

Instructions to authors

The following include the minimum requirements for manuscripts submitted for publication.

A stamped addressed envelope or an international reply coupon *must* accompany the manuscript if acknowledgment of receipt is desired.

(1) Original articles and those submitted for the Practice Observed and Medical Practice sections are normally up to 2000 words long; Short Reports should have no more than 600 words (with one table or figure and up to five references) and letters normally no more than 400 (with up to 10 references). Contributions for the Personal View and Materia Non Medica columns should contain up to 1150 and 400 words respectively.

(2) Authors should give their names and initials, their posts at the time they did the work and their current appointments, and not more than two degrees or diplomas each. Each author must sign his consent to publication, and the paper will be assumed to be submitted exclusively to the *BMJ* unless the contrary is stated.

(3) Three copies should be submitted. Two will be returned if the manuscript is rejected.

(4) Typing should be on one side of the paper, with spacing between the lines and 5-cm margins at the top and left-hand side of the sheet.

(5) Abstracts should accompany all original articles. They should be no longer than 150 words and should set out what was done and the principal findings and their implications in terms that will be understood by clinicians in other disciplines.

(6) Spelling should conform to that of *Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary*.

(7) SI units are used for scientific measurements. In the text they should be followed by traditional units in parentheses. In tables and illustrations values are given only in SI units, but a conversion factor must be supplied. For general guidance on the International System of units, and some useful conversion factors, see *The SI for the Health Professions* (WHO, 1977).

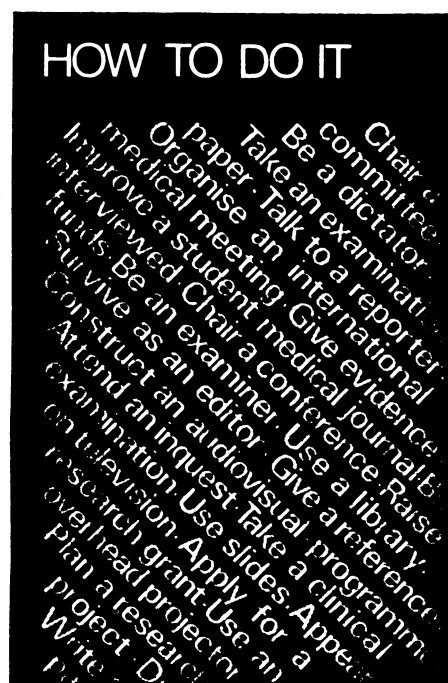
(8) References must be in the Vancouver style (*BMJ*, 24 February 1979, p 532) and their accuracy checked before submission. References should be numbered in the order in which they appear in the text. Each reference should include the names and initials of each author (or, if more than six, the first three followed by *et al*), the title of the article, the title of the journal (abbreviated according to the style of *Index Medicus*), the year, the volume, and first and last page numbers. Titles of books should be followed by the place of publication, the publisher, and the year. "Unpublished observations" may not be used as references but may be cited only in the text.

(9) Letters to the Editor submitted for publication must be signed personally by all authors.

(10) The Editor reserves the customary right to style and if necessary shorten material accepted for publication and to determine the priority and time of publication.

(11) Detailed instructions are given in the *BMJ* of 3 January 1981 (p 6).

HOW TO DO IT



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