

How to Make an Outline

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| 0:00 | Owl: Welcome to How to Make an Outline, an instructional video on reading comprehension brought to you by the Excelsior College Online Writing Lab. |
| 0:14 | Teachers often talk about the importance of making an outline. |
| 0:19 | However, students are often unfamiliar with how and why to make one. |
| 0:25 | Outlines are a great way to organize and evaluate ideas. |
| 0:29 | They can be used as a pre-writing method to get you ready to write. |
| 0:33 | But they can also help you improve your reading comprehension by breaking down the text into its main ideas. |
| 0:41 | Outlines present information in an organized and logical manner. |
| 0:46 | Whether you're outlining a text or a concept, your outline should focus on main ideas and key details. |
| 0:53 | Organizing this information into an outline will show how the information is related. |
| 0:58 | The finished product will cover a lot of material in a relatively small space. |
| 1:05 | In an outline information consists of heading and subheadings that are laid out using an ordering system comprised of capitalized and uncapitalized Roman numerals, letters, and numbers. |
| 1:18 | This method provides an efficient and logical way to present information and show how it is related. |

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Sample Outline

- I. Title
 - A. Heading 1
 - B. Heading 2
 - 1. Subheading 1
 - 2. Subheading 2
 - i.
 - ii.
 - a.
 - b.
 - 1.
 - 2.

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| 1:26 | In order to use the outlining method correctly, you'll first need to understand the four rules it follows. |
| 1:32 | They are: parallelism, coordination, subordination, and division. |
| 1:40 | Let's go over each rule. |
| 1:44 | The first rule of outlining is parallelism. |
| 1:48 | This means headings of the same level should be of the same kind. |



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| 1:52 | For instance, if the first heading is a verb, the second heading should also be a verb. |
| Displayed on screen | Example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Three types of muscle tissue <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Skeletal muscle B. Cardiac muscle C. Smooth muscle |
| 1:58 | In this example of an outline for a chapter on muscle tissue, the headings “Skeletal muscle,” “Cardiac muscle,” and “Smooth muscle” are of the same level because they are ordered with a capital letter. |
| 2:10 | In this case, they obey the rule of parallelism by all being nouns. |
| 2:17 | The second rule of outlining is coordination. |
| 2:20 | This means that all the information contained in Heading 1 should have the same significance as the information contained in Heading 2. |
| 2:28 | The same goes for the subheadings. |
| 2:30 | In other words, headings and subheadings of the same level should be of the same rank, which means the same level of importance. |
| Displayed on screen | Example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Skeletal muscle B. Cardiac muscle C. Smooth muscle <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Definition 2. Description 3. Examples |
| 2:38 | In this example, the headings “A,” “B,” and “C” are of the same rank, while the numbers “1,” “2,” and “3” are also of the same rank. |
| 2:50 | The third rule of outlining is subordination. |
| 2:54 | This means that the information in the headings should be more general, while the information in the subheadings should be more specific. |
| 3:01 | The movement from general to specific information is indicated by indenting from left to right. |
| Displayed on screen | Example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Skeletal muscle <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Definition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Found throughout the body ii. Voluntary iii. Responsible for movement |
| 3:07 | In this example, “Found throughout the body,” “Voluntary,” and “Responsible for movement” are specific examples of the more general category “Definition.” |



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| 3:18 | This relationship is displayed by indenting from left to right. |
| 3:23 | The fourth and final rule of outlining is division. |
| 3:28 | This means that each heading must have at least two subheadings in order to be divided. |
| 3:33 | If you can't divide a heading into at least two parts, then it doesn't require subheadings. |
| Displayed on screen | <p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Three types of muscle tissue <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Skeletal muscle B. Cardiac muscle <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Definition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Found in the heart ii. Involuntary iii. Pump blood into circulatory system 2. Description |
| 3:39 | In this example, the heading "Three types of muscle tissue" is broken down into two subheadings—"A" and "B." |
| 3:48 | "B" is further broken down into two subheadings—"1" and "2." |
| 3:53 | And "1" is even further refined by being broken down into three subheadings. |
| 4:00 | Now, if we put all four rules together—parallelism, coordination, subordination, and division—we get an outline that looks like this. (Shown after the transcript.) |
| 4:11 | Remember to write a title at the top of your outline that identifies the text you are outlining. |
| 4:17 | Creating an outline for a text is easier if you know where to look for the most important information in the text. |
| 4:24 | Depending on the type of text you're reading, you should focus your attention on one or more of the following elements: headings and subheadings, abstracts, introductions, topic sentences, bold-faced or italicized words, summaries, and conclusions. |
| 4:46 | Remember that your outline should be as long or short as you need it to be depending on the length and depth of the text you're reading. |
| 4:54 | I hope you have a better idea about how and why to make an outline. |
| 4:59 | They're not only great for pre-writing, but also for improving your reading comprehension. |
| 5:05 | Click here for a template on how to make an outline. |
| 5:11 | Thanks for listening to this instructional video on How to Make an Outline! |
| 5:16 | Visit the Excelsior College Online Writing Lab for more support with reading and writing skills. |



Sample Outline

Title: Chapter 10 – Muscle Tissue

- I. Three types of muscle tissue
 - A. Skeletal muscle
 1. Definition
 - i. Found throughout the body
 - ii. Voluntary
 - iii. Responsible for movement
 2. Description
 - i. Layers of connective tissue
 - a. Epimysium
 - b. Perimysium
 - c. Endomysium
 - ii. Muscle fibers
 - a. Long
 - b. Cylindrical
 - c. Striated
 - d. Banded
 3. Examples
 - i. Biceps
 - ii. Triceps
 - iii. Deltoids
 - iv. Trapezius
 - B. Cardiac muscle
 1. Definition
 - i. Found in the heart
 - ii. Involuntary
 - iii. Pump blood into circulatory system
 2. Description
 - i. Similar in structure to skeletal muscle
 - a. Shorter
 - b. Only one cell nucleus
 - ii. Connected by intercalated discs
 - iii. Controlled by pacemaker cells
 - C. Smooth muscle
 1. Definition
 - i. Found around organs
 - ii. Involuntary
 - iii. Control organ functions
 2. Description
 - i. Spindle-shaped muscle fibers
 - ii. Corkscrew motion
 - iii. Controlled by
 - a. Hormones
 - b. Neural stimulation
 - c. Stretching
 3. Examples
 - i. Digestive tract
 - ii. Respiratory tract
 - iii. Reproductive tract
 - iv. Iris
- II. Muscle injuries
- III. Muscle disorders

