

A Guide for Authors

Avoid simple mistakes

This guideline has been drafted for several reasons and based on typical errors researchers make when drafting conference papers. First, unless told how do you know the standard and style expected, not just layout and spacing's of the paper. Secondly, why put effort into doing something if it will need changing and finally it will help you with all other papers you write. Finally, reviewers keep seeing the same errors and may reject an otherwise suitable paper.

Let us start by considering the references. Your research is leading edge, first to review, experiment or calculate at this level or type of problem. Leading edge work needs current references. As a rule of thumb half your reference should be no older than 4 years. Indeed, most less than 2 years on an ideal and thorough paper. Old ones, if seminal, can be used. For example, if the subject is Quality then any of the classic Guru's works from the 1950s are acceptable. The split of references should be from conferences and journals, about 50%, books and internet the rest. Technical papers and Government papers, i.e., Federal Aviation Authority (FAA) crash reports are acceptable. Imagine, if most are 2012 or older, and many others just internet based what does that say about the quality of the literature review.

Abstract, follow the guidelines, not too long.

Introduction, state what is the problem being investigated, 10% of paper in length.

Literature, always, and I mean always address literature, the amount depends on the subject. Numerical work generally shorter.

A methodology, explaining why and limitations or how it affects results must be included. This could be a short paragraph up to a large section depending. Numerical work generally shorter.

Not too many mathematical proofs

Analysis of all findings

Conclusions are the main findings

English and Grammar

In this document the following descriptions discussed below are to remind you of the most common mistakes that researchers make when writing their conference papers. Nowadays, the use of computers allows for checks on spelling; however, if there are no spelling mistakes it does not mean no errors exist.

Basics guidelines exist that need following; for example, good practice is that a paragraph must have a minimum of three sentences. This might be critical for the conference but not all your work outside of academia. Your most common punctuation should be the period. Commas, semi

colons, and colons are added to introduce tags and additions to the sentence. Every sentence must have a noun and verb (doing – word) in order to be constructed and understandable.

The typical sign that work has not been proof read is by reviewing the start to each sentence. The typical error is to start each sentence with a determiner. The is a determiner and used all too often without thought for alternatives. This is also used too often at the start of many sentences. These problems of starting sentences with a word starting with the letter T are a sure sign that the language has not been checked and has been written in fragments.

Leaving sentences that start with a T word behind we can focus on aspects that show a weak use of language. Here some might have written a poor use of English. Poor relates to money, so not the correct word.

Below are some typical problems we face when writing and all too often are easy to miss or use incorrect words and phrases. A personal annoyance of mine is mixed metaphors. The storm of protest was nipped in the bud. They may work when used in poetry and add a dimension to expression; however, not in academic writing.

Try and or Try to?

Listen to the news when you have a chance. Does the presenter say they try and find a conclusion or they try to find a conclusion? You always try to solve and never try and solve. The use of ‘try and’ shows a poor education. Good style in writing is a pointer to education.

Affect or Effect?

Affect is usually a verb, to affect the outcome, and means influences something. Whilst Effect is usually a noun, and is the result of an affect. The ATC wanted to affect the landing schedule. The flight schedule was the effect of bad weather. A very common mistake that many make as they do not understand.

Can, May or Might?

Can means it is capable and may means possible. When something is very unlikely we would use might. Sir. @Can I go to the restroom?’ Answer, of course, you have legs and know where to go. You mean May I.’

That or Which?

Another very common error found in writing. These are not interchangeable. That is a restrictive pronoun and which introduces a reflective clause, a non-restrictive noun. For example, I only trust aircraft that are maintained outside of the USA. In other words I only trust aircraft that are maintained in the USA. I recommend aircraft, which are maintained in the USA.

Fewer and less?

This is simple, fewer is a countable noun and less a non-countable noun. You might need fewer troops (you can count them) and you need less sugar in your coffee (you cannot count how much sugar).

Since or Because?

Since refers to time and because refers to causation. Since I quit smoking I have run two marathons. Because I quit smoking I no longer cough in the morning.

Anxious

Anxious relates to being frightened. You are excited or eager to analyze results not anxious to analyze.

Different than or Different from?

This is tough and not surprising it is difficult to understand. Different is an adjective to draw comparison. The simple answer is always use different from.

Farther or Further?

Farther implies a measurable distance, e.g., I threw the ball farther than before. Further is reserved for abstract length, e.g., The financial problem caused further delays.

Whether or If?

These two are not interchangeable. Whether expresses a condition between two or more things. If expresses a condition with no alternatives. For example, I do not know whether to collect data or analyze what I already have found, or, I can go on vacation if I have enough money.

Tautology

A needless repetition or redundancy in your writing. To iterate again, to maintain focus you have to focus, it was correct or incorrect.

Its or it's?

You frequently see these used incorrectly when in fact it is a simple rule to follow. It's short for it is, and its is possessive. It's a good idea also means it is a good idea. While its shows belonging, its height.

Your or You're?

This is another confusable, Your is possessive and you're is abbreviated for you are. We can write: You're my best friend or can be written as You are my best friend. We can use your in a sentence: Is this your car?

The dangling participle

These cannot only make it difficult to read or understand but make the author appear lazy and uneducated. So what is a dangling participle? It was a hot day, my friend bought some apples. What have these two in common? Nothing. They are separate subjects and warrant their own sentences. Students often write without thinking about punctuation and these dangling participles appear too often. Dangling participles:

I went to the zoo and there was a man eating tiger. Is it illegal to eat Tigers?

The police told me my dog was chasing a man on bicycles – I said my dog did not have a bicycle.

Having been rotting in the cellar for two weeks my brother brought me apples. Is his brother a Zombie?

I saw my present peeking through the window. Presents cannot peek through a window.

Neutralizing adverbs

It was slightly poisonous. Really, it is poisonous or not.

Ending sentences

Grammar has rules that are expected to be followed. One, not always popular, is the ending of sentences. Good writing must not end in a preposition (of, with, it). For example, that is a situation I have not thought of. Better to write, I have not thought of that situation. Remember, these are not only guides but they allow you to show an erudite argument in your work. Of course, if not erudite it is probably languid. Finally, only use words that are in your vocabulary, adding a long word that is incongruous with your style will be clear to the reader. A constructed sentence is worth the effort. In your work there needs to be structure: Introduction, main body and conclusion. A conclusion is the principal findings of the analysis, not new thoughts.

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