

ABSTRACT

What is an abstract?

- An abstract is one of the most significant parts of any academic or professional paper (Atanassova et al., 2016).
- This concise text functions as a synopsis of a paper's content. It is designed to very briefly summarize the key details contained in a paper without providing too much detail (Hartley, 2008).
- An abstract is a short summary of your (published or unpublished) research paper, usually about a paragraph (150-250 words) long.

All abstracts typically serve these **primary objectives**:

- An abstract helps readers decide if they should read the whole article.
- It presents the nature or **level of technicality** of an article.
- An abstract enables **supervisors to evaluate theses** or dissertations without being too overwhelmed by intricate details.
- It helps to screen newly submitted papers and to **decide on the initial outcomes** for reviewing.
- An abstract allows readers and researchers to easily remember **core findings** on a research topic.
- It supports article **indexing for quick access** and **cross-referencing**.

There are two main types of abstracts / summaries

Descriptive abstract	Around 100-200 words (or shorter) in length; indicates the type of information found in the paper; briefly explains the background, purpose, and objective of the paper but omits the results, often the methods, and sometimes also the conclusion
Informative abstracts	One paragraph to one page in length; a truncated version of your paper that summarizes every aspect of the study, including the results; acts as a "surrogate" for the research itself, standing in for the larger paper

A summary of the article:

- Usually 150-250 words long
 - Preferably written in one paragraph
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- Covers the following about the article:
 - ☐ The **problem /issue/question** addressed by the article
 - ☐ Method(s) used
 - ☐ The main results
 - ☐ The main conclusions

An abstract should not contain

- lengthy **background information**,
- references to other literature,
- elliptical (i.e., ending with ...) or incomplete sentences,
- abbreviations or terms that may be confusing to readers,
- any sort of illustration, figure, or table, or references to them

Keywords

6-8 **keywords** are given immediately after the abstract in the article.

- They should be words or phrases the reader searching for the article in question would use in their search
- They could be single words or phrases
- They do not include prepositions or articles
- They should represent key concepts
- They should reflect a **collective understanding of the topic**
- They should be **descriptive**
- They should contain words and phrases that suggest what the topic is about

1 Work in pairs. Discuss the questions.

- 1 When are you likely to write an abstract for an article: before you write your article, after you have written it or at the same time you write it? Why?
- 2 How long is an abstract in your field of research? What does its length depend on?
- 3 Which abstracts do you usually write: informative (they give the main results) or indicative (they only indicate what kind of research has been conducted)?

How should I begin my Abstract?

Step 1: Introduction

Start by clearly defining the purpose of your research. What **practical or theoretical problem** does the research respond to, or what **research question** did you aim to answer?

You can include some brief context on the social or academic relevance of your **dissertation topic**, but don't go into detailed background information. If your abstract uses specialized terms that would be unfamiliar to the average academic reader or that have various different meanings, give a concise definition.

After identifying the problem, state the objective of your research. Use verbs like "investigate," "test," "analyze," or "evaluate" to describe exactly what you set out to do.

This part of the abstract can be written in the **present or past simple tense** but should never refer to the future, as the research is already complete.

- ✗ This study will investigate the relationship between coffee consumption and productivity.
- ✓ This study investigates the relationship between coffee consumption and productivity.

Step 2: Methods

Next, indicate the **research methods** that you used to answer your question. This part should be a straightforward description of what you did in one or two sentences. It is usually written in the past simple tense, as it refers to completed actions.

- ✗ Structured interviews will be conducted with 25 participants.
- ✓ Structured interviews were conducted with 25 participants.

Don't evaluate **validity** or obstacles here—the goal is not to give an account of the methodology's strengths and weaknesses, but to give the reader a quick insight into the overall approach and procedures you used.

Step 3: Results

Next, summarize the main **research results**. This part of the abstract can be in the present or past simple tense.

- ✗ Our analysis has shown a strong correlation between coffee consumption and productivity.
- ✓ Our analysis shows a strong correlation between coffee consumption and productivity.
- ✓ Our analysis showed a strong correlation between coffee consumption and productivity.

Depending on how long and complex your research is, you may not be able to include all results here. Try to highlight only the most important findings that will allow the reader to understand your conclusions.

Step 4: Discussion

Finally, you should discuss the main **conclusions of your research**: what is your answer to the problem or question? The reader should finish with a clear understanding of the central point that your research has proved or argued. Conclusions are usually written in the present simple tense.

- ✗ We concluded that coffee consumption increases productivity.
- ✓ We conclude that coffee consumption increases productivity.

If there are important limitations to your research (for example, related to your **sample size** or methods), you should mention them briefly in the abstract. This allows the reader to accurately assess the credibility and **generalizability** of your research.

If your aim was to solve a practical problem, your discussion might include recommendations for implementation. If relevant, you can briefly make suggestions for further research.

Identify the sentences that correspond to the elements of an abstract: background, purpose of the study, methodology, results, discussion, conclusion or recommendation.

This paper examines the role of silent movies as a mode of shared experience in the US during the early twentieth century. At this time, high immigration rates resulted in a significant percentage of non-English-speaking citizens. These immigrants faced numerous economic and social obstacles, including exclusion from public entertainment and modes of discourse (newspapers, theater, radio).

Incorporating evidence from reviews, personal correspondence, and diaries, this study demonstrates that silent films were an affordable and inclusive source of entertainment. It argues for the accessible economic and representational nature of early cinema. These concerns are particularly evident in the low price of admission and in the democratic nature of the actors' exaggerated gestures, which allowed the plots and action to be easily grasped by a diverse audience despite language barriers.

Keywords: silent movies, immigration, public discourse, entertainment, early cinema, language barriers.

What style should I use: personal or impersonal?

There are four possible styles for writing abstracts and papers:

STYLE 1	I found that $x=y$.
STYLE 2	We found that $x=y$.
STYLE 3	It was found that $x=y$.
STYLE 4	The authors found that $x=y$.

The style you use will depend on your discipline and on the requirements of the journal. Using the first person singular (Style 1), is generally only found in **humanistic** fields where the author's opinions are often outlined.

What tenses should I use?

The most commonly used tenses in abstracts are the **present simple** (*we show*) and the **past simple** (*we showed*).

Avoid passive sentences: Passive constructions are often unnecessarily long. You can easily make them shorter and clearer by using the active voice.

TASK 1:

Find two abstracts from your scientific field. Analyze them. Check them for structure, style, grammar and keywords.

TASK 2. Write a draft of your abstract (in 100-120 words).

You can use the phrases as support.

- The present study investigates _____.
- We expected that _____.
- The method we applied involved _____.
- The results obtained show that _____.
- The study provides (strong) evidence that _____.

1. THE GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE WORK (ARTICLE, CHAPTER OF THE BOOK, PAPER, ETC.)

The author	Studies analyses considers	the nature and origins of the problems
	outlines	problem topics such as ...
	tackles	the problem of inflation
The book	contains	a factual description of...
The monograph under review	concerns	the most up-to-date information on ...
The survey	presents	a refined analysis of...
The publication	focuses on (is focused on, concentrates on)	the new trends in ...
The article	reveals points out treats	the problem of... that... the opinion ...

2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The main principal chief primary	aim objective purpose task	of the book of the paper of the article	is ...
The particular special	stress concern	in the work of the discussion	is put on ... is ...
The central	thesis	advanced in the publication	is ...

THE STRUCTURE OF THE WORK

The book the article the publication	is divided into ... consists of... falls into ...	several parts an introduction a conclusion emphasizing that...
In the first part (chapter, section) of the book	effort is undertaken attention is paid emphasis is given	to examine the analysis of... to functioning of... to the importance of...
In conclusion the article reads that...		

3. THEORETICAL BASIS AND METHODOLOGY

The publication	Is based on (rests on)	the supposition that...
		the concept that...
		the conclusions made by ...
		the results achieved by ...
The present	theory	was thoroughly (in detail) worked out in ...
The above mentioned		has been put forward (proposed, advanced) by ...
This well-known		has been recently improved
	formulates	
The theory		explains
		treats
	method	
The main, chief, basic, underlying, principle		is widely applied
The modern, proposed	technique	was employed (used)
The applied		has been developed
		has thrown light on ...

4. ESSENTIAL ASPECTS OF THE WORK

New similar fundamental original	ideas	were advanced (were put forward) by ... analyzed (treated) in the article are ... developed by ... have been extended and illustrated by ...
The central fundamental most important	problem	is stated as follows: ...
An entirely new the key, the main	problem	is addressed is far from an exact solution at the present time since ... is worth investigating
The available the provided further detailed valuable	information	was obtained through ... concerning (regarding) the results of the analysis Should be carefully handled (with the help of...)

5. THE RESULTS OF THE WORK

Preliminary		were obtained from the study of...
Exact		are derived from ...
Similar		arise from ...
Final	results	were treated according to a new approach to ...
Contradictory		are summarized in ...
Convincing		should be analyzed and applied to ...
		<u>confirm</u> the mentioned supposition
		provide evidence for the improved method that
		demonstrate the usefulness of...
The author	comes to a conclusion (makes a conclusion, reaches a conclusion) that	
		some
		a slight
The study	reveals	a great
		a full
		discrepancy
		a striking
		a certain
In conclusion	the article summarizes principles, approaches, techniques	
	it may be stated that...	
	it should be noted that...	

6. THE ASSESSMENT OF THE WORK

POSITIVE ASSESSMENT

The (present) book	is a substantial comparative analysis of... is
paper	a useful backdrop to those interested in ... is
article	clearly and logically developed is
publication	well-organized
presentation	is a comprehensive view concerning the problems ... is an important contribution to a complete understanding of.

NEGATIVE ASSESSMENT

The author(s)	failed to ...
	seem(s) to fall into two errors that arise from
The paper	lacks the definition of...
The survey	is far from being comprehensive, yet...
The study	seems to be lacking in supporting examples