

Name
Street Address
City, State Zip
(813) XXX-XXX
E-mail address

600 words

STANDARD MANUSCRIPT FORMAT

This document shows the format you will use when submitting your work to publishers. Use it as a template and guide for creating your own document with the appropriate headers. Within the text are the standards to use when setting up your document (ie. double-spaced, font style, margins, etc.). Change the headers to reflect your name and your title.

Save the document you create as a template that you can open and use as you begin to create and polish new work that you will send to publishers.

This format, known as standard manuscript format, is the publishing industry's protocol. It's expected. You'll show you are a professional when you submit your work in this recognized format.

As professional writers, we want to present our work to our readers in the best possible format. Therefore, we will be using standard manuscript format for our weekly writing assignments during this class.

Use white 8 1/2" x 11", twenty-pound paper. Select a legible, serifed font, such as Times Roman. Font size should be 12 point. Set margins to 1" to 1 1/2" on all sides of the page including top and bottom. Do not justify the right margin. Do not number the first page.

Place your name, address, phone number, and e-mail address in the upper left corner in a single-spaced block. Next, space down 1/2 to 2/3 on the page. Center your title, typed in capital letters here.

Set the line spacing to double-space. Drop down two double-spaces and begin typing your manuscript with a paragraph indent of approximately five spaces. Continue typing your manuscript in this fashion with paragraph indents and double-spaces between lines. Do not separate paragraphs with two double-spaces. In the body of the manuscript, spell out all numbers below 100, except fractions or measurements.

On each page after the first, you will create a header that will include your last name, a shortened form of your title, and the page number. Headers may be placed in the upper left or upper right corner, maintaining the 1" to 1 1/2" margins at the top and to the sides of the page.

Acceptable formats include:

Marrs/MS Format/page 2

Marrs/MS Format/page 2

Marrs/MS Format/2

Marrs - 2
Ms Format

After the header, enter two double-spaces and continue your manuscript as before with 1” to 1 1/2” margins, double-spaced with paragraph indents of approximately five spaces. Once you’ve completed your manuscript, proofread it, read it aloud, have someone else proofread it, and run it through spellcheck. Watch for words that could be missed such as “for not four or fore” and “be not bee” etc.

Next, determine the manuscript word count. Most word processors will do this for you. Be sure to omit the number of words that are part of your information block on page one, your title, and headers as they do not count toward manuscript word count. If you do not have an automatic word count feature, you can get a rough estimate by counting the words in two to three lines. Determine the average number of words per line (usually ten to twelve); multiply that number by the number of lines in the manuscript. Or as another rough guide, a standard manuscript page is approximately 250 words when double-spaced with 1” margins.

Once you have your word count, round the number to the nearest ten. Return to page one and enter the word count at the right of your information block at the right margin.

Normally, when submitting a manuscript to an editor for publication, we do not staple the pages.