

First compare, and then Contrast

Writers using a comparison/contrast outline might begin by discussing the ways in which the two subjects are similar, and then move to a description of the ways in which the two subjects are different. This is the most commonly used method.

The sequence of information is important. If you begin with the comparison (similarities), then the contrast will be important –which means you begin with the similarities and then move on to the differences. If you begin by contrasting the ideas, then the similarities become important.

This is the outline:

Introduction:

- Begin with a sentence that will catch the reader's attention or interest
- Name the two subjects and say that they are very similar, very different or have many important (or interesting) similarities and differences

Paragraph 2:

- Begin each paragraph by repeating ideas, phrases, or words to make a change from one paragraph to another
- Discuss how both subjects compare on feature one
- For each comparison/contrast, use words such as *alike*, *similar*, *unlike*, *on the other hand*, *to also*

Include examples proving the similarities and/or differences

Paragraph 3:

- Begin the paragraph by repeating ideas, phrases, or words to make a change from paragraph 2 to paragraph 3
- Continue the pattern set in paragraph 2 discussing a new feature in each new paragraph
- For each comparison/contrast use words such as *alike*, *similar*, *to also*, *unlike*, *on the other*

hand

- Be sure to include examples proving the similarities and /or differences exist

Conclusion:

- Give a brief, general summary of the most important similarities and differences
- End with a personal statement, a prediction, or another snappy clincher