

TOP 10 TIPS TO BETTER ESSAYS

1. **Ask your professor** if you have ANY questions about the assignment.
2. **Start early** – never wait till the night before an assignment is due.
3. **Start with invention**: lists, scratch-outline, rough draft, circles, webs, etc.
4. **Map/outline your ideas** before drafting.
5. **Once you've written a draft**, reread the assignment to be sure you've understood and covered what was asked.
6. **Plan to write more than one draft**. The first draft is 'for you' -- it's the draft where you work out your ideas. Don't worry about how something sounds, about choosing the right words, or even about the structure.
7. **Explain points fully**. Readers are not mind-readers. If they were, we'd just do a Spock mind-meld thing.
 - a) make a clear assertion of your point;
 - b) provide details, examples, evidence, etc. to support the assertion;
 - c) explain how this support demonstrates the persuasiveness of the assertion.Skipping any of these steps results in undeveloped and/or confusing essays.
8. **Revise, revise, revise** -- and NOT by starting over and over. Sit there and think 'til you feel your brain at work. Set it aside for a day and then come back to it. You'll be able to see where it doesn't make sense.
9. **Proofread as the last step**, starting with the LAST sentence and working toward the first.

Write a lot outside the classroom. Letters are good, as are journals. When you write e-mails, don't write them in e-mail style, with the customary abbreviations. Use the writing of e-mails to reinforce the construction of good sentences and ideas. It prolly wont hurt u.

Finally:

All successful writers improve through feedback. Meet with your professor to discuss an early draft. Go to the Writing Center (101 Davis Hall) to discuss a draft with a writing consultant.