



Instruction to Authors

British Journal of Nursing (BJN)

BJN is the peer-reviewed, professional journal for clinical nurses. *BJN* welcomes articles on all aspects of clinical care. The journal publishes literature reviews, care studies and original research. The journal also welcomes letters commenting on previously published articles, or any subject relating to clinical nursing. Instructions are on pages 1-2, guidance for your articles is found on page 3.

Articles should generally be approximately 3000 words. Shorter or longer submissions are acceptable with the agreement of the Editor. If you would like to discuss your ideas or propose an article, please [email](#) the Editor Rosalind Hill or call on 020 7738 5454.

BJN does not accept for publication material that has been published in an identical form elsewhere. If in doubt, please contact the editor. All articles submitted to *BJN* are subject to double-blind peer review. The journal is indexed on: The International Nursing Index, PubMed and CINAHL.

General advice

- *BJN* aims to present all articles, including original research, in an easy-to-read informative style, so please avoid jargon.
- Consider the key take home message from your article. It may be helpful to distil the essence of your article into key points before you start and use these to guide your writing.
- Be very clear about what your article adds to the literature. If this is obvious, your article is more likely to be accepted.
- A key aim of *BJN* is to be of practical use to its readers, so take care to outline the implications for practice.
- Read other articles from *BJN* for ideas on style and substance. Organize your article in a logical manner; Subheadings, pictures and boxes all help break up the text for readers and help maintain interest in the article.
- Please highlight the word count on the cover page.
- While it is very important that all articles are fully referenced, the total number of references should not exceed 40.
- If you have not written for publication before, it can be helpful to take advice from colleagues. Always proof read and check spellings carefully.

Advice on submitting original research

- A significant number of articles published in *BJN* report original research. Reviewers will be looking at the originality of your research, whether the methods are appropriate, and the overall strength and rigor of the work.
- Your introduction should include relevant, up-to-date literature and support the need for the study. The aims of the study should be clearly stated.
- It is important to describe the theoretical underpinning of the methods used and explain why they are appropriate to answer the research question.
- Data analysis steps should be clearly described, with supporting references if appropriate.
- Give a full description of the sample, including how it was obtained and how the appropriate sample size was determined. Give the context of the research so that readers can judge its applicability to their work.
- The discussion should provide critical analysis of the relevant literature and

- relate this to the findings of your study.
- The limitations section is a key part of the article and should be considered carefully.
- A typical layout for a research piece would be: introduction, background, methods, results, discussion, limitations and conclusion – although this may not be appropriate for all types of research.
- The abstract should not give detailed background information but instead: give the aim of the article; provide details of the study design, sample and setting; describe the methods, including interventions, measures and analysis; briefly give the findings; and outline the main conclusions.

Articles

1. All articles should be submitted **ONLINE** at <http://www.epress.ac.uk/BJN/webforms/author.php>

The procedure is quite clear, but there are specific requirements that should be followed as closely as possible. If you have any difficulty, email the Editor.

2. Articles should be typed double-spaced (including references), in a Microsoft Word-compatible file. *Please ensure all pages are clearly numbered.*
3. For purposes of confidentiality author identification should appear only on the title page (see a) below).
4. After you submit your article you will receive an acknowledgement. All articles submitted for publication in *BJN* are reviewed before publication. The review process will take approximately 4–8 weeks. When the review is complete, you will receive an email regarding the suitability of your article for publication in the journal and any suggestions for amendments. A final copy of the article, including any changes recommended by the editor and/or the reviewers, should then be submitted online.
5. You will receive proofs for correction at a later date before the article is published.

Copyright: MA Healthcare will hold exclusive rights to all articles published.

ARTICLE FORMAT

a) Title page

The title page should carry:

1. Title of article.
2. The full names of the authors.
3. Job title, employer, location and affiliation of each author.
4. Name and address of the author responsible for correspondence, include address, telephone number and email address).

b) Abstract

An **abstract** of between 150 and 200 words should be included, giving a brief outline of the content of the article, including major findings. Please also supply **key words** that reflect the main points of the article.

c) Headings

Headings and subheadings make the text easier to read and enhance clarity. Use headings to break up long passages of text or to indicate a change in subject.

d) Key phrases

Please supply 4–6 key phrases, as complete sentences that summarize the major themes of your article. These will appear in a box at the end of the published article.

e) Tables and figures

Tables and illustrative figures are popular with readers and are encouraged.

Remember, your article has to compete with other articles in the journal to catch the eye of the reader. As a rough guide, there should be a table or figure every 600 words.

Photographs and slides should be supplied electronically. For the first submission, it is preferable that any images be embedded in the Word document and are low resolution. If your article is accepted, you will be asked to supply the high-resolution images.

You must have written consent to publish photographs of patients and/or their conditions. Please indicate that such consent has been obtained in your submission.

In the case of line drawings, rough drawings you provide can be transformed into finished artwork by our artists. Please clearly indicate the number of the figure or table in the text of the article and also on the illustration.

Please ensure that all tables and figures are cited in the text and that permission has been granted to use them where necessary, e.g. if they are from another publication, seek the original publisher's permission.

Graphs, bar charts etc must have *all percentages/numbers clearly marked on them*, as these are also redrawn by our artists.

References

Check all references carefully

The Harvard System must be used. Provide full details of the original source of the material used. Do not refer to a source cited in another source (i.e. by using 'cited in...')

In the text

- a) Use the name and year (Harvard) system for references in the text:
As Black and White (1987) have shown...
As already reported (Black and White, 1987)...
- b) For 3 or more authors, put the first author's name followed by et al:
e.g. As Black et al (1987) have shown...
Note: 'et al' should never be used to represent just one name – Black et al is acceptable for Black, White and Green but not for Black and White.
- c) When several references are cited simultaneously the order should be chronological (e.g. Ross, 1990; James, 1997; Levi, 1998).

In the reference list

- a) Arrange references alphabetically by first author's name and chronologically.
Black B (1987)...
Black B (1989)...
- b) Print the names and initials of all authors for references with six or less authors.
Black B, Green G (1975)...
Black B, White W (1963)...
Black B, White W, Green G, Brown B, Tan T (1973)...
Black B, Green G, Tan T (1974)...
Black B, Abel C, Tan T (1975)...

The last three references in the above list are in chronological order as they are all cited as Black et al in the text.

For seven or more authors print the first three and add 'et al' – these references are arranged chronologically:

Black B, White W, Green G et al (1973)...

Black B, Green G, Tan T et al (1974)...

Black B, Abel C, Tan T et al (1975)...

The references in the above list are also in chronological order as they are cited as Black et al in the text.

- c) The sequence for a standard journal article is: author(s); year; title; journal (abbreviated as in PubMed); volume; issue; first and last page numbers. The layout and punctuation are: Smith B, Abel CH (1987) Sexual hypersensitivity. *Br J Nurs* **10**(1): 40–6
- d) The sequence, layout and punctuation for books are:
Author
Ellis H (1980) *Lecture Notes on Psychiatry*. 5th edn. Blackwell, Oxford
Editor
Scott H, Brown B, eds (1973) *Histocompatibility Testing*. Vol 5. Raven Press, New York
Chapter in Book
Samuels B (1979) Pulmonary complications of AIDS. In: Rand A, Long B, eds. *Management of AIDS*. Butterworth, London: 387–95
- e) Articles that have been submitted for publication but not yet accepted are not acceptable as references. They should be cited in the text as 'unpublished observations'. (Smith XY, unpublished observations, with or without a date). Similarly, 'personal communication' should be inserted in the text in parentheses.
- f) Articles that have been accepted for publication but not yet published may be included in the reference list:
Abel HL (in press) Endometriosis. *Br J Nurs*
- g) Reference lists must be typed double-spaced.

Guidance on statistics

Statistical advice should be sought before data collection. Please provide full results of any tests used, giving complete test results (test statistic, degrees of freedom, *P* value). Appropriate indicators of error or uncertainty, such as confidence intervals, should also be given. Include power calculations if appropriate and give the name and version of any software used.

Ethical approval

You should provide a statement in the text to indicate that appropriate ethical committee approval has been obtained.

Conflict of interest statements

Please declare any conflicts of interest at the end of your article. These are any possible interests, financial or otherwise, which may embarrass the author or the journal if highlighted at a later date.