

# Guidelines for ZFA Authors

[www.online-zfa.com/fileadmin/user\\_upload/media/Autorenrichtlinien\\_englisch.pdf](http://www.online-zfa.com/fileadmin/user_upload/media/Autorenrichtlinien_englisch.pdf)

Welcome to the manuscript guidelines of the *Zeitschrift für Allgemeinmedizin* (German Journal of Family Medicine). We look forward to the submission of well-written texts based on the guidelines printed here. Paying careful attention to these guidelines also saves your time, which would be required later on for the necessary revision of the manuscript.

## General information

The ZFA ([www.online-zfa.com](http://www.online-zfa.com)) goes by primary care doctors (family physicians and general internists), vocational trainees in family medicine, medical teachers and members of other interested professional groups.

### The ZFA publishes different categories of papers:

- Original papers (empirical research; also meta-analyses)
- Reviews/Continuing Medical Education
- Systematic reviews/Meta-analyses
- Case Reports
- „Special Articles“ (e.g. reports from other countries; model projects; concept papers; texts on other [not genuinely family medicine] topics)
- Commentary/Opinion
- Letters to the editor
- Book reviews

Manuscripts in German or English may be submitted which have not yet been published or submitted for publication elsewhere. An accompanying letter should state explicitly that this requirement has been observed and the manuscript been approved by all authors involved. Double publications of original data (but not of reviews, etc.) is unethical and will be sanctioned by journal publishers and the scientific community.

By submitting an article, all authors agree that their article may also appear on the Internet. Definitions of authorship and conflicts of interest follow the criteria of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors ([www.icmje.org/](http://www.icmje.org/)).

## Peer review

Submitted papers will first be checked by the publisher for compliance with formal requirements. The five editors then decide by simple majority (on the basis of quality, originality and suitability for the readership of the ZFA) on an **external peer review**. The editors themselves must not review any papers.

For detailed knowledge about review procedures please consult the **information for reviewers** at [www.online-zfa.com/fileadmin/user\\_upload/media/Informationen\\_fuer\\_Gutachter-englisch.pdf](http://www.online-zfa.com/fileadmin/user_upload/media/Informationen_fuer_Gutachter-englisch.pdf)

After consultation with the authors the editors reserve the right to technically editing all manuscripts for language and editorial matters.

## Submission

Before submitting your paper at [www.editorialmanager.com/zfa](http://www.editorialmanager.com/zfa) you need to be registered beforehand.

In case of technical problems please contact the publisher at [www.online-zfa.com/legal-disclosure/](http://www.online-zfa.com/legal-disclosure/)

## Preparation of the manuscript

Please carefully read and follow the checklist for authors ([www.online-zfa.com/fileadmin/user\\_upload/media/Checkliste\\_ZFA\\_EN.pdf](http://www.online-zfa.com/fileadmin/user_upload/media/Checkliste_ZFA_EN.pdf)) and international recommendations for preparing various article categories (table 2, below).

### Literature search

Before you start writing a paper, make sure to have detailed informations about previous publications on the topic. Freely accessible databases (table 1) will facilitate your search.

### Format, spelling

- Please prepare the manuscript using MS Word for Windows (compatible: RTF). Set line numbers (line spacing min.1.5)
- Please upload images, tables and bibliography as separate files.
- The new German orthography apply.
- Break up the text with meaningful and concise subheadings.
- Avoid unusual abbreviations (write out initially, abbreviation in brackets).
- Avoid unnecessary foreign words.

### Length of article

- Title (German and English): maximum 100 characters

Database	Web address
PubMed	<a href="http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sites/entrez?db=pubmed">http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sites/entrez?db=pubmed</a>
PubMed Health	<a href="http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmedhealth/">http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmedhealth/</a>
Testing Treatments	<a href="http://www.testingtreatments.org/">http://www.testingtreatments.org/</a>
Trip Database	<a href="http://www.tripdatabase.com/">http://www.tripdatabase.com/</a>
Google Scholar	<a href="http://scholar.google.de/">http://scholar.google.de/</a>
Evidence Updates	<a href="http://plus.mcmaster.ca/EvidenceUpdates/">http://plus.mcmaster.ca/EvidenceUpdates/</a>
Cochrane Library	<a href="http://www.degam.de/index.php?id=288">http://www.degam.de/index.php?id=288</a> (free full text access for DEGAM members only)

**Table 1** Literature search: examples of freely accessible databases

- Authors (write out first name) + corresponding author’s address
- Text: maximum 20,000 characters including blanks and figures/tables/bibliography, (summary/abstract not included)
- Each figure/table is calculated with 2500 characters (calculation example: with three figures, the maximum number of characters of continuous texts 20,000 minus 7500 = 12,500 characters).
- Tables/figures should save and not expand the length of the text.
- German summary/English abstract + max. five keywords (max. 4000 characters) are not included in the length calculation.
- Please make sure not to exceed 20 literature references (exception: systematic review)

- References
- Tables/figures/photos

Review/Continuing Medical Education

- German summary/English abstract + max. five keywords (together max. 4000 characters), divided into: Background – Search methods – Main messages – Conclusions
- Background
- Search methodology (see table 3)
- Answers to frequent questions (1., 2., 3., ...)
- Conclusions
- References
- Tables/figures/photos

Systematic Review/ Meta-analysis (considered as an original paper)

- German summary/English abstract + max. five keywords (together max. 4000 characters), divided into: Background – Methods – Results – Conclusions
- Background
- Methods
- Results
- Discussion (internally structured into: 1. short summary (only) of the most important results; 2. comparison with other papers; 3. strengths and weaknesses of the paper; 4. conclusions)
- References (no restriction to 20 quotations)
- Tables/figures/photos

Case Report

- German summary/English abstract + max. five keywords (together max. 4000 characters), divided into: Background – Case Report – Conclusions
- Background
- Case Report
- Discussion
- References
- Tables/figures/photos

Special Article

- German Summary/English Abstract + max. five keywords (together max. 4000 characters). No fixed structure
- No fixed structure, but subheadings recommended.
- References
- Tables/figures/photos

Structure of manuscript

Original Paper

- German summary/English abstract + max. 5 keywords (together max. 4000 characters), structured into: Background – Methods – Results – Conclusions
- Background
- Methods
- Results
- Discussion (internally structured into: 1. very short summary of the most important results; 2. comparison with other papers; 3. strengths and weaknesses of the paper; 4. conclusions)

Search methodology
Search term/s
Type of search (systematic/pragmatic)
Consulted databases/indices
Time period included
Limitations (language, type of publication, etc.)
Last day of search
Any comments

Table 3 Search methods in article type „Review/Continuing Medical Education“

Type of study	Recommendation	Web address
Randomised clinical study	CONSORT	<a href="http://www.consort-statement.org/consort-statement/overview0/">www.consort-statement.org/consort-statement/overview0/</a>
Non-randomised study	TREND	<a href="http://www.cdc.gov/trendstatement/">www.cdc.gov/trendstatement/</a>
Diagnostic study	STARD	<a href="http://www.stard-statement.org/">www.stard-statement.org/</a>
Surveillance study	STROBE	<a href="http://www.strobe-statement.org/index.php?id=available-checklists">www.strobe-statement.org/index.php?id=available-checklists</a>
Systematic review paper	PRISMA	<a href="http://www.prisma-statement.org/statement.htm">www.prisma-statement.org/statement.htm</a>
Qualitative study	COREQ	<a href="http://intqhc.oxfordjournals.org/content/19/6/349.long">http://intqhc.oxfordjournals.org/content/19/6/349.long</a>
Study on quality assurance	SQUIRE	<a href="http://squire-statement.org/">http://squire-statement.org/</a>
Catalogue of reporting guidelines for health research		<a href="http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1365-2362.2009.02234.x/full">http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1365-2362.2009.02234.x/full</a>

Table 2 International recommendations for preparing various article categories

### Commentary/Opinion

- Summary/abstract not required
- No fixed structure, but subheadings recommended

### English language

- Papers can also be submitted in English (language check by native speaker is essential!).
- Please use „family physician“, not „general practitioner“ and „family medicine“, not „general practice“.

### Bibliography/references

- Number consecutive references in the text in Arabic numerals [numbers in square brackets] and list them – in this order – in the bibliography at the end.
- All quotations listed in the bibliography must also appear in the text; all references mentioned in the text must appear in the bibliography.
- Please make sure not to exceed 20 quotations (exception: systematic review).
- Journal abbreviations according to the National Library of Medicine <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/nlmcatalog/journals>
- All quotations should be written according to the Vancouver style (ZFA-modified, see below).

### Examples for references

#### Journals

1. Wydra J. Structure of a manuscript. *Z Allg Med* 1994; 70: 603–604
2. Holtzman NA. Chronicle of an unfortold death. *Arch Intern Med* 2012; 172: 1174–77 (*title in lower case!*)

#### Monographs

3. Rabady S, Sönnichsen A (Publ.). *EbM Guidelines*. Cologne: Dt. Ärzteverlag, 2011
4. Jones R, Britten N, Culpepper L, et al. *Oxford textbook of primary medical care*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005 (*title in lower case!*)

#### Book contributions

5. Baum E, Becker A. Health counselling. In: Kochen MM (Hrsg.). *Family Medicine*, 5. edition Stuttgart: Thieme, 2017: 65–72

6. Carter J. Adverse drug reactions. In: Lasagna L, Erill S (eds.). *Dose-response relationship in clinical pharmacology*. Amsterdam: Elsevier, 1989: 145–170 (*title in lower case!*)

#### Quotations from the Internet

7. www... (last accessed on ...)

#### Number of authors

Up to six authors: list all names. More than six authors: list the first three and add „et al.“.

### Tables, figures, photos

- Diagrams, photos, tables, figures, etc. numbered sequentially, add legends and submit them online as *separate files*.
- Tables/figures should save and not *expand* the length of the text. Diagrams, photos, graphics (image formats: TIFF, GIF, JPEG, EPS, PICT, BMP, PSD): resolution min. 300 dpi, width min. 12 cm
- Edit pixel images e.g. with Adobe Photoshop, save them in CMYK mode.
- Do not use special colours (e.g. Pantone or HKS).
- Size of diagrams and photos should be shrunk to fit the type area. For microscopic images, please indicate the scale or quote it in the image.
- Ask the publisher if anything is unclear.

### Portrait text and portrait photo

Please submit a short text (maximum 600 characters) and portrait photo (resolution 300 dpi, size 9 cm x 13 cm) to introduce the first author. Examples can be found in every issue of the ZFA ([www.online-zfa.com](http://www.online-zfa.com)).

### Conflicts of Interest, Ethical Approval, Informed Consent

A conflict of interest statement which complies with International Committee of Medical Journal Editors' recommendations ([www.online-zfa.com/fileadmin/user\\_upload/media/Interessenkonflikte\\_EN.docx](http://www.online-zfa.com/fileadmin/user_upload/media/Interessenkonflikte_EN.docx)) must be completed for each

author of each submitted article (including editorials and letters to the editor). In addition, authors must send a declaration granting rights to the publisher ([www.online-zfa.com/fileadmin/user\\_upload/media/Rechtseinraeumung\\_ZFA\\_EN.doc](http://www.online-zfa.com/fileadmin/user_upload/media/Rechtseinraeumung_ZFA_EN.doc)).

All original research papers involving human subjects must be accompanied by a prior ethics committee approval. Authors must also supply evidence of informed consent of research participants (patients).

### Supplementary informations

#### Sponsors

Sponsors of the study, in particular public funding and support by commercial companies, must be fully indicated (see conflicts of interest).

#### Consent to image publication

Publication of photos in which a person is the main subject, as well as x-rays, ultrasound or other images taken during medical care, requires written consent of the person (eye area concealed). The authors are responsible for obtaining these consents.

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The corresponding author assures the consent of all authors.

*Editors and publishers thank you for your interest in the ZFA and for your time and*

*energy invested in submitting your paper. Should you require assistance with online submissions or have other problems, we will be happy to assist and advise you.*

#### **We look forward to a successful collaboration**

##### **Contact address**

Jürgen Bluhme-Rasmussen  
Manager Content Management  
Deutscher Ärzteverlag GmbH  
Dieselstr. 2, 50859 Cologne  
Tel.: 0049 2234 7011-512  
Fax: 0049 2234 7011-6512  
bluhme-rasmussen@aerzteverlag.de