

Parts of an Abstract

Abstracts should contain an introduction, objective, methods, results, and conclusions. Consult with your target journal's submission guidelines to determine if subheadings are permitted in the abstract. Some publications prohibit abstract subheadings, others require them.

An acceptable abstract must contain the following information presented in complete sentences¹:

- **Introduction and Background**
 - One or two sentences providing a basic introduction to the field, comprehensible to a scientist in any discipline.
 - Two to three sentences of more detailed background, comprehensible to scientists in related fields.
- **Objective(s)**
 - One sentence clearly stating the general problem addressed by this particular study.
- **Methodology**
 - One sentence describing the study design.
- **Results**
 - One sentence summarizing the main result (with the words "here we show" or equivalent phrasing).
 - Two or three sentences explaining what the main result reveals in direct comparison to what was thought to be the case previously, or how the main result adds to previous knowledge.
 - *Optional:* One or two sentences to put the results into a more general context.
 - *Optional:* Two or three sentences to provide a broader perspective, readily comprehensible to a scientist in any discipline.
- **Conclusions**
 - One sentence stating the takeaway learning point.

Reference:

1. How to construct a Nature summary paragraph. Website. https://cbs.umn.edu/sites/cbs.umn.edu/files/public/downloads/Annotated_Nature_abstract.pdf. Accessed April 20, 2018.