

# How would I approach writing my first pre-lab:

## Parts of the Pre-Lab

The pre-lab must include:

1. Your name (and your partner's name)
2. Title
3. Purpose
4. Introduction, overview, or method (see pre-lab sheet)
5. Pre-lab questions
6. Procedure in outline form.

There are several handouts that will help in the process.

- 1) Click Laboratory experiments
- 2) Preparing for lab & formatting your lab reports
  - a. (So many handouts! Once you get the hang of writing a pre-lab, you won't need to look at the formatting handouts.)
- 3) Start with How to format a lab report. :
  - a. This handout is an overview.(kind of helpful-but...I needed more)
- 4) Look at the templates
  - a. Handouts **'1a & 1b'** are helpful :
    - a) Handout 1a) shows the general layout of a prelab
    - b) Handout 1b) shows the general form of the prelab.

Here is the general set up that I will use.

<b>Purpose:</b> What do I will I determine, explore, discover, calculate by doing this lab? (WRITTEN BEFORE LAB STARTS)	
<b>Introduction:</b> Does this lab need an introduction? Maybe-I should read the pre-lab for the experiment. (WRITTEN BEFORE LAB STARTS)	
<b>Procedure</b> (WRITTEN BEFORE LAB STARTS) Where would I find this information? How much should I put in here? How about spacing?	<b>Observations &amp; Raw data</b> <b>The pre-lab sheet has this information.</b> <b>Summarize the steps.</b> <b>Leave space in between each procedural step.</b>

NOW I AM GETTING A BETTER IDEA OF HOW TO WRITE A PRE-LAB

- 5) I skimmed '2.1)How to format a purpose' and **Experiment 2 Instructions** and took the MOODLE quiz. I know that there are two purposes that I can use.

So far, I have not written anything in the lab book. I got out some scratch paper or a note book dedicated to outlining the experiment.

Before I write **IN** my lab book, I sketch out and outline the parts I might need for the actual pre-lab in the scrap notebook or on the computer, or on the lab instructions.

**Now I am ready to write my pre-lab for Exp. 2**

- 6) Click on Experiment 2

- 1) I read the pre-lab sheet.
  - a. I will need a purpose, an introduction, and a procedure.
- 2) I copy the purpose that I will use from the **'How to format a purpose'**.
- 3) I answer the questions posed in the **'Introduction'** section of **'Exp. 2-Pre-lab'**. I would do these parts on the computer, because I like to type.
- 4) Then I skim the instructions and highlight the parts that I think are important for the lab. The lab instructions give the step by step information, while the pre-lab sheet points out parts that might be missed or are important to completing the whole lab report.

Now I am ready to write in my lab book. Because I have previewed the important parts, I write in the three parts needed in the appropriate format with very few mistakes.

At first, this might seem like a lot of work, and it is-I won't deny it. The first two labs are challenging because most students have never done a lab before. However, with a little bit of practice and diligence, you will be able to write standard reports that are flexible enough for you to walk into any lab course and adjust to the teachers specifications.