How to Write Explanatory Notes, Headnotes, Footnotes and Endnotes

The preparation of academic papers requires a systematic approach in presenting new findings so that the reader may follow the main content as well as easily concentrate on some specific aspects of a particular study. Additional information concerning the authors, the analytic model, the computational part, the experimental set up, etc., is sometimes included in short notes which are provided for completeness. The said notes can be included at different locations within a given paper as discussed below.

Explanatory Notes

The explanatory notes appear inline within the text and the frequency of occurrence of such notes depends on the writing style of the author(s) as well as the field of study. There is always a proper way to avoid the initiation of distinct explanatory texts in a new line, for example:

Note that the synonyms “note” and “remark” are used interchangeably.

Short notes can be included in parentheses which de-emphasizes their content:

This statement (usually being proven by contradiction) is based on the assumption that…

Also, the dashes increase the importance of explanatory texts within sentences, but dashes are less frequently used in academic writings:

…and the theory excludes the hidden parameters – recently confirmed by the experiment.

Whenever an emphasis is put upon specific information, the explanatory note begins in a new line where the terms “note” or “remark” are in bold and italic:

Note: The experiment is performed with the following safety precautions to ensure…

Long historical notes also start in a new line:

Remark: The Riemann hypothesis has been published for the first time in…

Headnotes

The inclusion of headnotes to the main text is discouraged. However, headnotes being placed below table titles are quite useful for the overall interpretation of table content. The explanatory text concerning an entire table or a significant part of it should be aligned to the right side of the column and written in 10 pts. Arial font. Table headnotes contain general information concerning the table title or the table itself that should be read before the rest of the table is observed. A headnote may provide explanations for methods and procedures, symbols and acronyms, etc.:

Method: Least Square Errors (LSE)

Indicators of just a few measuring units are sometimes included in headnotes:

Unit: Volume (tons), value (million baht)

However, if more than two measuring units are being used in a given table, the indicators of measuring units are usually included in parentheses in the headings of the corresponding rows or columns as shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mass (kg)</th>
<th>Acceleration (m/s²)</th>
<th>Force (N)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>…</td>
<td>…</td>
<td>…</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Footnotes

Footnotes are placed at the bottom of the page to which they refer following the single-space two-column style of the main text and written in 11 pts. TimesNewRoman font. A line must be placed above the footnote field to separate it from the text, for example:

1/ This is a sample footnote.
2/ This is a second sample footnote.

The footnotes are indicated in the text by superscript footnote markers. The footnotes should be numbered consecutively using superscript Arabic numerals. Some superscript special characters can be used instead to designate a consecutive number of footnote markers:

*, †, ‡, §,...

Footnotes are used mainly for:
- providing information about authors’ affiliation;
- including a brief explanatory text;
- citing a source of information;

A footnote to an author’s name concerning its affiliation should include the postal address and the e-mail of the author.

Footnotes to the title of the paper are discouraged. The explanatory footnotes highlight certain aspects of the study which are somehow related to it but could be written separately from the main text. Such brief explanatory texts should contain a few sentences only. Well known information which is universally accepted should not be a part of a footnote. The footnotes should contain less known information or additional evidence to support statements in the text which are a subject of an ongoing discussion or controversy.

Citations must preferably be inline or in parentheses rather than in footnotes. A footnote citing a source of information is usually combined with a short explanatory text. One can occasionally use “Ibidum” when a footnote refers to the source cited in the preceding footnote.

Similarly to the table headnotes, there are also table footnotes which should be aligned to the left side of the column and written in 10 pts. Arial font below the bottom row of the tables. Table footnotes refer to specific items within the tables.

Endnotes

Endnotes are located at the end of the paper rather than the bottom of a page. Endnotes may appear occasionally in review articles or long research papers where the additional information cannot easily fit within a footnote or where the number of explanatory texts is too big and could limit the space required for the main text. Frequently, the endnotes are composed as a combination of a citation and historical data.

Similarly to the footnotes, the endnotes are indicated in the text by superscript endnote markers. The endnotes should be numbered consecutively using these superscript markers. Whenever footnotes and endnotes appear simultaneously in the same paper, they must use different sets of markers.

In summary, the use of explanatory notes, headnotes, footnotes and endnotes should be kept to a minimum and avoided in general. The experienced authors have improved writing styles and are able to construct their papers in such a way that every piece of information fits inline. However, the complexity of the problems being studied at present and the multiple aspects of each study follow to the common inclusion of explanatory texts with a tendency to switch from sequential writing styles to more sophisticated paper management which evolves dynamically with the time.