



Writing a Compare/Contrast Essay

The following example contains an element of the author’s opinion, but not all compare/contrast assignments allow for that. Always check your assignment sheet and ask your instructor for clarification about including your opinion.

	Point-by-Point Method	Block Method
Intro	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction of general topic Specific topic Thesis = areas to be covered in this essay: <i>Both cats and dogs make excellent pets, but an appropriate choice depends on the pet owner’s lifestyle, finances, and household accommodations.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction of general topic Specific topic Thesis = areas to be covered in this essay: <i>Both cats and dogs make excellent pets, but an appropriate choice depends on the pet owner’s lifestyle, finances, and household accommodations.</i>
Body Paragraph 1	<p>Topic Sentence - Aspect 1 <i>Cats make less of an impact on an owner’s lifestyle.</i></p> <p>Topic 1 - Aspect 1: Cats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detail: Don’t have to be watched during the day Detail: Easier to get care if owner travels <p>Topic 2 - Aspect 1: Dogs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detail: Pack animals shouldn’t be left alone Detail: Harder to get care when away <p>Transition Sentence</p>	<p>Topic Sentence – Topic 1 <i>Cats are easier and less expensive to care for.</i></p> <p>Aspect 1: Lifestyle</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detail: <i>Don’t have to be watched during the day</i> Detail: <i>Easier to get care if owner travels</i> <p>Aspect 2: Cost</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detail: <i>Food and health care are usually less expensive</i> Detail: <i>Less likely to cause property damage</i> <p>Aspect 3: House accommodations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detail: <i>Don’t take up much space</i> Detail: <i>Less intrusive</i> <p>Transition Sentence</p>
Body Paragraph 2	<p>Topic Sentence - Aspect 2 <i>Cats are less expensive to own and care for.</i></p> <p>Topic 1 - Aspect 2: Cats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detail: <i>Food and health care are usually less expensive</i> Detail: <i>Less likely to cause property damage</i> <p>Topic 2 - Aspect 2: Dogs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detail: <i>Food is more expensive</i> Detail: <i>Over-breeding causes some health problems</i> <p>Transition Sentence</p>	<p>Topic Sentence – Topic 2 <i>Dogs are active and loyally engaging pets.</i></p> <p>Aspect 1 – Lifestyle</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detail: <i>Pack animals shoudn’t be left alone</i> Detail: <i>Harder to get care when away Need more living space</i> <p>Aspect 2 – Cost</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detail: <i>Food is more expensive</i> Detail: <i>Over-breeding causes some health problems</i> <p>Aspect 3 – House accommodations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detail: <i>Often need yard and fence</i> Detail: <i>Require more safety and protective measures</i> <p>Transition Sentence</p>
Body Paragraph 3	<p>Topic Sentence - Aspect 3 <i>Cats need few special house accommodation.</i></p> <p>Topic 1 - Aspect 3: Cats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detail: <i>Don’t take up much space</i> Detail: <i>Less intrusive</i> <p>Topic 2 - Aspect 3: Dogs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detail: <i>Often need yard and fence</i> Detail: <i>Require more safety and protective measures</i> <p>Transition Sentence</p>	<p>Optional: develop a paragraph to evaluate the comparison made in the essay: <i>Last summer, I was considering adopting a pet, so I visited the SPCA to gather more information about cats and dogs. I am a full time student and work part time in the evenings, so my lifestyle and schedule didn’t seem conducive to owning a dog like I had originally planned. Now that I’ve had my cat Cookie for a few months, I see that she’s the perfect fit and a great companion for me.</i></p>
Conclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summary of main points Evaluation and/or possible future developments Significance of topic to author: <i>When considering adopting a pet, a prospective owner must consider the lifestyle, finances, and household accommodations that the pet would require. Owners who neglect to compare these aspects will often not care for their pet in a safe manner.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summary of main points Evaluation and/or possible future developments Significance of topic to author: <i>When considering adopting a pet, a prospective owner must consider the lifestyle, finances, and household accommodations that the pet would require. Owners who neglect to compare these aspects will often not care for their pet in a safe manner.</i>