Outlining

What can it do?
An Outline will...
• Present information in an organized and logical manner
• Focus on main ideas and key details
• Show how information is related
• Cover a lot of material in a small space

When to outline...
• Outline before you write to organize ideas.
• Outline after you read to identify the order of main ideas and key supporting details.

The Four Rules of an Outline
1. Parallelism: Headings of the same level are of the same kind (a noun, a verb, etc.)
2. Coordination: Headings of the same level are the same rank
3. Subordination: Information moves from general to specific by indenting from left to right
4. Division: Each heading must have at least two subheadings in order to be divided

Anatomy of an Outline
• Headings and subheadings
• Ordering system
  o Roman numerals
  o Letters
  o Numbers

Where to look for information in a text:
• Headings and subheadings
• Abstracts
• Introductions
• Topic sentences
• Bold-faced or italicized words
• Summaries
• Conclusions

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