

## Describing Methods

In the Methods section of a dissertation or research article, writers give an account of how they carried out their research. The Methods section should be clear and detailed enough for another experienced person to repeat the research and reproduce the results. Where the methods chosen are new, unfamiliar or perhaps even controversial, or where the intended audience is from many disciplines, the Methods section will tend to be much more extensive. Typical stretches of text found in this section of a research article or dissertation along with examples of the kind of language used for these are listed below. Note that for many of the functional categories listed later in this section, the verbs are written in the simple past tense and are in the passive voice.

### Describing previously used methods

Many researchers have utilised X to measure ...  
One of the most well-known tools for assessing ...  
Traditionally, X has been assessed by measuring ...  
A number of techniques have been developed to ...  
Different methods have been proposed to classify ...  
X is the main non-invasive method used to determine ...  
Different authors have measured X in a variety of ways.  
Several methods currently exist for the measurement of X.  
Previous studies have based their criteria for selection on ...  
X is one of the most common procedures for determining ...  
There are three main types of study design used to identify ...  
The use of life story data has a relatively long tradition within X.  
Recent advances in X methods have facilitated investigation of ...  
There are a number of instruments available for measuring the ...  
Recently, simpler and more rapid tests of X have been developed.  
X and Y are currently the most popular methods for investigating ...  
In most recent studies, X has been measured in four different ways.  
The use of qualitative case studies is a well-established approach in ...  
Xs have been used in the past to investigate the mechanical properties of ...  
Case studies have been long established in X to present detailed analysis of ...  
To date, various methods have been developed and introduced to measure X.  
Since the 1950s, researchers have used a multitude of scientific methods to ...  
This test is widely available and has been used in many investigational studies.  
The methods for measuring X have varied somewhat across this research area.  
In recent years, two different approaches have attempted to account for the ...  
In recent years, molecular methods have been utilised for the quantification of ...  
A variety of methods are used to assess X. Each has its advantages and drawbacks.  
More recent examples of narrative studies within X can be found in the work of Smith (2010).  
Two of the most common methods for estimating X are the use of Y and the measurement of Z.

X studies Studies of X	have traditionally	employed ... based their approaches on ... used model systems to predict ... adopted functionalist perspectives utilised a population-based approach. relied upon participant observation as ...
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