

Comparison / contrast composition

Organization: Blocking or Point-by-Point?

There are two primary ways to organize the writing: in blocks and point-by-point.

- a) **In block (or the one-side-at-a-time method).** Describing the characteristics of the first item and then the characteristics of the second.

Introduction A ↔ B	name A,B state their relationship		
A	characteristic/s		
transition	B in relation to A	compare/contrast cue words	like, similar to, also ... unlike, on the other hand ...
B	characteristic/s		
conclusion	personal statement prediction conclusion...		

- b) **In point-by-point** ('separating similarities and differences' format) the comparison shifts from one aspect of the first item to the same aspect of the other(s). It presents both sides of the argument at the same time.

Introduction A ↔ B	name A,B state their relationship		
A // B	similarities		
transition	B in relation to A	compare/contrast cue words	like, similar to, also ...
A x B	differences	compare/contrast cue words	differs, unlike ... on the other hand ...
conclusion	personal statement prediction conclusion ...		

➤ Which method is best?

It depends on the situation, sometimes "point by point" works best and sometimes "block" is more suitable. To help your reader follow the information, you should signal the transitions (similarities ↔ differences).