

## The Introduction Section



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## The Basics

- “This is why I am doing what I am doing”
- Theoretical background
- Literature review
- Builds up to your hypotheses



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## Start \_\_\_\_\_

- “Top of the hourglass”
- Snag the reader
- Talk about “people in general” as they relate to your topic
- Present prevalence or frequency information if it’s a problem
- Purpose of study (not hypo) at the end of the first paragraph
- Section should get steadily more specific and end with your hypothesis



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\_\_\_\_\_ is Key

- There should be no question as to why you are conducting this research
- Illustrate with real world examples

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Be Consistent and

- Your literature review must be relevant to your hypothesis
- If there are conflicting results in the literature, focus on one side and only present the counterargument briefly

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**Literature Reviews**



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### The Basics

- Theoretical background from broad to specific
- Cites previous research for evidence
- Critically evaluates what is missing from past research
- Builds up to hypothesis

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### Back It Up!

- All claims must be backed up with \_\_\_\_\_
- “Studies show”, “Past research has found” MUST be accompanied with a citation
- Focus on what others FOUND, not on their method (unless you are pointing out a flaw)
- Anecdotal evidence ≠ empirical evidence
- Integrate common findings in one sentence

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### Same finding across articles?

- Gore & Lillie (2006)
  - Found that criminal behavior is negatively associated with GPA
- Gore & Terzino (2003)
  - Found that criminal behavior is negatively associated with GPA
- Smith & Gore (2002)
  - Found that criminal behavior is negatively associated with GPA
- Past research has found that criminal behavior is negatively associated with GPA (Gore & Lillie, 2006; Gore & Terzino, 2003; Smith & Gore, 2002).

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### Don't Have Any Evidence?

- Write "(REFS)" at the end of the sentence so I know you are looking
- Go back to PsychINFO, find an article that backs up the claim and cite it for the final paper

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### Can't Find Any Evidence?

- Discard the claim
- Turn it into a testable hypothesis

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### The Hypothesis Subsection

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### No \_\_\_\_\_

- No part of your hypothesis should come out of the blue
  - Set-up each piece for what you predict
- Literature review should set-up what we already know about these variables
- Provide an explanation of “what’s missing” in the literature

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### Make It Easy for the \_\_\_\_\_

- Create a separate subsection labeled “Hypothesis” or “Hypotheses”
- Have a statement that highlights your prediction:
  - “The current research tests the hypothesis that...”

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### No Additional Explanation

- Hypothesis is the “\_\_\_\_\_”
  - A good joke doesn’t require anything further than the \_\_\_\_\_
- Literature review should have done all of the work for setting this up
- No need to say “I predict this because...”

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### Phrasing It

- Make sure it is a clear prediction of what you expect will happen
- What kind of comparison are you making?
  - Correlational? Specify direction of association (positive or negative)
  - Experimental? State which groups you are comparing and who will be higher on the DV

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### Writing Issues

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- Avoid first-person pronouns
    - Try not to use “I”, “we”, “our”
    - Refer to “the current study” rather than “I”
  - Avoid colloquial phrasing
    - E.g., “...goes hand in hand with...”
  - Avoid cryptic language
    - No jargon, say what you mean in English

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- Synthesizing information
    - Esp. literature review
  - Logical argument
    - Consistency in argument
    - No contradictions
    - Each paragraph follows from previous one
      - Introductory statement
      - Information to support that statement (citing specifics)
      - Conclusive statement that leads into next paragraph

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- Avoid awkward and run-on sentences
    - Read your paper out loud
  - Say what you mean in English
    - Passes the “Mom Test”
    - Especially important in Results section

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### Features

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- Spelling
    - Errors noted as “sp”
  - Vocabulary
    - Errors noted as “w.c.” for word choice
  - Grammar
    - Errors noted as “gramm”
  - Punctuation
    - Errors noted as “punc”
  - Capitalization
    - Errors noted as “caps”

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