GUIDE FOR AUTHORS

The *International Journal of Gynecology and Obstetrics* (IJGO)—which is the official publication of the *International Federation of Gynecology and Obstetrics (FIGO)*—publishes articles on all aspects of basic and clinical research in obstetrics/gynecology and related subjects, with emphasis on matters of worldwide interest. See [http://www.ijgo.org/](http://www.ijgo.org/) for the IJGO Statement of Purpose.

The IJGO will consider for publication unsolicited submissions of the following: Clinical Articles; Review Articles; and Brief Communications (including Case Reports).

The requirements of the IJGO are in accordance with the “Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals” published by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors ([http://www.icmje.org/urm_main.html](http://www.icmje.org/urm_main.html)).

It is the general policy of the IJGO to ensure that papers from individual low- and middle-income countries include local co-authors and collaborators. These research and academic colleagues should be identified early and be involved in research question development, Institutional Review Board approval, data collection and analysis, and manuscript preparation. Principles of community-based participatory research should be strongly considered. Co-authors should satisfy generally accepted requirements for authorship. The Editorial Board believes this supports FIGO priorities for capacity building and prevents any perception that data or research is being co-opted by scholars from high-income countries. Multi-country studies or analyses of internationally available databases do not necessarily have to meet this requirement and will be considered individually by the Editors, as are all submissions. Any questions or issues can be addressed to the Editorial Office prior to submission or may be raised during the editorial process.

All manuscripts should be prepared according to the guidelines detailed below. Any manuscript that has not been formatted per the IJGO
requirements will be returned to the author. All manuscripts should be created and submitted in Word format.

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1. SUBMISSION
Authors must submit manuscripts online using the Elsevier Editorial System (EES): [http://www.ees.elsevier.com/ijg/](http://www.ees.elsevier.com/ijg/). Hard-copy submissions will not be considered or returned. Once submitted, manuscripts undergo initial screening by the editorial staff and editors. To ensure timely processing of the large number of submissions received, papers that do not meet the journal’s requirements will be declined at this stage, without peer review, and the authors will receive prompt notification. All other papers will undergo peer review.

Authors must register using EES when submitting a manuscript, at which time they will be given a username and password for access to their Home Page (please remember this information and avoid creating duplicate accounts). Authors should send queries concerning the submission process or journal procedures to authorsupport@elsevier.com. Authors can check the status of their manuscript within the review process using EES. All correspondence, including notification of the editor’s decision and requests for revision, takes place by e-mail and via the author's Home Page.
Please ensure that the e-mail address of the corresponding author is entered correctly and updated on EES if it changes. All correspondence regarding the submission will be sent to this e-mail address.

Authors are encouraged to include details for suggested reviewers. The details must include name, affiliation, and work e-mail address. The suggested reviewers should not have any conflicts of interest regarding the submission.

2. REQUIRED FORMS
The Author(s) Guarantee Form and the Submission Requirements Form (both available on EES at the “Select Article Type” stage of the submission process) must be completed and submitted with each manuscript. The article’s principal author is responsible for ensuring that all of the necessary forms are completed accurately.

2.1. Author(s) Guarantee Form
In the Author(s) Guarantee Form (http://www.ees.elsevier.com/ijg/img/author_guarantee.doc), the article title and the names of all authors must be listed as they appear in the manuscript. The author(s) must guarantee: (1) that all authors have participated sufficiently in the work to take responsibility for it; (2) that all authors have reviewed the final version of the manuscript and approve it for publication; (3) that neither this manuscript nor one with substantially similar content by the authors has been published elsewhere or is being considered for publication elsewhere; (4) that it has been submitted with the full knowledge and approval of the institution or organization given as the affiliation of the author(s); and (5) that they have informed the editor in a cover letter and in the manuscript itself of any conflicts of interest.

Submission of multi-authored manuscripts implies the consent of each of the authors. After an article has been accepted for publication, the name of each author must also be listed on a Transfer of Copyright (which will be sent by
the publisher) assigning FIGO all rights to the manuscript to protect the author(s) and the IJGO from unauthorized use of the article's contents.

2.2. Submission Requirements Form
In the Submission Requirements Form (http://www.ees.elsevier.com/ijg/img/submission_requirements.doc), authors must check each of the relevant boxes to be certain that the article complies with the format and requirements of the IJGO. The checklist must be completed by the author(s) for inclusion in the record.

Authors should check only the boxes that are relevant to their submission; submissions for which all of the boxes have been checked will be returned to the authors.

3. COVER LETTER
All submissions must be accompanied by a cover letter. The letter, which should be addressed to the Editor-in-Chief (Dr Richard Adanu), should briefly describe the study/paper and state the word count, in addition to any conflicts of interest for any of the authors.

If copyright permission is required to reproduce any material in an article, include confirmation in the cover letter that such permission has been obtained from the copyright holder (see section 5.10.2).

If any writing assistance—other than copy editing—was provided, details (including information about any funding for such assistance) must be given in the cover letter.

4. RANDOMIZED CONTROLLED TRIALS (RCTS) AND SYSTEMATIC REVIEWS
4.1. EQUATOR Network
The EQUATOR Network website (http://www.equator-network.org/home/) explains what reporting guidelines are and why they are needed. It contains
links to the checklists described below and provides useful guidance for authors and editors.

4.2. RCTs
Submission of RCTs must include reference to ethics approval (or explanation of why ethics approval was not received). Authors must consult the CONSORT statement and checklist ([http://www.consort-statement.org/consort-statement/](http://www.consort-statement.org/consort-statement/)) and submit a CONSORT flow chart as an editable figure in Word/PowerPoint format.

Information regarding power calculations must be included for RCTs (see section 5.4.1).

4.2.1. RCT registration
All RCTs must be registered in a public trials registry.

**Trials that began before July 1, 2005**
The IJGO will consider “retrospective registration” of trials that began before July 1, 2005 (retrospective meaning registration occurs after patient enrollment began).

**Trials that began after July 1, 2005**
The IJGO will consider trials beginning on or after July 1, 2005, if registration occurred before the first patient was enrolled (prospective registration).

The IJGO will consider unregistered trials on a case-by-case basis; however, supporting information and retrospective registration would be required prior to peer review.

The clinical trials registration information should be included at the end of the abstract.

4.3. Systematic reviews
Reviews based on the following recommended guidelines and checklists will be given preference. Systematic reviews and meta-analyses should follow the PRISMA guidelines (http://www.prisma-statement.org/). Meta-analyses of observational studies should follow the MOOSE guidelines (http://www.consort-statement.org/mod_product/uploads/MOOSE%20Statement%202000.pdf).

5. LAYOUT OF MANUSCRIPTS
Manuscript text should be in English (US spelling), double-spaced, font size 12, in Arial font.

5.1. First page
The first page of the manuscript should contain the following: (1) title; (2) full names of authors (6 maximum, although listing more authors may be considered on an individual basis if authorship requirements have been met and a request has been included in the cover letter); (3) affiliations of authors (i.e. department, section or unit of an institution, hospital or organization, city, and country where it is located; please note that street name/numbers are not required); (4) full contact details (postal address, phone/fax numbers, e-mail address) of the corresponding author; (5) a list of up to 8 keywords for indexing and retrieval; (6) synopsis (no longer than 25 words, stating the primary conclusion of the paper).

Footnotes linking author names to affiliations should be listed as a,b,c etc., rather than *,†,‡ or 1,2,3 etc.

The first page should also list the type of article: Clinical Article; Brief Communication; or Review Article.

5.2. Abstract
5.2.1. Clinical articles
A structured abstract not exceeding 200 words is required for all full-length clinical articles. It should contain all and only the following headings: Objective; Methods; Results; and Conclusion. The Objective reflects the
purpose of the study: that is, the hypothesis that is being tested. The Methods
should include the setting for the study, the participants (number and type),
the treatment or intervention, and the type of statistical analysis. The Results
include the outcome of the study and statistical significance, if appropriate.
The Conclusion states the significance of the results.

5.2.2. Systematic reviews
A structured abstract not exceeding **200 words** is required for systematic
review articles (Background; Objectives; Search strategy; Selection
criteria; Data collection and analysis; Main results; and Conclusions).

5.2.3. Brief communications
Brief communications should not include an abstract.

5.3. Main text
In full-length articles, subject matter should be organized under the following
headings, with no subheadings: Introduction; Materials and methods;
Results; Discussion; Acknowledgments; Conflict of interest; and
References. Footnotes should be avoided and their contents incorporated
into the text.

Brief communications should not have any headings separating the text.

5.3.1. Clinical articles
The main text of clinical articles should not exceed **2500 words**, excluding the
first-page information, abstract (**no more than 200 words**),
acknowledgments, conflict of interest, references (**no more than 25**), figure
legends, and tables and figures. Please include the word count in the cover
letter and on the first page of the manuscript.

5.3.2. Systematic reviews
Systematic reviews should adhere to PRISMA or MOOSE guidelines, with no
more than **3000–3500 words** in the main text and **40 references**. Please
include the word count in the cover letter and on the first page of the manuscript.

5.3.3. Brief communications
Brief communications should be no more than 400 words, excluding the first-page information, synopsis, keywords, acknowledgments, conflict of interest, references, figure legends, and tables and figures. There should be no more than 4 references and no more than 1 table or 1 figure. Please include the word count in the cover letter and on the first page of the manuscript.

5.4. Power calculations, statistics, and reporting of numbers
5.4.1. Power calculations
Where appropriate (e.g. for RCTs), power calculations should be performed as part of the study design, and a statement providing the power of the study should be included in the Materials and methods. Authors should state how the power calculation was determined, including what type of difference the calculation was powered to detect and on what studies the numbers are based.

5.4.2. Statistics
The statistical tests used and the significance level set should be listed in the methods for all studies that employed statistical analysis. Information regarding the statistical software programs used should be included in the methods: for example, “SPSS (IBM, Armonk, NY, USA).” This information should not be included in the reference list.

\( P \) values should be provided where calculated. The largest \( P \) value that should be expressed is \( P > 0.99 \). The smallest \( P \) value that should be expressed is \( P < 0.001 \).

For measures of effect (e.g. relative risks, risk ratios, odds ratios), authors should also report confidence intervals (e.g. 95%) so that the precision of the effect estimate can be assessed.
5.4.3. Reporting of numbers
Authors are urged to ensure that all reported numbers are accurate and listed consistently throughout the manuscript, tables, and figures.

All RCTs should include the results of intention-to-treat analysis, and all surveys should include response rates.

5.5. Ethics approval and informed consent
Studies of patients, patient records, or volunteers require Ethics Committee approval and informed consent.

5.5.1. Ethics approval
Include a statement in the methods that the research protocol was approved by the relevant Institutional Review Board or Ethics Committee before the study began; if such approval was not needed/obtained, include an explanation. Authors must provide copies of the appropriate documentation if requested.

5.5.2. Informed consent
Include confirmation in the methods that all human participants gave written informed consent before the study began; if consent was not needed/obtained, include an explanation. Authors must provide copies of the appropriate documentation if requested.

5.6. Acknowledgments
Include financial acknowledgments only.

5.7. Conflict of interest
A conflict-of-interest statement must be included in the cover letter and before the reference list in the manuscript. It should list any relationships (for any author) that may be deemed to influence the objectivity of the paper, or state that no such relationships exist.

5.8. References
The number of references should not exceed 25 for clinical articles, 40 for review articles, and 4 for brief communications; in general, they should be limited to the last decade. They must be numbered and listed as they are cited in the article, using Index Medicus abbreviations for journal titles. List all authors, but if there are more than 6 list the first 6 plus “et al.” Include the volume and issue numbers.


Text references should be indicated by Arabic numerals in square brackets on the line (not superscript): for example, [1–4] and [1,5,11,17]. To avoid any delays in the editing process, authors must make every effort to ensure that each reference is correct and complete. Incomplete references will be returned to the principal author for completion before the manuscript is edited.

All references must be in English. Citation information of those originally in other languages must be translated into English in the reference list. The IJGO should be cited as Int J Gynecol Obstet in the reference list.

Numbered references to personal communications, unpublished data, statistical software, or manuscripts that have not been accepted for
publication (i.e. “submitted” or “under consideration”) must not be included. Reference to such material, if required, can be incorporated at the relevant location in the text.

If bibliographic software has been used for managing the reference list (e.g. EndNote or Reference Manager), the reference list and citations must be unlinked before submission.

5.9. Tables
Each table should be titled, numbered (with Arabic numerals), and placed on a separate page after the reference list (not embedded within the main text).

All tables must be created and submitted in editable Word format. Only standard, universally understood abbreviations should be used. Authors should prepare tabular material in an easily readable form, eliminating tables presenting information that can easily be incorporated into the text. All tables must be cited in numeric order in the main text as “Table 1” etc.

Use the Word table function (not the “enter” key, spaces, or the “tab” function) to create a separate cell for each table entry.

Footnotes to tables should be listed as a, b, c etc., rather than *, †, ‡ etc.

If tables are deemed to be too large or there are too many, they may be published as online-only supplementary material (see section 5.11).

5.10. Figures and photographs
Advice on the preparation of electronic artwork can be found at the following URL:
http://www.elsevier.com/wps/find/authors.authors/authorartworkinstructions.

Figures and photographs should be submitted as separate figure files (not embedded within the manuscript file), preferably in TIFF or JPEG format (at least 300 dpi). CONSORT flow charts should be created and submitted as
editable Word/PowerPoint files. All figures must be cited in numeric order in the main text as “Figure 1” etc.

If labeling images, use lettering that remains clearly readable even after reduction to approximately 66%.

There are no charges for color figures.

5.10.1. Figure legends
For every figure, a titled legend must be provided in the manuscript file after the reference list; legends should be numbered consecutively in the order of their citation using Arabic numerals.

5.10.2. Figure permission
All authors wishing to use figures (or any material) that have already been published must first obtain the permission of the original author and publisher and/or copyright holders, in addition to giving precise reference to the original work. This permission must include the right to publish in electronic media. Confirmation should be included in the cover letter (the actual permission correspondence from the copyright holder does not need to be submitted).

5.10.3. Photograph/video consent
If photographs or videos of identifiable people are used, authors must obtain and submit a signed statement of informed consent from the identifiable person(s) or their next of kin. Authors should not try to conceal identity with black bars over eyes etc.

5.11. Supplementary material
Authors may submit supplementary material such as additional tables and figures, animations, presentations, and short videos. In particular, the submission of videos and other media is encouraged. Supplementary material will be hosted online only (it will not appear in the print version).
Supplementary material will not be edited or formatted but the editors and reviewers may suggest changes. All patient/participant identification must be removed or informed consent must be obtained from the identifiable person(s) or their next of kin (see section 5.10.3).

All supplementary material should be cited in the main text of the article as “Supplementary Material S1” etc.

Supplementary material will not be accepted if the associated manuscript is rejected.

6. EDITORIAL STYLE
Papers are published in English, using US spelling. The editors reserve the right to make any necessary editorial changes.

6.1. Numerals
Arabic numerals should be used for weights, measures, percentages, and degrees of temperature. Weights and measures should be abbreviated according to the International System of Units (SI) or non-SI units mentioned in the SI, followed by conventional units in brackets on first mention. Provide percentages after numerals throughout.

6.2. Drugs
Give generic names of all pharmaceutical preparations and, where appropriate, include (in parentheses, following) the trade name and manufacturer’s name and address. Review drug names and dosages with care. The author is responsible for all recommended dosages.

6.3. Manufacturer information
Give the manufacturer’s name and address (in parentheses) following the name of any instruments or equipment cited by brand name. Do not include the trademark or registered trademark symbol.

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Plagiarism entails the “use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one's own original work.” Verbatim copying of sentences, even if a citation is provided (unless the sentence appears in quotation marks), is considered to be plagiarism. Papers are checked for plagiarism (including self-plagiarism); if plagiarism is detected, action will be taken following the Committee on Publication Ethics guidelines.

6.5. Language editing
Authors whose first language is not English are encouraged to have their manuscripts reviewed by a native English speaker or a professional editing service (e.g. http://webshop.elsevier.com/languageservices) before submission. It is important for all submissions to be clear and understandable for the editors and reviewers.

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