

Editing the Results—Checklist for Editors

1. Are all the elements of a results section present?

(possible answers include yes, no, somewhat, N/A, or whatever else you feel like writing)

- Title/subheading with an active verb in the present tense (or any other formulation of a “take-home message”)
- Background/justification
- Statement of purpose
- Statement of method or approach
- Description of observations
- Statement of conclusion (mirroring the statement of purpose)

2. Is there extraneous information? Could some information be simplified or moved to other sections?

- Too much background (some of it could go in the Intro)
- Too many experimental details (some of it could go in the Methods)
- Too many numbers (some of them could go in a table, figure, figure legend...)
- Too much speculation or discussion material (some of it could go in the Discussion)

3. Are there writing issues?

- Absence of proper “signals” (e.g. “to determine whether...”, or “these results suggest that...”)
- Results read like a “data dump”: they need to be broken down into smaller nuggets of data, each with its own purpose and conclusion
- Key findings are buried in extraneous details or not given the proper emphasis
- Misuse of tenses
- Faulty comparisons
- Incomplete sentences
- Sentences too long or too complex
- Other issues?

4. Overall evaluation

- what is well done:
- what needs work: