

Table 6-3. Manuscript Formatting Requirements Across Several Sports Medicine and Kinesiology Journals

JOURNAL	TITLE LENGTH	ABSTRACT LENGTH	KEY WORDS LIMIT	MAXIMUM TEXT (ORIGINAL ARTICLE)	MAXIMUM REFERENCES
<i>The American Journal of Sports Medicine</i>	N/A	350	4	6000	60
<i>Gait & Posture</i>	N/A	300	6	3000	30
<i>Journal of Athletic Training</i>	16 words	300	3	N/A	30
<i>Journal of Rehabilitation Medicine</i>	N/A	200	5	2500	40
<i>Journal of Science and Medicine in Sport</i>	N/A	350	6	3000	30
<i>Journal of Sport and Health Science</i>	20 words	250	8	5000	N/A
<i>Muscle & Nerve</i>	80 spaces	150	5	4000	No limit
<i>Physical Therapy</i>	150 characters	275	N/A	4000	75
<i>The Physician and Sportsmedicine</i>	120 characters	300	10	6000	30 minimum

these components the manuscript is effectively meaningless as the complete message intended by the research cannot be conveyed. However, the drafting of the original manuscript must also take into account the style and formatting requirements of the journal to which the manuscript will be submitted, and it is essential that manuscript authors be aware of these requirements early in the manuscript writing process.

Essentially all journals include a set of guidelines that submitted manuscripts must adhere to in the form of an *Author's Guide*, *Submission Guidelines*, *Instructions for Authors*, or similarly named section. These guidelines outline the format, style, and order of the manuscript and must be adhered to in order for a submission to get to the review phase. Therefore, failing to identify a target journal early in the research process can result in time-consuming revisions and formatting updates to get the manuscript into the layout required by a particular journal. For example, formats differ among journals specific to abstract word limits, title length, font required, section headings, and table/image requirements. Table 6-3 outlines the formatting requirements listed by several journals in the field of sports medicine and kinesiology. It is key to format a prepared manuscript according to these requirements as an improperly formatted manuscript can result in outright rejection by the target journal.

Accessing a journal's submission guidelines is relatively easy in this digital age. Researchers need only to navigate to the journal's homepage, find the link entitled "Information for Authors" (or similar), and click. Authors will then be directed to a webpage that outlines the procedures and styles required of a manuscript prior to final submission to the journal. The content of the submission guidelines differs for each journal and can range from rather general to highly detailed. An outline of the general sections one can expect to find in the submission guidelines is discussed in the following pages.