European Journal of Soil Science: Guidance to authors

(Updated: August 2011)

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The Journal reports the latest significant results of research in all aspects of soil science and its applications including the development of new approaches, techniques and types of analysis. It also publishes up-to-date critical reviews, educational papers and comments on papers in the Journal.

We assess each manuscript by five major criteria which you should use as guidance when preparing your manuscript:

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Contributions are invited from all countries. The 'European' in the title implies no discrimination against papers originating outside Europe. The preferred language is English, but papers in French are considered. There are no page charges.

Steve Jarvis and Donald Davidson, Editors of *European Journal of Soil Science* and *Soil Use and Management* gave a presentation on How to Write for *Soil Use and Management* and *European Journal of Soil Science* at the 19th World Congress of Soil Science in Brisbane, Australia in August 2010. Authors should use the presentation, which can be found <u>here</u>, to optimize the chance of acceptance.

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A shortened version of the **Instructions to Authors** is printed from time to time on the inside back cover of the Journal and an expanded version is given below. Authors should also consult the style file (http://www.blackwellpublishing.com/specialarticles/ejsauthortemplate.doc) and the sample article (http://www.blackwellpublishing.com/pdf/ejs510.pdf).

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In preparing your manuscript, follow the layout that you see in the Journal and the sample article, paying special attention to the title (bold lower case), short running head (italics – maximum 50 characters including spaces), 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**.

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 although 'supporting

information' which will be published with the online version can be accepted (see <u>http://www.blackwellpublishing.com/pdf/ejs_supp_mat.pdf</u>). 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.

Papers should have a Times or similar typeface in 12 pt font, double spacing and single column format throughout the text. Margins should be at least 2.5 cm all round. Pages should be numbered in a single sequence including those listing references, Figure captions and Tables. Lines should be numbered in a continuous sequence throughout the paper.

Please provide a summary of no more than 250 words; you may add a French *résumé*. Papers in French must have an English summary in addition to a *résumé*. The summary should be 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). Do not regard this as a trivial task.

English spelling and usage

English spelling should follow the *Concise Oxford Dictionary*. Authors might also wish to consult *Fowler's Modern English Usage* (ed. R.W. Burchfield; Oxford University Press) and *Scientific Style and Format* (eds Council of Scientific Editors; Cambridge University Press).

Authors whose first language is not English must have their manuscript checked by a native English speaker before submission. A list of independent suppliers of editing services can be found at: <u>http://www.blackwellpublishing.com/bauthor/english_language.asp</u>. These services have to be paid for and arranged by the author; their use does <u>not</u> guarantee acceptance or preference for publication.

Units of measurement

Authors should adhere to SI (*Système International d'Unités*) standards. The most common SI and acceptable related units with their symbols and abbreviations are printed in Tables 1, 2 and 3. Clarity is of over-riding importance; if you are in any doubt write the units in full, e.g. litre (especially where 'l' might be mistaken for the number 'l'), minute etc. These instructions concerning numbers and units apply equally to the manuscript text to labels on the axes of Figures, and to material in Tables (both column headings and column entries).

Table 1 Basic units

Quantity	Name	Symbol
Length	metre	m
Mass	kilogram	kg
Time	second	S
Electric current	ampere	А
Temperature	Kelvin	Κ
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	Ν	$kg m s^{-2} = J m^{-1}$
Power	watt	W	kg m ² s ⁻³ = J s ⁻¹
Pressure	pascal	Pa	$\text{kg m}^{-1} \text{ s}^{-2} = \text{N m}^{-2}$
Electric charge	coulomb	С	A s
Electrical potential difference	volt	V	kg m ² s ⁻³ = J A ⁻¹ s ⁻¹
Electrical resistance	ohm	Ω	$kg m^{2} s^{-3} A^{-2} = V A^{-1} = S^{-1}$
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 ^a , cubic decimetre	l, dm ³	10^{-3} m^3
Volume	cubic centimetre	cm ³	10^{-6} m^3
Mass	gram	g	10^{-3} kg
Mass	tonne	t	10^3 kg
Concentration in solution	molarity	Μ	mol l^{-1} , mol dm^{-3}
Cation exchange capacity	moles of ion charge	$mol_{c} kg^{-1}$	
Temperature	degree Celsius ^b	°C	K – 273.15

^aSome journals print capital L for litre. EJSS 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 1 and the number 1 then write out "litre" in full; for example, write 'a 1-litre flask' rather than 'a 1-l flask'.

^bCelsius temperature is related to that in kelvin by $T_{\text{Celsius}} = T_{\text{kelvin}} - 273.15$.

Percentage and p.p.m.: In some instances percentages are more familiar than SI units and reading is easier if they are used. The proportions of sand, silt and clay and the carbon content may be expressed as % rather than g kg⁻¹. Parts per million (p.p.m.) must not be used to express concentrations – use the appropriate SI unit e.g. mg kg⁻¹, mg dm⁻³ etc. However, p.p.m. (or ppm) is the standard unit for chemical shift in nuclear magnetic resonance spectroscopy and may be used.

For gas concentrations, use μ mol mol⁻¹, or μ l l⁻¹, instead of p.p.m. or p.p.m.v.; and similarly use nmol mol⁻¹ or nl l⁻¹ instead of p.p.b. or p.p.b.v."

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. Use minutes, hours, days, weeks and years as appropriate; they are not SI units and should be written in full.

Numbers: The integer numbers from 1 to 9 or 10 are spelled out in the text: one, two, ..., nine, 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. The symbol for the decimal point in this Journal is the full stop and it is printed on the line (.). 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.

Grouping of digits: If a number contains many digits then divide these 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 1.5×10^6 Pa, or better as 1500 kPa or 1.5 MPa. **Please do not write '1.5 E06' or '1.5*10⁶'**. Note that there is no space between numbers in the range 1000 to 9999. For any number less than 1 and greater than -1 insert 0 before the decimal point. For example, print '0.25 1' and not '.25 1'.

Prefixes: 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'.

Derived units: A derived unit formed from several basic units is separated into the basic units by spaces; thus 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 **not** kg ha⁻¹ P. Similarly, insert a space between the number and the unit, as 1.5 MPa.

Powers: 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 $(2.3 \text{ cm})^3$. Note that, in English, 2 m^2 is 2 square metres; 2 m squared means an area 2 m x 2 m, i.e. 4 m².

Further guidance on units and symbols

- The definitive SI website (in English and French) is that of the Bureau International des Poids et Mésures at <u>http://www.bipm.org/</u>.
- 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, symbols and abbreviations

Normal text is printed in upright Roman font (like this here). *Italic* font is used for Latin words and expressions, including the names of plants and animals; thus *a priori*, *et al.*, *Pinus sylvestris* L. Similarly, the Journal prints short titles, and the titles of scientific journals and books in *italic*. You should not use italic font as a means to emphasize text.

SI units should be printed in an upright Roman font. The symbols for chemical elements and compounds are **always** printed in Roman except where they appear in subheadings, in which case they are in *italic*. Note that the unit for 'molar' is M (small capital, 10 font) to distinguish it from M (mega-).

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. Vectors are printed in **bold Roman** font, with lower case letters of either the Roman or Greek alphabet. Matrices are printed in **BOLD CAPITALS**.

Mathematical operators must be distinguished from variables on which they operate in algebraic expressions. Thus, exp for 'the exponential of', ln and \log_{10} for 'natural' or base10 logarithms respectively, cos for cosine, and the d in differential calculus are printed in roman, whereas the variables are printed in *italic*. We thus write 'exp(x - y)', 'ln z', 'cos Q', dx and so on.

Subscripts and superscripts: if a subscript or superscript is a variable then it is printed in *italic*. For example, the index i in z_i , i = 1, 2, ..., n, is *italic* because it is an integer variable taking values from 1 to n. If on the other hand it 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 used in Tables and equations must be the same as those in the text. Symbol fonts and styles on graphs and their axes should be the same as used in the text.

Abbreviations should generally only be used if they are widely known, e.g. OC (organic carbon), SOM (soil organic matter), NMR (nuclear magnetic resonance), and should be given in full when they are first used: this includes chemical symbols as with, for example, nitrogen (N). The rule adopted by the Journal is to terminate an abbreviation by a full stop (.) if it is a curtailment of a word (such as ed. for editor). A contraction with the first and last letters intact does not take a full stop (for example, eds for editors). Where an abbreviation, however common, is first used in the text, it must be spelled out in full; for example 'back-scattered electron scanning images (BESI)'. Avoid starting sentences with an abbreviation.

Statistics

We receive many papers that are weakened by inappropriate and/or mis-used statistical methods. Thus the basic advice from the editors of EJSS is: *Present the results of statistical analysis only where appropriate and ensure that the methods of analysis used are appropriate to your purposes*. If in any doubt you should take advice from a professional statistician. If the Editors have any concerns, the manuscript will be referred to a statistical panel and this may delay the decision-making process.

The following notes are designed to help you with your analysis.

Design of surveys and experiments

For experiments, state the experimental design, taking care to distinguish between replication of plots or samples in the field and replication for determinations 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 attach letters to estimates to represent the results of multiple range tests (and use these sparingly as they are often meaningless).

For surveys, state the sampling design, the number of samples and provide a statistical summary of the data. The latter 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 (Webster, 2001), for example the CV of pH is not as the pH scale does not have an absolute zero. Please note that data are **plural** when writing about them in the text.

Pseudo-replication is a frequent cause of failure in papers submitted to EJSS (Webster, 2007); however, there may be some circumstances where its use is unavoidable but the rationale behind this needs to be explained fully (the argument that this saves on experimental costs is not an acceptable explanation).

Significance

Statistical significance is to some extent a matter of personal judgement, and provided you report the standard errors readers can decide for themselves whether your results are significant. It is also a matter of sample size. If you wish to state your judgement then you should do so in the text. Avoid the use of stars in tables to indicate significance. Please also consider carefully the use of the word 'significant'. This should only be used in a statistical context where the significance of a difference or change can be expressed as a probability.

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 <u>predictor</u> 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, 1997). Note that R^2 is not necessarily the best way of relating the relationship between measurements; a 1:1 line is very often equally informative.

Analysis of variance (ANOVA)

Many authors use ANOVA inappropriately or fail to report the results fully. The latter is also particularly true of so-called multiple-range tests and similar procedures that add little statistical rigour to papers and should be avoided wherever possible. A properly conducted and reported ANOVA is of much greater value. If you carried out such an analysis, then it will greatly improve your paper if you make full use of the output in a table (Webster, 2007).

Principal components analysis (PCA)

Many such analyses are described inadequately and have to be returned to authors for improvement. Unless you are thoroughly familiar with PCA, you should study Webster (2001) and/or seek advice from a professional statistician.

Repeated measurements

In some investigations, such as field monitoring, studies of leaching and experiments in soil biology, measurements are made non-destructively from the same experimental locations. The data at any one location are then likely to be correlated in time, and the statistical analysis of those data should take into account that possibility. Webster & Payne (2002) describe ways in which that might be done.

If you are unsure of the best way to use statistics to analyse, interpret and present your work, then consult a professional statistician. It is also our experience that many papers would be much stronger and would yield much more valuable output if authors consulted professional statisticians before they finalised the design of their experiments.

You should also consult:

- Webster, R. 2001. Statistics to support soil research and their presentation, *European Journal of Soil Science*, **52**, 331–340.
- Lane, P.W. 2002. Generalized linear models in soil science. *European Journal of Soil Science*, 53, 241-251.

Webster, R. & Payne, P.W. 2002. Analysing repeated measurements in soil monitoring and experimentation. *European Journal of Soil Science*, **53**, 1-13.

Webster, R. 2007. Analysis of variance, inference, multiple comparisons and sampling effects in soil research. *European Journal of Soil Science*, **58**, 74-82.

Tables

- Consult a recent issue of the Journal or the sample article (http://www.blackwellpublishing.com/pdf/ejs510.pdf) for examples of layout and format.
- Prepare Tables separately from the text and put each on a separate page with its heading and with double spacing if there is room. Make sure that the table heading can be understood without the need for undue reference to the text.
- 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.
- Values in Tables are pure numbers. The variables to which they refer usually have dimensions, such as mol litre⁻¹ for concentration and g cm⁻³ for bulk density. The scale of the variable is, therefore, divided by the unit in which it is measured.
- The unit should be specified in column headings etc by placing it after a solidus, /, to indicate the division and not, for example by enclosing in parentheses: thus '/mol litre⁻¹' and '/g cm⁻³'.
- Be consistent in the number of significant digits used. Do not give numerical results or their statistics to an unrealistic degree of precision.
- Footnotes to Tables should be referred to by upright, i.e. not italic, superscript letters (^{a, b}, etc.).

Figures and other artwork

Figures

- Figures should be informative, attractive and readable. Make sure that the caption can be understood without the need for undue reference to the text.
- Put each Figure on a separate page. 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 *italic* 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 when reduced.
- Do not use outer boxes or frames (they waste space).
- Label the axes of graphs with the names of the variables followed by the solidus and the units. Similarly, the axes of graphs must be annotated with the names of the variables followed by the solidus and the units, for example, 'Concentration /mol litre⁻¹'. The scales

must be annotated correctly with pure numbers. Do **not** enclose units on tables or figures in parentheses (...).

- 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.
- Number each Figure BUT put the captions to the Figures on a separate page. <u>The</u> 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 (including spaces).

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 into a single Figure.
- Photomicrographs and other photographs must have clear scales. Digital images must be of fine resolution and of good contrast.

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We need your artwork in electronic form. Please save vector graphics (e.g. line artwork) in Encapsulated Postscript Format (EPS), and bitmap files (e.g. half-tones) in Tagged Image File Format (TIFF) or high-resolution PDF format. We cannot accept PowerPoint. WORD or EXCEL files for Figures. Detailed information on our digital illustration standards is available at www.blackwellpublishing.com/bauthor/illustration.asp

Citations and references

For *Research Papers*, cite works only if you have read them. Do not cite excessively; **try to avoid citing more than about 30 works**, and certainly no more than 40. The citations should be restricted to the really significant literature and **should not include standard students' textbooks.** In a *Review* you should cite the literature that you regard as significant.

Text citations: Cite 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. For two authors cite both (using "&", not "and"); for work by more than two authors cite only the first followed by *et al*. Where several references appear together they are arranged chronologically and then alphabetically within each year.

References: Refer to your citations at the end of the paper in the list of references. Check all references including your own against the source documents (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 ∞ , ζ , a, ϕ , etc. can be changed in unpredictable ways.

References should be prepared as follows:

- Name(s) and initial(s) of author(s). Where there are more than 6 authors only the first 6 names should be listed followed by *et al*.
- Year of publication.
- If a journal article, the article 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. You may not cite works that are 'In preparation' because often such papers never appear in print.

Websites are increasingly cited. **First check that the web-site still exists** and then cite it along with the date you accessed it.

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.
- Blackwell Publishing. 2008. *A major publisher of soil science Journals*. (At: <u>http://www.blackwellpublishing.com/</u>. Accessed: 10/03/2008); note that the date format is day/month/year.

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. 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])'.

Tools such as EndNote (<u>http://www.endnote.com/support/enstyles.asp</u>) or Reference Manager (<u>http://www.refman.com/support/rmstyles.asp</u>) should be used for reference management and formatting. **If we find more than a few errors in a list of references, we will return the paper to the author(s) for correction, and publication may be delayed.**

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