Some Macintosh software programs to consider:

Word processing programs:
- *Claris MacWrite® II*
- *T/Maker WriteNow*
- *Microsoft Word*
- *WordPerfect*

Grammar-checking programs:
- *Correct Grammar* by Lifetree Software
- *Grammatik Mac* by Reference Software
- *RightWriter* by Que Software

Outlining programs:
- *MORE* by Symantec
- *Acta Advantage* by Symmetry

Some books you may want to read about writing:
- *The Elements of Style*, by William Strunk and E. B. White, Macmillan
- *On Writing Well*, by William Zinsser; Harper & Row
- *The Careful Writer*, by Theodore M. Bernstein, Atheneum
- *Edit Yourself*, by Bruce Ross-Larson; W. W. Norton
- *Simple & Direct*, by Jacques Barzun; Harper & Row

4 The Thesis Statement.

Somewhere in the beginning of your paper, usually in the first paragraph, you'll want to clearly state your thesis—your particular point of view on the topic.

Writing the thesis of your paper is perhaps the most challenging part of the work. You want to be clear and concise, but also thought-provoking. Remember that the person who reads your paper is likely to be reading thirty, forty, maybe even a hundred other essays as well. To get noticed, you need to grab the reader's attention. Your thesis can help you do that.

Take the time to write and revise your thesis until it fully captures the complexity of your thoughts and ideas.

Once you're satisfied with your thesis, take a break. Put your paper aside. And reward yourself.

When you return, reread the thesis and make any necessary adjustments, before embarking on the rest of your paper.

Some questions to ask as you read your thesis statement:

- Is it clear? Will the reader understand the topic and the position you're taking?

- Is it compelling? Does it convince the reader that your paper will be interesting, worthwhile to read?

- Is it original? Does your thesis go beyond the obvious, beyond what has been said before? There's too much redundant clutter in this world. Be original.

"One of the great things about the Macintosh is how easily you can write and then revise your writing. I spend a lot of time working on the introduction of a paper, revising until I'm really happy with it. I think Macintosh encourages you to do better work because you can experiment—keep the good ideas, and throw out the bad."

The First Draft. 5

Now that you've written the thesis for your paper and have an outline for creating the rest of it, it's time to dig in and write the first draft.

The important thing here is to block out a chunk of time on your calendar to write it—at least an hour or two for each page of text you hope to produce. Allow more time if you prefer a more leisurely pace.

You'll need to concentrate. You might consider turning off the ringer on your phone and sending your roommate to the movies.

Some advice:

- Don't obsess, just write. Concentrate on getting the ideas down on paper; you can perfect the wording later. Relax.

- Connect your ideas. They should flow from one to the next. Concentrate on the argument you're making, and the words will come naturally.

- Use placeholders if you don't have the exact wording. If you can't seem to flesh out a particular part of the argument—either because you can't find the right words, or because you find you need to do more research—put in a placeholder and return later to finish it. (It's rumored that Ernest Hemingway ended each day's writing in the middle of a sentence, so he'd have a clear place to begin the next day.)

"I have a Macintosh with a color monitor. I try to write the first draft quickly. Sometimes I find the right words the first time through. Other times, I'll write a paragraph, and I won't be very happy with it. So I'll put it in a different color, say red, which reminds me to come back to it later and work on it. Sometimes I get really ambitious and use a lot of different colors: red for things I want to rework, blue for things that need more research, green for things that need more proof."

*Different font styles. You can use different font styles to add emphasis to your points: italics, **boldface**, underline, even* SMALL CAPS*. You can easily change the style and the size of fonts, too.*

6 The Rewrite.

An important part of creating a stellar paper is spending the time to perfect it.

Rewriting is the process of editing your own work to make it better. The best writers do it with everything they write.

It's a good idea to let some time pass before rewriting a paper—a few hours, or if your deadline allows, a few days. The more distance you have from the paper, the more objective you can be.

Pointers:

- First, read through the paper to evaluate the flow of the argument. Have you made your points clearly? Are they in the right order? Are you missing any major points?

Are there any "grand leaps of logic" that need to be corrected? Are there extraneous ideas, paragraphs, or quotes that should be removed?

- Second, read for tone and style. These details give your writing flavor. Try reading it aloud to yourself or to a friend. Does the writing sound like you?

- Third, trim the fat from your writing. ~~Have you been this? Do you make your points concisely? Are there words you can eliminate?~~ Have the courage to cut.

- Last, look at your references. Are they appropriate? Do they help prove your point? If so, make sure you've cited them accurately.

"The Macintosh makes revising my work easy. Say, for instance, I decide that a paragraph belongs somewhere else in my paper. All I have to do is cut it and then paste it where it belongs. Macintosh lets me focus on getting my ideas down on paper, rather than on how to get them down on paper."
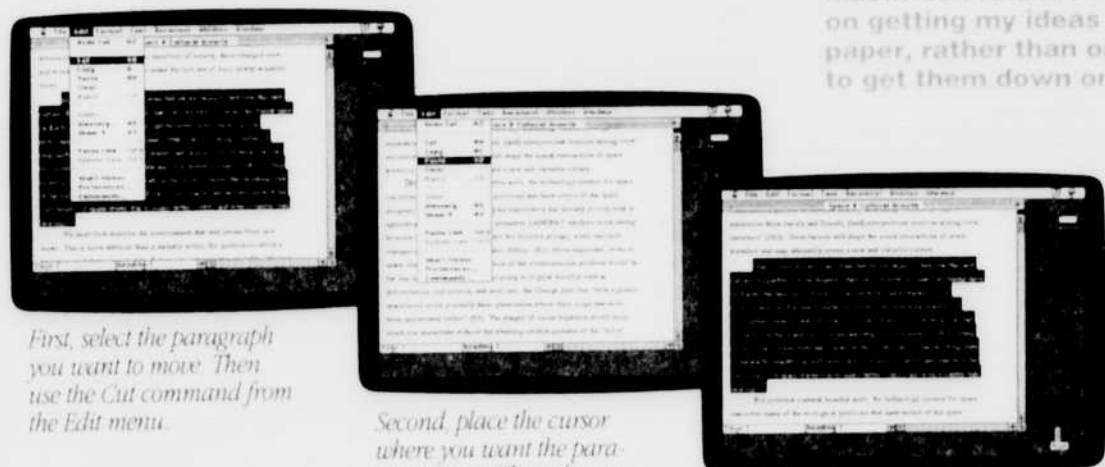
First, select the paragraph you want to move. Then use the Cut command from the Edit menu.

Second, place the cursor where you want the paragraph to go. Then choose the Paste command.

Voilà! You've moved your paragraph.

7 The Final Pass.

Set aside some time to proofread your paper. This is best done when you're alert—and calm. Avoid doing it on the way to turning in your paper. Sit at a desk, red pen in hand, and read carefully.

Misspellings, faulty grammar, and factual errors are distracting at best—and at worst, may significantly lower your grade. Be diligent. Correct them all.

A computer can greatly speed up the process by catching misspellings and even many grammatical errors. Some word processing programs come with a thesaurus that will suggest just the word you probably meant to use.

`Check Spelling...`

Once you've proofed your paper, all you have to do is print it. Which, on a Macintosh, is quite straightforward—just use the Print command. It's in plain English, so you can't miss it. (For more advice on printing, see page 14.)

Some things to look for:

- Factual errors. Make sure you've spelled the names of all major works, people, sources, and so forth correctly. Make sure your dates and other historical information are correct.

- Misspelled words.

- Misused homonyms. For example, have you used "it's" when you should have used "its"? Have you used "there" when you should have used "their"?

- Double words. When people type, they often repeat words accidentally.

- Missing words. When your mind works faster than you can type, it's easy to leave out words. Read carefully to make sure you haven't. Reading out loud helps a lot.

- Other grammatical errors. (If you'd like to brush up on your grammar, you might want to read some of the books listed at the top of this page.)

Automatic footnotes. You can easily create footnotes for your paper, and the Macintosh automatically keeps track of where they go in the text. Move a sentence that is associated with a footnote, and the footnote moves, too—if you move the sentence to a new page, the footnote follows, and the Macintosh remembers your footnotes automatically.

Space Travel and Cultural Growth

The space program that once rode a wave of national pride and support now needs concrete justification. Increasing environmental awareness and decreasing government funds have led many people to question the need for human presence in space, or more specifically, the need to support such presence with approximately 0.3% of our gross national product (Lewis and Lewis 119). The traditional response to such criticisms is to cite the various "spin-off" technologies created from the space industry, such as Velcro and very round ball bearings. But this seems unfulfilling at best; as columnist George Will noted, "we have justified space exploration in a very banal way; we have sold it on the basis that it produced nonstick frying pans" (quoted in White xviii). And in fact, more visionary supporters have begun to hail the space program for its *cultural* as well as its technological merits[1]. Yet as visionaries, these supporters tend to analyze the space program in its adulthood, skipping over the current stage of infancy; they discuss galactic society and extraterrestrial interaction. Thus, there is a relative vacuum of discussion dealing with the cultural benefits of space travel in the near future.

Yet these cultural benefits can be substantial. As space explorers shed the physical weight of flesh and bone, so may they shed the social weight of provincialism and cultural centrism. But while they must eventually resume the mantle of gravity, many will have permanently discarded their social biases. Upon their return to Earth, it is probable that elite spacefar[...] share new ideologies stressing global values. And precisely becau[...]

[1] This is not to say that space technology is useless [...] the con[...] developed originally for the space program have enhanced fields [...] materials research.

Writing is hard work. There's no question about it. But if you follow the tips on this page—and use a Macintosh—you can make the process of writing manageable, and even enjoyable.

And who knows? Maybe nine hundred years from now, deep in an archive, students will come across one of your papers. And maybe they'll find, in reading it, how different your ideas are from theirs. But maybe they'll also find that students writing papers, even when separated by centuries, have quite a lot in common.