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Nature is an international journal covering all the sciences. Contributors should therefore bear in mind those readers who work in other fields and those for whom English is a second language, and write clearly and simply, avoiding unnecessary technical terminology. Space in the journal is limited, making competition for publication severe. Brevity is highly valued. One printed page of *Nature*, without interruptions, contains about 1,300 words.

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Nature requests authors to deposit sequence and crystallographic data in the databases that exist for this purpose, and to mention availability of these data.

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Categories of paper

Review articles survey recent developments in a field. Most are commissioned but suggestions are welcome in the form of a one-page synopsis addressed to the Reviews Coordinator. Length is negotiable in advance.

Articles are research reports whose conclusions are of general interest and which are sufficiently rounded to be a substantial advance in understanding. They should not have more than 3,000 words of text (not including figure legends) or more than six display items and should not occupy more than five pages of *Nature*.

Articles start with a heading of 50–80 words written to advertise their content in general terms, to which editors will pay particular attention. The heading does not usually contain numbers, abbreviations or measurements. The introduction to the study is contained in the first two or three paragraphs of the article, which also briefly summarize its results and implications. Articles have fewer than 50 references and may contain a few short subheadings.

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Preparation of manuscripts

All manuscripts should be typed, double-spaced, on one side of the paper only. An original and four copies are required, each accompanied by artwork. If photographs are included, five sets of originals are required; for line drawings, one set of originals and four good-quality photocopies are acceptable. Reference lists, figure legends and tables should all be on separate sheets, all of which should be double-spaced and numbered. Three copies of relevant manuscripts in press or submitted for publication elsewhere should be included with each copy of a submitted manuscript, and clearly marked as such. Five copies of revised and resubmitted manuscripts, labelled with their manuscript numbers are required, together with five copies of a letter detailing the changes made.

Titles are brief and simple. Active verbs, numerical values, abbreviations and punctuation are to be avoided. Titles should contain one or two key words for indexing purposes.

Artwork should be marked individually and clearly with the author's name and, when known, the manuscript number. Ideally, no figure should be larger than 28 by 22 cm. Figures with several parts are to be avoided and are permitted only if the parts are closely related, either experimentally or logically. Unlettered originals of photographs should be provided. Suggestions for cover illustrations, with captions and labelled with the manuscript number, are welcome. Original artwork is returned when a manuscript cannot be published.

Protein/nucleotide sequences should ideally be in the three-letter and not the single-letter code for amino acids. One column width of *Nature* can accommodate 20 amino acids or 60 base pairs.

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References are numbered sequentially as they appear in the text, followed by those in tables and finally by those in figure legends. Only papers published or in the press are numbered and included in the reference list. All other forms of reference should be cited in the text as a personal communication, manuscript submitted or in preparation. Text is not included in reference lists. References are abbreviated according to the *World List of Scientific Periodicals* (Butterworths, London, 1963–65). The first and last page numbers are included; reference to books should include publisher, place and date.

Abbreviations, symbols, units and greek letters should be identified the first time they are used. Acronyms should be avoided whenever possible and, if used, defined. Footnotes are not used in the text.

Acknowledgements are brief and appear after the reference list; grant and contribution numbers are not allowed.

Supplementary information is material relevant to Articles or Letters which cannot, for lack of space, be published in full, but which is available from *Nature* on request.

Submission. Manuscripts can be sent to the Editor at 4 Little Essex Street, London WC2R 3LF, UK or at 1234 National Press Building, Washington, DC 20045, USA. Manuscripts or proofs sent by air courier to London should be declared as 'manuscripts' and 'value \$5' to prevent the imposition of import duty and value-added tax.