**IMRAD Paper Structure**

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|  | IntroductionWhy | MethodsHow | ResultsWhat | DiscussionSo what |
| What’s the point | Problem/Hook/Attention getting/Teaser Background/History of the questionGoals/Objectives/gaps to fill/Hypotheses | Procedure/RecipeEnsuring repeatabilityField-/stats-/program-methodsStudy areaData sources  | Main results without judgmentBare bonesFigures and tablesPerformance of new methods | Declaring success/problem solved Answering questions/hypothesesInterpretation of resultsNovelty/context to prior workLimitations and alternative explanationsApplication and implications |
| Structure | Opener: starting broad, leading to the main question/theme/research needContext and justification for objective 1Context and justification for objective 2Context and justification for objective 3Goal statement, followed by specific research objectives | Study areaData (if they apply to all objectives)Analysis related to objective 1Analysis related to objective 2Analysis related to objective 3Sometimes: verification/ accuracy assessment/ robustness checks | Results related to objective 1Results related to objective 2Results related to objective 3Sometimes: verification/ accuracy assessment/ robustness checks | Opener: summary of the key finding and message, parallels goal from introDiscussion related to objective 1Discussion related to objective 2Discussion related to objective 3Sometimes: caveats and limitationsSometimes: management and conservation implicationsConclusion: typically just one paragraph at the end of the Discussion |

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|  | Introduction | Methods | Results (and) | Discussion |

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| Comments | * About 1,000 words in length
* Starts broad, and narrows down
* Quite a few references, but the point is NOT a literature review, but rather a justification for the new research
* Rarely any figures
* Ideally, the reader should be able to write the last paragraph without having read it
* Only ONE goal statement in the last paragraph.
* Do not report that so-and-so studied this-and-that, but instead report findings;
* References should be at the end of sentences, no more than 3 references per set of brackets
* Typically no sub-section headings
* No methods sketch in the Intro
* Ideally no study area so that the questions retain broad relevance
 | * About 1,000 words in length
* Report only the methods that were necessary to obtain the results, not everything that was done
* Typically just 1-2 figures (study area, input data)
* Use sub-section headings
* Include typically only a few references
 | * About 1,000 words in length
* Report only the results that are relevant to address the objectives and conclusions, not everything that was done
* All other figures and tables here
* Highlight the key point of each figure/ table in the text, NOT tons of numbers
* Use sub-section headings
* Include rarely any references
 | * About 1,000 words in length
* Starts with a fairly broad paragraph, then specific, and then very broad towards the end
* Quite a few references to compare and contrast results with other studies
* Make clear how broadly applicable/relevant these results are
* Good idea to repeat goals and objectives in the respective paragraphs, but they have to match last paragraph of Intro
* Includes rarely any figures or tables
* Use sub-section headings, but sparingly
* No statements on future research needs
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