

## **Drafts of Methods**

1. For a copy-and-paste draft, it is hard to give meaningful feedback to help you avoid mistakes on the final version.
2. Start with the Word file to get an idea of the structure and language for your Methods, but you need to modify the Word file in some parts.
3. Most drafts used subheadings, past tense, and passive voice, but some did not.
4. Structure your Methods in a reasonable order. Generally, you should have about 6-8 subsections (give or take), but some of you are good at condensing into fewer subsections. For example, include a Chemicals or Reagents subsection in the appropriate location. Other possible example subsections: Samples or Sample Collection, Sample Treatment, Sample Analysis. These are generic headings, and you need to decide how to adapt them to your paper if you use them.

5. Many drafts can eliminate unnecessary details that are rather trivial. For example, how much detail do you really need to give on calibration? It's probably enough to say that you calibrated with X. Experts should know how to calibrate if given the materials.
6. Some drafts sound like a lab manual or lab report, rather than a journal article. The language and level of detail are not appropriate for the Methods section of a journal article.
7. Many drafts can eliminate unnecessary spaces. Don't leave blank lines between subsections, don't indent subheadings, etc.
8. Watch out for introducing acronyms without defining them and including sentence fragments.