

Advice for First-Time Authors writing for *Planning Theory & Practice*

Purpose of this Note

Academic articles are never easy to write, and each Journal and academic discipline tends to have particular styles and conventions. The aim of this Note is to alert authors to what the Editors look for in a paper for our Journal. We particularly seek to help practitioners and those writing academic papers for the first time. For our particular 'language style', please see the accompanying 'Style Guide' on our website.

The Note is organised as a series of points. Do, please, consider all these before submitting your paper.

1. Look at the *Aims* of the Journal, and at the Journal's Advice to Contributors. Consider especially what these indicate about the focus and readership of the Journal.
2. Look at back copies of the Journal, to see what is discussed. Check the Contents Lists, the Editorials and the Interface section, as well as the Articles, to get a sense of what the broad field of interest is.
3. Note that our Journal accepts articles which report empirical research, but we also accept papers which report on practice experiences, as well as review essays.
4. Consider carefully:
 - a. the contribution you want your article to make to existing knowledge, and the Journal's readership
 - b. the argument you want to make in your paper
 - c. how what you have to say relates to the existing literature (especially the most recent)
 - d. the implications of what you have to say for planning theory and/or planning practice
 - e. the structure of your paper, and how to make all the parts flow well and connect to each other.
5. Note that it is helpful to say at the start what your paper is about and how it is organised.
6. Note that although it is important to 'ground' your arguments and claims in the literature on a subject, you do not need a long literature review. It should be brief and focused towards what you will go on to discuss/research.
7. If your paper draws on empirical research or practice material, you should always explain why, when and how you did the research or were involved in the practice. It may be relevant to include details in the main text of your paper, but you could also make use of an endnote or a brief appendix.

8. Think carefully about the Abstract, the Title and the Key Words you use. In these 'electronic' days, your article is likely to be 'discovered' as much through these as through reading a Journal Contents list.
9. Edit your paper carefully before sending it, especially with regard to language and references. Although we give help to non-native English speakers, it is a great help to the Editors and the Referees if the initial text is in a good English. ALL authors should look at the Style Guide!
10. Make sure that you have got copyright permissions for illustrations and major quotations where these are needed.