

Writing a paper

- 1 Select your target journal early in the writing process. See Writing Protocol 8.
- 2 Tailor your writing to your target journal. See Writing Protocol 13.
- 3 Write a rough draft of the abstract. Use the abstract to help you plan the paper.
- 4 As you draft the paper, keep revising the abstract.
- 5 Define the problem that motivates your research. Use 'Haynes's all-purpose tool for research writing' (writeyourresearch.wordpress.com) to guide you.
- 6 Articulate your research question. Again, use 'Haynes's all-purpose tool for research writing' to guide you.
- 7 Draft your conclusion. See Writing Protocol 3.
- 8 Clarify how your conclusion (a) relates to the research problem and (b) answers your research question.
- 9 If your target journal requires a covering letter, ensure that it (a) outlines the contribution that your paper makes and (b) explains why you think it suits the journal.
- 10 If you receive peer review, regard it as free consultancy. Ask yourself, 'How can this review help me to improve the paper – even where the reviewer is mistaken?'

This resource is published as the fifteenth in the Writing Protocols series.

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Resources

Writing Protocols: 3, 'Writing a conclusion'; 8, 'Selecting a journal'; and 13, 'Tailoring your writing to the target journal'

Philippa J. Benson & Susan C. Silver, *What editors want: an author's guide to scientific journal publishing* (University of Chicago Press, 2012)

Björn Gustavii, *How to write and illustrate a scientific paper* 2nd edn (Cambridge University Press, 2008)

Wendy L. Belcher, *Writing your journal article in 12 weeks: a guide to academic publishing success* (Sage, 2009)

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We help engineers with bids, presentations, papers, reports, and publications.

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