Preparation Checklist for ASA Manuscripts

This checklist is intended to help you prepare your manuscript for publication in ASA journals. It covers some details of presentation and style that will be checked in copy editing if your manuscript is accepted for publication. Paying attention to these details now may save you time in the production process when time can get tight. So please address all items on this list. If you have any questions not answered here, refer to the American Sociological Association Style Guide (2d ed.), available from the ASA Executive Office, 1307 New York Avenue NW, Suite 700, Washington, DC 20036 ($5 for ASA members; $10 for nonmembers).

MANUSCRIPT FORMAT

- All pages must be typed or printed (12-point size preferred), double-spaced (including footnotes and references) on 8-1/2 by 11 inch white paper.
- Margins must be at least 1-1/4 inches on all four sides to allow room for Editor’s or copy editor’s notes.

TITLE PAGE

- Includes the full title of the article, the author[s]' name[s] and institution[s] (listed vertically if there is more than one author), a running head (60 characters or less), the approximate word count for the manuscript, and a title footnote.
- An asterisk (*) by the title refers to the title footnote at the bottom of the title page. The title footnote includes the name and address of the corresponding author, acknowledgments, credits, and/or grant numbers.

ABSTRACT

- View the abstract as your written “invitation” to your readers to read your entire article. The abstract appears on a separate page headed by the title. It should be brief (one paragraph of 150 to 200 words), descriptive (a summary of the most important contributions in your paper), and accessible (jargon-free and clear to the general reader). A good test of the quality of your abstract is to ask yourself if it could serve as a press release about your research.

TEXT

- Content. As you make changes in your text, read it objectively—from your reader’s point of view. Use terminology consistently throughout your text. Referring to a variable by one name at one time and by another name later or in your tables can confuse your readers. And remember, “active” writing (“I discovered that . . .”) is more concise, accurate, and interesting than “passive” writing (“It was discovered that . . .”).
- Subheadings. Generally, three levels of subheadings are sufficient to indicate the organization of the content. See recent journal issues for subheading formats.
- Text citations. Include the last name of the author and year of publication. Include page numbers when you quote directly from a work or refer to specific passages. Cite only those that provide evidence for your assertions or that guide readers to important sources on your topic. Examples follow:
  - If author’s name is in the text, follow the name with the year of publication in parentheses—“. . . Duncan (1959)”; if author’s name is not in the text, enclose both the last name and year in parentheses—“. . . (Gouldner 1963).”

FOOTNOTES/ENDNOTES

- Equations. Equations in the text should be typed or printed. Use consecutive Arabic numerals in parentheses at the right margin to identify important equations. Align all expressions and clearly mark compound subscripts and superscripts. Please clarify all unusual names and symbols. Use italic type for variables in equations and in the text; use bold type for vectors.

REFERENCE LIST

- All references cited in the text must be listed in the reference list, and vice versa. Double check spelling and publication details—ASA journals are not responsible for the accuracy of your reference list.
- List references in alphabetical order by authors’ last names. Include full names of all authors—use first-name initials only if the author used initials in the original publication.
- For multiple authorship, only the name of the first author is inverted (e.g., “Jones, Arthur B., Colin D. Smith, and Barrie Thorne”).

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For two or more references by the same author(s), list them in order of the year of publication. Use six hyphens and a period (----) in place of the name when the authorship is the same as in the preceding citation.

To list two or more works by the same author(s) from the same year, distinguish them by adding letters (a, b, c, etc.) to the year or to “Forthcoming” (e.g., 1992a, Forthcoming a). List in alphabetical order by title.

A few examples follow. See recent journal issues for further examples:

Books


Periodicals


Collections


Dissertations

Machine Readable Data File

Foreign Language Books/Journals/Articles

BIOGRAPHY
Include a short biography (five or six lines) for each author. Each biography should include the author’s name, title, department, institution, and a brief description of current research interests, publications, or awards.

TABLES, FIGURES, AND APPENDICES
Include tables, figures, and appendices only when they are critical to the reader’s understanding. As an alternative, consider inserting a statement in the text stating that the information is available from the author.

Tables
Number tables consecutively throughout the text. Type or print each table on a separate page at the end of your paper. Insert a note in the text to indicate table placement (e.g., “TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE”).

Each table must include a descriptive title and headings for all columns and rows (see recent journal issues for examples).

For clarity, always use the same variable names in your tables as you use in your text.

Standard errors, standard deviations, t-statistics, and so on, should appear in parentheses under the means or coefficients in the tables.

Gather general notes to tables as “Note:” or “Notes:” at the bottom of the table; use *, †, ‡, etc., for table footnotes.

Use asterisks *, †, and/or ‡ to indicate significance at the p < .05, p < .01, and p < .001 levels, respectively; note if tests are one-tailed or two-tailed. Generally, only those results significant at the p < .10 level or better should be indicated as significant in tables or text.

Figures and Other Artwork
Number figures or illustrations consecutively throughout the text. Each should include a title. Insert a note in the text to indicate placement (e.g., “FIGURE 1 ABOUT HERE”).

If your manuscript is accepted for publication, you must submit figures and illustrations in camera-ready form or on diskette. Camera-ready artwork must be produced by computer or by a graphic artist in black ink on white paper with clear lines. All labels on figures and illustrations must be typeset.

IMPORTANT: Before you submit a figure or illustration for publication, please contact the journal editorial office to discuss size specifications and/or disk and file formats. All artwork and type must be legible when reduced or enlarged to fit one or two column widths, 2 9/16 and 5-5/16 inches wide respectively (standard column widths for ASA journals).

Author(s) must secure permission to publish any copyrighted figure, illustration, or photograph.

Appendices
Appendices appear at the end of your article and should be labeled “Appendix A,” “Appendix B,” etc.

SPELL-CHECK YOUR MANUSCRIPT
When you have completed the final changes to your manuscript, run your computer spell-checker to correct misspelled words. You can also use the spell-checker to cross-check author names cited in your text with author names in the reference list.