

Top Ten Rules for Completing a Scholarly Publication

1. Unless you are some manner of Mozart or Beethoven, expect that your scholarly paper will take at least six months to write. Carefully review whatever paper requirements you have pulled from your target journal's website.
2. Distinguish one draft of your scholarly paper draft from the next by listing: a) the date, b) a general paper description in each and every file name.

For example: "02-11-10 BILL COMO METHODS PAPER." Insert a header at the top of each page with this date and file description. Insert page numbers. If you are writing this paper with other authors, insert line numbers as you work on edits, discuss certain sections, etc. as a group.

3. Make sure to thoughtfully and explicitly introduce and summarize your paper for your readers! This means: a) Telling them what you're going to tell them, b) Telling them, then c) Telling them what you've told them.
4. Avoid using sentimental arguments, jargon, or slang in the text.
5. Use correct past and present verb tenses, descriptors (adjectives, adverbs) and whatever format your target journal requires. You may want to purchase a "basic rules of writing/grammar" type reference book for more difficult grammatical issues
6. Treat your anticipated reader(s) as fairly naive to your area of work. Explain terms (within reason) throughout your paper. Minimize your use of abbreviations.
7. Restrict each of the paragraphs to a **maximum** of six (complete with subject and verb) sentences.
8. Split your paper text into paragraphs. Transition your paragraphs from one to the next. Have your paper "flow" for your reader(s).
9. Restrict each of the sentences in your paper to a **maximum** of 20-25 words. Avoid "run on" sentences.
10. Write the latest draft of the paper, put it away for a day or two before returning to edit it, and repeat this sequence for many more editing cycles.