

JANUARY

2026 V 1.0

7 STEP REJECTION PROOF

HOW TO AVOID
JOURNAL
REJECTIONS

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REJECTION-PROOF #1/7

Scope Mismatch (The Wrong Party)

Rejection Cause

Your paper walks into the wrong journal like it owns the place.

Avoid It

Rewrite your aim, first paragraph, and keywords for the journal's exact audience and article type.

Fun Fact

Editors smell scope mismatch faster than burnt toast.



REJECTION-PROOF #2/7

The "So What?" Problem (No Contribution)

Rejection Cause

Good work... but nobody knows why it matters.

Avoid It

Add one line: "This study adds ___ by ____." Then state who benefits.

Fun Fact

A paper without a "so what" is a trailer without a movie.

REJECTION-PROOF #3/7

Methods Fog (Trust Breaker)

Rejection Cause

Methods written like a suspense novel—interesting, but unclear.

Avoid It

Add a Methods Transparency Box: sample, variables, missing data, assumptions, validation.

Fun Fact

If methods aren't reproducible, results become "fiction-adjacent."





REJECTION-PROOF #4/7

Reporting Checklist Missing (The Invisible Form)

Rejection Cause

Journal expects PRISMA/STROBE/ CONSORT... you send vibes.

Avoid It

Attach the checklist and map items to page and line numbers.

Fun Fact

Checklists aren't bureaucracy—they're the entry ticket.



REJECTION-PROOF #5/7

Ethics/Disclosure Gaps (Instant Red Flag)

Rejection Cause

Missing ethics, COI, funding, or data statement equals broken trust.

Avoid It

Use a single Disclosure Block:
Ethics + COI +
Funding + Data +
Author roles.

Fun Fact

Many desk rejects are "missing trust," not "bad science."



REJECTION-PROOF #6/7

AI/Tool Use Not Declared (2026 Reality)

Rejection Cause

You used tools...
but didn't disclose
them.

Avoid It

Add a short
AI/Tool
Disclosure: tool +
purpose +
"authors
responsible."

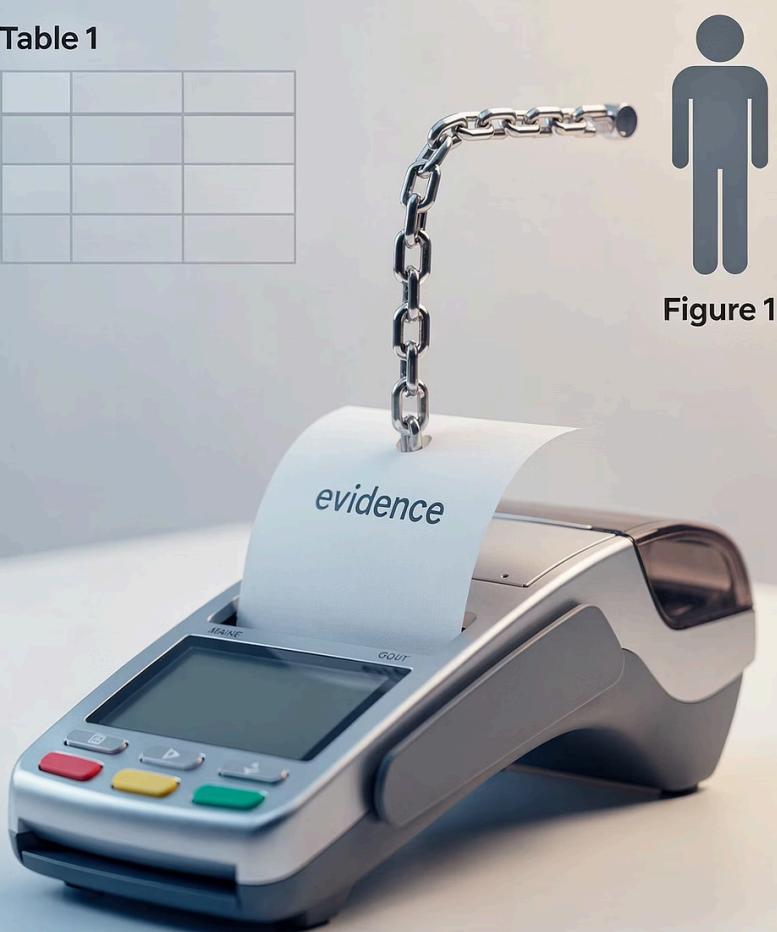
Fun Fact

"It was small" is
the new "I forgot
the reference."

Bold claim

Table 1

Header 1	Header 2	Header 3
Content 1	Content 2	Content 3
Content 1	Content 2	Content 3
Content 1	Content 2	Content 3
Content 1	Content 2	Content 3



REJECTION-PROOF #7/7

Claims Don't Match Evidence (The Confidence Problem)

Rejection Cause

Story is confident,
tables are shy.

Avoid It

Do a Claim-
Evidence Check:
every claim must
point to a figure,
table, or stat line.

Fun Fact

Reviewers don't
hate big claims—
only unpaid claims.

THANK YOU

7-STEP REJECTION-PROOF CHECKLIST

A quick, editor-style filter to reduce avoidable desk rejection—
scope • structure • transparency • compliance • trust.

Want this applied to your manuscript?

Send your abstract + target journal (or field) and get a

Fix-First Rejection Risk Scan.

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