

English 092 Unit 1.3

Process Paragraph Assignment

A **process paragraph** (or essay) explains how to do something or describes or explains how something is done. **The process should be described in a series of steps that follow a logical time order.**

1. **Choose a topic that you have some knowledge about.** It's easier to write about something you've done many times before.
2. **Consider your audience.** Who are you writing for and what background information does your reader need to follow the steps? Most process writing is written in second person (you). That gives your writing the feel that you are guiding another person through the steps of how to do something.
3. **Choose a topic that you can handle in a paragraph.** You can't cover how to fix the Canadian health care system in a paragraph or even an essay, but you can manage to cover how to quit smoking or how to change a bicycle tire flat.
4. **Make sure that your topic sentence clearly states what you are going to explain and also makes a point that indicates your view of your topic.**
E.g., By doing a little research and planning, you can save hundreds or even thousands of dollars on a used car.
Avoid simply announcing your topic: e.g., This paragraph will explain how to get a deal on a used car.
5. **Include every step.** If you're explaining how to change the oil in your car and you instruct your readers to remove the plug from the oil pan to drain the oil, don't forget to tell them to replace it before adding the new oil.
6. **Present the steps in the correct order.** This helps avoid confusion.
7. **Include all necessary details and steps.** At the same time, you'll have to decide how much detail is sufficient within the limits of a paragraph.

Don't write a process paragraph describing a recipe.

Example Process Paragraph

Getting a Deal on Wheels

Finding a reliable used car at an affordable price requires both planning and persistence. A good starting point is narrowing down the type car you want or need. Be realistic. You may envision yourself cruising around town in a little convertible, but that won't leave much room for the kids and dogs. Once you've settled on the basic vehicle, do some research to find out which vehicles have good reliability ratings. The internet and books like *Lemonade* can help you pick out the high maintenance turkeys. The next step is finding the model you are looking for. Used car lots will give you an idea of price, but they can be expensive and full of used car salesmen. Check your local paper, car buyers' magazines and the internet. When you finally track down what looks like the perfect car, the last step is the test drive and inspection. If the car drives well and looks good, arrange to have your mechanic inspect it. Never omit this step. After your mechanic gives the car the OK, all that's left is to haggle over the price.

Don't forget to double space!