



Paper Starter Checklist

Paper Name: _____

Decide what story to tell.

Write the story, without worrying about polish.

Polish the storytelling



Planning & Structuring

What is the one-sentence contribution of this paper?

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What is the novelty compared to prior work?

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Why should others care? What gap does it fill?

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2-4 main contributions

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Sketch the flow of the story

- Intro: Why the problem matters
- Related Work: What's missing.
- Methods: How you did it
- Results: What you found.
- Discussion: What it means.

figures/tables ideas?

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Drafting & Refining

Write top-down, not left-to-right

- Start with section headings and bullet points.
- Expand bullets into sentences later.

Work in passes, not perfection

- Pass 1: Skeleton outline
- Pass 2: Rough draft (full sentences, no polish).
- Pass 3: Smooth flow + clarity.

Anchor with figures/tables: what question does each figure answer?

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Check section purpose

- Intro = Why this problem is important
- Methods = Enough for replication
- Results = Clear, figure-driven
- Discussion = "So what?" and limitations
- Don't edit while drafting. Mark [FIX LATER] if you're unsure. Keep moving.



Refining & Sharing

Read for flow

- Does the story build logically from problem → method → result → insight?

Check contribution clarity

- Can a colleague restate your one-sentence contribution after reading?

Polish figures

- Make them self-explanatory with titles/captions

Trim extras

- Cut "Nice-to-Have" or tangential points that distract from the story.

Get feedback early

- Share with a peer/mentor before polishing everything.

Final checklist

- Figures/tables numbered and referenced.
- All claims supported with data or citation.
- Contributions summarized clearly in intro + conclusion.

