

How to

...write in paragraphs

Paragraphs divide what you write into sections that are easy to read. A paragraph can be one or several sentences long, depending on your PURPOSE and AUDIENCE.



Each paragraph that you write should be about a different subject, or topic, or make a new point about a subject.

The first sentence of a paragraph often gives us a good idea of what the paragraph will be about. This is called the 'topic sentence'. The other sentences in the same paragraph can develop the topic.

You can become uncomfortable if the indoor climate in the office is too warm, too cool or draughty. Electrical equipment dries the air, and static build-up around a computer screen attracts dust. These conditions can irritate the eyes, nose and throat. A comfortable temperature for office work is between 20 and 24 degrees C, with relative air humidity (the water content in the air) between 40% and 60%.

The quickest way to improve ventilation is to open a window. Check that this is allowable with your heating system and make sure it is not draughty for other people in your workplace. Introduce water-loving pot plants to your work area. This helps to keep the humidity at a comfortable level and also makes the working environment more pleasant. Make sure that you wear clothing appropriate for your work environment.

If you have no control over your indoor climate, report any problems to your Health & Safety Officer.

The 'topic sentence' of a paragraph tells us what the paragraph is going to be about. It is usually the first sentence.

The other sentences in the paragraph give us more detailed information about the topic.

When you write, arrange the sentences in each paragraph logically. Keep sentences and paragraphs short and clear.

Noise associated with computer use is rarely at a damaging level. However, noise should not interfere with communication or distract concentration. Irritation from low-level noise is sometimes an early indication of stress, and is often caused by you thinking that your interests are being ignored rather than by the noise itself. Stress can be increased if you sit next to a piece of equipment and get interrupted by other people who want to use it.

Arrange to have noisy printers, scanners and photocopiers moved away from your desk. If they are particularly loud, request a sound insulation cover or some screening. Place signs near the equipment that say who to call if there is a fault or no paper left.

Paragraph 1
Problems associated with sitting near equipment: noise and disturbance

Paragraph 2
Suggested solutions



Try this!

Organise the following sentences into two paragraphs. Each paragraph should start with the topic sentence. Put the paragraphs in order.

- 1 'Punch up' is a fast-inflating polyurethane punching bag, mounted on a spring-post base for gym-style return action.
- 2 The executive punch bag **takes your best jabs, hooks, and cuts.**
- 3 Great before meetings to get you in the fighting spirit.
- 4 Let's face it, sometimes life in the office just gets too much, and you just have to release some stress.
- 5 The bag is secured with suction cups to desk or cabinet.
- 6 There's no better way than with the executive punch bag.
- 7 You can visually go a few rounds with your boss, or whoever else is getting on your back.

<http://www.paramountzone.com/punchbag.htm>

When you plan your writing it's a good idea to note down what you want each paragraph to cover. You can then organise your ideas and information into these paragraphs.

Try this!

Write the topic sentence for three paragraphs about a job you have to do at work.

JOB:.....

1

2

3

