

How to write a paper, part 1

- Collect information, latest publication on the topic and put together figures and tables, target a Journal and get guidelines for sequence/organization, reference style, labeling of figures.
- Prepare a plan with a rough organization- sequence of topics to mention; have references and figures ready and start writing.
- Follow your plan of description – sequence and logic – the sequence of description may be different of the sequence in that experiments were performed. When writing the method section, remember that the description of experiments should be detailed enough that others can reproduce it.
- Give detailed information on animals and their conditions of husbandry, housing conditions, numbers of animals, cite methods and indicate whether modifications were applied.

How to write a paper, part 2

- Write in your own voice, without editing – stick to the plan, write in parts.
- In discussion mention novelty and importance of the results . Put the first draft aside, then revise and be critical about your own work.
- Keep short sentences (15-20 words) and avoid unnecessary words.
- Revise for clarity and have the manuscript read by a colleague. Check for consistency when several authors are involved, since every author has another style.
- Check for grammar and typographical errors. Have the manuscript proofread if English is not your mother tongue.
- Consult the checklist of the Journal if available prior to submission.
- Have names of potential referees ready.
- Prepare a cover letter that states novelty and importance of your findings.

Reporting data

- Note the source and full strain nomenclature of any laboratory animal stock according to international recommendations^{e.g.1)}.
- Mention ethical approval of (veterinary) authorities, and indicate what guidelines were followed. The ARRIVE guidelines are requested by many journals to help improve reporting on animal research²⁾. Because the ARRIVE are first applied at the reporting stage, it is advisable to use the Gold Standard Publication Checklist^{3,4)} already from the planning stage, because then all demands of the ARRIVE will 'automatically' be fulfilled from the start, which makes writing the publication a lot easier.
- Provide measures taken to refine experimental techniques to benefit animal welfare. Disposition and fate of the animals at the end of the experiment should be clear.
- The experimental design and the statistical analysis should be detailed, particularly in relation to using only the appropriate numbers of animals⁵⁾