

Guide to Authors

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General Policy

Mission

Our aim is to publish the most important and exciting research in materials science and engineering in a form that can be appreciated by a broad range of materials researchers. We hope to both inform and involve the materials research community, and we look forward to working with you to make *Nature Materials* a valuable, enjoyable source of information. We place a high priority on maintaining an open, active dialogue with the community, and we look forward to hearing from you; please feel free to contact the Editor, Vincent Dusastre (materials@nature.com) with any questions you might have.

For more information about the editors, please refer to the editor biographies at the following url <http://www.nature.com/nmat/about/biogs.html>

Nature Materials will:

- Place a priority on rapid peer review and publication
- Encourage online submission and presubmission enquiries
- Provide continuous publication of Articles and Letters on our website, before the results appear in print
- Deliver full text online
- Offer online supplementary material
- Publish papers at a length to allow full presentation of methods and results
- Provide high quality figure reproduction
- Highlight papers in a press release when appropriate

Editorial procedure

Nature Materials receives many more papers than it can publish each month. Manuscripts selected for publication should report original scientific research, which is of interest to an interdisciplinary readership of materials researchers, intellectually stimulating and represent a major conceptual, fundamental or technological advance in the field.

Nature Materials' editors, not the referees, make the judgement about which papers will interest a broad readership. This is partly because each referee sees only a tiny fraction

of the papers submitted, whereas the editors, who see all the papers submitted, will have a broader perspective.

Nature Materials does not have an editorial board of senior scientists, nor is it affiliated to any particular scientific society or institution, thus avoiding decisions that can be strongly coloured by the scientific or national prejudices of particular board members, as well as reducing the time taken to make decisions.

Because *Nature Materials'* editors judge which papers to publish, decisions are quicker, more uniform across disciplines, and are independent.

The first hurdle for a newly submitted paper is that the full-time editorial staff consider it sufficiently interesting to be sent out for peer-review. The editor who makes this judgement will be handling other papers in the same field, but papers are always discussed with editorial colleagues to ensure consistency, and informal advice (by phone or email) is often taken from outside scientific advisors. It is helpful to *Nature Materials'* editors if the paper is accompanied by a cover letter that states briefly why the author thinks the paper belongs in *Nature Materials*. The initial criteria for a paper to be sent for peer-review are that the results seem novel, arresting (unexpected or surprising), and that the work seems broadly significant outside its particular field. The initial judgement is not a reflection on the scientific validity of the work described, or on its importance to people in the same field.

Once the editors have decided that a paper is in principle sufficiently interesting to be sent to referees, the editor who knows most about the field in question is responsible for selecting independent experts to act as peer reviewers, and for ensuring that the process is rapid and constructive. Most papers are sent to two or three referees, but some are sent to more or, occasionally, just to one. The editors then make a decision based on the referees' advice and other editorial considerations.

Authors are welcome to suggest possible referees; these suggestions are often helpful, although they are not necessarily followed. Authors may also request the exclusion of individuals with a potential conflict of interest. Provided the number of exclusions is small, we try to honour these requests as far as possible.

Rapid peer review

Nature Materials places a high priority on rapid review and confidentiality. Decisions on whether to send a manuscript out for peer-review are generally made within 5–6 business days of receipt and we strive to ensure rapid peer review. Editorial decisions about publication are usually made within 2–3 business days after receipt of referees' reports. Manuscript receipt is confirmed by e-mail and editorial decisions are communicated to the authors by e-mail whenever possible (to ensure confidentiality).

Advance online publication

For more information please refer to www.nature.com/nature/aop.

Competing financial interests

In the interests of transparency and to help readers to form their own judgements of potential bias, Nature Research Journals require authors of original research papers to declare any competing financial interests in relation to the published papers. Full details

of the policy can be found at <http://www.nature.com/nature/submit/competing/index.html>
The declaration is required from the corresponding authors of all accepted manuscripts received after 1 October 2001; a shortened form of the declaration is published as part of the printed paper, with a more detailed version, if appropriate, on the web site.

Relationship between *Nature Materials* and *Nature*

Like the other *Nature* monthly titles, *Nature Materials* is editorially independent of *Nature*. Thus, it will be for authors alone to decide where to submit their manuscripts. *Nature* will continue to publish the most significant advances just as it has always done, whereas *Nature Materials* will publish landmark papers within the field. We firmly believe that for a journal to become the leading publication in its field, most of its papers must be submitted directly to that journal by authors who freely choose to do so. This system has served *Nature* and its monthly titles well, and has played a key part in the success of all the *Nature* journals.

Most papers published in the monthly journals are submitted to them directly. But because *Nature* has to decline many papers of very high quality for reasons of space, papers that are judged by *Nature*'s editors (before or after review) to be of potential interest to *Nature Materials*' readership will be passed, in strict confidence, to *Nature Materials*' editors for initial consideration. If *Nature Materials* is interested in the work, authors will be encouraged to resubmit to *Nature Materials*, but it is entirely up to them whether they agree to this course of action. The advantage to authors is that significant time can be saved in the editorial process.

For those cases where the *Nature* paper has already been peer-reviewed, and subject to the authors' agreement, *Nature* will then release referees' comments to the editors of *Nature Materials*, allowing a rapid editorial decision. In cases where the work was felt to be of high quality, papers may sometimes be accepted by *Nature Materials* without further review. But if there are serious criticisms, we will consider these in making our editorial decision. Based on the referees' reports and the authors' response, the editors will then decide whether to seek further advice from referees.

Types of Contribution

- **Correspondence**
- **Commentaries**
- **News and Views**
- **Reviews**
- **Articles**
- **Letters**
- **Cover artwork**

Detailed instructions for the preparation of these categories of articles are given below.

Correspondence

The emphasis is on brevity, topicality and widespread interest. *Nature Materials* seeks to promote discussion of issues relevant to materials science research and invites insightful, provocative and polemical correspondence. Although correspondence concerning material published in *Nature Materials* is always welcome, writers can address any subject that is likely to be of very broad interest within the materials science and engineering community. Since space in this section of the journal is limited, priority is given to short (fewer than 400 words), well-written letters addressing the most topical issues. Typically, new data are not presented in this section, although rarely it will be accommodated. Correspondence concerning material previously published in *Nature Materials* is usually sent to the authors of the original piece for their comments and/or a formal reply. References, if absolutely necessary, should be restricted to five or fewer. Given the shortage of space in this section, *Nature Materials* reserves the right to edit letters to highlight the most interesting aspects.

Commentaries

Nature Materials will publish occasional Commentaries, which are opinion pieces on topics of general interest to the materials research community. These are usually commissioned by the editors, but proposals are welcome. Commentaries are rarely more than 1,500 words in length, should have very few references, are well illustrated (with 2–3 figures) and avoid technical issues. Commentaries present a personal account of an issue related to materials science, rather than a review of recent progress. Topics covered include science policy, funding, education, historical insights and other contentious and timely issues that are of interest to materials scientists.

The best commentaries are provocative and justify a new concept or point of view. They are written at a level accessible to readers who are not researchers themselves but who are interested in materials research. Unsolicited manuscripts are sometimes considered, but short proposals in the form of a one-paragraph synopsis are preferred, addressed to the Editor at materials@nature.com. Articles by single authors are favoured as this is an "opinion" section of the journal. Further details of format and editorial advice can be provided by the editors after submission of a synopsis.

News & Views

Nature Materials is committed to providing its readers with a broad and accessible overview of the most important and interesting advances in the field. Our News & Views section is specifically designed to achieve this goal; News & Views articles inform readers about the latest advances in materials research, as reported in published papers (appearing in *Nature Materials* or elsewhere) and at scientific meetings. Most of the articles are commissioned, but proposals can be made to the Editor at materials@nature.com. We particularly encourage News & Views suggestions not linked to our own papers, and authors need not be shy about alerting us to their own forthcoming publications in other journals or to particularly interesting meetings they may be attending.

When a News and Views article is commissioned the editors provide further guidelines about the format and content. As a general guideline, News & Views articles are always short (up to 1,000 words in length) and have as much in common with journalistic news reports as the formal scientific literature. So the central message of the News & Views

must be stated clearly in the first paragraph and the piece should be written in a manner readily accessible to non-specialists. In this respect, it is essential to ask a colleague from an unrelated discipline to comment on the article before submitting it to *Nature Materials*. Personal opinions, viewpoints, criticisms and predictions are encouraged. The submission of figures and artwork is strongly encouraged, to illustrate both specific points made in the piece and the more general context.

Reviews

Review articles are designed to inform readers of fields and advances that are undergoing unusually rapid or exciting development. Although Reviews should be recognized as scholarly by specialists in the field being covered, they should also be written with a view to informing readers who do not specialize in that field, and should therefore be presented using simple prose and avoiding excessive jargon and technical details. Reviews should capture the broad developments and implications of recent work. The opening paragraph should make clear the general thrust of the Review and provide a clear sense of why the Review is particularly appropriate now. The concluding paragraph should provide the reader with an idea of how the field may develop or future problems to be overcome, but should not summarize the article. The ideal Review should synthesize a new hypothesis or view that the community will find useful and that will ideally stimulate further experimentation and debate.

To ensure that a Review is likely to be accessible to as many readers as possible, it may be useful to ask a colleague from another discipline to read the article before submitting it. Review Articles are limited to approximately 3,000–4,000 words and should be well illustrated with up to eight display items (tables and figures). References are limited to 80. If very technical concerns are essential to the Review, these can be presented in a separate box. When a narrow field is being discussed, very short reviews called Progress Articles, of up to 2,000 words with up to four display items (tables and figures), are welcome. References are limited to 50. Reviews that satisfy editorial criteria are peer-reviewed.

Most Reviews are commissioned but proposals are welcome; please contact the Editor at materials@nature.com with a short synopsis.

Articles

Articles in *Nature Materials* are typically somewhat longer than a *Letter* in *Nature*. Each issue will contain 8–15 Articles. For guidance, typical length is around 2,000–3,000 words with 4–6 "display items" (figures and tables). Titles should be simple and concise.

Articles begin with a brief abstract of around 150 words, which should explain the rationale and chief conclusions of the work, without references. If space is tight, the main text (introduction, results, discussion) can be followed by a methods section, and the number of references should not exceed 50. The reference format is identical to that of *Nature*; for detailed instructions, please see the "Format" section (in how to submit section). Although concise presentation is strongly encouraged, we recognize that certain studies may benefit from additional space, so this is a matter for discussion between authors and editors.

Letters

These are short reports of original research, selected for their broad interest to our readership. They are peer-reviewed in the same way as Articles. Letters should not exceed 1,500 words, four display items or 30 references. They should be written in a way that will be readily accessible to readers in other fields. Letters should begin with a fully referenced first paragraph of around 150 words, which should serve as both abstract and summary. They do not contain separate introduction methods; the background should be summarized as concisely as possible, and discussion should be restricted to a single brief paragraph.

Cover artwork

Authors are encouraged to submit artwork for consideration. Cover images are normally (but not necessarily) linked to specific papers in that issue, but we may also be able to use other images elsewhere in the journal. Illustrations are selected for their scientific interest and aesthetic appeal. Please send prints (rather than slides or electronic files) in the first instance. Please also include a clear and concise explanation.

How to Submit

***Nature Materials* is pleased to offer an online submission system. For instructions and to submit your manuscript or presubmission enquiry please go to www.mts-nm.nature.com**

Submissions

We encourage authors to use our electronic submissions system (see above), but hard copies of manuscript submissions may be sent to the following address:

Nature Materials

The Macmillan Building

4 Crinan Street

London UK N1 9XW

e-mail: materials@nature.com

Tel +44 (0)20 7843 4548

Fax +44 (0)20 7843 4794

Presubmission enquiries

We are happy to answer presubmission enquiries and authors will generally receive a response within 1–2 business days after receipt. We prefer presubmission enquires to be submitted via our new online submission system at www.mts-nm.nature.com. Alternatively, they can be sent by e-mail (materials@nature.com). To facilitate a rapid response, please send a fully-referenced abstract, with references, describing the

experimental methods and results, along with a brief cover note explaining the central advance and its broad interest and significance. Please include references to unpublished work under consideration elsewhere, together with your phone and fax contact numbers.

How to submit a manuscript

Please go to the following url to submit your manuscript online www.mts-nm.nature.com

If a manuscript is submitted by mail, we would ask you to e-mail the cover letter, abstract and introduction of the manuscript (materials@nature.com) in order to accelerate the review process. It is easiest if authors simply paste the material into an e-mail or send it as a word file attachment.

Any material submitted to *Nature Materials* must be original and not published or submitted for publication elsewhere. This rule applies to material submitted elsewhere while the *Nature Materials* contribution is under consideration. Authors submitting contributions to *Nature Materials* who have related material under consideration or in press elsewhere should provide a clearly marked copy, in confidence, to *Nature Materials* at the time of submission. Authors must disclose any such information while their contributions are under consideration at *Nature Materials*.

If part of a contribution has appeared or will appear elsewhere, the author must specify the details in the covering letter accompanying the *Nature Materials* submission. Consideration by *Nature Materials* is possible if the main result, conclusion, or implications are not apparent from the other work. Other exceptions can apply at the editor's discretion, for example if the other work is not published in English, or if it is published on a recognized preprint server for review by other scientists in the field before formal submission to a journal. In case of any doubt, authors should seek advice from the editor handling their contribution.

The manuscript should be accompanied by a cover letter from the corresponding author, who should be clearly identified on the manuscript, along with corresponding address, phone, fax and e-mail. Submission is taken to imply that all co-authors have approved the contents of the manuscript and its submission by the corresponding author. (The corresponding author for editorial purposes need not be the senior author, nor the person to whom correspondence is addressed after publication.)

Statements of equal contribution from more than one author are permitted. The cover sheet of the manuscript should indicate the date of submission (or revision/resubmission). If the manuscript includes personal communications, please provide a written statement of permission from any person who is quoted. Printouts of e-mail permission messages are acceptable.

Readability of manuscripts

Nature Materials is read by materials researchers from diverse backgrounds and many are not native English speakers. Authors should therefore give careful thought to how their findings may be communicated clearly. Although a shared basic knowledge of materials science and general chemistry and physics may be assumed, please bear in mind that the language and concepts that are standard in one discipline may be unfamiliar to those in another. Thus, technical jargon should be avoided as far as possible and clearly explained where its use is unavoidable. Abbreviations, particularly

those that are not standard, should also be kept to a minimum. The background, rationale and main conclusions of the study should be clearly explained. Titles and abstracts in particular should be written in language that will be readily intelligible to any materials scientist. We strongly recommend that authors ask a colleague from another field to review the manuscript before submission, in order to identify concepts and terminology that may present difficulties to non-specialist readers; please note that *Nature Materials* uses **Oxford English** spelling.

Article format

Articles in *Nature Materials* are usually no more than 4–6 printed pages. For guidance, the typical length is around 2,000–3,000 words with 4–6 display items. Although concise presentation is strongly encouraged, we recognize that certain studies may benefit from additional space; this will be at the discretion of the editor. Articles should be formatted as follows.

Title:

A succinct sentence of no more than 15 words, avoiding punctuation.

Authors:

Denote authors' affiliations with numerical superscripts (not symbols) preceding names. Give full details of authors' addresses; spell out US states in full and give full zip/post codes for the corresponding author. Please give authors' first names. The corresponding author is denoted as follows: 'Correspondence should be addressed to ... [initials].'

Abstract:

No more than 150 words. It should contain a sentence of background information and preferably a concluding sentence as well. It should not contain references.

Text:

The article itself begins with an introduction of up to 500 words of referenced text expanding on the background to the work (some overlap with the abstract is acceptable), before proceeding to a concise, focussed account of the experimental and/or theoretical findings, ending with three or four short paragraphs of discussion and conclusion. The text should not exceed 2,000–3,000 words.

Methods:

There is a separate methods section that follows the main text of the paper. It is imperative that the methods section should be written in enough detail so that experiments can be reproduced by others and **be properly evaluated by the reviewers**. Authors should take care when citing previous methods that the reference is accurate and directs the reader to the precise method used in this case. Any alterations should be noted. Units should be specified (for example, 10 mg.ml⁻¹). Ensure there is a space between numbers and units (for example, 2 mm). Names of manufacturers should be given in parentheses.

Acknowledgements:

Keep these brief. Professional titles and affiliations are unnecessary. Grant numbers can be listed.

References:

The reference format for *Nature Materials* is identical to that of *Nature*. References are numbered sequentially as they appear in the text, tables and figure legends. The maximum number of references is 50. Only one publication per entry is allowed, and each should follow the sequence: author list, title of paper, *name of journal*, **volume number**, INITIAL-FINAL page numbers, (year). All references must therefore include both the title and to and from page numbers if available (with the exception of recent *Physical Review* papers, for which the article number will suffice). The reference list must only contain published works, which includes published conference abstracts, papers that have been accepted for publication in a named journal and recognized preprint servers. Footnotes, grant details and acknowledgements may not be included in the reference list, but can be mentioned within the main text. More detailed instructions for references can be found in the Instructions for Authors of Accepted Manuscripts (Articles) below.

Figure legends:

Figure legends begin with a brief title for the whole figure and continue with a short description of each panel and the symbols used; they should not contain any details of methods.

Figures:

An Article typically contains 4–6 display items (figures and tables). The figures should be presented on separate sheets of paper attached to each copy of the manuscript, when submitting by mail. Please include one original figure and three copies of sufficient quality for review. The figures should be attached to the review copies of the manuscript (rather than enclosed in a separate envelope). In general, multi-part figures should be presented as they would appear in the final version. Please avoid sending oversized figures (larger than 8.5" x 11" or A4) whenever possible. Each copy should be marked with the figure number and the corresponding author's name. Reduction to the scale that will be used on the page is not necessary, but any special requirements should be clearly specified.

Formatting figures:

Unnecessary figures and parts (panels) of figures should be avoided: data presented in small tables or histograms, for instance, can generally be stated briefly in the text instead. Figures should not contain more than one panel unless the parts are logically connected. Each panel of a multi-part figure should be sized so that the whole figure can be reduced by the same amount and reproduced on the printed page at the smallest size at which essential details are visible. Electronic versions of figures will be requested (if available) when a manuscript is accepted for publication, and details of acceptable electronic formats (see Electronic figures section within Instructions for Authors of Accepted Manuscripts) will be provided at that time.

Formatting movies:

Movies should be provided in .avi or .mov format. Brief legends should be provided.

Letters format

Letters are short reports of original research, selected for their timeliness and broad interest to our readership. They are rigorously peer reviewed in the same way as Articles. They may not exceed 2-4 printed pages (1,000-1,500 words), 4 display items

and 30 references. They will be read by materials scientists from diverse backgrounds and authors should ensure that they are accessible to non-specialists; please refer to the 'readability' section above. On occasion, authors may be asked to reformat Articles as Letters by the editorial staff if the editors or reviewers feel that this format is more appropriate.

Letters use the same format as Articles, except for the following:

Abstract:

A fully referenced first paragraph of not more than 150 words, aimed at readers in other disciplines. This paragraph gives the background and rationale for the work, and summarizes the main results and conclusions with the phrase 'Here we show' or its equivalent. Its contents should not be repeated elsewhere in the paper.

Text:

The main text should be confined to a brief description of the experimental findings not to exceed 1,500 words, ending with one short paragraph of discussion.

References:

Uses the same format as for Articles. No more than 30 references are allowed.

Figures:

No more than 4 multi-panelled figures are allowed; they should be formatted as for Articles (described above).

Instructions for Authors of Accepted Manuscripts

Detailed instructions for authors of manuscripts accepted for publication

The instructions below apply only to accepted manuscripts and are intended to help us process your manuscript in an accurate and timely manner. Please therefore follow them as closely as possible, in order to avoid delays in publication. There is a separate section in the Guide to Authors that describes how to submit a manuscript for editorial consideration. See How to submit section for more information.

Hard copy

Accessible language and clear expression

Articles

Letters

Electronic text

Electronic figures

How to send files

Personal communications

General information

- Proofs
- Copyright
- Costs

- Use of human and animal subjects
- Materials
- Embargo policy

Hard copy

Please send two hard copies of the final manuscript, complete with two sets of publication-quality, glossy figures. The text should be double-spaced throughout (including references and figure legends). Please include the revision date on the cover page.

Accessible language and clear expression

Our primary concern is to facilitate communication of advances in materials research in a clear and accessible fashion so that scientists across a broad range of disciplines will be able to appreciate their worth. It is in your interest to ensure that your manuscript is written in this manner throughout, paying special attention to the abstract and first few paragraphs. Comments from colleagues outside your area of expertise can be most helpful in this regard and should be sought.

Manuscripts are subject to substantial editing to achieve clarity; editors may suggest revised titles and rewrite the summaries and introductions of Articles. After acceptance, a copy editor may make further changes so that the text and figures are readable and clear to those outside the field and so that papers conform to our style; *Nature Materials* uses **Oxford English** spelling and we ask that you format your manuscript accordingly.

Contributors are sent proofs and are welcome to discuss proposed changes with the editors, but *Nature Materials* reserves the right to make the final decision about matters of style and the size of figures.

Articles

Title:

A succinct sentence of no more than 15 words, avoiding punctuation.

Authors:

Denote authors' affiliations with numerical superscripts (not symbols) preceding names. Give full details of authors' addresses; spell out US states in full and give full zip/post codes for the corresponding author. Please give authors' first names. The corresponding author is denoted as follows: 'Correspondence should be addressed to ... [initials].'

Abstract:

No more than 150 words. It should contain a sentence of background information and preferably a concluding sentence as well. It should not contain references.

Text:

The article itself begins with an introduction of up to 500 words of referenced text expanding on the background to the work (some overlap with the summary is acceptable), before proceeding to a concise, focussed account of the experimental findings, ending with three or four short paragraphs of discussion. The text should not

exceed 2,000–3,000 words. References to figures in the text should be in bold and should include parentheses, capitalized Fig, period, space (thus **Fig. 1a**).

Methods:

A separate section that follows the main text of the paper. It is imperative that methods should be written in enough detail so that others can reproduce the experiments. Authors should take care when citing previous methods that the reference is accurate and directs the reader to the precise method used in this case. Any alterations should be noted. Units should be specified (for example, 10 mg ml⁻¹). Ensure there is a space between numbers and units (for example, 2 mm). Names of manufacturers should be given in parentheses.

Acknowledgements:

Keep these brief. Professional titles and affiliations are unnecessary. Grant numbers can be listed.

References:

The reference format for *Nature Materials* is identical to that of *Nature*. References are numbered sequentially as they appear in the text, tables and figure legends. The maximum number of references is 50. Only one publication is given for each number and titles of manuscripts should be included. Published conference abstracts, papers that have been accepted by a named publication and recognized preprint servers may be included in reference lists, but footnotes, grant details and acknowledgements may not. References should be formatted as follows:

- there should be one tab after the reference number and period
- if the number of authors does not exceed five, a complete list should be given, e.g. Golgi, C., Ramón y Cajal, S. & Sherrington, C. S.
- if the number of authors is six or greater, they should be listed as: Golgi, C. *et al.*
- no comma before or after *et al.* in any context
- no comma before or after an ampersand (&)
- titles should be quoted in full in roman text; the first word of the title is capitalized and the title written exactly as it appears in the work cited, ending with a period
- journal names should be italicized, using standard *Index Medicus* abbreviations with periods
- the volume number should be in bold, followed by a comma
- give page number range (use 'en' dashes between numbers)
- year of publication appears in parentheses
- referenced work that is 'in preparation' or 'submitted' must be mentioned as such in the text (with a list of authors, or initials if any of the authors are co-authors of the present contribution) rather than in the numbered reference list
- for books, the title should be in italics; the first word of the title is capitalized and the title is written exactly as it appears in the work cited, ending with a period; the publisher and city of publication are required

- citations in the text should be given in superscript, with no space preceding the number; numbers should be separated by commas but no spaces; consecutive numbers should be given as, e.g. 9–12

Figure legends:

Begin with a brief title for the figure. Individual panels should be referred to in bold followed by a comma (thus **a**,).

Figures:

The final versions of figures should be of publication quality (300 dpi at final size). Please give careful thought to clarity and layout, bearing in mind the final size on the printed page. Colour should be used only to enhance understanding. (For illustrations on disc, see electronic figures section below).

Please follow the following guidelines:

- the final sizes of figures will be 86 mm wide (single column), wherever possible, although figures may be 178 mm wide (two columns) in exceptional circumstances; when preparing originals, please bear in mind that a 50% reduction will result in loss of resolution
- figures should appear on a white background
- the vertical axis of histograms should not be truncated to exaggerate small differences
- the figure number should appear on the back of the figure
- in general, visual cues on the figure itself are preferred to verbal explanations in the legend (e.g., "broken line", "filled black triangles", "horizontal hatching")
- photographs should be provided with a scale bar, if appropriate
- text, arrows *etc.*, should not be pasted directly on to photographs; instead, their position should be indicated on a photocopy
- photographs should be unmounted or mounted on flexible paper, not card
- all labelling should be in a sans serif font such as Arial or Helvetica; if possible, the same typeface should be used for all figures of a paper
- figures divided into parts should be labelled with a lower-case, bold letter, in the same type size as used elsewhere in the figure
- lettering in figures should be in lower-case type, with the first letter capitalized
- units should have a single space between the number and the unit, and follow SI nomenclature or the nomenclature common to a particular field
- thousands should be separated by a comma (1,000)
- unusual units or abbreviations should be spelled out in full or defined in the legend
- scale bars rather than magnification factors should be used, with the length of the bar defined in the legend rather than on the bar itself
- use the Symbol font for Greek characters

Please also **avoid** the following:

- unnecessary figures and parts (panels) of figures: data presented in small tables or histograms, for instance, can generally be stated briefly in the text instead
- figures should not contain more than one panel unless the parts are logically connected
- gratuitous use of colour for decorative effect
- other decorative effects such as three-dimensional histograms
- 'boxing' around graphs (generally two lines for the two axes will suffice, and additional superfluous lines will merely distract from the data)
- highly pixelated computer drawings
- truncated graph axes

Letters

Please follow all of the above instructions for Articles, except:

Abstract:

A fully referenced first paragraph of not more than 150 words, aimed at readers in other disciplines. This paragraph gives the background and rationale for the work, and summarizes the main result and conclusions with the phrase 'Here we show' or its equivalent. Its contents should not be repeated elsewhere in the paper.

References:

Use the same format as for Articles, but without titles. The total number of references should not exceed 30.

Electronic Text

We require an electronic version of the manuscript. The text (including tables) must be sent on a computer disk, which should be clearly marked with the file number and name of the corresponding author. We can accept floppy, CD-ROM, Jaz and Zip disks. They can be formatted for either Macintosh or Windows PC. We do not accept files submitted by ftp, e-mail or ISDN. Label the disk with the authors' names, the word-processing program and version used, and the type of computer. In the case of a discrepancy between the disk and the manuscript, the latter will be taken as the definitive version.

MS Word

Our preferred format is Microsoft Word, although we can accept most word-processor programs, in both PC and Macintosh formats. With the latter, please use 'Save as' and select MS-DOS file format if the option is available. In all cases, also save the text as an ASCII file in case the word processing file is not translatable.

Electronic figures

Where possible, we prefer to use electronic figures, and these should be sent on a computer disk. Please note, however, that these are not a substitute for hard copy; electronic figures may sometimes reproduce incorrectly, and a hard copy is the only way for us to check this. We require 3 high-quality, glossy prints of all figures.

Sending files

We can accept floppy, CD-ROM, Jaz and Zip disks. They can be formatted for either Macintosh or Windows PC. We do not accept files submitted by ftp, e-mail or ISDN. Name your files with the corresponding author's name, figure number and letter, and file format (e.g. Dr. Golgi's figure 3a in TIFF format: golgi3a.tiff).

Formats

For photographic type images we prefer to work with Adobe Photoshop 6. If the image contains layers, please save your image in the native photoshop format (PSD). If not, please save as a TIFF file. We will also accept DCS 1, DCS 2, JPEG and EPS.

The minimum resolution we can accept is 300 dpi (dots per inch).

For line art/charts/graphs we prefer to work with Adobe Illustrator 9 format or Illustrator EPS files. We can also accept Freehand 8, Canvas 6 (no earlier than 3.5), PDF and PostScript (up to Level 3). Information on how to produce PostScript files can be found elsewhere.

Please note:

- Preferred resolution is 300 dpi
- We can accept Microsoft Word and PowerPoint files BUT any placed images must be provided separately. This is so that the resolution of the files can be checked.
- Ensure that all images that make up the files are included.
- Please use sans serif typefaces such as Arial or Helvetica in your artwork and when labelling panels.
- Levels of grey should be differentiated by at least 20% (i.e. 20% black, 40% black, 60% black).
- Avoid layering type directly over shaded or textured areas.
- Avoid reversed type (white lettering on black background).

Colour images

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