

**ASEAN+3 FETN**  
**Scientific Writing Workshop**

**LECTURE 4 METHODS**

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# METHODS



# Objectives

- Focus on organization of a manuscript: **The Methods section**
- Review and discuss related ‘most common errors’
- Time to Write: expand on your draft manuscript’s **Methods section**



# The Methods section

## Suggested Sub-headings

- **Study design**
- **Setting**
- **Participants**
- **Operational Definitions**
- **Sample size and assumptions**
- **Variables and measurement/Bias**
- **Data collection**
- **Statistical methods**
- **Ethical issues**



# Handout

## Tips for writing the Methods section



# Errors linked to the Methods section:

- B3 Not writing the methods in chronological order
- B4 Not emphasizing steps taken to protect ethical rights
- B9 Reporting the number of enrolled subjects
- B10 Specifying the contents of a questionnaire
- B13 Failure to clarify key sample size assumptions
- B15 Specifying software used for routine data analysis
- D1 Using present rather than past tense
- D4 Improper use of 'we'
- E1 Labeling rather than explaining
- E12 Using a technical term in its non-technical sense

# Methods do's and don'ts

## Do's

- Use past tense
- Use subheadings
- Respect chronology
- Give specific steps
- Use active voice

## Don'ts

- Use present tense
- Include any numbers of participants or samples
- Be vague

If you only remember **one** thing about writing the **Methods section...**





**Provide enough information so that the study or experiment **could be reproduced** by a competent colleague.**



**Source: Day, R.A. 1998. How to Write and Publish and Scientific Paper, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. Oryx Press, Phoenix, AZ.**



# Writing Time



- Review your draft manuscript's **Methods section**
- Include as many sub-headings that are appropriate for your study
- Use your research protocol, but change from future tense to past tense, and only include methods related to the specific objective(s) of your manuscript.