



## How to write the methods section of a research paper: A handy checklist

### Methods section

#### Key writing tips:

- **Role:** The methods section of a research paper forms the central component of the study and justifies the validity and reliability of the research
- **Purpose:** The methods section is meant to enable others to reproduce or verify the research results, so write this in a clear, concise manner and include all relevant details
- **Approach:** Take the top-down approach to identify details of experiments that are critical and relevant for readers; this helps ensure vital information is highlighted properly and not lost in unnecessary data and technicalities
- **Consistency:** Use same experiment names as headings, and preferably in the same order, in the results and methods section to make it simple for readers to locate or corroborate information

### Do's when writing the methods section

- Follow the journal guidelines to structure the methods section
- Arrange different sections to tell a story
- Define and explain the objects and procedure
- Always include relevant information
- Follow a consistent sequence order similar to the results
- Write for the audience
- Include information on data interpretation and analysis

### Don'ts when writing the methods section

- Don't elaborate on specifics of common methods/procedure
- Don't add unnecessary details
- Don't discuss results
- Don't make the section bulky