AMSA JOURNAL OF GLOBAL HEALTH

AUTHOR GUIDELINES

These guidelines have been adapted from the American Medical Association (AMA) Manual of Style, with a few concessions. The submission guidelines are adapted from those provided by the Australian Medical Student Journal. Authors are expected to conform to the following guidelines when submitting articles for consideration. Failing to conform to these style guidelines may result in your paper being rejected.

Last edit 18th April 2019.

PREPARING YOUR ARTICLE

1. Titles

- Avoid overly general titles and make sure a title is concise, specific, and informative (and gets the attention of the desired reader).
- Italicize and expand all the words in a genus and species.
- Avoid abbreviations in a title **unless** specifically unwieldy (e.g. "*R-CHOP*" would be too long to be reasonably included in a title) or more established than the expanded counterpart (e.g. "*PCSK-9 inhibitors*").
- Capitalise only the first word of the title ('sentence capitalisation').
- Use subtitles judiciously and without redundancy.

2. Abstracts

When abstracts are required, such as for original research articles and review papers (not feature articles), these should be structured under the following headings: Aims, Methods, Results, Conclusions. The abstract should be brief (<250 words) and should focus on the most salient features of the paper.

The abstract is a complete summary of the piece; it does not allow for "mystery", and it cannot include any information not in the article. The abstract must be true to the article and should not overstate the results or their implications. The abstract subheadings should be bolded for contrast; however, there should be only a return, and not a space, between adjacent sections:

"Aims: To determine the length of bananas from Queensland and Indonesia, and to quantify their relative potassium content.

Methods: In total, 2509 bananas were enrolled in this prospective study; all bananas provided written informed consent before study inclusion."

3. Headings and subheadings

AJGH editors will typeset all articles before publication to be consistent with the style used for the given issue. For this reason, we do not specify a specific style for headings and subheadings but ask that the heading *levels* are obvious – i.e. use a consistent and ***obvious*** style for headings and subheadings. The preferred is:

Main title or first level heading (i.e. title of the paper or 'Abstract', 'Introduction', 'Methods' etc.):
Bold, 12 pt, left margin, do not capitalize anything but the first word, no full-stop

Second-level headings ('subheadings'):
Italicized, 12pt, left margin, do not capitalize anything but the first word, no full-stop

Articles requiring more than 2 levels of headings may choose to use a numbering system (1.0, 1.1, 2.0, 2.1.1, 2.1.2, and so on) for clarity. Whilst these numbers will be removed during typesetting, this allows our editors to interpret heading and subheading styles accurately.

4. Structure

Article structure depends on the type of article being submitted. Rough guidelines are given below.

Original research articles

All original research articles require a structured abstract. The following headings should be used: Aims, Methods, Results, Conclusions. The abstract should be brief (<250 words), and should focus on the most salient features of the paper. Further guidance on writing and editing a good abstract is found above.

The structure of original research papers follows the IMRAD format: Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion or Conclusion. Use this structure to evaluate the paper when editing.

- The introduction introduces the work by stating the objectives and the hypothesis, and provides enough context (often with ***some*** evaluation of the literature – typically epidemiological in nature – enough to indicate the need for the research in question) to make the work understandable and meaningful to the reader.

- The methods section is a description of how the research was performed in enough detail that an informed reader could replicate the methods. Established methodology that is described in detail in other publications should not be repeated, but referenced. E.g.:

  "Banana measuring was performed as described in detail previously.[1-4]"

- The results section describes the results and relevant data of the study. Generally speaking, data should be presented in the most efficient format - generally tabulated or graphical - and should not be duplicated between the main text and graphs or tables. Some data can not be reasonably presented using graphs/tables, often due to a lack of data points or use of qualitative outcomes. In such instances, it is acceptable to present the data in the main text, using common sense to limit detriment to readability.

- The discussion or conclusion section provides explanation, examination, and consideration of the study, including its limitations, as well as its generalizability, implications, and meaning. However, this section should not overstate the meaning and implications.

Key point: Do not repeat information between sections and between text and illustrations (tables and figures) etc.

Reviews and systematic reviews

Generally speaking, reviews follow the same format as original research papers, with the exception that the methods section focuses on the literature search. Please note that there is a distinction between a systematic review (which evaluates all literature on a given topic, using a pre-defined search strategy, and specific exclusion/inclusion criteria for articles) and a general review (which does not necessarily evaluate all available data). Regardless of type, some discussion of the literature search is expected. However, for systematic reviews, AJGH expects a rigorous and extensive discussion of the literature search, including the number of papers found, reviewed, and included, often presented as a flow-chart. It may be convenient to describe your literature search using Boolean operators:

"We performed a literature search of the PubMed, MEDLINE, and CINAHL databases, using the following search string: "Bananas" [AND] "potassium" [OR] "nutrients" [OR] "tasty". The systematic review modifier was applied, and all articles prior to 2027 were excluded. The search return can be seen in Figure 1."

Feature articles

Feature articles are relatively flexible in structure, and your editor will work with you to develop a structure that best fits AJGH's objectives and the formatting of the issue in question. Nonetheless, it would be expected that all feature articles possess some form of introduction, discussion, and conclusion. Further information in this regard can be obtained by reviewing previously published articles.

Case reports

Case reports should, at a minimum, include an introduction/case presentation and discussion, where the discussion includes reasonable evaluation and comparison with previous literature.

Other article types

All other article types should be structured as considered appropriate by the author. AJGH editors will discuss the need for structural changes with the author directly.

Word count

	Original research articles	Review articles	Case reports	Feature articles	Book reviews	Letters, news
Word count	2000 - 3000 (plus 250-word abstract)	1000-2000 (plus 250-word abstract)	1000-2000 (plus 250-word abstract)	1000-2000	1000	500
Purpose	Present original clinical, laboratory or other research findings	Review the literature regarding important and interesting medical topics	Document a single interesting case providing useful learning points	Report on conferences or elective experiences, provide an alternative perspective on the nature of medicine or a medical topic	Critically analyse (and potentially compare) books, particularly textbooks, of use and/or interest to medical students	Provide commentary on current medical issues or previously published articles

Please note that the above word counts do not include references.

5. In-text Citations

References are cited by number in the text, i**n square bracketed normal script**. The full list appears at the end of the manuscript file. Note that references to material not published and personal communications of any kind are not to be listed in the reference list; if necessary, they can be mentioned in the text. Use Arabic numerals *outside* periods and commas, but *inside* colons and semicolons. No space should be placed between a period/comma and a citation, but a space is required before a citation within a colon/semicolon. Citations should **not** be separated by spaces within brackets.

For example:

"As reported previously,[1,3-8,19] bananas are popular in many cultures."

"Bananas have considerable variability in length and potassium content [3,4]; indeed, this remains one of the great questions of modern scientific literature."

Please note than inappropriate reference style will result in **immediate return** of the article to the author for the necessary changes.

6. Tables

Due to reading habits, primary comparisons should be shown horizontally. Similar data elements should be arranged vertically. Tables should have titles and footnotes, if necessary. Be sure that each table is cited in the text; otherwise, it will be deleted. Although not specified in the AMA manual, Arabic, not Roman, numerals, are used for tables.

- All numbers should be presented to the same number of decimal places.
- Units of measure: In tables, units of measure should follow a comma in the table column heading. For example (see also how comparisons are made horizontally):

	Group A	Group B	p-value
Blood sugar level, mmol/L	>9000	0	p < 0.05

- Significance: All p-values should be reported as exact numbers to 2 digits past the decimal point, regardless of significance, unless they are lower than 0.01, in which case they should be presented to 3 digits. Express any p-values lower than 0.001 as p < 0.001. P-values can never equal 0 or 1.

7. Figures

Ensure you provide high-resolution files where possible. AJGH prefers that you provide figures as the original, non-embedded file (i.e. as a separate jpg/png/tiff); however, we also appreciate if you identify the preferred placement of the figure in the text. Figures **do not** carry a title above, but may have a brief, descriptive title as the first sentence of the figure legend, in which case it is acceptable to finish the title with a full-stop.

8. Lists (seriation).

Seriation is the itemization or enumeration of the parts to a series or an argument. The AMA style refers to this as the process of enumeration.

- Sentence seriation: A series or list of terms or phrases can be introduced following a colon in AMA style: either (*a*) marked by lowercase letters in italics with the parentheses in plain text; or 2. marked by numbers, and (3) set in parentheses. Whatever style you adopt, be consistent throughout your text. ***Sentence seriation is preferred to bulleting, because it is considered more professional and takes up less space in the typeset piece.*** For example:

"Whilst regularly confused with apples, bananas are identifiable via a number of salient features: (1), their yellow skin, tough and inedible; (2), a characteristic bend; (3), a pasty-white interior, sweet, and semisolid; and (4) a gross black thing that sticks into the bottom."

Commas should be used when each element does not, itself, contain a list. For lists containing sub-lists (e.g. third element above: *'...interior, sweet and semisolid'*), for clarity, the list itself should be demarcated with semicolons (see above).

- Bullets without enumeration may be used for emphasis and clarity when the specific order of the item is not important. If the items are complete sentences, begin each item with a capital letter and end it with a period. If the items do not form a sentence do not use a period.

9. Permissions

Figures that are taken from other sources or are recognisable photographs of people *must* have permissions. For previously published figures, permission to reprint must be obtained from the original copyright holder. Usually, this is not the author(s), but the publisher of said content. **Authors are required to provide these permissions where possible.** Alternatively, images in the public domain may be used, provided the copyright designation permits publication and, where relevant, adaptation of the original image.

10. Acknowledgements

Acknowledgements are listed at the end of the article, before the references. Acknowledgements are used to identify those individuals that have contributed to the article in any way considered to be insufficient for authorship. Permission should be obtained from any individuals named in the acknowledgements.

11. Conflicts of interest

All authors are to include a statement of conflict of interest with the article. This statement should include all financial and personal conflicts with the content of the article. If no conflicts exist, this should be noted.

12. Consent to publish and ethics approval

Original research articles should include a statement that describes the ethics approval obtained for the project, specifying the institution, and consent obtained from participants in the study. Authors are responsible for ensuring the ethical and academic integrity of the work.

13. Copyright

AJGH may accept submissions that have been previously published elsewhere with permission from, and appropriate attribution given to, the original source. Authors will retain copyright of their submissions.

By submitting, you are only providing AJGH with a licence to publish the submission as the first publisher. This obliges the author to mention AJGH as a source if they later republish the submission on another platform. Authors published in AJGH are free to submit to other journals that accept previously published work. However, authors should realise that they may not be able to submit their published work to other journals that only accept original work not previously published elsewhere.

AJGH is an open access journal and believes in the free flow of information. Articles may be republished online or in print for free, as long as AJGH is given credit, a link is provided, and the material is not edited or sold separately.

STYLE GUIDELINES

General guidelines:

- 12-point font, Times New Roman
- 2.5cm margins
- Single-spaced manuscript
- .doc or .docx format
- Line numbers, repeating each page
- Use hard returns (i.e. spaces) rather than paragraph indentation
- At the beginning of the document (not on a separate title page), please list the following:
    - Submission type
    - Submission title
- All manuscripts should be blinded (remove author and institution names) for initial review.

1. Punctuation

a. Commas

- The trend is to use them sparingly.
- Serial commas are used; AJGH does not currently use an Oxford comma ('...bread, eggs*,* and milk'), and therefore articles should be written in more common Australian English ('...bread, eggs and milk').
- Use commas in dates: August 14, 1929.
- Large numbers should be separated by a comma: 12,122.

b. Hyphens

- There are several pages of AMA guidelines related to hyphens. Salient points are included here.
- Hyphenate a compound word that contains a noun and adverb or participle to make an adjective:
    - "*Decision-making methods*"
- Hyphenate an adjective-noun compound when it falls before the noun it modifies:
    - "*Upper-class values*"
- Hyphenate a compound adjectival phrase when it precedes the noun it modifies:
    - "*End-to-end anastomosis*"
- When not otherwise specified, hyphens should only be used to aid understanding.

c. Em dash (—)

- The em dash is used variably to represent a number of forms of punctuation — such as commas, colons and semicolons — but is generally considered an informal construct. The em dash is probably most suited to feature articles, but limited exceptions can be made elsewhere.
- A space should be inserted either side of an em dash:
    - "*Bananas should — at least in my opinion — remain a central component of the Australian diet.*"

2. Capitalisation

- Words are capitalized **sparingly**. The common rule is to capitalize terms when they refer to specific things such as people or places. When these terms are generalized, they are written in lowercase. For example:

"The study was approved by the Ethics Committee of University X."
BUT, when used in a general sense:
"The study was approved by the university ethics committee."

- In headers and titles, do not capitalize the second part of a hyphenated word if either part is a hyphenated suffix or prefix (e.g., *"Anti-arrhythmic drugs"*).

3. Numbers and dates

- **Numerals should be used to express numbers in most circumstances.** Exceptions include numbers that begin a sentence, title, subtitle, or heading; common fractions; accepted usage such as idiomatic expressions; and numbers used as pronouns. Note, this also applies to numerals <10, where commonplace usage tends to write in full, the AMA guide recommends numerals.
- *Compound numbers:* Hyphenate compound written numbers from twenty-one to ninety-nine.
- *Common fractions:* Usually written as words. A hyphen is inserted in a fraction only when it is used as an adjective:

  > *"Two-thirds majority"*

- *Inclusive numbers:* When expressing an inclusive range of numbers in your text do not use a dash or hyphen, write *to* or *through* instead: 80 to 100, not 80-100.
- The conventional format for time is preferred over 24-hour time: 5:45 AM.
- *Ordinal numbers:* Since these are used to express order or rank rather than quantity, **spell out first through ninth.**
- *Decimal fractions:* Numbers less than 1.0 **must have a leading 0 before the decimal point**, for example: *"0.6 kg"* (not .6 kg)
- When writing out numbers, accompanying units of measure must also be written out (and vice versa). For example, write:

  > *"**Twenty degrees centigrade** was the maximum temperature at which the vaccine could be stored."*
  > Or: *"The maximum temperature at which the vaccine could be stored was **20°C**."*

  But **not**:

  > *"**Twenty °C** was the maximum temperature at which the vaccine could be stored"*
  > Or: *"The maximum temperature at which the vaccine could be stored was **20 degrees centigrade**."*

- Typically, a space is preferred either side of a mathematical symbol, and between a numeral and the corresponding units, with the exception of percentages (%). For example: '5 ± 1', rather than '5±1'.

4. Abbreviations

- Acronyms should be written out on first use followed by the abbreviation in parentheses. Subsequently **only** the abbreviation is used.
- Clinical and technical terms may have acronyms that are unfamiliar or difficult to remember. Unless these are used more than 5 times in an article, or are very unwieldy in full expression, they should be written out at each mention.
- **Avoid introducing an abbreviation in a subheading**. Instead, write the term out and repeat it in the following text to introduce the acronym.
- Write the plural form of an acronym without an apostrophe. For example: "*NSAIDs*"

5. Units of measure

- Use quantitative values in the International System of Units and abbreviate according to these guidelines.
- Units are written in lowercase (kilogram), except for Celsius. Abbreviations are generally written in lower case, but there are exceptions.
- Use exponents (m^2) rather than abbreviations cu and sq.

6. Quotations

- Quotations must be placed within quotation marks ("") or indented as a block quote. As a matter of form quotations should be integrated into the flow of the text (i.e. continuous is preferred to 'blocking' on a new line).
- Longer quotations - quotes requiring more than 4 typewritten lines in your text - are formatted as block quotes:

  > "*This is a quote about bananas. This is a quote about bananas. This is a quote about bananas. This is a quote about bananas. This is a quote about bananas. This is a quote about bananas. This is a quote about bananas. This is a quote about bananas. This is a quote about bananas. This is a quote about bananas.*"

- Question marks, dashes, and exclamation points should be placed inside quotation marks only when they are part of the quoted material.
- Use ellipses (...) to indicate an omission in quoted material.

7. Citations

- Items are listed numerically in the order they are cited in the text.

- Within text citations use square bracketed Arabic numbers that are placed outside periods and commas and inside colons and semicolons.
- When using authors' names in text, use only the surname. Use both names if there are 2 authors. It there are more than 2 authors, use the first author name and "et al." (Example: *'Doe et al.[7] reported on the survey...'*)
- In reference listings, **abbreviate names of journals according to PubMed**. (Search the journal *here*, use the NLM title abbreviation).
- In the reference list, the author's surname is followed by initials **without periods**. All the author names are given unless there are more than 6. In this case the first 6 authors are named followed by "et al."

Doe JF (*one author*)

Doe JF, Roe JP (*two authors*)

Doe JF, Roe JP, Sherry GM, Smith MA, McNeil TM, Dust BL (*six authors*)

Doe JF, Roe JP, Sherry GM, Smith MA, McNeil TM, Dust BL, et al. (*more than six authors*)

- For websites, include the name of the webpage, the name of the entire website, the full date of the page (if available), and the date of accession.
- It is reasonable to leave an EndNote-linked reference list in the initial submission, as there is often changes to the in-text references during editorial review that are easier to manage with EndNote than manually. However, final submissions will require that the EndNote list is replaced by plain text and **checked thoroughly against PubMed entries** (EndNote often makes mistakes!).
- A full reference guide is included below. This has been re-produced from the Vancouver referencing guide provided by the University of Western Australia. Examples for uncommon material types can be found at: *https://goo.gl/seYZXj*

AJGH Reference Guide

Example references as provided by the University of Western Australia (http://guides.library.uwa.edu.au/)

Material Type	Example Reference
Chapter or section in an edited book, with named authors	Pagel JF, Pegram GV. The role for the primary care physician in sleep medicine. In: Pagel JF, Pandi-Perumal SR, editors. Primary care sleep medicine. 2nd ed. New York: Springer; 2014. • If no authors are listed, simply omit the author list. • If no editors are listed, simply omit the editor list.

Book, print	Eckerman AK, Dowd T, Chong E, Nixon L, Gray R, Johnson S. Binan goonj: bridging cultures in Aboriginal health. 3rd ed. Chatswood, NSW: Elsevier Australia; 2010.
Book, ebook/online	Langford S. Transporting your patient: guidelines for organizing and preparing patients for transfer by air [Internet]. Jandakot (WA): Royal Flying Doctor Service; 2015 [cited 2015 Jun 23]. Available from: <URL>
Journal article, print and online	Carmody J, Traynor V, Steele A. Dementia, decision aids and general practice. Aust Fam Physician. 2015;44(5):307-10.
Report, print	Lourey C. A contributing life: the 2012 national report card on mental health and suicide prevention. Sydney: National Mental Health Commission; 2015.
Report, online	Lourey C. A contributing life: the 2012 national report card on mental health and suicide prevention [Internet]. National Mental Health Commission [cited 2015 Jun 29]. Available from: <URL>
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics. General Health Survey: summary of results, Australia 2014 [Internet]. 2015 [cited 2015 Jul 14]; ABS cat. no. 4159.0. Available from: <URL>
AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. Australian Hospital Statistics 2012-13 [Internet]. 2014 [cited 2015 Jun 9]; AIHW cat. no. HSE 145. Available from: <URL>

SUBMITTING YOUR ARTICLE

Submission Process

Following the close of submissions for an issue, submissions will be screened and short-listed by the editorial staff to ensure that they meet submission criteria and appropriate standard. Successful academic submissions (original research articles, review articles and case reports) will proceed through an anonymous external peer-review process. Previous peer-reviewers have been academics of the highest calibre in their respective fields, and we encourage all authors to ensure the academic rigor of their paper prior to submission.

If revisions are required, authors will be contacted, and given a specific window of time in which to return a revised submission. It is the author's responsibility to cooperate fully and promptly with any request of the editorial staff during this time. Proceeding to the author revision stage is NOT a guarantee of eventual publication. Following the revision stage, final article selection will be made by editorial staff.

Ready to submit?

Title your submission document (*.doc or *.docx format) according to submission type and the first five words of the title, using the following format:

- Submission Type. Title (first five words)
- e.g. Review article. Surgery for spinal cord injury.
- e.g. Letter. Research and development in the.

Title your figures in the same manner, but with the figure number added at the end:

- Submission Type. Title (first five words). Figure Number.
- e.g. "Review article. Surgery for spinal cord injury. Figure 4.
- e.g. "Letter. Research and development in the. Figure 1.

Do not include any tables, figures, or images in the main text file of your manuscript. Please include all tables, figures, and images in a separate document. Include these in the order they are referred to in the manuscript, with one table, figure, or image per page with its appropriate caption and number. Captions must contain sufficient information to render their associated item intelligible without reference to the text of a submission.

Additionally, please also include as attachments in your submission email the individual files of each of your images and figures (not tables), without their captions. This includes any diagrams or figures created using Microsoft Word, which should subsequently be converted to a vector or bitmap format and attached as described.

> Email your submission document and all figures as separate attachments to koshy.mathew@amsa.org.au. Alternatively, you may directly email an associate editor who you have been in contact with. As the subject, use the title of the submission document, i.e. "Submission Type. Title (first five words)."

The editorial team will then be in contact with you regarding acceptance of your submission and for any further revisions required.