

6 Things to Check before You Submit

Submitting an article to a peer reviewed journal isn't always as simple as just clicking "Send." Many journals have strict formatting and citation guidelines. For this reason, it's always best to create a separate, custom formatted document for each journal to which you submit. Correct formatting shows respect for each journal's standards and means fewer steps in the publishing chain, and less time before you get your digital object identifier (DOI).

Here are some quick checks to ensure that you've been diligent in your formatting.

1. Triple Check Your References

In our experience, plagiarism is often unintentional. Plagiarism standards may vary internationally, creating confusion. Being overly cautious to avoid plagiarism is the best tactic. Be sure to check the standards of each journal to which you submit.

Giving Proper Credit

Plagiarism is the passing off as one's own of any element of another person's work. This includes the methods of an experiment, the conclusions found, and the opinions raised.

It also includes another author's words. Sentences taken from the works of authors need to be credited properly, with quotation marks ("") and in-text citation. However, it is preferable to paraphrase another author's words before citing.

It is also possible to plagiarize oneself. Ensure that any references to your previous work are carefully cited.

Citation Style

Not every journal uses generally accepted citations styles like APA, Chicago, MLA, or IEEE. While they may work for some cases, many journals have specific requirements when it comes to citation that need to be met.

Be sure to follow what the journal has asked for *to the letter*. Mistakes in citation are serious and can cause confusion.

In-Text Citation

Not all journals will use the same form of in-text citation. At *Can. J. Chem. Eng.*, we use an endnote style, with hypertext numbers as in-text reference. Ensure that you consistently follow the journal's style.



2. Check Your International Version of English

English is a diverse language. British English, for example, differs drastically from American English. If you're submitting to an American journal, they'll most likely be using the American style, and spelling *colour* with a U will be incorrect.

It's not always possible to tell which version of English your journal will use from its country of origin. Some international journals will choose between American and British styles, and Canadian journals may choose one or the other, or use Canadian English, which is distinct from the others.

3. Check Your Units

Like the version of English, the units of measurement required will differ greatly journal by journal. Most journals will accept [SI units](#), which are intended as the international standard. However, some journals allow submissions with imperial or alternative measurements.

Once again, it's best to refer to your author guidelines, or to ask the journal directly.

4. Ensure Your Figures Are to Standard

Transferring image files over the internet is a quagmire. The quality, the file type, the size, and the shape are all determined in advance by the author guidelines.

Make absolutely sure that you have your figures sized and formatted correctly. Each journal has different guidelines, as there is no agreed-upon universal standard.

In general, your figures should be designed to be easily comprehended. Journals will be looking for clarity, simplicity, and impact in your figures. The captions should be carefully written and contain no unessential information.

5. Read the Author Guidelines

The best way to ensure that your paper is correctly organized and formatted is to look at the guidelines themselves. If the journal you're submitting to does not list these publically, they may be able to provide their standards to you directly.

Meeting the author guidelines is a very important step in submission, and should not be put off or passed over.

6. Get an Extra Set of Eyes

Before you submit, have someone else read your paper. If it is a collaborative project, you can likely ask a colleague. Failing that, a friend or a paid editor can be invaluable in catching mistakes.



Conclusion

Now you're ready to submit. Remember that submission is often a process with multiple steps. Hitting the submit button is only the first.

However, if you've followed the advice above, you've done your part to ensure that the publishing process goes smoothly, and you're one step closer to getting your DOI.

