

# European Journal of Soil Science: Guidance to authors (September 2005)

The Journal exists to report the latest significant results of research in all aspects of soil science and its applications, to describe new techniques, to provide up-to-date critical reviews, and to publish advanced educational papers. The Editor welcomes comments on papers in the Journal, which may be published as Letters to the Editor together with any replies from the authors. Contributions are invited from all countries. The 'European' in the title of the Journal signifies that the Journal is published on behalf of the societies of soil science in Europe and implies no discrimination against papers originating outside Europe. The preferred language is English, but papers in French are considered. There are no page charges. Papers offered must not have been published previously in any language; further, authors may not offer their papers while they are being considered by other journals, nor may they submit their papers to other journals while being considered by this one. **Submissions must be accompanied by a covering letter stating that the paper has not been published previously elsewhere nor is being considered by another journal, in any language, and that all authors have seen and agreed to the version submitted.**

Instructions to Authors are printed on the inside back cover of every issue of the Journal. Not all authors have ready access to the Journal, and even those who do can benefit from our expanding on those instructions, which we do below. They should also inspect the style file\* and the sample article\* (\*consult the files available at <http://www.blackwellpublishing.com/ejs>).

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However submitted, papers should be no longer than about 6500 words, plus figures, tables and references. Authors will be asked to reduce papers that are significantly longer than this. The Journal does not publish 'Short Communications' as such, but brief papers of about 2000 words or less are welcome; they should conform to the scientific, stylistic and format requirements of longer papers.

All versions of the paper should have double spacing and single column format throughout, with margins of at least 2.5 cm all round. Number the pages, including those listing references, figure captions and tables, in a single sequence. You should number the lines continuously in single digits; **the numbers should not start afresh from 1 on each page.** In all other respects follow the layout that you see in the

Journal, paying special attention to the title (bold lower case), short running head (italics), name(s) of author(s) (large and small roman capitals) and address(es) (italics), name of corresponding author and his or her e-mail address. Note also that these are left justified. The title should be succinct and contain the keywords. **Do not include separate lists of keywords; neither the Journal nor the major search engines use them.** The short running head title should be of no more than 50 characters including spaces. Please use a Times or similar typeface in 12 pt font throughout your text.

You must provide a summary of no more than 250 words, and you may add a French résumé. Papers in French must have an English summary in addition to a résumé. The summary should be largely factual. For a research paper it should state the underlying problem or question (one or two sentences), what you did (three or four sentences), what you found (another three or four sentences), and your conclusions (one or two sentences). It is the most important part of your paper because it is the only part that most potentially interested soil scientists will read, whether in abstracting journals or on the Internet. Do not regard it as a trivial task.

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The Journal accepts **supplementary material**. For further information see the Journal website.

## English spelling and usage

English spelling should follow that of the *Concise Oxford Dictionary*. Authors might wish to consult other works for English usage and style. Fowler's classic *Modern English Usage*, now in its third edition, edited by R.W. Burchfield and published by Oxford University Press, 1998, is highly recommended for general matters of usage and grammar. You will find more specific matters of scientific reporting in *Scientific Style and Format* written by the Council of Scientific Editors and published by Cambridge University Press for authors, editors and publishers.

## Système International d'Unités, SI

Authors must adhere as far as is reasonable to SI standards. Lists of the SI units you are most likely to encounter, their symbols and abbreviations are printed in Tables 1, 2 and 3. Note that all symbols are in roman font, which is plain and upright. Bear in mind that clarity is of overriding importance, and if you are in doubt about symbols write the units in full, e.g. litre (especially where 'l' might be mistaken for the number '1'), minute.

**Table 1** Basic units

Quantity	Name	Symbol
Length	metre	m
Mass	kilogram	kg
Time	second	s
Electric current	ampere	A
Temperature	kelvin	K
Amount of substance	mole	mol
Luminous intensity	candela	cd

**Table 2** Derived units

Quantity	Name	Symbol	Definition
Frequency	hertz	Hz	$s^{-1}$
Energy	joule	J	$kg\ m^2\ s^{-2} = N\ m$
Force	newton	N	$kg\ m\ s^{-2} = J\ m^{-1}$
Power	watt	W	$kg\ m^2\ s^{-3} = J\ s^{-1}$
Pressure	pascal	Pa	$kg\ m^{-1}\ s^{-2} = N\ m^{-2}$
Electric charge	coulomb	C	A s
Electrical potential difference	volt	V	$kg\ m^2\ s^{-3} = J\ A^{-1}\ s^{-1}$
Electrical resistance	ohm	$\Omega$	$kg\ m^2\ s^{-3}\ A^{-2} = V\ A^{-1} = S^{-1}$
Electrical conductance	siemens	S	$kg^{-1}\ m^{-2}\ s^3\ A^2 = \Omega^{-1}$
Electrical conductivity			$S\ m^{-1}$
Radioactivity	becquerel	Bq	$s^{-1}$

**Table 3** Other common related units

Quantity	Name	Symbol	Definition
Area	hectare	ha	$10^4\ m^2$
Volume	litre <sup>a</sup> , cubic decimetre	l, dm <sup>3</sup>	$10^{-3}\ m^3$
	cubic centimetre	cm <sup>3</sup>	$10^{-6}\ m^3$
Mass	gram	g	$10^{-3}\ kg$
	tonne	t	$10^3\ kg$
Concentration in solution	molarity	M	$mol\ l^{-1}, mol\ dm^{-3}$
Cation exchange capacity	moles of ion charge	mol <sub>c</sub> kg <sup>-1</sup>	
Temperature	degree Celsius <sup>b</sup>	°C	°C = K

<sup>a</sup>Some journals print capital L for litre. This Journal does not; it follows the rule that only units that are the names of people are capitalized. If there is likelihood of confusion between lower case letter l and the number 1 then write out litre in full; for example, you may write 'a 1-litre flask' rather than 'a 1-l flask'.

<sup>b</sup>The Celsius temperature is related to the temperature in kelvin by  $T_{Celsius} = T_{kelvin} - 273.15$ .

### Percentage and p.p.m.

In some instances percentages are so much more familiar than the SI units that it makes reading easier if they are used. For example, the proportions of sand, silt and clay are easier to appreciate when expressed as % rather than g kg<sup>-1</sup>. The carbon content of the soil is also often best expressed as % by weight.

Parts per million (p.p.m.) is ambiguous because it is not clear whether it refers to mass or volume or mass per unit volume. To avoid misunderstanding use SI units; e.g. mg kg<sup>-1</sup> or  $\mu g\ cm^{-3}$  as appropriate. Note that p.p.m., or ppm without the stops, is the standard unit for chemical shift in nuclear magnetic resonance spectroscopy, and is allowed.

### Time

The SI unit of time is the second (s). However, it is clearly inconvenient for expressing durations of more than a few minutes or hours. So use minutes, hours, days, weeks and years as appropriate. And remember that they are not SI units and have no standard symbols or abbreviations, so spell them out in full.

### Numbers and units

The integer numbers from 1 to 9 or 10 are spelled out in the text: one, two, ..., nine or ten. Larger integers are printed as arabic numerals: 11, 12, ..., except at the beginnings of sentences where they are printed as words. So, write, for example, 'four treatments' and '72 plots' in an experiment. Real numbers are printed in arabic numerals, again except where they begin sentences, with or without decimal points; e.g. 2.4 m, 3 hours.

The symbol for the decimal point in this Journal is the full stop (.), not the comma (,), and it is printed on the line (.), not centred (·).

If a number contains many digits then divide the digits into groups of three, starting at zero or the decimal point, and separate them by spaces, not commas. For example, write 1 500 000 Pa for the matric suction at wilting point, not 1,500,000 Pa. Alternatively, you may write it as  $1.5 \times 10^6$  Pa, or better as 1500 kPa or 1.5 MPa. Do not write '1.5 E06' or '1.5\*10<sup>6</sup>'; they are computer code. Notice that there is no space in numbers in the range 1000 to 9999.

In any number less than 1 and greater than -1 insert 0 before the decimal point. For example, print 0.251 and not .251.

The combination of a prefix and a symbol for a unit is regarded as a single symbol and is written with no space between the prefix and the unit; for example, kPa and not k Pa.

When writing a derived unit formed from several basic units, on the other hand, you must separate the basic units by spaces. For example, the unit for velocity, metre per second, is written  $m\ s^{-1}$ , not  $ms^{-1}$  (ms would be millisecond). For amounts of substance leave a space between the unit and the symbol of the substance, e.g.  $kg\ P\ ha^{-1}$ , not  $kgP\ ha^{-1}$ , and certainly not  $kg\ ha^{-1}\ P$ . In like manner insert a space between the number and the unit, as 1.5 MPa, not 1.5MPa.

When a unit is raised to a power, the power refers only to the unit and not to any number preceding it; for example,  $2.3\ cm^3$  means 2.3 cubic centimetres, not  $(2.3\ cm)^3$ .

Both numbers and SI unit symbols are printed in upright (roman) font. Algebraic symbols are printed in italics (sloping), and so are distinguished from SI symbols.

### Further guidance on units and symbols

- The definitive SI website (in English and French) is that of the Bureau International des Poids et Mesures at <http://www.bipm.org/>.
- International Standards Organization (ISO). 1992. *SI units and recommendations for the use of their multiples and of certain other units, ISO 1000*. International Standards Organization, Geneva.
- International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC) 1993. *Quantities, Units and Symbols in Physical Chemistry – The Green Book*, 2nd edn (eds I. Mills, T. Cvitas, K. Homann, N. Kallay & K. Kuchitsu). Blackwell Science, Oxford.
- Monteith, J.L. 1984. Consistency and convenience in the choice of units for agricultural science. *Experimental Agriculture*, **20**, 105–117.

## Fonts

### Fonts in text

Normal text is printed in roman font. You may use italic (sloping) to emphasize, but you should do this as little as possible: overuse reduces impact. Italic is also used for Latin words and expressions, including the names of plants and animals; thus *a priori*, *et al.*, *Pinus sylvestris*. Please use this facility if you have it; if not then print in a roman font and underline the words that are to appear in italic. Similarly, the Journal prints short titles, subheadings B and C, and the titles of scientific journals and books in italic.

You can see what is required by looking at a recent issue of the Journal, the style file\*, the sample article\* and the references below.

### Fonts for symbols

Choosing fonts for symbols is less obvious. As above, all SI units should be printed in a plain upright (roman) font. The symbols for chemical elements and compounds are always printed in roman except where they appear in subheadings B and C, in which case they are in italic.

Scalar variables and parameters, such as *A* for area, *c* for concentration in a solution, *m* for a mean, *b* for a regression coefficient, and *K* for hydraulic conductivity, are always printed in italic. Greek characters may be used for population parameters or other quantities following the convention of the discipline concerned. The standard deviation and product–moment correlation coefficient of a population are usually denoted by  $\sigma$  and  $\rho$ , for example. Vectors are printed in bold roman (upright) font, with lower case letters of either the Roman or Greek alphabet, such as **b** and  **$\sigma$** . Matrices are printed in bold capitals: **B**,  **$\Sigma$** .

Mathematical operators must be distinguished from variables on which they operate in algebraic expressions. Thus, exp for the exponential of, ln and log<sub>10</sub> for logarithm, cos for cosine, and the d in differential calculus are printed upright, whereas the variables are printed in italic. And so we write ‘exp(*x* – *y*)’, ‘ln *z*’, ‘cos  $\theta$ ’, and so on.

Diacritics (subscripts and superscripts) are dealt with as follows. If a diacritic is a variable then it is printed in italic. For example, the index *i* in  $z_i$ ,  $i = 1, 2, \dots, n$ , is italic because it is an integer variable taking values from 1 to *n*. If on the

other hand the diacritic is an abbreviation, as in  $K_s$  or  $K_{sat}$  for saturated hydraulic conductivity in which the ‘s’ or ‘sat’ are abbreviations for saturated, then it is printed in plain roman font.

The fonts in displayed equations and those in the text must be the same.

### Fonts in tables and graphs

The fonts used in tables must also be the same as those in the text. Symbols on graphs should match in that though they are printed in a sans serif font they should slope to match italics in the text and be upright to match roman text.

Values in tables are pure numbers. The variables to which they refer usually have dimensions, such as mol l<sup>-1</sup> for concentration and g cm<sup>-3</sup> for bulk density. The scale of the variable is, therefore, divided by the unit in which it is measured to arrive at the pure numbers in the body of a table, and the unit should be specified by placing it after a solidus, /, to indicate the division: thus ‘mol l<sup>-1</sup>’ and ‘g cm<sup>-3</sup>’.

In like manner, the axes of graphs are annotated with the names of the variables followed by the solidus and the units, for example, ‘Concentration /mol l<sup>-1</sup>’. The scales then become dimensionless and can be annotated correctly with pure numbers. Clearly, this notation means that the negative index should be used rather than the solidus to signify division within the unit; i.e. ‘mol l<sup>-1</sup>’ instead of ‘mol/l’. Do **not** enclose units on tables or figures in parentheses (...).

## Abbreviations generally

In general, do not use abbreviations, although some of the more common ones, e.g. OC (organic carbon), SOM (soil organic matter), are now widely understood and are acceptable. The abbreviations for the units of the SI are, of course, fully defined. They are as in Table 1 without stops. Other common abbreviations are accepted. These include M., Mme and Dr for Monsieur, Madame and Doctor, as examples. Some are followed by stops and others not. The rule adopted by the Journal is to terminate an abbreviation by a stop if it is simply a curtailment of a word. Therefore the abbreviation M. has a stop. A contraction with the first and last letters intact does not take a stop; hence Mme and Dr have none; ed., for editor, takes a stop; eds in the plural does not. Where an abbreviation, however common, is used in the text, e.g. BESI, it must be spelled out in full in the first instance; thus, ‘back-scattered electron scanning images (BESI)’. If in doubt do not abbreviate, and never begin a sentence with an abbreviation. You may write the following: ‘Nitrate was more concentrated in the rhizosphere than in the bulk soil, but NH<sub>4</sub><sup>+</sup> was not’.

## Statistics

Present the results of statistical analysis where appropriate.

For experiments state the experimental design, taking care to distinguish between replication of plots or samples in the field and replication for chemical determination in the laboratory. Analyse the data according to the design, and report the results, as either tables or graphs of means and their standard errors only. Do not add stars to indicate levels of significance, and do not attach letters to estimates to represent the results of multiple range tests. Statistical

significance is to some extent a matter of personal judgement, and provided you report the standard errors (not standard deviations) readers can decide for themselves whether your results are significant. If you wish to state your judgement then you may so in the text. There is no need to mention computer software for routine analyses.

For surveys state the sampling design and summarize the data. The summary should include size of sample, mean, median (optional), minimum, maximum, variance, standard deviation and skewness. Add the coefficient of variation (CV) only if it is sensible in the context.

Distinguish between correlation and regression. Express a linear relation by the Pearson product–moment correlation coefficient, denoted  $r$ . Use regression to express how one variable, the dependent variable, varies in response to change in one or more other predictor variables. Give the regression equation, with standard errors on the coefficients, and the coefficient of determination,  $R^2$ . Quoting  $R^2$  on its own is not acceptable.

Webster, R. (2001) Statistics to support soil research and their presentation, *European Journal of Soil Science*, **52**, 331–340 (available on the Journal’s website) provides further more detailed guidance. If you are in any doubt as to the correct form of analysis, the presentation of the results or the inference that you may properly draw from them then consult a professional statistician before finalizing your script.

## Citations and references

### Why cite?

In a research paper you may wish to cite sources

- 1 to acknowledge recent or otherwise unfamiliar research or discoveries from which your own research developed,
- 2 to tell readers where they can find details of investigations that bear on your own, or of technique that you have used, and
- 3 to document supporting or conflicting evidence from other investigations.

As a general rule cite works only if you have read them. Do not cite excessively; **try to avoid citing more than about 30 works**. The citations in **1** should be to the really significant literature, especially those papers that set you on the road to the investigations you describe. Typically the citations in this group will be few, rarely more than six. **They should not include standard students’ textbooks**. Exceptionally editors and referees draw authors’ attention to important papers that have been overlooked, but such omissions are usually easily rectified during revision.

The source literature in **2** needs no elaboration here.

What to include in **3** depends to a large extent on your discussion of the results. If you concentrate on the most significant results and omit the unimportant minutiae then you should find that you will need fairly few citations.

If you are writing a review you will obviously cite the literature that you regard as significant.

Having decided the literature to which you wish to refer cite it in the text by author(s) and year; for example, Chertkov (2001), McGarry & Yule (2002), (Ghassemi *et al.*, 1997; Siemens, 2003), with the parentheses placed according to context. Note that for a work by two authors cite both and for a work by more than two cite only the first followed by *et al.* Where several references appear together they are arranged chronologically and then alphabetically.

## References

Having cited works in the text you must refer to them at the end of the paper in the list of references. Be as punctilious in compiling the references as you are in reporting your methods and results, i.e. absolutely accurate. Check all references against the source documents, including your own (and not someone else’s citations), and ensure that they are correct and complete in every detail, and unabbreviated. Beware of transferring references obtained from searches of electronic databases; they are often truncated, omit accents and umlauts, and the less common characters such as œ, ç, å, ø, etc. can be changed in unpredictable ways.

The elements of references are as follows.

- Name(s) and initial(s) of author(s).
- Year of publication.
- If a journal article, its title, name of journal (*in italic*), volume number (**in bold**), and page numbers.
- If a book, its title (*in italic*) name of publisher, place of publication.
- If a paper in a collected work, title of the paper, In: title of collected work (*in italic*), editor(s) if any, page numbers, publisher and place of publication.
- If a thesis, its title (*in italic*), degree, name of university. Bear in mind that most readers will find it difficult to access theses, especially the unpublished ones of universities in English-speaking countries; so cite theses only if they contain crucial information that is not otherwise available.
- If a report of an institution or agency, its title (*in italic*) and as full information as possible on the publisher and where it might be obtained.

Do not cite unpublished documents other than theses. However, you may cite works that are ‘In press’ so long as you are able to give the Journal that has **accepted** them, but you may not cite works that are ‘In preparation’ because often such papers never appear in print.

Arrange the references in alphabetical order by author; where the same author appears more than once, single-author papers come before two-author papers, which come before multi-author papers. Within each class arrange papers in chronological order.

The following examples are for guidance.

- Chertkov, V.Y. 2002. Modelling cracking stages of saturated soils as they dry and shrink. *European Journal of Soil Science*, **53**, 105–118.
- Ghassemi, F., Jakeman, A.J. & Nix, H.A. 1995. *Salinisation of Land and Water Resources*. CAB International, Wallingford.
- McGarry, D. & Yule, D.F. 2002. Shrinkage. In: *Encyclopedia of Soil Science* (ed. R. Lal), pp. 1197–1200. Marcel Dekker, New York.
- Siemens, J. 2003. *Controls of carbon, nitrogen, and phosphorus fluxes in vadose zone and groundwater of protected watersheds in Münster (Germany)*. Doctoral dissertation, Technische Universität, Berlin.

Pay attention to the order of detail, style and punctuation adopted by the Journal, as shown above and evident in any recent issue and the sample article\*. If an author or set of authors has more than one reference in any year add the letters ‘a’, ‘b’, ‘c’, etc., as necessary to distinguish them in the text. Do not abbreviate. If a work is in a language that uses the Roman alphabet and is little used outside its country

of origin then give in parentheses the English translation immediately after the original title. For works in other alphabets, e.g. Russian, and in non-alphabetic languages, such as Chinese and Japanese, give the whole reference in English and print after it '(In [language])'.

If we find more than a few errors in a list of references then we return the paper to the author(s) for correction, and publication may be delayed.

## Tables

Prepare tables separately from the text, and list each table separately with its heading and with double spacing if there is room. Design your tables so that they will fit either in a single column of the printed Journal or across two columns. Avoid large tables that are likely to occupy more than one page. Provide all columns with headings, with the first letter of each heading capitalized. Specify the units by placing them after the solidus, /, as mentioned above. Consult a recent issue of the Journal or the sample article\* for examples of layout and format. Footnotes to tables should be referred to by upright, i.e. not italic, superscript letters (<sup>a</sup>, <sup>b</sup>, etc.). **Do not give numerical results to an unrealistic degree of precision.**

## Figures (see also Electronic artwork below)

Figures should be informative, attractive and readable. Design them to fit either into a single column of the Journal (83 mm), intermediate width (115 mm), or to span the width of the page (175 mm). Figures will be reduced to approximately half their original size, so prepare them for this reduction. Lettering should be sans serif, of a size that will be 2–3 mm in height when reduced, either upright or sloping to match the roman or italics in the text. Lines should be thick enough to be at least 0.33 mm in width when reduced, and symbols should be 2–3 mm across. The preferred symbols on graphs are ○, ●, □, ■, △, ▲. Do not embellish figures with unnecessary boxes or outer frames, nor repeat labels unnecessarily. Label the axes of graphs with the names of the variables followed by the solidus and the units. Give values on any one axis with the same number of decimals, except at the origin which you should label with a plain '0' and no decimal point. List the captions to the figures separately. The online version of the Journal will print only the first 100 characters of any caption, so ensure that all important aspects of any caption are mentioned in those first 100 characters.

## Photographs

Photographs are figures, and they are numbered in the same sequence as line drawings. They must be sharp and of good contrast. You may assemble several of them into a single figure on thin white card with spaces of 2–3 mm between them. Photomicrographs and other photographs the scales of which are not immediately apparent must have scales placed on them. Photographs obtained or submitted digitally (see Electronic artwork below) must be of fine resolution and of good contrast. We strongly discourage the use of figures that have been published in whole or in part elsewhere, unless they make an essential point. Where you do use such material its source must be acknowledged and, if the use is

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