

Below is a quick checklist of formatting issues that we commonly ask authors to address. This list is not all inclusive. Authors are encouraged to review the Instructions to Authors for more guidelines and details. If this is a revision/resubmission, specific issues identified by the editor, reviewers, and/or ASM staff are listed in your decision letter; be sure to review and address these issues.

Cover Letter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Address the cover letter to the journal, the editor in chief, or your suggested senior editor. <input type="checkbox"/> You may list suggested senior editors, editors, and/or reviewers in the cover letter. Do not list these in the manuscript itself.
Page Format/Length	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Double-space and left-justify the manuscript; use 12-point type and 1-inch margins; use portrait layout for 8.5" × 11" paper. Add continuous line numbers to assist editors/reviewers. <input type="checkbox"/> All article types have word limits (which do not include Materials and Methods, References, tables, or figure legends), and some have limits on the numbers of figures and/or references. See the Instructions to Authors. <input type="checkbox"/> On the title page (first page of your manuscript), include the full working title, author byline with all authors' full names and affiliations, and the corresponding author's contact information.
Abstract/Importance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Most article types require an abstract (see the Instructions to Authors for exceptions and for specific word limits). The abstract should concisely summarize the content of the paper without presenting extensive experimental details. <input type="checkbox"/> For Research Articles, Observations, and Resource Reports, include a separate Importance paragraph of ≤150 words. This is a nontechnical explanation of why the work was undertaken.
Acknowledgments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The source(s) of any direct financial support (funding) received for the work being published must be indicated on the submission form; any other form(s) of assistance that you received may be noted in an Acknowledgments section. <input type="checkbox"/> Recognition of personal assistance should be given as a separate paragraph, as should any statements disclaiming endorsement or approval of the views reflected in the paper or of a product mentioned therein.
References	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The numbered citation (citation-sequence) reference method should be used. List and number references in the References section in the order in which they are cited in the text. Include the names of all authors for each work cited (instead of "et al.>"). <input type="checkbox"/> Refer to the Instructions to Authors for specific formatting instructions.
Tables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Place all tables after the References section. <input type="checkbox"/> Refer to each table at the appropriate place in the body of the text. <input type="checkbox"/> Create tables using the Table function of Microsoft Word (preferably without using the spacing and tabbing features). Arrange the data so that columns of like material read down, not across. <input type="checkbox"/> Create fully descriptive table captions and place them above the body of the table. Create footnotes for content that does not conveniently fit in the title or in data cells. Use superscript lowercase italic letters in alphabetical order as the footnote symbols (<i>a</i>, <i>b</i>, <i>c</i>, etc.).
Figures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Place all figures after the References section and after tables, if any. <input type="checkbox"/> On initial submission, figures may be supplied as PDF files. For revisions, they must be supplied as individual TIFF or EPS files. PowerPoint files are NOT accepted. <input type="checkbox"/> Multipanel figures must be assembled onto one page if at all possible. <input type="checkbox"/> Refer to each figure at the appropriate place in the body of the text. <input type="checkbox"/> On initial submission, set each figure legend directly beneath the corresponding figure. For revisions, the legend(s) should be provided in the manuscript file, separate from the figure file(s). <input type="checkbox"/> If any figure is being adapted or reproduced from a previously published version, secure all necessary permissions from the original authors and publishers and forward these to the <i>mSphere</i> production editor at the manuscript revision stage.
Supplemental Material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> On initial submission, supplemental text, tables, and figures should be combined and uploaded as a single PDF. <input type="checkbox"/> For revisions, each item in the supplemental material must be submitted as a separate file; e.g., multiple figures and/or tables should not be zipped together or combined in a single PDF. Legends should not be included in the supplemental files; rather, they should appear at the end of the main manuscript text. <i>mSphere</i> will post no more than 10 individual supplemental items. <input type="checkbox"/> On the manuscript submission form, be sure to designate the supplemental file type correctly as either "FOR Publication" or "NOT for Publication" by <i>mSphere</i>. If not intended for publication, add the words "for reviewers only" wherever the supplemental material is mentioned in the manuscript. <input type="checkbox"/> Each different type of supplemental material should be numbered with a separate series of "S" numbers (e.g., a set of files that includes a movie and two figures should be numbered as Movie S1 and Fig. S1 and S2). Supplemental material must be cited at least once in the text. If references are included for supplemental material, add those references in the supplemental item itself and cite them by those numbers. Do not include references in the main text that are cited only in the supplemental material.
Revised Manuscripts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> In addition to the specific items mentioned above for revisions, please include a "Response to Reviewer Comments" file that addresses the editor/reviewer comments point by point, with line numbers to indicate where changes have been made. Do NOT include this file as part of the cover letter. <input type="checkbox"/> Upload a separate "Marked Up Manuscript" file showing the changes made to the paper. Your main manuscript upload must contain only a clean copy of the revised paper. <input type="checkbox"/> An accession number paragraph should appear at the end of Materials and Methods (for Research Articles and Resource Reports) or at the end of the text (for Observations).