# How to Use Tables and Figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When to Use a Table:</th>
<th>When to Use a Figure:</th>
<th>When to Use Text:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To show many and precise numerical values and other specific data.</td>
<td>To show trends, patterns, and relationships across data sets. Use graphs and data plots.</td>
<td>When you don’t have extensive or complicated data to present.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To compare and contrast data values or characteristics among related items.</td>
<td>To summarize research results. Use graphs, data plots, maps, and pie charts.</td>
<td>When you have fewer than 2 columns or rows.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To show the presence or absence of specific characteristics.</td>
<td>To present a visual explanation of a sequence of events, procedures. Use schematic diagrams, images, photographs, and maps.</td>
<td>When the data is peripheral to the study or irrelevant to your findings.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## General Checklist:
- Are all figures/tables self-explanatory and self-contained so they can be understood without the paper?
- Are all figures/tables mentioned in the text?
- Are all figures/tables numbered in the order in which they are mentioned?
- Are you consistent between values or details in a table and those in the text?
- Are your titles clear and informative to concisely describe the purpose or contents of the table/figure?
- Is patient confidentiality protected (refer to journal guidelines)?
- Did you obtain permission for adapted or reprinted tables and/or figures, and cite these figures/tables appropriately (e.g., “Adapted from…”, “Reprinted from…”)?
- Is the formatting of your “List of Tables and/or Figures” page consistent with the manuscript?
- Did you adhere to journal guidelines: Total number of tables and figures? Style of numbering and titles? Image resolution and file format?

## Tables Checklist:
- Did you combine repetitive tables if they talk about the similar thing?
- Did you divide large amounts of data into clear and appropriate categories?
- If your data is extensive, can you make the tables a part of the appendix or supplemental material?
- Does every table column, including the stub column, have a heading?
- Does your table have sufficient spacing between columns and rows?

## Figures Checklist:
- Have all images been prepared at a resolution sufficient to produce a high-quality image sharp image?
- Is your image still clear after the figure has been reduced to the width of a journal column or page?
- Are your axis labels, figure labels, etc., clearly and appropriately labelled?
- Are all labels legible against the figure background?
- Did you give specifics including scale bars and units?
- Did you use legends to explain the key message?