

Writing Scientific Abstracts

An abstract is a brief summary of a research study. The abstract is always short (usually **200-300 words or one page**) and is always written as a **single paragraph** (even though many abstracts strain the textbook definition of a paragraph). It is written for the same audience as the article, so it uses the same level of technical language. It always summarizes the major points of the results, and generally summarizes the major points of the materials and methods, and of the discussion. It never includes bibliographic citations unless it is necessary.

The abstract must be submitted in a Microsoft Word format (*.doc) and as attachment file to the email.

Parts of the Abstract

Title: The title should be short, but descriptive.

Author(s) name(s) and some sort of address/ affiliation of place where you have done the work. You can also add your email address. If the abstract has more than one author, **underline** the name of the author who is going to be responsible for the presentation/poster.

Background & aims: The first part of the abstract introduces the study. It should describe the goals, significance and background for the study. This is usually accomplished in one or two sentences that describe the general topic to be investigated and why it is important. Sometimes this is most easily done by relating something about the state of the field and why you did the experiments. Write one or two sentences describing the specific question you are addressing or relationship you are investigating with this investigation.

Methods: The second section of the abstract summarizes the methods used: how the study was designed and carried out. This usually takes about two sentences, but may be shorter or longer depending on the complexity of the study. Do not attempt to write a detailed procedure; just give a general idea of how you did it.

Results: Write one or two sentences explaining what you found out. Be as specific as possible. State only your major findings of the study. These should relate to the objectives that you described in the introductory section of your abstract. This section is variable in length, depending on the number and complexity of the findings, but is typically two to three sentences long.

Conclusions: The final part of the abstract consists of one or two sentences giving your interpretation of the results and the overall significance of the study.

Additional Guidelines for the Preparation of a Scientific Abstract

Verb tenses: the common practice is to express the work being described in the past tense: "The average concentration of hemoglobin in the study sample 13.5 g/dL," and previously reported work is expressed in either the present or past tense: "Low hemoglobin levels in the elderly people is known to negatively affect the quality of life."

Be sure to follow the above instructions carefully.