give specific indications of how to write the main body of a term paper. But, the general rule is that you must organize your presentation in a logical framework with a clear conceptual linkage among sections and give every point with substantial support from concrete source.

3.3. Conclusion

A conclusion should provide a firm ending of what you have discussed in the paper and, preferably, further to reach a judgment, to endorse one side of an issue, or to offer directives. A good conclusion usually contains:

i. a recapitulation of the main findings or main themes
ii. statements about the specific values or alternative insights of your paper for understanding the subject matter
iii. indications of the important relevance to the current circumstance or future possibility
iv. suggestions for policy in points to your findings
4. Guidelines for Reference Materials

Different institutions have developed different styles of documentation. No matter which one you use for your paper, the principle is to be consistent. The format system provided. Here comes from the American Psychological Association (APA system).

4.1. Parenthetical Reference

A term paper must have a clear documentation of all reference materials used in the text. This requires that your paper must indicate from where you obtained:

i. direct quotations
ii. borrowed ideas (including paraphrases and summaries)
iii. data and cases (if they did not come through your own research)

Sample:

i. One work by one author

If the author’s name appears in the text,

Walker (2000) compared reaction times

If not,

In a recent study of reaction times (Walker, 2000)

ii. One work by multiple authors

First citation in the text:

Wasserstein, Zappulla, Rosen, Gerstman, and Rock (1994) found

First next citation in the text:

Wasserstein et al. (1994) found

iii. One work by group as author

Use the name of the group as the author

Hong Kong Census and Statistics Department (1997) found
iv. Authors with the same surname

| For one work by one author, show author’s initials in all text citation: |
| R. D. Luce (1959) and P. A. Luce (1986) also found |

| For one work by multiple authors, show the first author’s initials in all text citation: |
| J. M. Goldberg and Neff (1961) and M. E. Goldberg and Wurtz (1972) studied |

v. Two or more works within the same parentheses

| By different authors: |
| Several studies (Balda, 1980; Kamil, 1988; Pepperberg & Funk, 1990) |

| By the same author: |
| Past research (Gogel, 1984, 1990) |

| By the same author in the same year: |
| Several studies (Johnson, 1991a, 1991b, 1991c) |

vi. Specific parts of a source

| One specific page: |
| (Cheek & Buss, 1981, p.332) |

| More than one page: |
| (Cheek & Buss, 1981, pp. 332-333) |

| A specific chapter: |
| (Shimamura, 1989, chap.3) |
4.2. Notes
The notes at the foot of each page are called as footnotes. The notes at the end of each chapter or at the end of the paper before other reference materials are called as endnotes. But, both formats and functions are the same.

i. Documentation notes
Footnotes or endnotes for reference documentation is seldom used now. In APA system, it is replaced by the parenthetical documentation form. If you would like to know how to use footnotes or endnotes for reference documentation, see The research paper: Process, form, and content by Roth (1986, chap. 8) or Assignment and thesis writing by Anderson and Poole (2001, chap. 11).

ii. Content notes
However, it remains common to use footnotes or endnotes for providing additional content in the text. Such footnotes or endnotes may:
  a. include material which is not strictly relevant to the main argument while yet is too important to be omitted.
  b. explain, supplement, amplify material that is included in the main text.
  c. give cross-reference to other sections of a paper

4.3. Appendix
The purpose of appendix is to provide reader with detailed information which would be distracting to read in the main body of the paper. Usually, the information in an appendix is a large table, a long cross-reference to the text, a sample of a questionnaire or other survey instrument used in the research.

If your paper has only one appendix, you should simply label it Appendix; if your paper has more than one appendix, you need to label each one with a capital letter (Appendix A, Appendix B, Appendix C, etc.)

4.4. English References
At the end of your paper, you must provide a reference list in an alphabetical order by the surname of the author. If you use the title Bibliography, you can list out both references cited in the text and the relevant works which have been consulted. If you use the title Reference, you should only list out the
references cited in the text.

General forms:

i. Book reference

Author’s name. (Year). Title of work. Location: Publisher

ii. A chapter or an article in an edited book

Author’s name. (Year). Title of chapter or article. In Editor’s name (Ed.), Title of book (page numbers). Location: Publisher.

iii. Periodical (e.g., journal articles)

Author’s name. (Year). Title of article. Title of periodical, Volume Number, Page.

iv. Daily newspaper report or article

Heading of the report or the article. (year, month and date). Title of the newspaper, page.

Sample: Book reference

i. A reference to an entire book


ii. Book in new edition (second, third, etc.)


iii. Edited book


iv. Translated work


v. Book, group author as publisher

*Note. When the author and publisher are identical, use Author as the same of the publisher.*

Sample: A chapter or an article in an edited book


Sample: Periodical


Sample: Daily newspaper report or article

4.5. Chinese References

For paper written in Chinese, the format of reference documentation used by *Chinese Social Science Quarterly* (CSSQ System) is recommended. The details are as follows:

《中國社會科學季刊》注釋體例說明

注釋體例建制是學術研究規範化的一項重要內容，一方面，它表明作者對他人學術著述的尊重，以及自身從事研究的基點和依托；另一方面，亦有助於讀者查閱相關文獻，獲得比較全面的信息；故完整而準確的引文注釋，在學術研究和交流活動中具有不可忽視的作用和意義。在國際學術交流日趨頻繁之今日，建立一種規範化的注釋體例，對於中國社會科學的發展顯得尤為迫切。

本刊願與廣大讀者/作者一起從事這項建設性活動。下面所述的格式，是本刊在參酌國內外有關資料後擬釆用的注釋方式。自然，一種規範的形成，需要互動者的創造而非被動的接受。我們真誠歡迎廣大作者/讀者的"參與"，在實踐中確立和完善學術研究的注釋規範。

一、 著作引文注釋

統一規格：作者、書名、卷次、版本（出版社名、出版年份）、頁碼。

範例：

1. 徐民：《抗美援期的歷史回顧》，北京：中國廣播出版社 1990 年版，頁 5、7。
2. 柴成文、趙永田：《板門店談判》，上海：上海人民出版社 1989 年版，頁 5-9。
3. ［作者為三人以上］王永民等：《五筆字型輸入法》，石家莊：河北人民出版社 1992 年版，頁 5、8、12。
4. ［集體作者］軍事科學院軍史研究室：《朝鮮戰爭史話》，北京：解放軍出版社 1990 年版，頁 233。
5. 《魯迅全集》，卷 13：十以下用漢字表示，十以上用阿拉伯數字），北京：人民文學出版社 1991 年版，頁 9。
6. 《魯迅全集》，卷十，北京：人民文學出版社 1991 年版，頁 462、464。

編寫：

7. 陳忠龍主編：《論朝鮮戰爭》，南京：南京大學出版社 1991 年版，頁 2。

文選、選集：

8. 《毛澤東選集》卷二，北京：人民出版社 1970 年版，頁 2。

譯著：

9. 約瑟夫·格登：《朝鮮戰爭》，於濱等譯，北京：解放軍出版社 1990 年版，頁 23。

原文著作：（書名排斜體）

Publishers, 1993, pp.5-10.

二、文章引文注釋
統一規格：作者、文章題目、引自何種出版物、出版時間、頁碼。
範例：
著作中的文章：
1. 王民：巋市場經濟理論，張歌主編：巋市場經濟論集，北京：經濟出版社 1992 年版，頁 33-44。
期刊中的文章：
2. 鄧正來、景躍進：巋建構中國的市民社會，《中國社會科學季刊》(香港) 1992 年創刊號，頁 18。
報紙上的文章：
3. 劉育寧：巋克林頓政府經濟政策，《人民日報》1993 年 3 月 23 日，第 6 版。
原文著作的文章：
原文期刊中的文章：
外國報紙上的文章：
注釋統一放在文章尾處。
Selected bibliography


