

Organizing Your Paragraph

The sentences in a paragraph should be put in order so that the reader can easily follow the ideas. Here are four ways to organize paragraphs.

Time Order.....

Time order gives details in the order in which they happened. Transition words like *first*, *next*, and *then* are used.

First, read the directions for the recipe carefully. **Next**, gather all the ingredients. **Then** get a large bowl and the measuring spoons and cup you'll need. **Finally**, begin mixing the best trail mix you'll ever eat.

Time order works well with narrative and expository paragraphs.

Order of Location...

Order of location describes a topic from top to bottom, left to right, near to far, or in some other order. Transition words and phrases like *on top of*, *next to*, and *underneath* are used.

In the picture, a team of oxen stands **in front of** a tall prairie schooner wagon. **Above** the wagon, the white cover looks like a giant sail. The wagon box **below** the canvas is made of thick, gray wood. Four big wheels are attached to **the bottom** of the box **at the corners**.

Order of location works well for descriptive paragraphs.

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Order of Importance...

Order of importance tells the most important detail first or last. Transition words and phrases like *first of all*, *also*, and *most importantly*. are used.

Every family should have a fire escape plan. For one reason, a plan makes sure that everyone knows where to go in case there is a fire. In addition, practicing the plan will make you less afraid if there is a real fire. Most importantly, an escape plan can save your life.

Order of importance works well with persuasive and expository paragraphs.

Logical Order...

Logical order means that you organize details in a way that makes the best sense. Transition words like *in fact*, *for example*, and *also* are used.

Trees are a very important form of plant life. Trees add beauty to the landscape and give shelter to wildlife. Because of their deep root system, trees also prevent soil erosion and help store water. In addition, some types of trees supply lumber for building houses and furniture. Other trees provide food and medicines.

Use a logical order in expository paragraphs.