

## What is the Difference Between a Research Paper and an Essay?

Research Paper	Essay
Researching and expressing other's points of view on a topic, as well as incorporating your insights and ideas	Usually your point of view
Long in length, at least 8 pages	Short in length with an average of 5 paragraphs
Requires comprehensive understanding of a topic by researching it thoroughly	Does not necessarily require a comprehensive understanding of a particular topic
Familiarity required with research writings associated with a chosen topic	Familiarity may or may not be required with other research or writing
Helps build writers knowledge of a topic	Helps build writers writing skills
The writer compares various pieces of information on a topic and then presents a cumulative overview of the findings	The writer hones their writing skills by presenting their thoughts in a logical and coherent manner
Different flavors of Research Papers Include but are not limited to: compare and contrast, argumentative, analytical, cause and effect, and subject-bases. The last is the most common. A subject or topic is chosen and then that topic is researched and written about.	Different flavors of Essays include but are not limited to: academic, narrative, and philosophical. The academic essay is common at the collegiate level. This type of essay commonly includes a literature review. The literature review is an evaluation of information that is read. It should describe, summarize, evaluate and clarify the chosen piece.
After researching a topic thoroughly, the writer compiles and evaluates the information. The writer then restructures and presents the topic from their point of view, incorporating citations from complied research to back up their analysis.	In an essay the writer puts their thoughts on paper. Thought is given to the purpose of the writing and what type of essay it is. The perspective audience is also considered. The writing should be well-organized, coherent and supported by appropriate facts and examples.