

Basic Do's and Don'ts For Scientific Writing

Do's

- State the findings of the research clearly and start with the main finding.
- Spell out numbers from zero to nine. Numbers 10 and above can be written as a number.
- Numbers can be written when hyphenated
 - *Example: 3-week study vs. week three of the study*
- Cite after you explain any information taken from another research article.
- One citation should be included when using reference to a single research article.
 - *Example: A study found that stress can increase cortisol (Reference 1).*
- Two or more citations should be included when referencing multiple research articles.
 - *Example: Research studies found that stress can increase cortisol (Reference 1, Reference 2, and Reference 3).*
- Round numbers in tables, in text, etc. to the nearest tenth (0.1) unless the number is large and a decimal does not enhance the results.
 - *Example: 5.1 miles or 10,244 steps per day.*
- Use general language to explain results, since results are tentative.
 - *Example: A plausible explanation could be....*
- Always spell out a phrase or repetitively used words and then in parenthesis, state the acronym. The acronym can then be used throughout, except when starting a sentence.
 - *Example: Participants heart rate (HR) was assessed.*
- Report accurate significant levels.
- Detail the statistical analysis in the order the analyses took place.
- Carefully review all references in the list for correct dates and identifiers.

Don'ts

- Never write in the 1st person. Avoid using words like “I,” “we,” “our,” etc.
 - *Example: Our hypothesis is....*
- Avoid over complicated words that do not enhance the quality of the manuscript.
- Do not end a sentence with a preposition.
 - *Example: Participants did not require any tools to write with.*
- Avoid the overuse of introductory phrases in a single paragraph and then throughout the manuscript
 - *Example: However, furthermore, therefore, etc.*
- Do not simply report significant levels as $P < 0.05$...use accurate significant levels for each analysis?
 - *Example: $P = 0.034$*
- Do not start a sentence with an abbreviation or acronym.
 - *Example: HR was assessed in all participants.*