

Instructions to Authors – for Beginners (Part 3)

Author

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Post Url

<https://www.enago.com/academy/instructions-to-authors-beginners-part-3/>

In our [last post](#), we spoke about preparing the manuscript for submission to a particular journal. As the next step, this article discusses the typical process to submit a manuscript. Nowadays, the [manuscript submission](#) process is completely online. Almost every big publication house has its own manuscript submission portal and authors have to follow a step by step guide to submit their manuscript. The main points covered in manuscript submission are:

1. Submission Fee
2. File Formats
3. Cover Letter
4. Submission Process

Submission Fee

A submission fee is usually charged when submitting a manuscript. Some journals have it in their policy not to process the manuscript further until the fee is received. The charges are levied in the following formats:

- Per article: for example, the submission fee of *Journal of Biological Chemistry* is \$60 USD per article
- Per page: for example, *PNAS* charges \$70 per page
- Figures: Some journals charge an additional amount per colour figure submitted. For example, *Nature* charges £700 for the first colour figure and £250 for each additional figure

Warning!

Make sure your figures are prepared according to the journal guidelines the first time around because some journals charge extra if you would like to replace the figure after the initial submission.

The submission fee varies greatly from journal to journal, and some journals don't charge a fee at all, but invite authors to submit, especially if it is a new journal. Previous studies have also suggested that higher manuscript submission fees act to ration out lower quality manuscripts. This eventually results in higher quality papers being published and increasing journal's impact factor.

File Formats

Instructions to Authors usually note extensive information on the format of the file.

The typically accepted formats are as follows:

- Main text: PDF (.pdf), MS Word (.doc, .docx), PostScript (.ps, .eps, .prn), or Rich Text Format (.rtf)
- Figures: TIFF, EPS, or high-resolution JPEGs or PDFs

Tip 1!

1. **Look out for restrictions on the file format. Some journals stipulate that the file size be less than 5/8 MB to enable a successful upload**
2. **Look out for restrictions on the file name. Some journals stipulate a limit on the character count of the file name, e.g., the filename should be less than 31 characters in length, and should not include any Asian characters**
3. **Make a special note of the resolution [e.g., 150, 300, or 600 dpi (dots per inch)] and colour mode (RGB/CMKY) required when submitting the figures**

Cover Letter

Most cover letters follow a standard format as given below. However, some journals also specify very specific information to be included in a cover letter; for example, a statement saying that all regulations have been followed for animal testing or the total word count and number of figures contained in the manuscript.

Example statements of other journal-specific information

This information should be provided if specifically mentioned in the journal guidelines for cover letters. It is not harmful to provide this information (where true) even if it is not specifically mentioned.

1. This work is original and has not been published or accepted for publication and is not under consideration for publication by any other journal or book.
2. The manuscript has been read and approved by all the authors.
3. The manuscript has been carefully reviewed by an experienced editor whose first language is English and who specializes in editing papers written by scientists whose native language is not English.

Editorial pointers for cover letters:

1. Do not use the word “entitled” to introduce the title of your manuscript. It is old school usage.

2. Instead of “Dear Editor,” write the name of the editor; for example, “Dear Prof. Gomes:”

3. Always italicize the journal name

4. Do not use a comma at the end of the line in a vertical address. For example,

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Submission Process

Before proceeding to the online portal, have the following information ready to enter. Note that the kind of information you will actually enter will vary from journal to journal.

1. For all authors

- First, middle, and last names
- Postal address
- Email address
- Work telephone number

2. Title of manuscript

3. Abstract

4. Cover letter

5. Manuscript files

6. Figures as individual files

7. Corresponding author name and contact information

8. Suggested and/or excluded reviewers (if any)

Tip 2!

Be sure to enter an e-mail address that you use frequently. All correspondence regarding submissions will be sent to this address, so take special care to enter the address carefully.

We hope that the information provided in this series of articles will help you in the successful submission of your manuscript.

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