JOVE’s Text Style Guide

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# Text styling

## General

### Use American English. JoVE uses *Merriam Webster’s Dictionary* as a reference. In cases where the current document does not provide guidelines, refer to *The Chicago Manual of Style*.

### Do not use the “&” symbol as an alternative to the word “and” anywhere in the text (except in the list of references when it is part of a journal or book title, or in occasional abbreviations).

### Following the *Chicago* manual, i.e. and e.g. may be used when placed within parentheses and followed by a comma. Example: Genes expressed in stem cells (e.g., Oct4, Nanog, and Myc) were found to be…

### Avoid the use of personal pronouns and do not use second person pronouns (i.e., you, your). Aim for less than 25x “we” and 3x “us”/“our”.

### Capitalize commonly used proper names. Examples: Petri dish, Southern blot, Student’s *t*-test

### Do not use TM/TM, ©/(C), and ®/(R) anywhere in the text.

### Do not bold or capitalize any references to other sections of the text. Examples: As mentioned in the introduction…, See the discussion section.

### Following *Chicago*, use a serial comma (Oxford comma) when necessary.

### When listing keywords, use all lowercase (except for proper nouns and abbreviations).

## Titles, (sub)headings, and section labels

### Manuscript section labels should be in bold, all caps, and followed by a colon. Example: **SUMMARY:**

### Bold all titles and (sub)headings in the text. Titles and (sub)headings should never be a sentence (in the imperative voice or otherwise); thus, avoid the use of punctuation in all titles and (sub)headings.

### Use title case for the manuscript title. Example: **Isolation and Characterization of Tumor-initiating Cells from Sarcoma Patient-derived Xenografts**

### Avoid or limit (as reasonable) any abbreviations in the title of the manuscript.

### Limit manuscript titles to 150 characters in length, since shorter titles draw more readers and are easier to search. Avoid the use of hyphenations and colons.

### If necessary, any (sub)headings in the introduction, representative results, and discussion sections should be bold and in sentence case.

### For rules on the (sub)headings in the protocol section, see section 4.2.

## Italicization

### In text, reserve italics for scientific names, mathematical variables such as *g* (in 200 x *g*), and non-English words that are not in *Webster’s*. Examples: *bcl2*, *Escherichia coli*

## Abbreviations

### Maintain consistency throughout the manuscript: abbreviations should have only one meaning, and only one abbreviation should be used for the same terminology throughout the entire manuscript. Specifically, pay attention to abbreviations for three-dimensional, etc. It is acceptable to use either 3D or 3-D, but do not use both in the same manuscript.

### Abbreviations, when given, can/should be used throughout the entire manuscript from the abstract onward (with the exception of figure and table legends, where, if necessary, the abbreviated terms can be explained again).

## Hyphens and dashes

### Do not use hyphens in compound words with prefixes. For extensive rules and exceptions, see *Chicago* 7.85. Example: micropipettes, overexpression

### For clear guidelines on the use of hyphens (-) and/or en dashes (–), see *Chicago* 6.75–6.81. For the use of hyphens when dealing with numerals and units, see section 2.5.

## Parentheses

### In text, place square brackets within a parenthesized text when necessary. Example: (i.e., the column input [**Figure 4**])

### Exceptions in which parentheses can appear within square brackets are mathematical expressions and chemical names.

## Hyperlinks

### Avoid webpage addresses as much as possible in the text. If necessary, only add the text of the hyperlink, preferably within parentheses. Example: (i.e., http://imagej.nih.gov/ij/download.html)

## Formatting

### Use letter-sized pages, with 1-inch margins on all sides.

### Use 12-pt Calibri font throughout the text, except in mathematical equations.

### Maintain a 0-inch left indent throughout the text and indicate new paragraphs using single-line spacing.

### Use 12-pt single-line spacing for all lines.

### Do not underline any text; however, bold text is acceptable for emphasis.

## Length limits

### The summary section should have a maximum of 50 words.

### The abstract section should have a maximum of 300 words.

### Use 6–12 keywords/phrases, separating keywords either with a comma or with semicolons (be consistent in the current list). Abbreviations may not appear in parentheses but can be listed as separate keywords (i.e., separated by comma or semicolon).

# Numerals and units

## Numbers

### Avoid starting a sentence with a mathematical variable or numeral. Try to restructure the sentence. Example: “5 h after the injection, anesthetize the animal” should be rewritten as “Anesthetize the animal 5 h after the injection”.

### Unless a number is followed by an (abbreviated) unit or is a concentration/magnification, spell out zero through nine (i.e., follow *Chicago*’s alternative rule) and use numerals for all other numbers except millions and billions. Examples: 4x, 50 mL, six mice, 6–12 mice, eight million, 10 billion

### For large numerical quantities, use a comma after every three digits. Example: 10,000 x *g*

### For quantities of one million and greater, use scientific exponential notation. Example: “10,000,000” becomes “1 x 107”

## Units

### For SI units, use standard abbreviations when the unit is preceded by a numeral. Abbreviate liters to L to avoid confusion. Examples: 10 mL, 8 µL, 7 cm2

### If non-SI US measurements are necessary, use common abbreviations when the unit is preceded by a numeral. Do not use primes for foot and inch. Do not set the abbreviation with a period. If confusion regarding the meaning might arise, consider writing out the unit. Examples: 5 in, 10 lb

### For time units, use abbreviated forms for durations of less than one day when the unit is preceded by a numeral. Do not abbreviate day, week, month, and year. Examples: 5 h, 10 min, 100 s, 8 days, 10 weeks

### Use the multiplication dot for compound units. Either slash or negative exponents are acceptable for some compound units, as long as the meaning is explicitly clear. Examples: N·m, m/s, eV·s/rad, m2·kg·s-3A-2, m2·kg/s3

### After amounts of mass or volume (e.g., 5 mL), add “of” before the material used. Do not add “of” after concentrations, but leave it if it is present (i.e., if the authors have used it). Examples: 5 mL of DI water, 4 mM phosphate

### Italicize *g* in centrifugation speeds and maintain the unit spacing rules (see section 2.3). Example: 1,000 x *g*

### Use capital G with single spacing when mentioning needle/catheter gauges. Examples: 21 G, 30 G needle

### When times is used as a unit (i.e., for concentrations and magnifications), use lowercase x throughout after the numerical value. Examples: 10x magnification, 2x concentration

## Spacing

### Maintain a single space between the numeral and (abbreviated) unit, except in cases of %, x, and ° (i.e., the degree sign; excluding temperature). Examples: 5 mL, 10%, 3°, 100 °C, 3x SSC

### Maintain single spacing before and after mathematical operators used in specifying ranges. Example: The weights of the animals were 123 g ± 2 g.

## Mathematical notations

### When giving dimensions, use a lowercase x and repeat the unit to remove any ambiguity. Examples: 35 mm x 48 mm, 30 cm x 50 cm x 10 cm

### Use x as a multiplication sign for scientific notation and before the unit for centrifuge speeds. Examples: 100 x *g*, 1.4 x 106, 1 x 109

### When specifying quantities with standard deviations and standard errors, repeat the units to avoid ambiguity. Examples: 123 g ± 2 g, 70% ± 5%

## Hyphens and dashes

### Do not add a hyphen between numerals and abbreviated units, even when they are used as adjectives. Example: a 10 mL tube

### When giving a range, use an en dash without spacing. Show the unit twice when a space between the numeral and the unit is not applicable. Otherwise, give the unit only after the range. Examples: 12–14 mL, 20%–25%

### For clear guidelines on the use of hyphens (-) and/or en dashes (–), see *Chicago* 6.75–6.81. For the use of hyphens in general text, see section 1.5.

## Fractions

### In the overall text, follow *Chicago*’s rule for simple fractions and write out fractions (*Chicago* 9.14 and 9.15). Examples: three-fourths, two-thirds. In the protocol section, set fractions with a slash to separate numerator and denominator. Examples: one-third becomes 1/3, *x*/*y*

# Mathematical variables and expressions

## Variables and symbols

### Use italics for mathematical variables. Examples: *x* + *y* = 10, min(*x*, *y*)

### Insert Greek symbols using the **Symbol insert** toolbox in MS Word. Do not italicize these. Examples: *a* = π*r*2

## Equations and expressions

### Use consistent font style and size when formatting equations.

### Separate each equation to its own line.

### Do not embed equations as images. Instead, use the equation builder (i.e., the **Insert equation** toolbox) in MS Word or type it out.

## Spacing and punctuation

### Do not insert a space if an operator modifies a single entity. Examples: -1, ±10, >5, <10

### Use a single space before and after operator(s) within an expression. Examples: *x* + *y* = 10, *p* < 0.05

### Do not use spaces before parentheses in functions. Examples: *f*(*t*), min(*x*, *y*)

### Follow regular punctuation rules for commas and periods.

# Protocol section

## Structure

### Structure the protocol so that it consists of only numbered steps, occasional notes (NOTE:), and/or cautions (CAUTION:). Ethics statements may appear at the start of the protocol. These do not need to be preceded by the listing “NOTE:” or be part of a numbered step.

### Reserve level-1 numbered steps for section headings that have subheadings and/or (sub)steps beneath them. Every heading must have one or more steps under it.

### Maintain consistency in the way each numbered level is used within a section (i.e., as a step or as a subheading).

### Leave a one-line space after each note/caution/step and before the first note/caution/step. All notes and steps should not have a left indent.

### Avoid long steps/notes/cautions (of more than three or four lines) and use only one note and/or caution per step.

### Number the step sequentially using a multilevel list style. It does not matter whether the number is followed by either a period or a parenthesis, but do not use both. Examples: 1., 2., or 2.1, 2.1.1, or 1), 1.2)

### The protocol section, with the correct formatting, should not exceed a length of 10 pages.

## Protocol section headings, (sub)headings, steps, and (sub)steps

### Use sentence case for the protocol section headings and subheadings. Bold the text and step numbers. Do not add any type of punctuation after the protocol headings. Example: **1. Preparation of the materials, 5.3. Preparation of the reagents**

### Write all (sub)steps in the imperative voice as directive/instruction statements.

### When referencing multiple steps all listed under the same heading, use “section”, followed by the specific section number. Otherwise, use “step(s)”, followed by the specific step number(s). Example: see section 3.1, steps 3.1.3 and 3.1.4, steps 4.1.1–4.1.4

## Text styling

### When (a part of) a protocol step needs to be performed multiple times (e.g., once, twice, four times), use a numeral immediately followed by a lowercase x. Examples: 1x, 2x, 4x

### If button clicks/menu selections are identified (e.g., quotes or cursive text has been used), change them to bold text. Use either | or > between the clicks/selections, and do not use 🡪 or other symbols. Example: “File 🡪 Options 🡪 Advanced” becomes **File** > **Options** > **Advanced** or **File** | **Options** | **Advanced**

### Do not use any first and second personal pronouns in the steps (e.g., we, our, you, your, I). We/our can be used sparingly in the notes.

# Figure references and legends

## Text styling

### References to separate figures in the text should all be preceded by the word **Figure**. Capitalize the letter “F” and bold the word “Figure” and the figure number. Do not bold the word “and” and/or any commas when describing multiple figures. Examples: see **Figure 2** and **Figure 3**; **Figure 3B**, **Figure 4B**, and **Figure 5B**

### References to multiple panels should avoid spaces. Examples: **Figure 3A,B**, **Figure 4B–D**

### Do not use ranges to reference multiple figures. Example: **Figure 3**–**Figure 5** becomes **Figure 3**, **Figure 4**, and **Figure 5**.

## Figure and table legends section

### Use the following format for the figure and table legends. Identify the panel label before the panel description. **Figure 1: Figure heading.** (**A**) Panel description. (**B**) Panel description. Example: **Figure 1: Preparation of the surgical field.** (**A**) Tools used. (**B**) Anesthesia induction.

### When clarifying abbreviations used in the figure, use the = sign. Example: Abbreviations: SD = standard rodent chow and water; KE = SD and ketone ester; KS = SD and beta-hydroxybutyrate-mineral salt.

# References

## In-text citations

### In-text references must be numbered in the order of citation, and when repeated, they must be given in the numbered order used in the list of references.

### When giving a reference in the text, the corresponding number from the reference list must appear superscripted without a space after the word/group of words it applies to but before any punctuation (in the case of et al., place the superscripted number after et al. but before other punctuation). In the case of parentheses, decide based on the context whether the reference applies to a specific part of the text within the parentheses (place the superscripted number within the parentheses) or to all text within the parentheses (place the superscripted number after the closing parenthesis). Ranges of reference numbers are separated by an en dash (no spaces), individual reference numbers are separated by commas (no spaces). Examples: Phang et al.5, (see previous publications)1–4,7,8

### The abstract and summary sections should not have any citations.

## References section

### Use the following format for the authors: last name, first and middle initials (if available). For six or more authors, show only the first author’s name followed by et al. Do not use a comma before et al. Example: Kioh, L. G. et al. *Physical Treatment in Psychiatry*. Blackwell Scientific Pubs. Boston, MA (1988).

### Do not use the &-sign or the word “and” when listing authors. Authors should be listed as last name author 1, initials author 1, last name author 2, initials author 2, etc. End the list of authors with a period. Example: Bedford, C. D., Harris, R. N., Howd, R. A., Goff, D. A., Koolpe, G. A. Quaternary salts of 2-[(hydroxyimino)methyl]limidazole. *Journal of Medicinal Chemistry*. **32** (2), 493-503 (1998).

### Title case and italicize journal titles and book titles. Do not use any abbreviations. Article titles should start with a capital letter and end with a period and should appear exactly as they were published in the original work, without any abbreviations or truncations.

### Write volume numbers in bold, followed by a space, issue number (in parentheses), a comma, and then, a range of page numbers (start page-last page). A single page number or digital object identifier (doi) can be substituted for a range of page numbers.

### Provide the year published (in parentheses), followed by a period. Do not use any punctuation before the parentheses around the year.

### “Accepted” or “In Press” can be listed after the journal title and before the year. Manuscripts that are in preparation or under review cannot be used as reference, do not list publications that are “In Preparation” or “Under Review”. Example: Greten, T. F., Lai, C. W., Li, G., Staveley-O’Carroll, K. F. Targeted and Immune-based Therapies for Hepatocellular Carcinoma. *Gastroenterology*. In Press (2018).

### Do not use tabs or indents in the reference list.