

### Research paper: plan on a page

These decisions and reporting style will differ depending on the methods and methodology of the study you have conducted.

Title	Remember this is the first thing readers see. It orients them to the purpose and methods of the paper. Avoid country names in titles. Add succinct methods details. Use common keywords in your title.
Journal	What is your target journal (and some back-ups). Are you writing it with that audience in mind? National or international audience? Is there a cost (e.g. open access)
Key message	Outline the key message of the paper in no more than one or two brief bullet points. Remember this message as you write the paper.
Background	What do we know already? What don't we know yet? Why do we need to know this?
Research question	What is the research question (or aim/objective/hypothesis as relevant)?
Design	What is the study design? Why has this been chosen? What are the epistemological, ontological and methodological underpinnings?
Population	What is the population(s) for this study (e.g. from whom you wished to draw participants). What are the inclusion and exclusion criteria?
Setting	What type of setting e.g. acute hospital, hospice, primary care, social care. Country.
Sample	How are you choosing potential participants from the population of interest? Random, purposive, convenience ....?
Recruitment	How are potential participants identified, approached, informed about the study. How do they respond, to whom? Consent procedures.
(Intervention)	What is the intervention, for an interventional study? Report according to TiDIER guidelines.
Data collection	What is the approach to collecting data? Why has this been chosen? What measurement tools have been chosen, when are they being administered (use a SPIRIT figure to display this). Who is collecting the data, reflexivity?
Data analysis	What is the approach to analysing your data? Use of tools such as NVivo, SPSS etc.
Ethical issues	What permissions do you have to conduct your study (research ethics committee, organisational governance approvals)? What are the ethical issues associated with conducting your study.
Findings	Who took part in your study? What are their characteristics (table?). Do you need a recruitment flow such as a CONSORT or STROBE diagram? What did you find? How can you display this best – use tables/figures as required. Data extracts to support findings?
Discussion	Brief (one paragraph) summary of main findings. Discussion of findings relating and contextualising them to the broader literature and theory in the area. Articulation of what this study adds to knowledge. Why is this important? Recommendations for practice, policy, further research. Strength and limitations of the study Conclusions.
Reporting guidelines	You will want to use a relevant reporting guideline for your study type such as CONSORT, COREQ, STROBE, CHERRIES and the like – see Equator network for details.