

# WHEN DO I BEGIN A NEW PARAGRAPH?

You must begin a new paragraph:

1. At the beginning of your paper
2. For the conclusion of your paper
3. The first time you use dialogue and whenever a new person begins to speak
4. For a new idea or a change in topic, focus, or direction

You may need or want to begin a new paragraph:

1. For a long example or a long set of facts
2. For emphasis—a one or two sentence paragraph may be used occasionally to call attention to a major statement or idea
3. For transitions—a very short paragraph may sometimes be used as a transition between two sections of a paper
4. To vary the length of paragraphs to help maintain reader interest. You may start a new paragraph for a minor idea shift or for transition or emphasis. You may join related paragraphs together to make longer ones.

If you are having trouble deciding where to break your material into paragraphs, try making an outline first. Each major step in your outline can then be a new paragraph.

*Try the exercise on the back*

As you read this essay, write “1” where you would begin the first paragraph, write “2” at the beginning of the next paragraph, and so on. Briefly explain in the margin why you began each new paragraph. There may be more than one correct way to do this exercise.

The aging process in animals, as in humans, begins at various times. Generally a dog is considered old by the time it is nine to fourteen, depending on the breed. Cats may show signs of aging around age twelve or later. Most pets will slow down as they grow older; this is a normal part of the aging process. However, it is important to keep in close touch with your veterinarian and keep a good eye on the animal. “Don’t assume that a change in your pet is merely due to ‘old age’” says Dr. Thomas Bricker, a local veterinarian. “The pet may be suffering from some treatable disease.” It is easy to dismiss lethargy and lack of appetite, for example, as “old age” when such symptoms may signal several different diseases. “Veterinary medicine is changing as quickly as human medicine,” says Dr. John Heinz, head of the school of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Minnesota. “Today many animal diseases that we were helpless about in the past can be successfully treated,” he continues. There are many things you can do to make your pet’s declining years healthy and happy. A high quality diet is as important during the animal’s old age as it is throughout its lifetime. The animal should be encouraged to get regular, moderate exercise by taking walks or playing with you, but do avoid overtiring your pet. Daily grooming will make your pet look and feel better and alert you to important health changes. Proper shelter is vital; cats in particular need more warmth as they age. Don’t expect the vim and vigor of the puppy or kitten you once knew from your aging friend; however, you will find that bond of affection between you has deepened. The older animal especially needs a safe, secure environment. Avoid stress and major changes if you can. With proper care from you and regular attention from the veterinarian, your pet’s last years can be a real pleasure for you both.