

UCA Writing Center



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I know I learned about this but I've forgotten . . . tell me again about...

OUTLINES

Remember that outlines are used to:

- 1) Organize Information
- 2) Connect Information

A formal outline helps you indicate main ideas and various levels of subordinate ideas. It also helps show the connections between them.

GUIDELINES

- Each level must have at least two subdivisions: no I without a II, no A without a B, and so on. If a level has only one subdivision, either eliminate it or expand the material to at least two subdivisions.
- Make sure all subdivisions are at the same level (a main idea cannot be paired with supporting detail)
- Make all entries on the same level grammatically parallel (as in the sample, Noise pollution is subcategorized into: Traffic rumbles and Construction work blasts).

FORMAL OUTLINE FORM

Thesis Statement:

I. First Main Idea

A. First subordinate idea

1. First reason or example

2. Second reason or example

a. First supporting detail

b. Second supporting detail

B. Second subordinate idea

1. First supporting detail

2. Second supporting detail

II. Second Main Idea

III. Conclusion