Most Common Formatting Errors

Listed here are the most common formatting errors. Proper formatting will speed your manuscript to publication.

**TITLE PAGE**

- Running head should be a maximum of 60 characters and spaces
- Running head should be in CAPITALS and written in one of the following styles:
  - AUTHOR—SHORT TITLE WRITTEN HERE
  - AUTHOR & AUTHOR—SHORT TITLE WRITTEN HERE
  - AUTHOR ET AL.—SHORT TITLE WRITTEN HERE

**ABSTRACT**

- the word “Abstract.” should be left-justified, only the first letter capitalized, **bold type** followed by a period then the body of the abstract follows on the same line
- maximum length: feature article - 250 words, short communication - 150 words
- first mention of each arachnid species name (or genus name alone) should be followed by the original describing author, then a comma, then year of description (i.e., Gertsch, 1947) (see Instructions to Authors for sources to consult for this information)
- **“Keywords:”** should be one word, only the first letter capitalized, followed by a colon, **bold type**, with keywords separated by commas
- keywords should not include any words that appear in the title

**BODY OF THE TEXT FOR ARTICLES**

- manuscript text should be left-justified throughout, not left and right justified
- do not use the word “INTRODUCTION” as a first-level heading
- first-level headings should be all capitals, centered and not **bold type**
- the correct first-level heading is METHODS, not MATERIALS & METHODS
- second-level headings (if used) should be indented, **bold type** followed by a period, then a dash, not italicized (e.g., **Secondary heading.**—Followed by text…….)
- when citing a paper, do not use a comma between authors and year of publication
- when citing a two-author paper, use “&” not “and” to connect the authors
- when citing paper with 3 or more authors, use “et al.”, not italicized, with no comma
- multiple citations in a sentence are separated by a semi-colon unless two papers by the same author(s) are cited (example: Chamberlin & Ivie 1937, 1942; Kaston 1970)
- first mention of each arachnid species name (or genus name alone) should be followed by the describing author, then a comma, then year of description (i.e., Gertsch, 1947) (see Instructions to Authors for sources to consult for this information)
- leave a space on either side of an equal sign (i.e., n = 4, not n=4)
- sample size should be written as n; not n, N, or N
- probability should be written as P; not p, P or p
- proper punctuation and spacing is: i.e., or e.g.,
- **Short communications:** do not use section headings in the body of the text
- **Short communications:** should be limited to 2 small figures or tables or 1 table and 1 figure
**CITATIONS:** **note: citation format was changed in June 2020**

- the section heading should be LITERATURE CITED, not REFERENCES

Below is a properly formatted article citation:


- initials trail all author surnames, no periods
- no space between author initials (i.e., "RS" not “R S”)
- if more than 6 authors to a citation, list the first 6, then use “et al.”, not italicized
- use a period after the last author’s initials
- year of publication: no parentheses, followed by a period
- title: in sentence case; i.e., capitalize only first letter of first word and proper names (except for titles in German)
- use a period after the title
- journal name is spelled out, in *italics*, neither a period nor comma at end
- volume number is in regular type, neither bold nor italics
- no issue number after volume number unless every issue in a year starts with page 1
- no space between the colon and opening page number
- closing page number is not truncated (i.e., 344-349, not 344-9)
- period after closing page number

Below is a properly formatted chapter in a book


- sequence: Authors, year, chapter title, pages, book title, editor(s), publisher, location
- chapter title: only first letter of first word and proper names are capitalized
- pages listed as “Pp.” not “pp.”, closing page number not truncated (i.e., 241-251 not 241-51)
- the word “*In*” is italicized without a period or colon following
- book title: the first letter of each important word is capitalized
- if multiple editors, list them, initials preceding surname, and follow with “eds.”
- use a period at the end

Below is a properly formatted book


- the first letter of the first word and each important word is capitalized
- the number of pages in book should not be listed