

Notes on the writing of report

ST 623

- Reports should be no longer than necessary. A short report that makes the salient points is preferable to a long rambling philosophical essay, even if the longer essay makes the same points.
- A plot either of the raw data or of the residuals is almost always essential at some point in the analysis. Not all plots will be helpful or especially interesting. Although you should indicate what plots were made, it is generally not necessary to include in the report a copy of all plots made and all analyses performed. If necessary for examination purposes, extra plots and lengthy analyses can be included in an appendix.
- If you are doing a data analysis, You need to have a summary and all major conclusions should be stated at the beginning. The report should describe the models fitted, the tests performed, and how these support the conclusions. The relevance of the models to the context under study is important.
- If you are doing a final project on an advanced topic, you must have a short introduction, describing the problem and the method used to solve the problem. You will also need to illustrate with a data set (fake or real), how the method works in practice.
- Adequate precision is important, but ordinarily two significant digits are sufficient for standard deviations. Parameter estimates should always be given with standard deviations.
- If you are using statistical packages, it is more important to tailor the computer output to the problem at hand. (i) From the computer-generated output, list only the parts that are relevant to your analysis.
- Physical variables, unlike mathematical variables, always have units such as length in mm., temperature in K, mm. Hg., age in months, or depth in fathoms. Please include them in the report.
- Reports should be logically organized.

- It is sometimes helpful to indicate what further analyses might have been helpful had there been more time or different software available.