

General Organization of a Literature Review Paper
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Section of the Paper	What should it include?
Introduction & Background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be brief (just a couple of paragraphs) • Clearly identify the topic/thesis in very specific terms • Explain why the topic is important (provide context & “big picture”) • Engage the reader’s attention
Body of the Paper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DO NOT devote a paragraph or two to each article/source you review. INSTEAD organize your main points and themes citing all the sources that are relevant to that theme. Any one source is likely to be cited at multiple points throughout your paper as you refer to sub-topics for which the article is relevant. • Analyze and summarize experimental evidence (describe the important results from recent primary literature articles). • Explain how those results shape our current understanding of the topic. • Mention commonalities and distinctions in research methods, especially if that helps to explain variations in study results. • Identify and discuss unanswered questions and controversies in the literature/field, pointing to the need for research when relevant.
Conclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be relatively brief (just 2-3 paragraphs) • Succinctly summarize your major points • Point out the significance of your points/analysis • Summarize the key questions and controversies that remain and that warrant further research (you should have introduced these gaps, controversies, and questions in the body of the paper).
References	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin on a new page titled “References” (centered at top) • Use your discipline’s standard format for citing sources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The APA format can be accessed at: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/ • Include EVERY source you have cited in your paper • Include ONLY those sources you have cited in your paper (do not include those sources you have read but did not cite in the text of your paper).