

## Guide to Authors

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### AIMS AND SCOPE OF THE JOURNAL

*Nature Chemical Biology* is an international monthly journal that provides a high-visibility forum for the publication of top-tier original research and commentary for the chemical biology community. Chemical biology is an emerging field that combines the scientific ideas and approaches of chemistry, biology and allied disciplines to understand and manipulate biological systems with molecular precision. The journal publishes papers from the expanding community of chemical biologists, including contributions from chemists who are applying the principles and tools of chemistry to biological questions and from biologists who are interested in understanding and controlling biological processes at the molecular level.

We give priority to studies that report significant conceptual or practical advances in any area where chemistry and biology intersect. The journal is primarily interested in basic research, especially those studies that report new chemical or biological tools or present significant new molecular-level insights into the mechanisms underpinning biological processes. Additionally, because chemical biology approaches have broad utility for manipulating or engineering biological systems, the journal also considers manuscripts describing applied molecular studies at the chemistry-biology interface. Independent of the scientific area, we seek manuscripts that blend chemistry and biology in new ways, particularly those that provide major conceptual or methodological advances that are likely to open up innovative avenues of research in the field. The journal strives for a fair but comprehensive review process that emphasizes rigorous chemical and biological characterization.

In addition to publishing original research, *Nature Chemical Biology* is a forum for the exchange of ideas between scientists in the chemical and life sciences and a community resource for this emerging field. To this end, we publish content including scholarly reviews and perspectives, highlights of research published in our pages and in other journals, correspondence and commentaries that present topics of scientific and community interest.

### SAMPLE ISSUE

Free online access to the [December 2008 issue](#).

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### ENHANCED ONLINE FEATURES

In addition, the online journal includes functionality developed specifically for *Nature Chemical Biology* including:

#### PUBCHEM LINKING

A PubChem link allows users of *Nature Chemical Biology* to go, in a single click, from the mention of a molecule in a paper to a rich and growing collection of information about chemical structures and their biological assay results, hosted by the NCBI.

### CHEMICAL COMPOUND INFORMATION

For all significant compounds included in *Nature Chemical Biology* original research papers, a compound data page, linked directly from the compound reference in the full text, appears in the online journal.

### 3D RENDERING OF COMPOUNDS

Using a jmol window within the 'compound data index page', users can view and manipulate chemical compounds in three dimensions on the journal web site.

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### EDITORIAL PROCESS

The overview of the journal's [manuscript decision process](#) includes submission, editorial decision on whether the paper should be reviewed, peer review, decisions after review, revision, acceptance in principle, final submission and acceptance, proofs, advance online publication, and print publication. Before submitting a paper, authors should consult our [editorial policies](#) as well as [technical tips](#) for using our online submission system.

Please also consult our general guide for [manuscript preparation and submission](#), which includes information on article formats, journal style, and figure preparation tips. Note that procedures for initial submission, revision, and final submission are slightly different, so please consult the directions before proceeding to the [online submission system](#). Presubmission inquiries are not a prerequisite for the regular submission process, but are intended as a mechanism for authors to receive rapid feedback on whether a manuscript in preparation is likely to be of interest to the journal. We encourage authors who have already prepared their manuscripts to bypass the presubmission inquiry process and upload their papers as a regular submission to the journal.

Journals in the Nature family no longer take copyright on the primary research articles we publish. Instead we ask authors to sign a [license](#) for us to publish their work. US government employees [sign a different license](#).

### EDITORS AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Like the other Nature titles, *Nature Chemical Biology* has no external editorial board. Instead, all editorial decisions are made by a team of full-time professional editors, who are PhD-level chemists and biologists. For information on their research backgrounds and scientific interests, see [About the Editors](#) at [http://www.nature.com/nchembio/about/about\\_ed/index.html](http://www.nature.com/nchembio/about/about_ed/index.html).

A full list of journal staff appears on the masthead at <http://www.nature.com/nchembio/masthead/masthead.html>.

### RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER NATURE JOURNALS

*Nature Chemical Biology* is editorially independent, and its editors make their own decisions, independent of the other Nature journals. If a paper is rejected from one Nature journal, the authors can use an automated manuscript transfer service to submit the paper to another

## GUIDE TO AUTHORS

Nature journal via a link sent to them by the editor handling the manuscript. Authors should note that referees' comments (including any confidential comments to the editor) and identities are transferred to the editor of the second journal along with the manuscript. In that case, the journal editors will take the previous reviews into account when making their decision, although in some cases the editors may choose to take advice from additional or alternative referees. Alternatively, authors may choose to request a fresh review, in which case they should not use the automated transfer link, and the editors will evaluate the paper without reference to the previous review process. More details are available on the [manuscript transfer service](http://www.nature.com/authors/author_services/transfer_manuscripts.html) at [http://www.nature.com/authors/author\\_services/transfer\\_manuscripts.html](http://www.nature.com/authors/author_services/transfer_manuscripts.html) and on the [relationships between Nature titles](http://www.nature.com/authors/relationships_between_Nature_titles) at [http://www.nature.com/authors/relationships\\_between\\_Nature\\_titles](http://www.nature.com/authors/relationships_between_Nature_titles) at [http://www.nature.com/authors/author\\_services/about\\_nature\\_family.html](http://www.nature.com/authors/author_services/about_nature_family.html).

### EDITORIAL AND PUBLISHING POLICIES

Please see [authors & referees @ npg](http://www.nature.com/authors/index.html) at <http://www.nature.com/authors/index.html> for detailed information about author and referee services and publication policies at the Nature family of journals. The Nature journals, including *Nature Chemical Biology*, share a number of common policies including the following:

[Author responsibilities](#)

[License agreement and author copyright](#)

[Embargo policy and press releases](#)

[Use of experimental animals and human subjects](#)

[Competing financial interests](#)

[Availability of materials and data](#)

[Digital image integrity and standards](#)

[Security concerns](#)

[Refutations, complaints and corrections](#)

[Duplicate publication](#)

[Confidentiality and pre-publicity](#)

[Plagiarism and fabrication](#)

### IMPACT FACTOR

The 2008 ISI impact factor for *Nature Chemical Biology* is 14.612, according to the Thomson Reuters Journal Citation Reports. This places *Nature Chemical Biology* as the leading primary research journal not only in chemical biology but also across related chemical sciences.

The 2008 impact factor represents the number of citations in 2008 to papers published in 2006 and 2007, divided by the total number of papers published in 2006 and 2007. A more detailed explanation of impact factors appears on the [Thomson Reuters web site](#).

### EDITORIAL BLOGS

We encourage community participation in all Nature journal blogs. The Sceptical Chymist is a chemistry blog by the editors of *Nature* and the research journals and a forum for readers, authors and the entire chemical community and can be found at <http://blogs.nature.com/thescepticalchymist/>. *Nautilus* is a blog for authors and aspiring authors of Nature Publishing Group journals. *Peer-to-Peer* is a blog for peer reviewers and about peer review. Other Nature Publishing Group blogs can be found on the blog index page at <http://www.nature.com/blogs/index.html>.

### ABBREVIATION

The correct abbreviation for abstracting and indexing purposes is *Nat. Chem. Biol.*

### ISSN AND EISSN

The international standard serial number (ISSN) for *Nature Chemical Biology* is 1552-4450, and the electronic international standard serial

number (EISSN) is 1552-4469.

### FURTHER EDITORIAL INFORMATION

Please see the following editorials for more information on various aspects of journal policy.

[A community of chemists and biologists \(June 2005\)](#)

[Keeping it real \(April 2007\)](#)

[A new look for chemical information \(June 2007\)](#)

[Plus ça change \(November 2007\)](#)

[To the editor \(June 2008\)](#)

[Data shown \(October 2008\)](#)

[Decoding decisions \(December 2008\)](#)

[New in 2009 \(January 2009\)](#)

[A very good place to start \(February 2009\)](#)

[Screening we can believe in \(March 2009\)](#)

## CONTENT TYPES

### PRIMARY RESEARCH FORMATS

A **Brief Communication** reports a concise study of high quality, broad interest and immediate importance. This format may not exceed 3 printed journal pages. Brief Communications begin with a brief unrefereed abstract (3 sentences, no more than 70 words). The main text is typically 1,200–1,600 words (not including abstract, figure legends or references) and contains no headings. Brief Communications normally have no more than 2 display items (schemes, figures and/or tables), although this may be flexible at the discretion of the editor, provided the page limit is observed. References are limited to 25. Article titles are omitted from the reference list. Experimental methods should be provided as Supplementary Methods. If statistical testing was used to analyze the data, the Supplementary Methods must contain a section on statistical analysis.

Brief Communications include received/accepted dates and may be accompanied by Supplementary Information. Brief Communications are peer reviewed, and authors must provide a [competing financial interests](#) statement before publication.

An **Article** is a substantial novel research study of high quality and general interest to the chemical biology community. Articles are generally 4–10 printed journal pages. The main text (not including abstract, Methods, references and figure legends) is limited to 4,000–5,000 words. The abstract is no more than 150 words (10 lines in print) and may not contain references. Articles have up to 8 display items (schemes, figures and/or tables). An introduction (without heading) is followed by sections headed Results, Discussion and Methods. The Results and Methods should be divided by topical subheadings; the Discussion should be succinct and may not contain subheadings. The Methods section in the main text is limited to 1,000 words; additional experimental protocols should be placed in Supplementary Methods. If statistical testing was used to analyze the data, the Methods section must contain a subsection on statistical analysis. References are limited to 50.

Articles include received/accepted dates and may be accompanied by Supplementary Information. Articles are peer reviewed, and authors must provide a [competing financial interests](#) statement before publication.

### OTHER FORMATS

**Correspondence** provides readers with a venue to comment on papers published in a previous issue of the journal or to discuss issues relevant to chemical biology. A Correspondence is never more than one printed

page and typically is 250–500 words and is limited to one display item and 10 references. Article titles are omitted from the reference list. Titles for correspondence are supplied by the editors.

In cases where a correspondence is critical of a previous research paper, the authors are given the opportunity to publish a brief reply. Refutations are always peer reviewed, but do not include received/accepted dates. Other types of Correspondence may be peer reviewed at the editors' discretion. Authors must provide a [competing financial interests](#) statement before publication.

**Commentary** articles focus on policy, science and society or purely scientific issues related to chemical biology. They should be of immediate interest to a broad readership and should be written in an accessible, nontechnical style. Commentaries are approximately 2,000–3,000 words and typically occupy 3–4 printed journal pages. These pieces generally contain 2–3 display items (schemes, figures, tables and/or boxes) and up to 25 references. Article titles are omitted from the reference list. Commentaries may not contain primary research data, although they may present 'sociological' data (funding trends, demographics, bibliographic data, etc.).

Commentaries may be peer reviewed at the editor's discretion and do not include received/accepted dates. Authors must provide a [competing financial interests](#) statement before publication.

**Book Reviews** present reviews of current books of interest to the chemical biology community. Suggestions for appropriate books are welcome, but book reviews are by prior arrangement only. Book reviews are generally limited to one printed journal page.

Book reviews are not peer reviewed do not include received/accepted dates. Authors must provide a [competing financial interests](#) statement before publication.

**Meeting Reports** present highlights of scientific meetings that are of interest to chemical biologists. Meeting reports are approximately 2,000–3,000 words and usually occupy 3–4 printed journal pages. These pieces generally contain 2–3 display items (schemes, figures, tables and/or boxes) and up to 25 references. Article titles are omitted from the reference list. Suggestions for appropriate meetings are welcome, but meeting reports are by prior arrangement only.

Meeting reports are not peer reviewed and do not include received/accepted dates. Authors must provide a [competing financial interests](#) statement before publication.

**News and Views** are by prior arrangement only. They may be linked to articles in *Nature Chemical Biology*, or they may focus on papers of exceptional significance that are published elsewhere. Although unsolicited contributions will not normally be considered, prospective authors may propose topics. News and Views are not peer reviewed, but undergo editing in consultation with the editorial team. Authors must provide a [competing financial interests](#) statement before publication.

A **Review** is an authoritative, balanced and scholarly survey of recent developments in a research field. Although reviews should be recognized as scholarly by specialists in the field, they should be written with a view to informing nonspecialist readers. Thus, reviews should be presented using simple prose, avoiding excessive jargon and technical detail. Reviews typically occupy 8–10 pages in the printed journal and begin with a 150-word abstract written for a general audience. The main text is approximately 4,000–5,000 words. Reviews typically include 6–8 display items (schemes, figures, tables and/or boxes). Because references are limited to 100, citations should be selective. In

the case of particularly important studies ( $\leq 10\%$  of all the references), we encourage authors to provide short annotations explaining why these are key contributions. The scope of a Review should be broad enough that it is not dominated by the work of a single laboratory, and particularly not by the authors' own work. Unpublished primary research data are not permitted in Reviews.

Reviews do not include received/accepted dates. Reviews are always peer reviewed to ensure factual accuracy, appropriate citations and scholarly balance, and they are edited in consultation with the editorial team. Authors must provide a [competing financial interests](#) statement before publication.

**Perspectives** are a second format for scholarly reviews and discussions of the primary research literature. Perspectives differ from Reviews and Commentaries in that they frequently present a focused review of a rapidly moving area of science. They also may advocate a controversial position or present a speculative hypothesis. Two reviews advocating opposite sides in a research controversy are normally published as Perspectives. Perspectives are usually 8–10 printed journal pages. Perspectives include a 150-word abstract written for a general audience, a main text of 4,000–5,000 words and 6–8 display items (schemes, figures, tables and/or boxes). References are limited to 100. Unpublished primary research data are not permitted in Perspectives.

Perspectives do not include received/accepted dates. Perspectives are always peer reviewed to ensure factual accuracy and appropriate citations, and they are edited in consultation with the editor. Authors must provide a [competing financial interests](#) statement before publication.

## HOW TO SUBMIT

### ONLINE SUBMISSION

We strongly prefer to receive manuscripts via our [online submission system](#). Using this system, authors can upload manuscript files (text, figures and supplementary information, including video) directly to our office and check on the status of their manuscripts during the review process. In addition, reviewers can access the manuscript over a direct Internet link, which speeds the review process and maintains referee anonymity. Please consult our [technical information](#) on file formats and tips for using the system effectively. Revisions, including manuscripts submitted after a [presubmission inquiry](#), should be uploaded via the link provided in the editor's decision letter. Please do not submit revisions as new manuscripts.

### SUBMISSION POLICIES

Submission to *Nature Chemical Biology* is taken to imply that there is no significant overlap between the submitted manuscript and any other papers from the same authors under consideration or in press elsewhere (abstracts or unrefereed web preprints do not compromise novelty). The authors must include copies of all related manuscripts with any overlap in authorship that are under consideration or in press elsewhere. If a related manuscript is submitted elsewhere while the manuscript is under consideration at *Nature Chemical Biology*, a copy of the related manuscript should be sent to the editor.

The primary affiliation for each author should be the institution at which the majority of their work was done. If an author has subsequently moved, the current address may also be stated.

If the manuscript includes personal communications, please provide a written statement of permission from any person who is quoted. E-mail permission messages are acceptable.

For bioinformatics manuscripts, please send four copies of a CD containing any new algorithms for data analysis along with other resources necessary to use the algorithm, such as the user manual or spreadsheets. The CDs should be mailed to *Nature Chemical Biology*, 25 First Street, Suite 104, Cambridge, MA 02141, USA.

For further information on the review process and how editors make decisions please see the [manuscript decisions](#) page.

*Nature Chemical Biology* strives to publish papers that will be of interest to chemical biologists with diverse research interests. Thus it is essential that all manuscripts are accessible to nonspecialists. Manuscripts are subject to substantial editing, in consultation with authors, to achieve this goal. After acceptance, a copy editor may make further changes so that the text and figures are readable and clear to those outside the field, and so that papers conform to our style. Contributors are sent proofs and are welcome to discuss proposed changes with the editors, but *Nature Chemical Biology* reserves the right to make the final decision about matters of style and the size of figures.

The editors also reserve the right to reject a paper even after it has been accepted if it becomes apparent that there are serious problems with the scientific content or with violations of our publishing policies.

Additional editorial policies can be found on the Nature journals [joint policies page](#). This page includes information on manuscripts reviewed at other Nature journals, competing financial interests declarations, pre-publication publicity, deposition of data as a condition of publication, availability of data and reagents after publication, human and animal subjects, digital image integrity, biosecurity, refutations and complaints, correction of mistakes in the journal, duplicate publication, confidentiality and plagiarism.

### COSTS

There is a charge of \$525 for the first color figure and \$262.50 for each additional color figure. Otherwise, there are no submission fees or page charges.

### ADVANCE ONLINE PUBLICATION

*Nature Chemical Biology* provides Advance Online Publication (AOP) of Brief Communications and Articles, which benefits authors with an earlier publication date and allows our readers access to accepted papers before they appear in print. Note that papers published online are definitive and may be altered only through the publication of a print corrigendum or erratum, so authors should make every effort to ensure that the page proofs are correct. All AOP articles are given a unique digital object identifier (DOI) number, which can be used to cite the paper before print publication. For details, please see [about advance online publication](#) at [http://www.nature.com/authors/author\\_services/about\\_aop.html](http://www.nature.com/authors/author_services/about_aop.html).

### COVERS AND OTHER ARTWORK

Authors of accepted papers are encouraged to submit images for consideration as a cover. Cover images normally are linked to a specific paper in that issue, but we may also be able to use other images elsewhere in the journal. Illustrations are selected for their scientific interest and aesthetic appeal. Please send electronic files and include a clear and concise legend explaining the image.

### GRAPHICAL ABSTRACT

A Graphical Abstract, which summarizes the manuscript in a visual way, is designed to attract the attention of readers in the table of contents of the journal. Graphical abstracts are published with the following content items: Brief Communications, Articles, Reviews and Perspectives. The Graphical Abstract may contain chemical structures or images. Textual

statements should be kept to a minimum. Color figures are encouraged and will be published at no additional charge. The image must be sized to fit in a rectangle of dimensions 11 cm wide × 5 cm high. The graphic should be submitted as a single file using a standard file format (see below) and will be published in the Table of Contents in print and online. All Graphical Abstracts should be submitted with a white background and imagery should fill the available width, whenever possible. Please see figure guidelines for resolution requirements.

### PREPARING THE MANUSCRIPT

*Nature Chemical Biology* is read by scientists from diverse backgrounds including chemists and biologists. In addition, many are not native English speakers. Authors should therefore give careful thought to how their findings may be communicated clearly. Although a shared basic knowledge of biological and chemical sciences may be assumed, please bear in mind that the language and concepts that are standard in one subfield may be unfamiliar to nonspecialists. Thus, technical jargon should be avoided as much as possible and clearly explained where its use is unavoidable. Abbreviations, particularly those that are not standard, should also be kept to a minimum. Chemical abbreviations should be defined in the text or legends at their first occurrence, and abbreviations should be used thereafter. The background, rationale and main conclusions of the study should be clearly explained. Titles and abstracts in particular should be written in language that will be readily intelligible to any scientist. We strongly recommend that authors ask a colleague with different expertise to review the manuscript before submission, in order to identify concepts and terminology that may present difficulties to nonspecialist readers.

The content types page describes the types of contributions that may be submitted to the journal, along with their length and figure limits. The journal's format requirements are described below.

Manuscripts reporting new macromolecular structures (proteins, nucleic acids, etc.) should contain a table summarizing structural and refinement statistics. Templates for such tables describing [NMR](#) and [X-ray crystallography](#) data are available. To facilitate assessment of the quality of the structural data, a stereo image of a portion of the electron density map (for crystallography papers) or of the superimposed lowest energy structures (>10; for NMR papers) should be provided with the submitted manuscript. If the reported structure represents a novel overall fold, a stereo image of the entire structure (as a backbone trace) should also be provided.

Please use American English spelling throughout.

At this time, we are not able to accept manuscripts in Word 2007 format.

Online submissions include a cover letter, a manuscript text file, individual scheme/figure files and optional Supplementary Information files.

### Cover Letter

Authors should provide a cover letter that includes the affiliation and contact information for the corresponding author. Authors should briefly discuss the work's importance and explain why the work is considered appropriate for the diverse readership of *Nature Chemical Biology*. Authors should provide a statement explaining why their manuscript is most appropriate as a Brief Communication or Article. Authors are asked to provide the names and contact information for qualified scientific reviewers and may request the exclusion of certain referees. Authors should indicate whether they have had any prior discussions with a particular *Nature Chemical Biology* editor about the work described in the manuscript so that the manuscript may be assigned appropriately.

### Manuscript Text

The manuscript text should be submitted in a single word processing file (such as Microsoft Word); schemes and figures are provided in individual files (see below). The manuscript text file should include, in the following order: a title page with author affiliations and contact information, the sections required for each content type (see information for Brief Communications and Articles), Acknowledgments (optional), Author Contributions (optional), Competing Financial Interests Statement, References, Figure and Scheme Legends, and Tables. *Nature Chemical Biology* does not use word processing manuscript templates. Thus, the manuscript file should be formatted as double-spaced, single-column text with left justification. Pages should be numbered using an Arabic numeral in the footer of each page. Please use American English spelling throughout. Standard fonts are recommended and “Symbol” font should be used for representing Greek characters and for symbols such as  $\pm$ ,  $\times$  (times), and  $^\circ$  (deg). Molecular structures are identified by bold, Arabic numerals assigned in order of presentation in the text. Once identified in the main text or a figure/scheme, compounds may be referred to by their name, by a defined abbreviation, or by the bold, Arabic numeral (as long as the compound is referred to consistently as one of these three). The corresponding author(s) should be identified with an asterisk (\*).

**Methods.** Authors must ensure that their manuscripts include adequate experimental and characterization data necessary for others in the field to reproduce their work. For Articles, essential methods should be reported in the Methods section. For Brief Communications, experimental details should be reported in Supplementary Methods. Authors of all content types are encouraged to include important additional protocols or data in Supplementary Information, which will be peer reviewed.

**General methods.** Descriptions of standard protocols and experimental procedures should appear in Supplementary Methods. Commercial suppliers of reagents or instrumentation should be identified only when the source is critical to the outcome of the experiments. Sources for kits should be identified in the Methods section or Supplementary Information.

**Synthetic protocols.** Experimental protocols that describe the synthesis of new compounds should be included. The systematic name of the compound and its bold, Arabic numeral are used as the heading for the experimental protocol. Thereafter, the compound is represented by its assigned bold numeral. Authors should describe the experimental protocol in detail, referring to amounts of reagents in parentheses, when possible (e.g., 1.03 g, 0.100 mmol). Standard abbreviations for reagents and solvents are encouraged. Safety hazards posed by reagents or protocols should be identified clearly. Isolated mass and percent yields should be reported at the end of each protocol.

**Acknowledgments** should be brief, and should not include thanks to anonymous referees and editors, or effusive comments. Grant or contribution numbers may be acknowledged. Acknowledgments should be brief, and should not include thanks to anonymous referees and editors, or effusive comments. Grant or contribution numbers may be acknowledged. *Nature Chemical Biology* requires an Author Contribution statement as described in the [Authorship](#) section of our joint [Editorial policies](#).

Submission of a signed **Competing Financial Interests Statement** is required for all content of the journal, but a statement will be published only if a competing financial interest is reported.

**References** are numbered sequentially as they appear in the text. References in the figure legends are numbered in sequence after those in the main text, followed by references in tables and finally references in boxes. Only one publication is given for each number. Only papers that have been published or accepted by a named publication should

be in the numbered list; preprints of accepted papers in the reference list should be submitted with the manuscript. Meeting abstracts that are not published and submitted manuscripts should be mentioned in the text with a list of authors (or initials if any of the authors are coauthors of the present contribution). Authors should avoid excessive use of “unpublished results.” URLs for web sites and personal communications should be cited parenthetically in the text, not in the reference list. Grant details and acknowledgments are not permitted as numbered references. Footnotes are not used.

*Nature Chemical Biology* uses standard *Nature* referencing style. All authors should be included in reference lists unless there are more than five, in which case only the first author should be given, followed by ‘*et al.*’. Authors should be listed last name first, followed by a comma and initials of given names. There should be no spaces between initials. Article titles should be in Roman text and book titles in italics; the first word of the title is capitalized, the title written exactly as it appears in the work cited, ending with a period. Journal names are italicized and abbreviated (with periods) according to common usage; refer to *Index Medicus* for details. Volume numbers appear in bold.

Titles of cited articles are required for Articles, Perspectives and Reviews. Example: Prescher, J.A., Dube, D.H. & Bertozzi, C.R. Chemical remodeling of cell surfaces in living animals. *Nature* **430**, 873–877 (2004).

For Commentaries, Brief Communications, Meeting Reports and News & Views, titles of cited articles are not included. Example: Xu, P. *et al.* *Nature* **431**, 1107–1112 (2004).

For book citations, the publisher and city of publication are required. Example: Eliel, E.L. & Wilen, S.H. *Stereochemistry of Organic Compounds* Ch. 12 (Wiley, New York, 1994).

**Figure or Scheme legends** for Articles begin with a brief title sentence for the whole figure and continue with a short description of each panel and the symbols used, focusing on describing what is shown in the figure and de-emphasizing methodological details. Each legend should total no more than 250 words. Legends in Brief Communications may include details of methods. Text for figure legends should be provided in numerical order after the references, followed by Scheme legends.

**Tables.** Please submit tables in Word format at the end of your text document. Tables that include statistical analysis of data should describe their standards of error analysis and ranges in a table legend.

**Equations.** Equations and mathematical expressions should be provided in the main text of the paper and will be inserted as figures during manuscript production. Equations are identified by parenthetical numbers, such as (1), and are referred to in the manuscript as “equation (1).”

### PREPARING FIGURES AND SCHEMES

Schemes are used to indicate a series of chemical reactions or experimental procedures, which typically are connected graphically by arrows. Figures are used for data in all other formats including groups of unlinked chemical structures, graphical data, photographs or images, etc. Schemes and Figures should be numbered separately with Arabic numerals in the order of occurrence in the text of the manuscript. Schemes and figures in one- or two-column format are preferred. When appropriate, schemes and figures should include error bars. A description of the statistical treatment of error analysis should be included in the figure or scheme legend.

Authors are responsible for obtaining permission to publish any figures or illustrations that are protected by copyright, including figures published elsewhere and pictures taken by professional photographers. The journal cannot publish images downloaded from the internet without appropriate permission.

Figure and scheme lettering should be in Helvetica or Arial; if possible, the same typeface in approximately the same font size should be used for all figures in a paper. Use Symbol font for Greek letters. All display items should be on a white background, and should avoid excessive boxing, unnecessary color, spurious decorative effects (such as three-dimensional ‘skyscraper’ histograms) and highly pixelated computer drawings. The vertical axis of histograms should not be truncated to exaggerate small differences. Labeling must be of sufficient size and contrast to be readable, even after appropriate reduction. The thinnest lines in the final figure should be no smaller than one point wide. Reasonable requests to enlarge figures will be considered, but editors will make the final decision on figure size. Authors will see a proof of figures.

Figures and schemes divided into parts should be labeled with a lower-case, bold “a”, “b”, and so on, in the same type size as used elsewhere in the figure. Lettering in figures and schemes should be in lower-case type, with only the first letter of each label capitalized. Units should have a single space between the number and the unit, and follow SI nomenclature (for example, ms rather than msec) or the nomenclature common to a particular field. Thousands should be separated by commas (1,000). Unusual units or abbreviations should be spelled out in full or defined in the legend. Scale bars should be used rather than magnification factors, with the length of the bar defined in the legend rather than on the bar itself. In legends, please use visual cues rather than verbal explanations, such as “open red triangles.”

Authors are encouraged to consider the needs of colorblind readers (a substantial minority of the male population) when choosing colors for figures. Many colorblind readers cannot interpret micrographs presented in green and red, for example. Thus, we encourage authors to submit micrographs in yellow and blue rather than green and red.

Unnecessary schemes or figures should be avoided: data presented in small tables or histograms, for instance, can generally be stated briefly in the text instead. Figures or schemes should not contain more than one panel unless the parts are logically connected; each panel of a multipart figure should be sized so that the whole figure can be reduced by the same amount and reproduced on the printed page at the smallest size at which essential details are visible.

When a manuscript is accepted for publication, we will ask for high-resolution figure files, possibly in a different electronic format. This information will be included in the acceptance letter. See below for detailed digital image production and submission.

## CHEMICAL AND BIOLOGICAL NOMENCLATURE AND ABBREVIATIONS

When possible, authors should refer to chemical compounds and biomolecules using systematic nomenclature, preferably using IUPAC and IUBMB rules (<http://www.chem.qmw.ac.uk/iupac>). Standard chemical and biological abbreviations should be used. Unconventional or specialist abbreviations should be defined at their first occurrence in the text.

## GENE NOMENCLATURE

Authors should use approved nomenclature for gene symbols, and use symbols rather than italicized full names (*Ttn*, not *titin*). Please consult the appropriate nomenclature databases for correct gene names and symbols. A useful resource is LocusLink. Approved human gene symbols are provided by HUGO Gene Nomenclature Committee (HGNC), e-mail: [hgnc@genenames.org](mailto:hgnc@genenames.org); see also [www.genenames.org](http://www.genenames.org). Approved mouse symbols are provided by The Jackson Laboratory, e-mail: [nomen@informatics.jax.org](mailto:nomen@informatics.jax.org); see also <http://www.informatics.jax.org/mgihome/nomen>.

For proposed gene names that are not already approved, please submit the gene symbols to the appropriate nomenclature committees as soon as possible, as these must be deposited and approved before publication of an article.

Avoid listing multiple names of genes (or proteins) separated by a slash, as in ‘*Oct4/Pou5f1*’, as this is ambiguous (it could mean a ratio, a complex, alternative names or different subunits). Use one name throughout and include the other at first mention: ‘*Oct4* (also known as *Pou5f1*)’.

## STATISTICAL GUIDELINES

Every article that contains statistical testing should state the name of the statistical test, the *n* for each statistical analysis, the comparisons of interest, a justification for the use of that test (including, for example, a discussion of the normality of the data when the test is appropriate only for normal data), the alpha level for all tests, whether the tests were one-tailed or two-tailed, and the actual *P* value for each test (not merely “significant” or “*P* < 0.05”). It should be clear what statistical test was used to generate every *P* value. In the case of Brief Communications, these details should be reported in the text or the figure captions. Use of the word “significant” should always be accompanied by a *P* value; otherwise, use “substantial,” “considerable,” etc.

Data sets should be summarized with descriptive statistics, which should include the *n* for each data set, a clearly labeled measure of center (such as the mean or the median), and a clearly labeled measure of variability (such as standard deviation or range). Ranges are more appropriate than standard deviations or standard errors for small data sets. Graphs should include clearly labeled error bars. Authors must state whether a number that follows the  $\pm$  sign is a standard error (s.e.m.) or a standard deviation (s.d.).

Authors must justify the use of a particular test and explain whether their data conform to the assumptions of the tests. Three errors are particularly common:

- *Multiple comparisons*: When making multiple statistical comparisons on a single data set, authors should explain how they adjusted the alpha level to avoid an inflated Type I error rate, or they should select statistical tests appropriate for multiple groups (such as ANOVA rather than a series of *t*-tests).
- *Normal distribution*: Many statistical tests require that the data be approximately normally distributed; when using these tests, authors should explain how they tested their data for normality. If the data do not meet the assumptions of the test, then a nonparametric alternative should be used instead.
- *Small sample size*: When the sample size is small (less than about 10), authors should use tests appropriate to small samples or justify their use of large-sample tests.

There is a [checklist](http://www.nature.com/nchembio/authors/submit/Checklist_of_statistical_adequacy.doc) available to help authors minimize the chance of statistical errors available at [http://www.nature.com/nchembio/authors/submit/Checklist\\_of\\_statistical\\_adequacy.doc](http://www.nature.com/nchembio/authors/submit/Checklist_of_statistical_adequacy.doc).

## CHARACTERIZATION OF CHEMICAL AND BIOMOLECULAR MATERIALS

*Nature Chemical Biology* is committed to publishing the highest quality research at the interface of chemistry and biology. Manuscripts submitted to the journal will be held to rigorous standards with respect to experimental methods and characterization of new compounds. Authors must provide adequate data to support their assignment of identity and purity for each new compound described in the manuscript. Authors should provide a statement confirming the source, identity and purity of known compounds that are central to the scientific study, even if they are purchased or resynthesized using published methods.

**Chemical identity** for organic and organometallic compounds should be established through spectroscopic analysis. Standard peak listings (see preparation of methods section below) for  $^1\text{H}$  NMR and proton-decoupled  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR should be provided for all new compounds. Other NMR data should be reported ( $^{31}\text{P}$  NMR,  $^{19}\text{F}$  NMR, etc.) when appropriate. For new materials, authors should also provide mass spectral data to support molecular weight identity. High-resolution mass spectral (HRMS) data are preferred. UV or IR spectral data may be reported for characteristic functional group identification, when appropriate. Melting point ranges should be provided for crystalline materials. Specific rotations may be reported for chiral compounds. Authors should provide references, rather than detailed procedures, for known compounds, unless their protocols represent a departure from or improvement on published methods.

**Combinatorial compound libraries.** Authors describing the preparation of combinatorial libraries should include standard characterization data for a diverse panel of library members.

**Biomolecular identity.** For new biopolymeric materials (oligosaccharides, peptides, nucleic acids, etc.), direct structural analysis by NMR spectroscopic methods may not be possible. In these cases, authors must provide evidence of identity based on: sequence (when appropriate) and mass spectral characterization. Detailed characterization of standard oligonucleotide reagents (for example, primers) for molecular biology experiments is not required.

**Biological constructs.** Authors should provide sequencing or functional data that validates the identity of their biological constructs (plasmids, fusion proteins, site-directed mutants, etc.) either in the manuscript text or the Methods section, as appropriate.

**Sample purity.** Evidence of sample purity is requested for each new compound. Methods for purity analysis depend on the compound class. For most organic and organometallic compounds, purity may be demonstrated by high field  $^1\text{H}$  NMR or  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR data, although elemental analysis ( $\pm 0.4\%$ ) is encouraged for small molecules. Quantitative analytical methods including chromatographic (GC, HPLC, etc.) or electrophoretic analyses may be used to demonstrate purity for small molecules and biopolymeric materials.

**Spectral data.** Detailed spectral data for new compounds should be provided in list form (see below) in the Methods section or Supplementary Methods. Figures containing spectra generally will not be published as a manuscript figure unless the data are directly relevant to the central conclusions of the paper. Authors are encouraged to include high-quality images of spectral data for key compounds in the Supplementary Information. Specific NMR assignments should be listed after integration values only if they were unambiguously determined by multidimensional NMR or decoupling experiments. Authors should provide information about how assignments were made in a general Methods section.

**Example format for compound characterization data.** mp: 100–102 °C (lit.<sup>ref</sup> 99–101 °C); TLC ( $\text{CHCl}_3$ :MeOH, 98:2 v/v):  $R_f$  = 0.23;  $[\alpha]_D^{25}$  = –21.5 (0.1 M in *n*-hexane);  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  9.30 (s, 1H), 7.55–7.41 (m, 6H), 5.61 (d,  $J$  = 5.5 Hz, 1H), 5.40 (d,  $J$  = 5.5 Hz, 1H), 4.93 (m, 1H), 4.20 (q,  $J$  = 8.5 Hz, 2H), 2.11 (s, 3H), 1.25 (t,  $J$  = 8.5 Hz, 3H);  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (125 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  165.4, 165.0, 140.5, 138.7, 131.5, 129.2, 118.6, 84.2, 75.8, 66.7, 37.9, 20.1; IR (Nujol): 1765  $\text{cm}^{-1}$ ; UV/Vis:  $\lambda_{\text{max}}$  267 nm; HRMS ( $m/z$ ):  $[\text{M}]^+$  calcd. for  $\text{C}_{20}\text{H}_{15}\text{Cl}_2\text{NO}_5$ , 420.0406; found, 420.0412; analysis (calcd., found for  $\text{C}_{20}\text{H}_{15}\text{Cl}_2\text{NO}_5$ ): C (57.16, 57.22), H (3.60, 3.61), Cl (16.87, 16.88), N (3.33, 3.33), O (19.04, 19.09).

#### Crystallographic data for small molecules

Manuscripts reporting new three-dimensional structures of small molecules from crystallographic analysis should include a structural figure

with probability ellipsoids and a .cif file. Small molecular crystallographic data should be submitted upon publication to the Cambridge Structural Database (<http://www.ccdc.cam.ac.uk>).

#### Macromolecular structural data

Manuscripts reporting new three-dimensional structures of macromolecules should include a table summarizing structural and refinement statistics. To facilitate assessment of the quality of the structural data, a stereo image of a portion of the electron density map (for crystallography papers) or of the superimposed lowest energy structures ( $>10$ ; for NMR papers) should be provided with the submitted manuscript. If the reported structure represents a novel overall fold, a stereo image of the entire structure (as a backbone trace) should also be provided.

#### DEPOSITION OF CHEMICAL COMPOUND INFORMATION TO PUBCHEM

For manuscripts that describe original research (Brief Communication or Article), the *Nature Chemical Biology* acceptance process includes automated deposition of the article's chemical compound data to PubChem (<http://pubchem.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov>) by the *Nature Chemical Biology* staff. In the online version of the published paper, chemical compounds will be linked to a Compound Data Page for each compound, which includes links to PubChem and further information related to the compound. At the time of submission of the final revised version of the manuscript, authors provide two files:

- A single ChemDraw file (.cdx) that contains all of the structures in the manuscript that are identified with bolded Arabic numerals (see Chemical Structure Display Items below). Reagents and solvents should not be included, and the structure of each compound should be “grouped” with its assigned numeral. If the paper contains more chemical structures than will fit on a single page in ChemDraw, additional pages should be created within the same file.
- A tab-delimited text (.txt) (or Microsoft Excel spreadsheet, .xls) file with two columns that associates the bold numeral of each compound included in the ChemDraw file with its IUPAC (or systematic) name. Widely recognized biochemical compounds and natural products may be referred to by their common names.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

Supplementary Information should be submitted with the manuscript and will be sent to referees during peer review. It is published with the online version of accepted manuscripts. We request that authors avoid “data not shown” statements and instead include data necessary to evaluate the claims of the paper as Supplementary Information. Supplementary Information is not copyedited by *Nature Chemical Biology*, so authors should ensure that it is clearly and succinctly presented, and that the style and terminology conform with the rest of the paper. The following guidelines detail the creation, citation and submission of Supplementary Information. Please note that modification of Supplementary Information after the paper is published requires a formal correction, so authors are encouraged to check their Supplementary Information carefully before submitting the final version. Papers may include up to 10 individual Supplementary Information files, contained sequentially within a single PDF document (in the order figures, schemes, tables and text).

Where there is Supplementary Information to be included exclusively in the online version of a paper published in *Nature Chemical Biology*, please follow these guidelines, or publication may be delayed:

- Designate each item as Supplementary Table, Scheme, Figure, Data, Discussion, Equations, Video, Video Legend, Audio, Audio Legend, Tutorial, Note or Methods. Number Supplementary Tables and Figures as, for example, “[Supplementary Table 1](#),” (and ensure that they appear in order in the text) and provide a title for each one (for figures, please include the number and title in the caption). This numbering should be separate from that used in tables and figures appearing in the main printed article. Supplementary Note or Methods should not be numbered; titles for these are optional.
- Refer to each piece of Supplementary Information at the appropriate point(s) in the main article. Be sure to include the word “Supplementary” each time one is mentioned.
- Use the following samples as a guide (note: abbreviate “Figure” as “Fig.” when in parentheses).

“Table 1 provides a selected subset of the most active compounds. The entire list of 96 compounds can be found as [Supplementary Table 1](#) online.”

“The biosynthetic pathway of L-ascorbic acid in animals involves intermediates of the D-glucuronic acid pathway (see [Supplementary Fig. 2](#) online). Figure 2 shows....”

- Audio and video files should use a frame size no larger than 320 × 240 pixels.
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- With the exception of spreadsheet, audio and video files, please submit the Supplementary Information as a single combined PDF if possible. If necessary, we can accept any of these formats:
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  - .htm HTML document
  - .doc MS Word document
  - .jpg JPEG image
  - .swf Flash movie
  - .xls MS Excel spreadsheet
  - .pdf Adobe Acrobat file
  - .mov QuickTime movie
  - .ppt MS Power Point slide
  - .wav Audio file

Further queries about submission and preparation of Supplementary Information should be directed to [chembio@boston.nature.com](mailto:chembio@boston.nature.com).

## DIGITAL FIGURE GUIDELINES

Please read the [digital images integrity and standards policy](http://www.nature.com/authors/editorial_policies/availability.html) at [http://www.nature.com/authors/editorial\\_policies/availability.html](http://www.nature.com/authors/editorial_policies/availability.html). When possible, we prefer to use original digital figures to ensure the highest quality reproduction in the journal. For optimal results, prepare figures at actual size for the printed journal. When creating and submitting digital files, please follow the guidelines below.

Schemes and Figures should be uploaded upon submission via our online submission system, in one of our preferred formats. Please use the smallest file size that provides sufficient resolution, preferably less than 1 MB, so that referees do not have to download extremely large files. When a paper is accepted, the editors will request high-resolution files suitable for publication.

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For publication, we can only use .tif, .eps, .ai or PostScript (.ps) files in PC or Macintosh format, preferably from PhotoShop or Illustrator

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### Chemical Structure Display Items

Schemes and figures that contain chemical structures should be produced using ChemDraw or a similar program. All chemical compounds must be assigned a bold, Arabic numeral in the order in which the compounds are presented in the manuscript text. Schemes and Figures containing chemical structures should be submitted in a size appropriate for direct incorporation into the printed journal. Authors using ChemDraw should make use of our [ChemDraw template](http://www.nature.com/nchembio/authors/submit/NatChemBio.cds) available at <http://www.nature.com/nchembio/authors/submit/NatChemBio.cds> or use the preferences below, submitting the final files at 100% as .cdx files. Creating molecules within or copying them into the template will ensure that most of our journal style points are followed. For more information, please also review our [Chemical Style Guide](http://www.nature.com/nchembio/authors/submit/chemicalstyle.pdf) available at <http://www.nature.com/nchembio/authors/submit/chemicalstyle.pdf>.

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## MANUSCRIPT DECISIONS

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Editors will express interest in pre-submission inquiries on the basis of the information provided by the authors. In cases where editors decline a full submission, authors are still free to submit through our [online submission system](#) so that editors have an opportunity to evaluate the paper in full. Papers invited after a pre-submission inquiry may be rejected without review once the editors have had a chance to consider the paper in its entirety.

**INITIAL SUBMISSION**

*Nature Chemical Biology* publishes manuscripts that describe novel results that are likely to advance thinking in the field and appeal to a broad readership of chemical biologists. The editorial team reads all submitted manuscripts and assesses the appropriateness of each manuscript for publication in *Nature Chemical Biology*. At this stage, the team evaluates the novelty and potential impact of the work, the appropriateness for the journal's editorial scope, the conceptual or methodological advances described in the paper, and its potential interest to a diverse readership of chemists and biologists. Manuscripts that meet editorial criteria are sent out to external referees for further assessment. The editorial team then makes a decision on each manuscript based on the reviewers' advice.

Papers should be submitted via the [online submission system](#). Each new submission is assigned to a primary editor, who reads the paper, consults with the other editors, and decides whether it should be sent for peer review. The author should identify if the work describing the manuscript has been discussed with a specific *Nature Chemical Biology* editor before submission. Many papers describing solid studies of interest to those in the field are nonetheless judged to be unlikely to compete successfully with the best work submitted to the journal.

Like other journals in the Nature family, *Nature Chemical Biology* has no external editorial board. However, if a paper's importance within the field is unclear, an editor may request advice from outside experts in deciding whether to review it. The novelty of a submitted paper is considered to be compromised if it has significant conceptual overlap with a published paper or one accepted for publication

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If a paper was previously reviewed at another Nature journal, the authors can use an automated manuscript transfer service to transfer the referees' reports to *Nature Chemical Biology* via a link sent by the editor who handled the manuscript. In that case, the journal editors will take the previous reviews into account when making their decision, although in some cases the editors may choose to take advice from additional or alternative referees. Alternatively, authors may choose to request a fresh review, in which case they should not use the automated transfer link, and the editors will evaluate the paper without reference to the previous review process. However, this decision must be made at the time of initial submission and cannot be changed later. If the authors ask the editors to consider the previous reviews, they should include a note that explains the relationship between the submitted manuscript and the previous submission and (assuming it has been revised in light of the referees' criticisms) provides a point-by-point response to the referees. In cases in which the work was felt to be of high quality, papers can sometimes be accepted without further review, but if there were serious criticisms, the editors will consider them in making the decision. In the event of publication, the received date is the date of submission to *Nature Chemical Biology*. More details are available on [the manuscript transfer service](#) ([http://www.nature.com/authors/author\\_services/transfer\\_manuscripts.html](http://www.nature.com/authors/author_services/transfer_manuscripts.html)) and on the [relationships between Nature titles](#) ([http://www.nature.com/authors/author\\_services/about\\_nature\\_family.html](http://www.nature.com/authors/author_services/about_nature_family.html)).

**PEER REVIEW**

The corresponding author is notified by e-mail when the editor decides to send a paper for review. Authors may indicate a limited number of scientists who should not review the paper. Excluded scientists must be identified by name. Authors may also suggest referees; these suggestions are often helpful, although they are not always followed. By policy, referees are not identified to the authors, except at the request of the referee.

Conceptually similar manuscripts are held to the same editorial standards as far as possible, and so they are often sent to the same referees. However, each of the co-submitted manuscripts must meet the criteria for publication without reference to the other paper. Thus if one paper is substantially less complete or convincing than the other, it may be rejected, even if the papers reach the same conclusion.

**DECISION AFTER REVIEW AND REVISION**

When making a decision after review, editors consider not only how good the paper is now, but also how good it might become after revision.

In cases in which the referees have requested well-defined changes to the manuscript that do not appear to require extensive further experiments, editors may request a revised manuscript that addresses the referees' concerns. The revised version is normally sent back to some or all of the original referees for re-review. The decision letter will specify a deadline (typically a few weeks), and revisions that are returned within this period will retain their original submission date.

In cases in which the referees' concerns are more wide ranging, editors will normally reject the manuscript. If the editors feel the work is of potential interest to the journal, however, they may express interest in seeing a future resubmission. The resubmitted manuscript may be sent back to the original referees or to new referees, at the editors' discretion. In such cases, revised manuscripts will not retain their earlier submission date.

In either case, the revised manuscript should be accompanied by a cover letter that includes a point-by-point response to referees' comments and an explanation of how the manuscript has been changed.

An invited revision should be submitted via the revision link to the online submission system provided in the decision letter, not as a new manuscript.

### FINAL SUBMISSION AND ACCEPTANCE

A request for final submission is sent when the paper is nearly ready to publish, possibly requiring some text changes but no revisions to the data or conclusions. These letters are accompanied by detailed comments on the paper's format from the copy editor. At this stage, authors may receive an extensively edited manuscript from the editor indicating editorial concerns that must be addressed in the revision. A high priority of *Nature Chemical Biology* is that all papers be accessible to nonspecialists. Manuscripts are subject to substantial editing to achieve this goal. After acceptance, a copy editor may make further changes so that the text and figures are readable and clear to those outside the field, and so that papers conform to our style.

For the final revision, authors should use the revision link to the online submission system provided in the decision letter to upload a final version of the text with all the requested format changes. Electronic files of the final figures, at high resolution, should be sent via [ftp](#) (see below).

When all remaining editorial issues are resolved, the paper is formally accepted. The received date is the date on which the editors received the original (or if previously rejected, the resubmitted) manuscript. The accepted date is when the editor sends the acceptance letter.

Contributors are sent proofs and are welcome to discuss proposed changes with the editors, but *Nature Chemical Biology* reserves the right to make the final decision about matters of style and the size of figures.

### APPEALS

Even in cases in which editors did not invite resubmission, some authors ask the editors to reconsider a rejection decision. These are considered appeals, which, by policy, must take second place to the normal workload. In practice, this means that decisions on appeals often take several weeks.

Decisions are reversed on appeal only if the editors are convinced that the original decision was a serious mistake, not merely a borderline call that could have gone either way. Further consideration may be merited if a referee made substantial errors of fact or showed evidence of bias, but only if a reversal of that referee's opinion would have changed the original decision. Similarly, disputes on factual issues need not be resolved unless they were critical to the outcome. Thus, after careful consideration of the authors' points, most appeals are rejected by the editors.

If an appeal merits further consideration, the editors may send the authors' response or the revised paper to one or more referees, or they may ask one referee to comment on the concerns raised by another referee. On occasion, particularly if the editors feel that additional technical expertise is needed to make a decision, they may obtain advice from an additional referee.

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### Corrected Proofs

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