

Preparing a Paper for Publication
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1. Select the appropriate journal.
 - a. Consider the subject matter. Is there a match between the emphasis of the other articles in the journal and your manuscript?
 - b. Consider who reads the journal. Does the journal reach the people who will be interested in the content of your article?
 - c. Consider the journal's requirements. Some journals have space limitations, some do not. Some allow color, some do not.

CAVEAT: You can submit your article to only ONE journal at a time.
- 2 Ethical considerations
 - a. Authorship and Contributorship
 - i. Authorship credit should be based on 1) substantial contributions to conception and design, or acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data; 2) drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content; and 3) final approval of the version to be published. Authors should meet conditions 1, 2, AND 3.
 - ii. All contributors who do not meet the criteria for authorship should be listed in an acknowledgments section.
 - b. Duplicate publication
 - i. Duplicate publication is publication of a paper that overlaps substantially with one already published in print or electronic media. Duplicate publication of original research is particularly problematic, because it can result in inadvertent double counting or inappropriate weighting of the results of a single study, which distorts the available evidence.
 - ii. Make a full statement to the editor about all submissions and previous reports (including meeting presentations and posting of results in registries) that might be regarded as redundant or duplicate publication of the same or very similar work. Alert the editor if the manuscript includes subjects about which the authors have published a previous report or have submitted a related report to another publication. Any such report must be referred to and referenced in the new paper.
 - c. Conflict of interest
 - i. Individual authors: Disclose all financial and personal relationships that might bias your work. To prevent ambiguity, state explicitly in a cover letter or on the title page whether potential conflicts do or do not exist. Most journals usually request signed conflict of interest forms for all authors once a manuscript is provisionally accepted.
 - ii. Project support: Describe the role of the study sponsor(s), if any, in study design; in the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data; in the writing of the

report; and in the decision to submit the report for publication. This information can be included in the cover letter or in the methods section, depending on journal requirements.

d. Protection of human subjects and research animals

i. Human subjects: If you are reporting experiments on human subjects, indicate whether the procedures followed were in accordance with the ethical standards of your institutional review board and with the Helsinki Declaration of 1975, as revised in 2000 (5).

ii. Research animals: When reporting experiments on animals, indicate whether the institutional and national guide for the care and use of laboratory animals was followed.

3. Organize your material and write and assemble your manuscript.

a. Consult “Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals” (<http://www.icmje.org/>) for all issues related to publication.

b. Compose your title and abstract. These are often the first elements read by reviewers and readers.

i. Title: The title should be concise but informative. The initial words should represent the most important aspect of the paper.

ii. Most journals require a structured abstract for original research articles: Background, Methods, Results, and Conclusions.

c. Compose your text according to the following pattern:

i. Introduction: a description of the general problem followed by a statement of the specific problem and the motivation for the study

ii. Methods: what was done

iii. Results: what was learned

iv. Discussion: how the results fit into the larger picture, the limitations of the study, and comments on “what next”?

d. Prepare figures as needed.

Submit photographic prints, laser-quality prints, or electronic files. Most publishers prefer electronic files prepared using graphics software (Photoshop, Illustrator) rather than presentation software (PowerPoint)

e. Tables

Tables should be self-explanatory and self-contained.

f. Permission

To avoid breaking copyright laws, it is the author’s responsibility to obtain permission from the copyright holder to reproduce material from a copyrighted source.

g. References

The author is responsible for the correctness and completeness of all citations.

Personal communications should be cited in the text only, not in the list of references, and should include the name of the person and the date of the communication. Check the target journal concerning limitations on the number of references and the appropriate reference style.