
Formatting Manuscripts

Note that the journal's instructions for authors take precedence if they conflict with any of the guidelines listed below.

Text (general)

- Title page, abstract, text, references, acknowledgments, tables, and figure legends are in separate sections.
- Paragraphs are indented properly (except for those under a header, unless a sample article indicates otherwise).
- All abbreviations are spelled out at first use.
- Font and text size are correct and uniform. Before using Ctrl+A (Select All) and then changing the font, check to make sure there are no symbols in the text, as changing the font could turn them into boxes.
- Text is double-spaced and left-justified.
- Headings and subheadings are formatted per journal style.
- Paper size is letter (ie, 8½ × 11), and margins are 1" on all sides (unless otherwise specified).

Title page

- The title is within the character limits, if any are specified.
- The title is formatted as in example articles from that journal (eg, bold, title case)
- Author names, initials, titles, degrees, and affiliations are correct and formatted as in published examples.
- Institutional affiliation listing reads "Texas Heart Institute." Heart-failure group: Clinical LVAD or bridge-to-transplant papers should be from the Center for Cardiac Support; transplant papers, from the Dept. of Cardiopulmonary Transplantation.
- Running title is present (if needed) and of the correct length.
- Word count is included (if asked for) and accurate.
- Corresponding author information is complete, accurate, and formatted as in example articles.

Abstract

- Abstract meets word-length requirements.
- Abstract is unstructured or follows the structure (Intro, Methods, etc.) dictated by journal.
- Condensed abstract (if needed) meets word-length requirements.
- Key words are listed (if needed).
- Note: Some journals do not allow the use of abbreviations in the abstract.

Methods

- Human studies: IRB approval and informed consent are mentioned.
- Animal studies: IACUC approval is mentioned; state whether the institution's or the National Research Council's guide for the care and use of laboratory animals was followed (if required by journal).
- Units of measurement conform to journal specifications.
- Manufacturer's information given for commercial products. List the location at the first mention of the manufacturer, regardless of how many products they supplied.
- Generic, not proprietary, names given for drugs.

Results

- Units of measurement conform to journal specifications.

Acknowledgments

- If work was funded by an NIH grant (as for CFTAH papers), this must be acknowledged; not doing so could jeopardize future funding.

Reference Citations (in text)

- All numbers appear at least once and in the proper order.
- Numbers are in the correct format.
- Numbers appear in the correct place relative to punctuation (eg, after commas and periods for superscripted numbers, before commas and periods for bracketed numbers that are on the line).

References

- Per the target journal's requirements:
 - Correct number of authors is listed, and "et al" is used where necessary.
 - Author names are separated by appropriate punctuation (typically a comma).
 - Journal titles are spelled out or abbreviated.
 - Journal titles are italicized (if required).
 - Periods appear (or don't appear) at the end of the journal title.
 - Periods appear (or don't appear) at the end of the reference (after the page #s).
 - Page numbers are abbreviated or fully listed, including end pages where necessary.
- Text is double spaced and in the same font and size as the rest of the manuscript.

Tables

- Tables have complete and correctly formatted titles.
- Tables are numbered as in example articles (eg, Table 1 or Table I).

- All tables are cited in numerical order in the text.
- Tables are double-spaced.
- Horizontal rules are present above and below the column heads and at the foot of the table. Vertical rules are not standardly used.
- All abbreviations are explained in footnotes.
- Have copy of written permission to use tables from other manuscripts.

Figures

- Figures have complete and correctly formatted legends, with any abbreviations explained.
- All figures are cited in numerical order in the text.
- Figure citations in the text are properly formatted (eg, Fig. 1A, Figure 1a, Figures 1-2).
- Figures are in the required format and are of sufficient resolution (DPI).
- If there are multiple graphs, the same line/fill patterns are used to represent the same variables in each.
- Have copy of written permission to use figures from other manuscripts.
- Legends are double spaced.
- Figures are saved as separate files, unless the instructions ask for them to be embedded in the document.

Final

- Run spell check.
- No extra spaces or hard/soft returns in manuscript.
- If Track Changes was used, make sure all changes have been accepted.
- Pages are numbered correctly.
- Pages have correct running head (usually first author, “et al”, page #).