★Chicago Style★
TURABIAN

PLANNING YOUR DRAFT

In constructing your argument, you may not have to put your reasons in any particular order. But when you plan a draft, you must impose *some* order on them. The best order is the one that best meets your readers' needs. When you're not sure how to order your reasons, consider the following principles:

1. You can organize your paper according to its subject matter:

    - **Chronological.** This is the simplest: earlier-to-later or cause-to-effect.

    - **Part by part.** If you break your topic into its constituent parts, you can deal with each in turn, but you must still order those parts in some way that helps readers understand them: by their functional relationships, hierarchy, similarities and differences, and so on.

2. You can also organize your paper to facilitate your readers' understanding:

    - **Short to long, simple to complex.** Most readers prefer to deal with simpler issues before they work through more complex ones.

    - **More familiar to less familiar.** Most readers prefer to read what they know about before they read what's new.

    - **Most acceptable to most contestable.** Most readers move more easily from what they agree with to what they don't.

    - **Less important to more important (or vice versa).** Most readers prefer to read more important reasons first, but those reasons may have more impact when they come last.

    - **Earlier understanding as a basis for later understanding.** Readers may have to understand some events, principles, definitions, and so on before they understand another thing.

To test an order, create one paragraph that includes just your reasons in the order you want to test. If that paragraph reads like a convincing elevator story, then you have found a usable order.