

DRAFTING A CONCLUSION

You can build your conclusion around the elements of your introduction, only in reverse order.

1. **Restate your claim** early in your conclusion, but more fully than in your introduction:

For years, efforts by public-interest organizations to curtail cellphone use while driving have focused on informing people of the practice's dangers, but much evidence exists to show that cellphone use remains common on our roadways. My study, however, challenges the assumption that risky behaviors are primarily a matter of choice by showing that even when people are aware of the dangers of cellphone use, they may be unaware of actually using their cellphones in the moment. I conclude that cellphone use while driving might be better understood as a habitual activity that occurs below threshold of conscious attention.

2. After stating your claim, **remind readers its significance** or, better, state a new significance or a practical application:

If my conclusion is correct, it suggests that we might productively change the focus of our efforts to reduce the incidence of cellphone use by drivers. Rather than attempting to influence drivers' decisions through information campaigns or legal prohibitions, we ought to pursue technological solutions that make it difficult or impossible for drivers to engage unconsciously in this unsafe behavior.

3. Finally, **suggest other questions** that your results might raise. This gesture suggests how other researchers can continue the conversation. And it mirrors the opening context:

My research improves our understanding of the causes of cellphone use while driving and risky behavior generally, but my findings are nevertheless preliminary. This study focused exclusively on young adult drivers, and so it is possible that drivers of other ages may display different behaviors. Likewise, I did not consider the influence of gender. Moreover, my findings do not indicate which sorts of technological interventions might be most effective in curtailing the behavior, nor do they tell us how these interventions might be combined with other prevention efforts. Additional research is thus needed before we can know how to apply these results effectively at the level of policy.