

How to Prepare Digital Images for Publication

Many journals now accept properly-prepared digital images for publication. This guideline is to help you create your own professional-quality digital images for journal submission.

If digital images are properly prepared according to professional standards, many journals do not require that you provide glossy prints. All journals that accept digital images have specific guidelines. Although different journals will have different guidelines, here are some general requirements.

Color

- Scan and save black-and-white images in grayscale mode (not black and white).
- Scan continuous tone (grayscale) and color images in RGB color mode, but save them in CMYK color mode.

Format

Digital files imbedded within a Microsoft environment cannot be accepted for publication. In other words, do not insert photos into Word or PowerPoint. Send native TIFF or EPS files only. Do not send JPG files.

Resolution

Images must be scanned at the proper resolution in order to ensure print quality:

- Continuous tone (grayscale) and color figures with no text 300 DPI/PPI
- Continuous tone (grayscale) and color figures with text 600 DPI/PPI
- Black-and-white line art 1200 DPI/PPI

If at all possible, obtain the original image. Do not submit graphics downloaded from Web pages because the resolution is too low for publication. Also avoid scanning photographs from published materials because these images have been screened with a halftone pattern that will create an unpleasant moire effect.

Image Size

Scan images at 100% of the final print dimensions, which is typically one-column width, so that scaling is not necessary. Refer to the target journal's guidelines for the exact column width.

Graphs and Charts

Graphs and charts created in PowerPoint may be submitted as native .ppt files. We recommend that you do not use grayscale (black and white solids or patterns are preferred), or 3-dimensional charts.

Fonts

Check with the target journal for preferred fonts. When in doubt, Arial, Helvetica, and Times New Roman are usually acceptable.

Annotations

We recommend that you submit two versions of your digital files to the journal: one with annotations and one without. In the event that the annotation needs to be edited, the journal can then use the clean copy to re-label the image.