A few more finesses

Abbreviations
Explain at 1st mention except for the well established (UN, EU, AIDS, DNA)

Avoid in title (and abstract)

Units
In full when in text - abbreviated when quoting values

We measured the mass in milligrams.

BUT

Mass of an elephant was 10⁷ mg.

Use spaces between the value and the unit.

A few more finesses

Math
Use spaces on both sides of operation symbols: \( p = a + b \)

minus ≠ hyphen \( \text{minus: } 5 - 1 = 4; \)

hyphen: sites 1-4 or day-to-day sampling

Use negative exponent rather than fraction:

\( g \text{dm}^3 \) or \( g \times \text{dm}^3 \) is better than \( g/\text{dm}^3 \)

Use ONLY SI UNITS e.g. \( \text{dm}^3 \), not \( \text{L} \)

Decimal mark - point or comma?

math (& english standard + Asia) - . \( 1.5 + 1.6 = 3.1 \)

writing (Europe; hrvatski pravopis 2013.) - ,

I had 1,5 kg of lamb for lunch.
A few more finesses

The 22nd General Conference on Weights and Measures:

...numbers may be divided in groups of three in order to facilitate reading; neither dots nor commas are ever inserted in the spaces between groups.

Writing - scientific style

AIM: to convey your message well minding the logical flow of ideas and work procedures

HOW:
0. Impeccable grammar, syntax and spelling
1. Comprehensibility and clarity with sound reasoning!
   (keep it concise, direct and short)
2. Inambiguity
   (watch for the structure and style - disable ambiguity)

Let (a colleague) review

Keep in mind the audience and leave an impression of impartiality
Language

Verbs: The only words capable of expressing action are verbs and their derivatives.

Invigorating verbs will make writing more concise and easier to read.

- Active voice
  - When we reduce dose, ...
- Passive voice
  - When dose is reduced, ...
- Verbal
  - With reduced dose, ...
- Verb-derived noun (n)
  - With the reduction of dose, ...

Common mistakes

Voice (Active/Passive)

Nature journals like authors to write in the **active voice** ("we performed the experiment...") as experience has shown that readers find concepts and results to be conveyed more clearly if written directly.

*Nature*

Use **active voice** when suitable... e.g., ‘To address this possibility, we constructed a lZap library ...’ not ‘To address this possibility, a lZap library was constructed...’

*Science*
Common mistakes

**Voice (Active/Passive)**

- ✗ It was established by the experiment that...
- ✔ We have established through the experiment that...
- ✗ Content of dissolved oxygen was measured using a digital oximeter (WTW oxi 95), daily in the period from May 13th to June 13th.
- ✔ I measured the content of dissolved oxygen daily at noon from May 13th to June 13th using an oximeter (WTW oxi 95).

**Passive voice is allowed in Abstract**

'The research was carried out' paradox

---

**Common mistakes**

**Tense:**

- Your result, previously unknown – past tense;
  - *Drusus croaticus* individuals emerged on sunny days.
- Known result – present tense
  - *Drusus* individuals emerge during dusk (Kučinić, personal communication).

A negative effect of turbidity **was found** on total Ephemeroptera ...  
We **observed** that calcite precipitation **was promoted** by leaf litter decay.

Passive filterer taxa **are known** to be sensitive to siltation disturbances...

*Cum grano salis!* A published result – past tense (depending on style)

- *Baetis genus* **was previously reported** as one of the most sensitive to sediment disturbance (Bond & Downes, 2003).

**BUT IT IS BETTER:** *Baetis is among the most sensitive taxa to sediment disturbance (Bond & Downes, 2003).*
Common mistakes

Tense:
Conclusions – Present tense

We conclude that limiting food resources is an important aspect in ...

This suggests that tufa deposition is at least indirectly promoted by the decomposition process.

Verb derived nouns

We carried out the study...

We studied...

Person:
Biology (Natural sciences)
One author – first person singular
More authors – first person plural

Other ‘sciences’ - third person!
Common mistakes

Empty words and phrases

We don’t listen any more. Perhaps because words are very cheap and so many are thrown away each day. Our loss of critical listening skills leaves us vulnerable to manipulation by words which have no meaning...

Empty phrases are meaningless and loaded with emotion. Their use takes away the opportunity for calm, objective discussions...

Richard B. Shepard, Applied Ecosystem Services, Inc.

Example

After careful consideration of all the foregoing lines of evidence, it is apparent to us that among all the antibiotics discussed, penicillin is the one that should be chosen for the treatment of infections caused by Streptococcus.

We conclude that streptococcal infections are best treated with penicillin.

Common mistakes

Empty words and phrases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Have an effect on</th>
<th>affect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cause a change in</td>
<td>change, alter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The mechanism by which</td>
<td>how</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Causes an increase in</td>
<td>increases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Represents</td>
<td>is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has been shown to be</td>
<td>is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate</td>
<td>show</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A majority of</td>
<td>most</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In greater abundance</td>
<td>more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounted for by the fact that</td>
<td>because</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As a consequence of</td>
<td>because</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Due to the fact that</td>
<td>because</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Despite the fact that</td>
<td>although</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has the capability of</td>
<td>can</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If conditions are such that</td>
<td>if</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is clear that</td>
<td>clearly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is worth pointing out that</td>
<td>note that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It may, however, be noted that</td>
<td>but</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Homework

Note the emptyness 😊 in mass media
Common mistakes

Empty words and phrases

Formalisms

That is why I want to start the initiative that would appropriately regulate this issue. I expect the contribution of experts and all political stakeholders.

Common mistakes

Jargon and ‘fancy’ words

Axonal signals transiently activate the expression of the transcription factor Oct6 in Schwann cells that will form myelin.

Swearing rather than being a maladaptive pain response actually produces a hypoalgesic effect.

Limnological research of the rheikotopes and the phenomenon of streamflow travertinization...

Coenoses of rithron and potamon of Sava.
**Common mistakes**

**Repetition**
- Figures / Tables - in main text
- Figures - in Tables and vice versa
- Results - in discussion
- Of already published procedure (in Methods)

*Fig. 4 and Table 3 show* that the diversity of macroinvertebrates ranged from a minimum of three taxa in fall to 8 taxa in spring at site 1.

*The diversity of macroinvertebrates at site 1 peaked in spring (Fig. 4).*

*In Figure 1 we present* the superoxide dismutase activity in Euglena under stress and under control conditions.

*Superoxide dismutase activity was higher in specimens that endured stress than in control specimens (Fig. 1).*

**Chapter mixing**
- Results in Methods chapter
- Results in Discussion chapter (and the other way around)

*Shredders dominated the community with 71% of total number of individuals which suggests* that the main energy sources is leaf litter.

**Insufficient data**
- Can I reproduce my own work purely by following what I wrote in Methods?
- Can I unambiguously deduce my conclusion from data I presented in Results?
Common mistakes

Lack of conciseness (wordiness)

The data that were collected in this study were obtained by walking 6 x 500 m transects that traversed, from one side to the other, study plots in each of the four forest compartments (K14, K15, K16, K17) listed in the previous section.

We obtained the data by walking 6 x 500 m transects in each of the four forest compartments.

Lack of data

Pitfall traps were set up at several transects and sampled at equal intervals during the project period.

We set up fifty pitfall traps 15 cm diameter and 15 cm deep, at least 10 m apart in each of ten transects and sampled at weekly intervals between April and June.

Common mistakes

Excessive writing

Is this passage/result/procedure essential to the message of the work?

We found that the content of X was significantly higher when the specimens were treated with ethanol than when they were treated with ethanol and nicotine simultaneously, which may reflect their lower ability to sustain light organic compounds contrary to previous reports that they are readily metabolised in similar organisms (Smith, 2000.).

We found that the content of X was significantly higher when the specimens were treated with ethanol than with both ethanol and nicotine.

Thus, we propose that specimens are more vulnerable to light organic compounds. However, some organisms were proven to readily metabolize them (Smith, 2000.).
Common mistakes

Indirectness

There are several studies published in favor of flood pulse management of dams discharge (Robinson et al. 2012, Konrad et al. 2013).

Flood pulse management is vastly favored... (Robinson et al. 2012, ...)

It has been reported that Drusus emerges at dusk (Ivković i sur., 2011)

Ivković i sur. (2011) reported that Drusus emerges at dusk.

Drusus emerges at dusk (Ivković i sur., 2011)

Insecurity (indecision)

We speculate that Z may be a possible reason why X affects Y.

We propose that X affects Y because of Z...

In our opinion it is not an unjustifiable assumption that... 😊 😊

Common mistakes

Excessive use of brackets

Integrate the relevant, throw out the irrelevant

1. We recorded significant reduction in the number of caddisflies (34%).

   We recorded reduction in the number of caddisflies by 34 %.

   We recorded significant reduction in the number of caddisflies.

2. We separately analyzed the permanent (Oligochaeta, Acarina, Gastropoda) and temporary aquatic fauna (Ephemeroptera, Plecoptera, Trichoptera).

   We analyzed separately the permanent and temporary aquatic fauna.

Do not interrupt the flow of thought with inserted brackets.

Performance was measured with a CX1 hygrometer (Pullman Inc., OR) at 20 °C.

Performance was measured at 20 °C with a CX1 hygrometer (Pullman Inc., OR).
Common mistakes

Inconsistency

We recorded 14 taxa of Trichoptera […] the most dominant insects were caddisflies.

SO2 converts to sulphuric acid when in contact with…

Using complicated toponyms - (local)patriotism

Samples taken at Čikotina Lada differed from the ones taken at Novakovića Brod …

Samples at Site 1 differed from the ones at Site 2 …

(If needed - state the toponyms in Methods/Study site)

Common mistakes - spot them

Three out of ten fathers and 17.0% of mothers have a college or university degree. In contrast, without primary education is only 7.5% of mothers and 3.8% fathers, and with primary school a little more than one fifth of mothers and 17.1% of fathers.

A bit less than a fifth (17.6%) of the surveyed Torcida members still lives with one parent, but considering the frequency of divorces in recent years (it is estimated that in 1991 in Split on three new marriages came one divorce) it can be concluded that the most active Torcida members do not come, at least to a greater extent, from, 'broken families' extensively more than their peers …
Common mistakes - Vague and ambiguous comparisons

Griotte contain more alcohol, so we think it is more beneficial to consume them before lectures in Principles ...

Griotte contain more alcohol than other candy, so we think they are a better choice for consumption before the lecture ...

The lady hit the man with an umbrella.

‘Conceptual understanding of cell division and inheritance among students in elementary school.’

Try to improve

Common mistakes

Personification

From Table 5 it is evident that the detritivores recorded positive correlation with AFDW.

The abundance of detritivors was positively correlated with AFDM (Table 5).

G. fossarum had the greatest influence on the seasonal changes in number of shredders.

Change in abundance of G. fossarum caused the observed variability in abundance of the shredders.
Common mistakes

Poor labeling of attachments (F&T) (omitting explanation of abbreviation in the legends, units, axis titles ...)

Overcrowding of Figures and Tables

Too small font and graphics in attachments

Meaningless decimal places

Citing sources in the reference list that is not in the text, and vice versa

Common mistakes of non-native English speakers

Word choice is not the difference between an acceptable and a unacceptable paper – but it can be the difference between a good and a great paper.

Journal of Young Investigators

www.jyi.org

Poor choice of words:

Content of X increased in the impact group compared to the control.

Content of X was higher in impact group than in the control group.
Common mistakes of non-native English speakers

Poor choice of words:

*Brand loyalty is higher with age.*
*Brand loyalty increases with age.*

**Comparison - Comparative adjective;**

**Action/process - Verb**

Common mistakes of non-native English speakers

Lack of ‘Parallel structure’

Repetition of a chosen grammatical form within a sentence. By making each compared item or idea in your sentence follow the same grammatical pattern, you create a parallel structure...

Mary likes hiking, swimming, and **to ride** a bicycle.
Mary likes hiking, swimming, and riding a bicycle.

Mary likes **to hike**, **to swim**, and **to ride** a bicycle.
Lack of ‘Parallel structure’

Nonlinear regression gave more accurate results with Bonferroni correction than ANOVA.

Possible interpretation 1 – comparison of analyses
Nonlinear regression with Bonferroni correction gave more accurate estimates than ANOVA gave/did.

Possible interpretation 2 – comparison of corrections
Nonlinear regression gave more accurate estimates with the Bonferroni correction than with ANOVA.

Common mistakes of non-native English speakers
The & a(n)
Temperature is an important factor...
Temperature is the most important factor...

Decay was driven by an unknown factor...
Decay was driven by the force of water...

Which v. that
The paper that you lent me is in my bag.
The paper, that you lent me, which is excellent, is in my bag.

On/in v. at
We sampled on the Plitvice Lakes; We stored samples at plastic bags.
We sampled at the Plitvice Lakes; We stored samples in plastic bags.
Common mistakes of non-native English speakers

Direct translation (Google) & ‘synonyms’ tool (Word)

Phrases are often incorrectly translated from ‘small’ languages

Complex and expert language is almost never translated correctly...

If GT translates it correctly
It is written clearly and concisely!

On low trophy of this hydrosystem indicate presence of trout...

For low trophic this phenomenon indicates the hydro trout...

Presence of trout indicates low level of trophy in this stream...

Presence of trout indicates low level of organic pollution...

Common mistakes of non-native English speakers

Direct translation (google) & ‘synonyms’ tool (word)
Non-scientific & emotional text

In the seventies Gregurić very strongly defined his recognizable style of painting, painting profile and distinctive style, relying on virtuosic knowledge of technical skills, accepting the tradition of experience of "Molve segment" within the Podravina art circle, and above all respecting the need and urge to speak in his own distinct language.

Forming himself on a standardized poetics of Molve expression, therefore on the line of Kovačić painting viewpoints and bearing for long time quite distinctive elements of this "style" (vegetation, houses, colors, atmosphere) Gregurić has, accepting that dominant rich iconography, found that not even the brightest epigonism cannot measure up to the worst example of establishing own ways of expression.

Česte pogreške (u pisanju hrvatskim jezikom)

Da li če... ✗
Hoće li... ✔
Da li je... ✗
Je li... ✔
Je li hoće... ✗ ✗

Paronimi
vapnenjački / vapneni / vapnenasti
elektronski / elektronički / električni
Česte pogreške (u pisanju hrvatskim jezikom)

Č i Ć / je i ije

Futur

Koristit ćemo metodu... = Metodu ćemo koristiti

Futur 2.

❌ Ako ćemo biti dobri, možda ćemo ugledati štrumpfove.
✅ Ako budemo dobri, možda ćemo ugledati štrumpfove.
❌ Ako budemo dobri, budemo ugledali štrumpfove.

Posuđenice/tudice:
Kvaliteta, period, (in)direktno, grupa, kategorija, sistem,
vertikalno, maksimalno, abundancija...

‘Hiperkorektnost’
Htjeo, vidjeo, ...

Česte pogreške

Pošto = nakon što ≠ budući da

Optimalno, ekstremno, maksimalno ⇒ ne stupnjuju se
Bitno, savršeno ⇒ ne valja stupnjevati

Često puta, nekoliko alternativa, Vremensko razdoblje

U mogućnosti, u potpunosti

Bez da ⇒ A da ne
⇒ iako, premda
⇒ glagolski prilog
⇒ glagolska imenica

Srušio me (je), a da me nije ispitao
iako me nije ispitao
ne ispitavši me
bez ispita