

Instructions for Authors

Manuscripts that do not follow the style and format given here may be rejected by the reviewers. Authors should strictly follow the instructions to avoid rejection.

Microsoft Word file format only is acceptable for the main manuscript document for all journals.

Only JPEG (JPG) file format for illustrations and figures is accepted for photographs or images that should be at least 300 dpi.

Submission process

As part of the submission process, authors are required to check off their submission's compliance with all of the following items, and submissions may be returned to authors that do not adhere to these guidelines.

1. The submission has not been previously published, nor is it before another journal for consideration (or an explanation has been provided in Comments to the Editor).
2. The submission file is in Microsoft Word document file format.
3. The text is double-spaced; uses 'Calibri' 12-point font; employs italics, rather than underlining (except with URL addresses); and all illustrations, figures, and tables are placed within the text at the appropriate places, rather than at the end.
4. The text adheres to the stylistic and bibliographic requirements outlined in the Instructions for Authors.

Send the manuscript to journal's email address given on its homepage, with a cover letter and attached manuscript. Author names, affiliations, contact information and acknowledgement should be provided on a separate Word file and must not be included in the main manuscript as we use double-blind peer-review that does not reveal the reviewers' and authors' identities thereby removing any bias. The cover letter must include a statement that the author(s) agree to pay the Manuscript Processing Charge if their manuscript is accepted for publication after peer-review. The authors' consent to pay the charge does not ensure acceptance of their manuscript.

To facilitate rapid publication and to minimize administrative costs, we accept submissions only through email attachments to speed up the review process. The time taken to reach a final decision depends on whether reviewers request revisions, and how quickly authors are able to respond.

The ultimate responsibility for any decision lies with the Chief Editor or Editor.

Manuscript-processing charges

All journals have a manuscript-processing charge (MPC) for every accepted manuscript, to cover the costs incurred by open-access publication, website maintenance and marketing. The MPC for 2011 is USD 300 for Developed Countries (applicable on submissions from January 1, 2011) and USD 100 for Developing Countries (applicable on submissions from May 1, 2011). No printed reprints will be provided, as the published manuscript's PDF will be free to download (for anyone across the world) and

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can be printed by authors concerned for their record. Please note that if a manuscript has half or majority of the authors from a developed country, it will be considered to be from a developed country and charged accordingly.

Editorial policies

Any manuscript submitted to any journal must not already have been published in another journal or be under consideration by any other journal. Manuscripts of papers presented at conferences can be submitted unless they have been published as part of the conference proceedings in a peer reviewed journal. Authors are required to ensure that no material submitted as part of a manuscript infringes existing copyrights, or the rights of a third party. Authors who publish with AstonJournals retain copyright to their work.

Authors of 'Research Article' should complete a declaration of competing interests, which should be provided as a separate section of the manuscript, to follow the Acknowledgement. Where an author gives no competing interests, the listing will read 'The author(s) declare that they have no competing interests'. A competing interest (or conflict of interest) appears when professional judgment concerning a primary interest (e.g. patient's welfare or validity of research) may be influenced by a secondary interest (e.g. personal rivalry or financial gain). It may creep in for the authors when they have financial interest that may affect their interpretation of their results or those of others. Potential conflicts of interest include employment, consultancies, stock ownership, honoraria, paid expert testimony, patent applications/registrations, and grants or other funding.

Preparing main manuscript text

When submitting your manuscript, you must mention the 'submission type' (choosing from those given below) in the email as well as above the title of the manuscript:

Research Article

Review

Case Report

Research Note

The length of 'Research Article' must be limited to 25 pages typed in double-spacing including tables, figures and illustrations. The number of references should be around 30 to include only relevant and preferably recent citations (i.e. from the last decade).

Manuscript sections for 'Research Article'

The full names and institutional addresses of all authors, and e-mail addresses (official and private) for only the corresponding author, must be included on the title page. The corresponding author should also be indicated by *.

Manuscripts for 'Research Article' submitted should be divided into the following sections:

Abstract

The abstract of the manuscript should not exceed 350 words and should briefly give the context and purpose of the study, the main findings, and brief summary and potential implications. Please minimize the use of abbreviations and do not cite references in the abstract. **Keywords** must be provided separated by semi-colons, below the abstract.

Number the headings and subheadings starting from Introduction e.g. 1. Introduction, 1.1 subheading, 1.2 another subheading; 2. Methods, 2.1 subheading, 2.1.1 subheading within 2.1 and so on, up to Conclusion.

1. Introduction

Introduction should be written from the standpoint of researchers without specialist knowledge in that area and must clearly state the background to the research and its aims. It should include a summary of a search of the literature to indicate why this study was necessary and what it aimed to contribute to the field. The section should end with a very brief statement of what is being reported in the article.

2. Methods

This should include the design of the study, the setting, the type of participants or materials involved, a clear description of all interventions and comparisons, and the type of analysis used.

3. Results and Discussion

The Results and Discussion may be combined into a single section or presented separately. Results of statistical analysis should include, where appropriate, relative and absolute risks or risk reductions, and confidence intervals. The results and discussion sections may also be broken into subsections with short, informative headings.

4. Conclusion

This should state clearly the main conclusions of the research and give a clear explanation of their importance and relevance. Summary illustrations may be included.

Abbreviations

If abbreviations are used in the text, either they should be defined in the text where first used, or a list of abbreviations can be provided, which should precede the competing interests and authors' contributions.

Competing Interests

A competing interest exists when your interpretation of data or presentation of information may be influenced by your personal or financial relationship with other people or organizations. Authors should

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disclose any financial competing interests but also any non-financial competing interests that may cause them embarrassment were they to become public after the publication of the manuscript.

Authors are required to complete a declaration of competing interests. All competing interests that are declared will be listed at the end of published articles. Where an author gives no competing interests, the listing will read 'The author(s) declare that they have no competing interests'.

Authors' Contributions

In order to give appropriate credit to each author of a paper, the individual contributions of authors to the work and manuscript must be specified in this section. It is not required in single author papers.

We suggest the following kind of format (please use initials to refer to each author's contribution): MFT carried out the genetic studies and drafted the manuscript. YRSY carried out the sequence alignment. TJ participated in the assays. SM performed the statistical analysis. AFJ participated in study design and helped to draft the manuscript.

All contributors who do not meet the criteria for authorship should be listed in an acknowledgements section. Examples of those who might be acknowledged include a person who provided purely technical help, writing assistance, or a department chair that provided only general support.

Acknowledgement (optional)

Please acknowledge anyone who contributed towards the study by making substantial contributions to conception, design, acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data, or who was involved in drafting the manuscript or revising it critically for important intellectual content, but who does not meet the criteria for authorship. Please include the source(s) of funding and acknowledge anyone who contributed materials essential for the study.

References

All references must be numbered consecutively (within '[']' in the text), and numbered without brackets in the references list, followed by any in tables or legends. Each reference must have an individual reference number. Please avoid excessive referencing. If automatic numbering systems are used, the reference numbers must be finalized and the bibliography must be fully formatted before submission.

Unpublished abstracts, unpublished 'in press' manuscripts and personal communications must not be included in the reference list. Journal names must be given in full. Citations in the reference list should name first three authors only, denoting the remaining author(s) by '*et al.*'

Examples of reference style are shown on next page. Please take care to follow the reference style precisely; references not in the correct style must be retyped.

URLs in the reference list should be provided in full, including both the title of the site and the URL.

Authors are completely responsible for the correctness of cited references, both within the text and in the reference list.

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Reference style:

Journal Article

Orengo CA, Bray JE, Hubbard T *et al.*, 1999. BRCA1 protein products: functional motifs. *Nature Genetics*, 13: 266-267.

Journal Supplement Article

Koonin EV, Altschul SF, Bork P, 1996. Analysis and assessment of *ab initio* three-dimensional prediction, secondary structure, and contacts prediction. *Proteins*, 43 (Suppl 3): 149-170.

Conference Proceeding

Zvaifler NJ, Burger JA, Marinova-Mutafchieva L *et al.*, 1999. Zeolites and synthetic mechanisms. In *Proceedings of the First National Conference on Porous Sieves: 27-30 June 1996; Baltimore*. Edited by Smith Y. Stoneham: Butterworth-Heinemann, 16-27.

Published Abstract

Jones X, 1996. Mesenchymal cells, stromal derived factor-1 and rheumatoid arthritis [abstract]. *Arthritis and Rheumatism*, 42: s250.

Book

Hunninghake GW, Gadek JE, 1995. *Origin of Eukaryotic Cells*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Book Chapter

Margulis L, 1970. From prey via endosymbiont to plastids: comparative studies in dinoflagellates. In *Origins of Plastids. Volume 2*. 2nd edition. Edited by Lewin RA. New York: Chapman and Hall, 53-76.

Monograph or Book in a Series

Schnepf E, 1993. The alveolar macrophage. In *Cultured Human Cells and Tissues*. Edited by Harris TJR. New York: Academic Press, 54-56. [Stoner G (Series Editor): *Methods and Perspectives in Cell Biology*, Vol. 1]

Book with Institutional Author

Advisory Committee on Genetic Modification, 1999. Annual Report, London.

PhD Thesis

Kohavi R, 1995. Wrappers for performance enhancement and oblivious decision graphs. PhD thesis. Stanford University, Computer Science Department.

Link / URL

The Mouse Tumor Biology Database [http://tumor.informatics.jax.org/cancer_links.html]

Preparing illustrations and figures

Figures must be included at the appropriate places within the main text of the submitted manuscript. Figures should also be provided separately as JPG files while submitting the manuscript. There is no charge for the use of color. Only JPEG (JPG) file format is acceptable.

For each figure, the following information should be provided: Figure number (in sequence, using Arabic numerals - i.e. Figure 1, 2, 3, etc.); short title of figure; detailed legend. The titles and legends should be given above the figures and not below.

Please note that it is the responsibility of the author(s) to obtain permission from the copyright holder to reproduce figures or tables that have previously been published elsewhere.

Preparing tables

Each table should be prepared in Calibri 9 font and numbered in sequence using Arabic numerals (i.e. Table 1, 2, 3 etc.). Tables should also have a title that summarizes the whole table. Detailed legends may then follow, but should be concise. The titles and legends should be given above the tables and not below. Tables must be included at the appropriate places within the main text of the submitted manuscript.

As far as possible, authors should provide the tables in portrait orientation and avoid landscape. If landscape is necessary, authors must provide the table as a scanned file (JPG). These will be typeset and displayed in the final published form of the manuscript. Such tables should be formatted using the 'Table object' in a word processing program to ensure that columns of data are kept aligned when the file is sent electronically for review; this will not always be the case if columns are generated by simply using tabs to separate text. Commas should not be used to indicate numerical values. Color and shading should not be used.

Style and language

We only accept manuscripts written in English. Spelling should be US English or British English, but not a mixture. Scientific names, gene names should be in italic, but protein products should be in plain type.

We will not edit submitted manuscripts for style or language; reviewers may advise rejection of a manuscript if it is compromised by too many spelling and grammatical errors. Authors are advised to write clearly and simply, and to have their manuscript proofread by colleagues before submission. In-house copyediting will be minimal. Non-native speakers of English may choose to make use of a copyediting service.

MedBioWorld (<http://www.medbioworld.com>) provides a list of resources for science writing.

Typography:

- Please use double line spacing.
- Type the text justified, without hyphenating words at line breaks.
- Use hard returns only to end headings and paragraphs, not to rearrange lines.

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- Capitalize only the first word, and proper nouns, in the title.
- Pages should not be numbered.
- Use the reference format and style provided above.
- Footnotes to text could be used.
- Greek and other special characters may be included. If you are unable to reproduce a particular special character, please type out the name of the symbol in full.

Please ensure that all special characters used are embedded in the text, otherwise they will be lost during conversion to PDF.

Abbreviations and Units:

Consistency must be maintained throughout the text in the use of abbreviations and units.

Abbreviations that are accepted and recognized as common scientific terminology may be used without definition. All nonstandard abbreviations should be defined at that point in the text where they first appear or a list of 'Abbreviations' could be provided before 'Competing Interests'.

The international system of units (IUPAC) is the preferred system for expressing measurements. Some examples of the abbreviations for these units are:

Area: m², cm², mm²

Length: m, cm, mm

Mass: kg, g, mg, µg, ng, pg

Mass concentration: g/L, mg/L, µg/L

Volume: L, mL, µL

The preferred concentration units for volatiles such as ethanol are g/100 mL, g/dL, or mg/dL.