LaTeX

Submitting a LaTeX manuscript? Follow these guidelines to make sure it is properly formatted for the PLOS system.

Guidelines for all manuscripts are listed in the author instructions.

Need assistance? Email latex@plos.org.

PLOS Template

PLOS provides a template for LaTeX submissions. Download the template.

The template linked above is optimized for the latest June 2022 LaTeX release and may return errors if you are using an older version of LaTeX. Click here to download an older version of the template.

Use this template to help format your article for our production process. You can add packages to this template but please do not remove any that are already included.

The zip also contains the plos2015.bst BibTeX style sheet. Use this file to specify the formatting of your BibTeX file as it will ensure that your references are generated in the correct format.

If your submission does not follow the template format, your manuscript may be sent back to you for corrections.

LaTeX Version

You are required to use LaTeX2e. Download the latest version.

How to Submit

For your initial submission, upload the PDF as your manuscript file, containing your manuscript text, figure legends, tables, and references.

You can choose whether to provide your LaTeX source file along with the PDF version for the initial submission, but it will be required should you be invited to submit revisions. If your manuscript .tex is separated into several .tex files, combine these into a single, cohesive .tex file before submission. Make sure to update your PDF file with the most recent version of your manuscript.

As stated in the PLOS template, your reference information should be included in your .tex file (not submitted separately as .bib or .bbl). See the References section below for more information.

Preprint submissions

Authors submitting manuscripts in the health sciences to *PLOS Medicine* may choose to have PLOS forward their submission to medRxiv for consideration for posting as a preprint.

If you choose this option, you may supply your own preprint PDF, or use the PDF generator in the submission system to have a PDF created for you.

Read more about preprints at PLOS.

Learn how to post a preprint to medRxiv at *PLOS Medicine*.

Formatting Tips

- Use the PLOS template.
- Do not track changes in your final tex file. PLOS recommends the use of latexdiff to track changes in the manuscript PDF during review, as this will help to maintain a clean tex file. Download latexdiff.
- Your manuscript source file should not call on external files (do not use \input or \externaldocument).
- Include all portions of equations within the math environment in order to ensure it is correctly rendered.
- For the author byline, use the formatting and symbols included in the template.
- Follow the instructions in the template regarding the placement of table and figure legends.
- Follow the instructions in the template for proper formatting of supporting information legends and citations.

- Elements that exceed the width of the text column must be included in an “adjustwidth” environment to display properly. See the template for more information.

Figures

Do not include figures in the manuscript PDF. Submit figures as separate TIFF or EPS files. Figures with multiple panels (subfigures) should be uploaded as a single file. Do not upload each panel/subfigure separately.

PLOS does not accept figures generated in LaTeX. PLOS only accepts figures as TIFF or EPS files, which can be created in standard software such as Adobe Illustrator, InkScape, PyMol, MatLab, or SAS.

Convert LaTeX-generated EPS figures to TIFF:

1. Compile the LaTeX files as PDF.
2. Open PDF in Photoshop, GIMP, or another graphics software that enables TIFF.
3. Crop out the figure and export as TIFF.

For more information about figures, read the figure guidelines.

Equations

Display equations

- Include the entire equation in one math environment.
- Include terminal punctuation within the math environment.
- Add line breaks in long equations (so that they will fit our column width).

In-line equations

- If any part of the equation or phrase includes a character only available in math mode, then include the entire equation/phrase in one math environment.

Please refrain from using math mode for non-math content, such as chemical formulas. For example, please use “CO\textsubscript{2}” instead of “CO_2”

- Do not include commas or other normal (text) punctuation in the math environment, if possible.

Tables

- Tables must be cell based.
- Do not use nested tabular environments (do not include tabular environments within tabular environments).
- Tables cannot contain graphics.
- Cell background color/shading can be added using {xcolor} package commands. See the package documentation for more information. Please use the 6-digit hexadecimal color codes when defining colors.
- Do not use “\hline” for new lines within a cell. Instead, allow text to wrap within a cell.
- Thick rules can be added using commands defined in the PLOS template.

For more information about tables, read the table guidelines.

Supporting Information

Supporting Information requirements for LaTeX do not differ from the requirements for normal manuscripts. See our Supporting Information guidelines for more detailed instructions.

References

As stated in the PLOS template, your reference information should be included in your .tex file (not submitted separately as .bib or .bbl). Here is a step-by-step way to include your reference list directly within your .tex file:

1. Compose your LaTeX manuscript as normal, using \cite{bibkey} for reference citations.
2. Compile your manuscript using BibTeX, your .bib file (\bibliography{references}), and the plos2015.bst style file. This process should output a .bbl file into the same folder as your manuscript.

1. *Overleaf users can find the .bbl file in the 'Logs and output files' tab under the 'Other logs and files' option.*
3. Open the .bbl file and copy/paste its contents into the appropriate position within the manuscript .tex. Comment out or delete the \bibliography command.
4. Compile your manuscript again. The PDF output should be the same as before.

Please contact latex@plos.org if you encounter any issues and be sure to include your manuscript files.