





'You can't reinvent the wheel', so the old saying goes. But presumably the wheel and countless other innovations were reinvented many times before we had the ability to record and share information reliably. Intellectual progress is only possible when new ideas are stored and shared so others can take the next steps.

The primary method of communication between scholars remains the research article. Once an author's work earns the approval of their peers and gets published in a journal, it becomes part of the literature and contributes to a permanent record of human discovery.

Publishing, therefore, is an extremely important part of a career in research. However, despite the importance of publishing, and aside from reading papers, for many people their first experience is when they have to sit down and write a paper.

But navigating the world of research publishing today can be a difficult and daunting prospect. The sheer number of titles, metrics and submission requirements is overwhelming, not to mention the demands of funding bodies and institutions. As an author taking the first steps toward publication you are confronted by this mass of information as you prepare to translate your data, results and conclusions into a format suitable for publication in a journal.

Simply getting started can be difficult. But being aware of some key points and taking some simple steps can focus the writing process and improve your chances of publication.

This eBook is designed to provide some very basic tips to help you get started on your publishing journey. We will provide information to assist you in selecting a journal, writing your article, navigating the peer review process and more. The details contained within are not exhaustive and are meant as a jumpingoff point for further investigation as you proceed through the stages of the peer review and publication process

We hope that this document proves to be an accessible resource that you find useful as you prepare to share your work with the research community and the wider world as it too becomes part of the literature.

**Peter Creaton, Wiley**

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# Find a Journal

Think about what kind of article you want to write and the audience you want to reach before you begin the process of writing your paper – this will provide a focus for the whole writing process and ultimately help you choose the right journal.

**Identify your audience:** is your work aimed at the core participants in your specific field or does it have a broader interest for communities at interfaces between your discipline and other disciplines? If possible – think broad!

**Be self-critical:** is your article really ground breaking in the field? Would it really be best served by submission to the top-rated, most popular journal in the subject area? What are the other options?

**Ask questions:** you can identify journals and possible target audiences by thinking about the following:

- Where do you read papers related to your research?
- What journals have you cited or intend to cite in your paper?
- What do your peers suggest?
- Where does your boss want you to publish?!



## Step outside the lab!

Make good use of colleagues and supervisors who can be useful sources of information.

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**NEXT STEPS** – after thinking about your target audience and asking yourself some simple questions you will have identified a handful of journals which may be appropriate for your work. The next step is to evaluate the target journals to form a submission plan. The following points are useful to look out for:

**Review and publication timescales** – this information may be available from the journal homepage or by contacting the Editorial Office.

**Quality** – look at the papers published in the journal – are they of a high standard?

**Likelihood of acceptance** – is it the leading journal in the field? Ask colleagues how likely it may be for you to be accepted.

**Are there any costs** – are there costs or fees for submission and/or publication?

**MOST IMPORTANTLY** – look beyond the Impact Factor! Read the aims and scope for each journal carefully. Your article must be appropriate!



## Are you writing a full research article, a short communication or a review article?

Think about what audience would find the article type you have chosen most useful.



[Find the right journal](#)

# Prepare

A standard research article follows a basic structure. Each section is a building block within this overall structure and it is important to be aware of the purpose served by each section as your article builds to its conclusion. Adhering to this structure will help you to begin the writing process and make your article easier to review. Here is the typical structure of a research article and the fundamental requirements for each section:

**TITLE:** choose a title that best describes your work, is concise and free from jargon. Be mindful of search engine optimization by using the most relevant keywords. Remember that it should entice the reader!

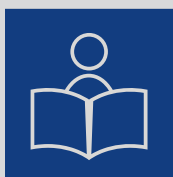
**ABSTRACT:** this is a concise summary of the entire article. It is the first and often the only part of an article that gets read –so it’s important to get it right.

**INTRODUCTION:** why did you do the research? Demonstrate an expert understanding of prior work in this field, typically via a literature review, placing the significance of your research among the existing literature.

**METHOD/EXPERIMENTAL SECTION:** think of this as a recipe, the aim here is to enable the reader to recreate the research with the same outcome. How you did it, what materials, tools and techniques you used.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:** what was the result? What does it mean? Why does it make a difference? Where does it lead? Does it open other avenues for enquiry? Be careful not to summarize the entire article here, that is what the abstract is for.

**CONCLUSION:** what is the take home message?



## Read the author guidelines carefully.

Review what you have written and avoid writing too much – it makes it harder for editors and readers to get to the important bits.

## THINK ABSTRACT!

The abstract is one of the most important elements of your article. Why?

Firstly, editors and referees do not have time to read your entire manuscript when making their first assessments. If you can 'sell' them the importance of your research in the abstract they are able to make a decision on whether the article is acceptable for the scope of the journal quickly and easily.

Secondly, due to abstracting and indexing agencies, such as Web of Science, Scifinder, PubMed (the list goes on) more people are going to view your abstract than read your paper. If you can make it clear why your article is important it is more likely to be found and read.

**Write backwards! Start with the data and end with the abstract:**



Figures and Tables



Conclusions and Introduction



Method, Results and Discussion



Abstract and Title



**Think of your article as a well structured story. Only include information that advances the plot.**



**Tables and information boxes are often great ways to organize important details without breaking up the main narrative of your writing.**



# Prepare

Simple mistakes are very common and, although small, can slow the progress of your submission or cause disruption further down the line. Below we outline some of the key points to remember.

## AUTHORSHIP

The list of authors is very important. If you have a common name, you may want to add a middle initial to help distinguish yourself from others. You should [sign up for an ORCID iD](#) – this is a unique identifier that you can use for both submitted and published papers to help editors and readers identify you.

It is essential to make sure all of the authors are listed. The Editor and referees need to know who has contributed BEFORE a paper is accepted. If you wish to make changes after acceptance it may not be permitted.

## REFERENCES

- More mistakes are found in the references than in any other part of the manuscript. Sometimes an error in one paper is replicated in subsequent papers because authors simply copy the mistake into their list of references.
- Be sure to cite all of the papers on which your work is based
- Make sure your citations are relevant. Citing a range of irrelevant papers can be a hindrance to the Editor and does not work to your advantage.
- If you have published lots of papers before, try to avoid excessive self-citations.
- Most journals are international – avoid excessively citing publications from a single region.

## ARTWORK

- When preparing images, try to keep them as simple as possible and use a single font.
- Remember that they may eventually be printed so try to avoid needless shading effects which will make them appear blurry.
- Check the journal's colour policy. Some journals charge for colour printing.

## LANGUAGE

- Keep the language as clear and simple as possible.
- If English isn't your first language, then there are services to edit or completely translate the text of your paper.



Consider using [professional formatting and editing services](#) so you can present your work in the best way possible.

## Think about SEO (Search Engine Optimization)!

What is SEO?

SEO is the practice of increasing the quantity and quality of traffic to your paper through organic search engine results.

When you are writing your article, you need to think about it. More than 50% of traffic to Wiley Online Library comes directly from Google, Google Scholar, and other search engines. Wiley does everything possible to ensure that all research content is visible and high ranking in the search results of Google and other engines.

You can also play a crucial role in optimizing the search results for your article – helping people to find, read, and cite your work.

## These are five tips for increasing your article's search engine discoverability:

### TIP 1 - Create a search engine friendly title

- Include 1-2 keywords related to your topic. Place your keywords within the first 65 characters of your title.
- Keep your title short. Consider moving a phrase from your title to the first or second sentence of your abstract.

### TIP 2 - Optimize your abstract

- Place essential findings and keywords in the first two sentences of your abstract. Only the first two sentences normally display in search engine results.
- Repeat your keywords 3-6 times. Don't forget the purpose of your abstract is to clearly and concisely express the key points of your research.

### TIP 3 - Be consistent

- Refer to author names and initials in a consistent manner throughout the paper. Remember to be consistent with any previous online publications.

### TIP 4 - Use keywords throughout your article

- Include keywords in your title (1-2), abstract (2-3), and keyword fields (5-7). Keywords may be keyword phrases rather than just single words.

- Incorporate keywords in your headings too. Headings tip off search engines to the structure and content of your article.
- Find specific keywords on Google Trends and Google Adwords keyword tools. Remember that keywords are important for A&I services as well as SEO.
- Use keywords consistent with your field. If you're unsure, check the words used in your field's major papers.
- Let keywords flow naturally and in a contextual way. Search engines dislike too much keyword repetition, known as keyword stuffing, and may 'un-index' your article, making it hard to find online.

### TIP 5 - Build links

- Link to your article across your social media, networking, and institutional sites. The more in-bound links to your article, the more search engines like Google will value and highlight your content.
- Encourage colleagues to link to your article. The more links from respected individuals/trusted sites the more powerful the effect. Don't forget to do the same for them!

**It is vitally important to think about Search Engine Optimization (SEO) keywords at the beginning of the writing process!**



# Submission

You have written your article to the specifications identified when researching your target journals. Now it is time to finalize the submission. The following are the key points to remember when submitting your manuscript to a journal.

## COVER LETTER

Along with the title and abstract, the covering letter is one of the first things that editors see. It is a great way to communicate directly with the Editor and gives you an opportunity to highlight the novelty of your paper. Don't rewrite the abstract but try to explain in simple terms why the Editor should consider your paper further. Keep it short and direct. The longer it is, the easier it is to miss something important.

## SUBMITTING YOUR PAPER

Most journals have an electronic editorial office. Most Wiley journals use ScholarOne, as do many other publishers. Read the submission instructions carefully as you progress through each step and ensure that your manuscript files are clearly labelled when you upload them. Very occasionally submission will be directly to the Editor.

## INITIAL STEPS AFTER SUBMISSION

The first step in the process for a submitted paper is to undergo an initial assessment by an editor. They will check that the paper is appropriate for the journal and ready for further consideration. There are generally three things that may happen at this stage:

The paper is deemed not suitable and is rejected. Rejections at this stage depend on the journal but are often related to whether it is within the journal's scope or how novel the research is judged to be.

The paper is sent back to the author for correction. This can mean that the Editor believes the paper has potential but it is not ready for further consideration in its existing form. Requested changes will often be to improve the English language or change the format to match that requested by the journal.

It is sent out for peer review. If you have written your article in line with the journal guidelines, provided a suitable cover letter and followed the submission instructions closely, there will be a much higher chance that your paper will go through to peer review.



**Tailor the cover letter to the journal, as you would a cover letter when applying for a job.**

Some journals receive more papers than they can publish, so editors are looking for reasons to reject. Pay attention to the details and don't make it easy for an editor to dismiss your paper.

# Peer Review



## PEER REVIEW PROCESS

Peer review is the process of screening a submitted manuscript. It can be broadly summarized into 10 steps, although these steps can vary slightly between journals.

The paper is reviewed by professionals in the same field to assess the quality, validity and novelty of articles under consideration for publication. Its ultimate purpose is to maintain the integrity of science by filtering out poor or invalid articles.

Journal editors will identify and invite reviewers to assess your paper. The Editor will make the final decision based on their own assessment alongside the comments provided by the reviewers.

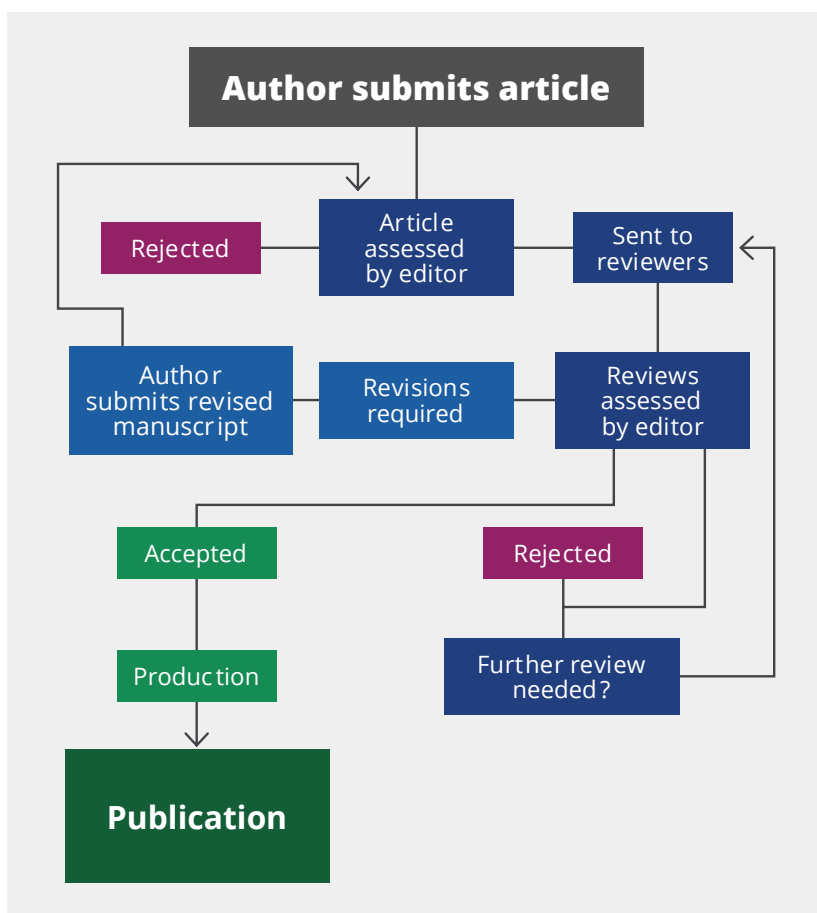
## PEER REVIEW DECISIONS

These are the possible outcomes for your submission following peer review:

**Major revision:** your article is within scope for the journal but needs extensive work before it can be reconsidered.

**Minor revision:** your article is close to being ready but there is still work to be done to make it acceptable. Be mindful that your paper could still be rejected at this point!

**Accept:** acceptance means that your submission has now met the requirements of the Editor and reviewers and is ready for publication



## REJECTION

Your article may not be accepted following initial review or following revision and further review. Reasons for rejection can vary but these are some of the most frequent:

- Not within scope: the paper has been found to be outside the scope of the journal.
- Not scientifically sound: the data does not support the conclusion.
- Novelty: the paper does not demonstrate sufficient novelty for further consideration.

### Reading and Responding to Reviews

You will be given access to the comments from the reviewers who have assessed your paper. It is rare not to be asked to make revisions – any feedback should be treated as an opportunity to improve.

### Key Points to Remember

- The reviewers have taken the time to read and comment on your manuscript, therefore you should take the time to respond to all comments.
- Be scientific and use clear evidence to demonstrate your arguments or to illustrate the revisions you have made.
- Be polite! –You may not agree with the comments but it is important that you respond in a professional and scientific manner.

## APPEALS

It is possible to appeal a reject decision but it should only be done in very specific circumstances where there is a clear scientific or technical reason to do so, such as misinterpretation or where obvious errors were made by a reviewer.

An appeal should be made in writing to the Editor and should always be polite and professional. You should support your appeal with data and/or clear evidence to back up your argument.

### Find support and guidance for navigating the complicated world of publishing ethics

**But remember** – the Editor knows the journal and the subject area very well and their judgement should be respected. The Editor makes the final decision with assistance from the Reviewers – but the Editor ultimately has the final call.

**And think carefully!** – Appealing a decision will not change the result in the majority of cases. Be aware that the process will slow down the possibility of submitting your paper to another journal where it might be accepted. An appeal may not be the right option in the long run.



**It's never easy when your manuscript is not accepted by your choice journal, but it happens. Try viewing it as an opportunity to improve your paper.**

# Licensing & Open Access



Your article has been accepted – congratulations! You will now need to make a decision about open access, and sign a license agreement for your manuscript. It is important that you choose the right open access option for your article. Don't forget to check your institutional and funder requirements- they may require you to publish green or gold open access.

Use Wiley's [Author Compliance Tool](#) to easily check your compliance with open access policies and mandates.

## OPEN ACCESS

There are a number of ways you can make your research open access:

### GOLD OPEN ACCESS:

You pay an article publication charge (this varies by journal) to make your article immediately freely available online for anyone to read, download and share. Your funder may be willing to pay the APC for you. Visit our [Institutional and Funder Payment](#) pages to find out more. There are two options available to you:

- Fully open access journals
- Hybrid open access: publish open access in a subscription journal - most of Wiley's subscription journals offer this option

### GREEN OPEN ACCESS:

You can self-archive non-final versions of your subscription article in an online repository, or on a personal or institutional website.

- The submitted (preprint) version of your article can be archived on acceptance
- The accepted (peer-reviewed) version of your article can be archived after a 12-24 month embargo period

## LICENSING

Copyright licenses detail the rights for publication, distribution, and use of research. You'll be asked to sign a license agreement before publication- always make sure that you understand what you are signing, and that you are getting the right license for you and your institution.



## PRODUCTION

Your manuscript now enters the production phase of the publishing process. The main steps in this process are:

**Copyediting:** the written content of your manuscript is adjusted to adhere to the journal style guidelines and minor changes to grammar and English language may be made.

**Typesetting:** the source files you provided during submission are now formatted according to the journal style.

**Proofing:** once a final version of your manuscript is ready the proof will be sent to you for checking. At this stage you should highlight any minor errors or adjustments you would like made before final publication. You cannot change the scientific content at this stage.

**Publication:** once you have returned your proof and confirmed that it is ready, your manuscript will first be published online in an Early View or pre-print queue to await assignment to an issue.



**Check your proof carefully but ensure that you return it as quickly as possible. Being slow to return your proofs can severely delay the publication of your paper.**

## Maximize the impact of your published research!

Your article has been accepted for publication and is now online - but you have no time to rest! In the current publishing environment it is important for authors to actively promote their work; this can improve citation rates and online usage for the article, but can also have career benefits by helping to build your network of contacts.

### Nine promotional tools to help you ensure your work gets seen, read and cited:



#### SEO

- Are your title and abstract clear and searchable? Have you used the most relevant keywords?
- Have you looked at off-page SEO strategies, such as link building, to promote your article?



#### CONFERENCES

Think about simple messages to promote your article at your next conference – whether networking with colleagues, or presenting formally.



#### PUBLICITY

- Is your latest research newsworthy? Have you shared it with your local press office?
- If sending a press release, wait until the article is published online, refer to the journal in the first paragraph, and link to the final published article on Wiley Online Library.



#### NETWORKING

- If you run a blog, post about your article.
- Join academic social networking sites such as Mendeley and Academia.edu.



#### THE WIDER WEB

- Update your faculty or professional website with an entry about your article.
- Register for your unique ORCID iD and add your article details to your profile.
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Use the [Journal Author Promotional Toolkit](#) and find more tools to ensure your work is seen, read, and cited.

# Discover benefits and resources made for you!

## Ready to submit your paper? Use these tools along the way

### FIND JOURNAL

[Wiley Author Webinars](#) offer you free access to expert advice on a wide-range of publishing topics to support you with your research career. With over 18 hours of content available, you'll hear from editors, industry experts and fellow researchers on topics like:

- Choosing the right journal
- Writing and submission
- Peer review
- Open access
- Promoting your research



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- Academic Illustration
- Journal Recommendation

You and your co-authors can use an online or collaborative authoring tool to write and edit your article together, making the proofing process easier and less prone to errors so you can submit sooner. We recommend [Manuscripts](#).

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### SUBMISSION

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# Discover benefits and resources made for you!

## LICENSING & OPEN ACCESS

Most of Wiley's 1,500+ journals offer you the option to [publish your article open access](#). With Wiley's hybrid journals, authors or the author's funding agency or institution pay an article publication charge to make the final published version of their article open access and freely available to all on Wiley Online Library, including those who don't subscribe.

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## PROMOTE

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- Share anywhere - post the link on social channels, institutional repositories, author websites, or Scholarly Collaboration Networks

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## Supporting you at every stage of your publishing journey

[CREATE YOUR FREE AUTHOR SERVICES ACCOUNT](#)

### An improved experience:

#### 1. Author, Reviewer and Editor Resource Centers

The Resource Centers contain resources to assist authors, reviewers and editors with all steps of the publishing process including:

- Journal Finder
- Links to editing and translation services
- Links to submission sites
- Promotional toolkits for authors
- Peer review training tools
- Support for editors

#### 2. Author Dashboard

The dashboard makes it easier for authors to access all relevant information around their publication through an intuitive and comprehensive dashboard.

- More detailed production tracking
- OnlineOpen ordering
- Open access payments
- Article citation metrics

#### 3. Online Licensing Service

Wiley Author Licensing Service (WALS) provides a streamlined online licensing solution for authors

- Automatic, online, fast license signing
- Authors can change and edit licenses themselves
- Licenses are stored in a repository for easy viewing and retrieval
- Creative Commons license of choice for open access

#### 4. Article Citation Metrics

Authors receive and can view quarterly updates about their article citation metrics, which contain the following:

- Journal & article title
- Digital Object Identifier (DOI)
- Link to published article online
- Number of citations



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