

Guidelines for writing the Abstract

(Source: Coghill, A., et al., *The ACS Style Guide*\ American Chemical Society: Washington, DC, 2006.)

Abstract

Most [scientific] publications require an informative abstract for every paper, even if they do not publish abstracts. For a research paper, briefly state the problem or the purpose of the research, indicate the theoretical or experimental plan used, summarize the principal findings, and point out major conclusions. Include chemical safety information when applicable. Do not supplement or evaluate the conclusions in the abstract. For a review paper, the abstract describes the topic, scope, sources reviewed, and conclusions. Write the abstract last to be sure that it accurately reflects the content of the paper.

(Reminder: The abstract allows the reader to determine the nature and scope of the paper and helps technical editors identify key features for indexing and retrieval.)

- Although an abstract is not a substitute for the article itself, it must be concise, self-contained, and complete enough to appear separately in abstract publications. Often, authors' abstracts are used with little change in abstract publications. The optimal length is one paragraph, but it could be as short as two sentences. The length of the abstract depends on the subject matter and the length of the paper. Between 80 and 200 words is usually adequate.
- Do not cite references, tables, figures, or sections of the paper in the abstract. Do not include equations, schemes, or structures that require display on a line separate from the text.
- Use abbreviations and acronyms only when it is necessary to prevent awkward construction or needless repetition. Define abbreviations at first use in the abstract (and again at first use in the text).