

General

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Responsibilities in the Submission and Peer-Review Process: authors, reviewers and the journal bear responsibility in the review process. Read the [guidelines of the ICMJE](#).

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 - **Materials and Methods**
 - **Results**
 - **Discussion**
 - **Conclusions**
 - **Acknowledgements**
 - **References**
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- **Acknowledgements:** authors should acknowledge all support received for the work: funding, equipment, materials, technicians or anyone who has contributed but has not been listed as an author. Any conflict of interest should also be stated here.
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Reference may be made to Web sites. These must be listed separately, in a list entitled 'Web References', following the main list of references. Web references in the list should be numbered in the order in which they appear in the text. Web references should be referred to in the text as '(Web ref. 1)', '(Web ref. 2)' *etc.* Details of each Web reference should include the full Uniform Resource Locator (URL), followed by the date accessed in square brackets *i.e.* [dd-mm-yyyy].

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{Jones and Brown (1990); Jones and Smith (1988)}; and [c] three (and more)-author references, ordered by year {Jones *et al.* (1983); Jones *et al.* (1993a); Jones *et al.* (1993b)}.

Begin each reference on a separate line; first line indented using a single tab.

Reference list style

- For a paper from a journal: last names and initials of all authors (not "*et al.*"), year (in parentheses), full title of paper, name of publication (use only standard **Index Medicus** abbreviations – as used by PubMed; ; terminated by a period). Do not use any punctuation (nor "and" or "&" preceding last author's name), except for commas between authors' names. A period must be inserted at the end of the title (with the exception of titles ending with a question mark). Next, insert the volume-number (in bold), followed by a colon, a single space before the first page number and a period/full-stop following the last page number (separated from the first page number by a hyphen, not an 'en-dash' or 'em dash'). Then, insert the DOI (followed by a period). *e.g.* Modic MT, Steinberg PM, Ross JS, Masaryk TJ, Carter JR (1988) Degenerative disk disease: assessment of changes in vertebral body marrow with MR imaging. *Radiology* **66**: 193-199. DOI: 10.1148/radiology.166.1.3336678.
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Style specifications

- **Headings**
- **Equations**
- **Symbols and abbreviations**
- **Tables**
- **Units**
- **Statistical tests**
- **Figures**
- **Figure legends**
- **Text:** For the correct use of tenses please check [here](#).

Examples

Present tense is used to talk about general background information, *e.g.* "Osteoinduction by CaP bone grafts is material-dependent", "The structure of the bovine disc is similar to the young healthy human IVD" and "Rod-shaped nanoparticles have high affinity for endothelial cells".

Past tense is used to talk about actual results and procedures used, *e.g.* "A panel of 36 specific proteins was measured", "IVDs from the lumbar region were harvested" and "A staining diminution of around 60 % was observed". When referring to the content of a specific paper, past

tense can be used, e.g. "Zhang *et al.* (2012) developed a composite HA-agarose material" and "Collins and Birkinshaw (2011) studied a series of HA scaffolds"; however, when referring directly to the publication e.g. "Zhang *et al.* (2012) describe a composite..." the present tense is more appropriate. In order to avoid confusion, it is essential that a clear distinction is always made between what is published information (present/present perfect tense) and that which represents a description of the current work being reported (past tense).

Present perfect tense is used when previous research is being discussed in general terms, e.g. "A number of groups have focused on".

The accepted convention for scientific writing should be used, where the text is written in the third person, *i.e.* it should not contain phrases like "I/we described X", "I/we did X", "I/we performed X", *etc.*. In such instances, passive forms are to be used, such as "X was described", "X was performed" *etc.*.

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Graphical abstract

General

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Technical requirements are as follows:

- Size: 858 × 229 pixels (X-Y axes) at 400 dpi.
- Font style: Arial
- Font size: 10-16
- Accepted file type: PNG, JPG
- Content: the abstract should summarise the findings of the manuscript
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- The graphical abstracts should be drawn within a box of the indicated size (858 × 229 pixels)

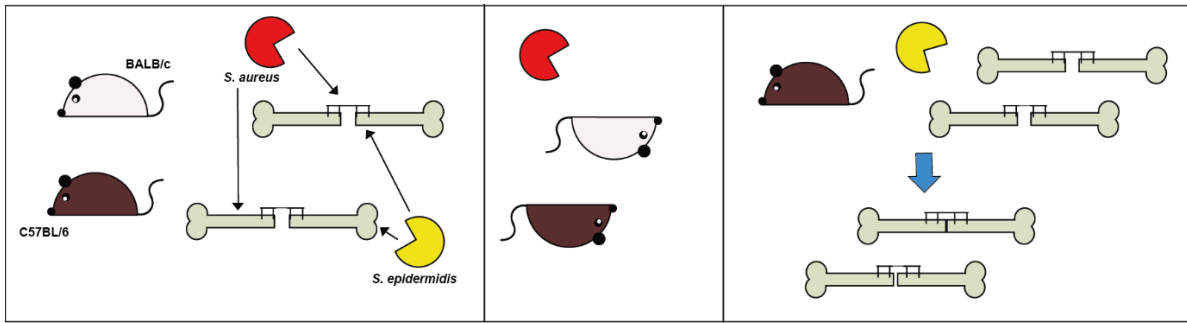
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The graphical abstract should:

- Have a clear start and end, "reading" from left to right
- Emphasise the take-home message of the paper
- Not include data items of any type; all the content should be in a graphical form
- Use simple labels
- The use of text should be limited

Example 1.

- The panel tells a story from left to right
- Names are present only in the first panel for designation of the objects
- Italics font is used for bacteria names (or any Latin-origin name)



Example 2.

- The panel tells a story from left to right
- The bottom legend clarifies the meaning of the abstract objects

