Copy-editor’s checklist



For copy-editing a protocol/review/update

**Version and date:** V2, 18 July 2013 (corrected section 2.8.11)  
**Prepared by:** Cochrane Editorial Unit, Copy Edit Support and Cochrane Editorial Resources Committee

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Title** |  |
| **Cochrane Review Group** |  |
| **Notes from the editorial team** | *Copy and paste from the pre-copy-edit checklist* |
| **Date** |  |
| **Checked by (role)** |  |
| **Notes for the editorial team** |  |

# General checks (across all sections)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **No.** | **Y or n/a** | **Check** |
|  |  | Tense: (1) protocols are in the future tense; and (2) reviews are in the past tense. ([Tense: Cochrane Review](http://www.cochrane.org/sites/default/files/uploads/Cochrane-Style-Guide_4th-edition_000.pdf#page=53)) |
|  |  | Spelling: (1) Review Manager (RevMan) spell check completed; and (2) text checked for spelling errors (including common errors such as trail and trial, consistent use of -ize or -ise) |
|  |  | Grammar: check completed |
|  |  | Punctuation: guidance followed ([Punctuation](http://www.cochrane.org/sites/default/files/uploads/Cochrane-Style-Guide_4th-edition_000.pdf#page=28)) |
|  |  | British and American English: used throughout ([English language: regional differences](http://www.cochrane.org/sites/default/files/uploads/Cochrane-Style-Guide_4th-edition_000.pdf#page=18)) |
|  |  | Technical and medical terms: inform editorial team of those not explained for non-expert readers |
|  |  | Facts, figures, and statements: inform editorial team of those not supported with references |
|  |  | Intervention names, comparison names, and outcome measures: expressed consistently throughout |
|  |  | Each forest plot in ‘Data and analyses’, and all ‘Figures’, ‘Tables’, and ‘Appendices’: referenced with a hyperlink in the main text of the review |
|  |  | Order of the forest plots in ‘Data and analyses’, ‘Figures’, ‘Tables’, and ‘Appendices’: in the main text, these need to be ordered in the sequence they appear (ie Table 1 should be the first table, followed by Table 2) |
|  |  | Abbreviations and acronyms: have been used correctly ([Abbreviations and acronyms](http://www.cochrane.org/sites/default/files/uploads/Cochrane-Style-Guide_4th-edition_000.pdf#page=10)) |
|  |  | Active and passive voice: (1) active voice is used in most instances (without adversely affecting readability); and (2) active and passive voice not mixed in a single sentence ([Active and passive voice](http://www.cochrane.org/sites/default/files/uploads/Cochrane-Style-Guide_4th-edition_000.pdf#page=12)) |
|  |  | ‘And/or’: searched for this and reworded where possible ([And/or](http://www.cochrane.org/sites/default/files/uploads/Cochrane-Style-Guide_4th-edition_000.pdf#page=12)) |
|  |  | Bold/italic/underline/superscript and subscript: (1) used according to the Cochrane Style Guide; and (2) checked that these have not been applied instead of the official RevMan heading styles ([Character formatting](http://www.cochrane.org/sites/default/files/uploads/Cochrane-Style-Guide_4th-edition_000.pdf#page=13)) |
|  |  | Common terms (included in the CSG): searched for and formatting corrected if needed ([Common terms](http://www.cochrane.org/sites/default/files/uploads/Cochrane-Style-Guide_4th-edition_000.pdf#page=15)) |
|  |  | Pharmaceutical drug names: used the recommended International Nonproprietary Name (rINN), also known as the generic name, instead of the brand name |
|  |  | Currency: formatted correctly ([Currency](http://www.cochrane.org/sites/default/files/uploads/Cochrane-Style-Guide_4th-edition_000.pdf#page=17)) |
|  |  | Dates: formatted correctly ([Dates](http://www.cochrane.org/sites/default/files/uploads/Cochrane-Style-Guide_4th-edition_000.pdf#page=17)) |
|  |  | Eg/etc/ie: formatted consistently ([eg](http://www.cochrane.org/sites/default/files/uploads/Cochrane-Style-Guide_4th-edition_000.pdf#page=17)/[etc](http://www.cochrane.org/sites/default/files/uploads/Cochrane-Style-Guide_4th-edition_000.pdf#page=18)/[ie](http://www.cochrane.org/sites/default/files/uploads/Cochrane-Style-Guide_4th-edition_000.pdf#page=20)) |
|  |  | Headings: (1) relevant RevMan optional headings activated and used where appropriate (ie do not insert a similar free-text heading); (2) unused headings deactivated; and (3) RevMan heading styles selected for author-defined headings ([Headings](http://www.cochrane.org/sites/default/files/uploads/Cochrane-Style-Guide_4th-edition_000.pdf#page=19)) |
|  |  | Lists (within paragraphs, and bulleted and ordered lists): formatted correctly ([Lists](http://www.cochrane.org/sites/default/files/uploads/Cochrane-Style-Guide_4th-edition_000.pdf#page=20)) |
|  |  | Numbers: (1) less than 10 have been spelled out (although there are exceptions); (2) between 1000 and 9999 contain no punctuation; (3) numbers with five or more digits include commas ([Numbers](http://www.cochrane.org/sites/default/files/uploads/Cochrane-Style-Guide_4th-edition_000.pdf#page=24)) |
|  |  | Units: International System of Units/Le Système International d’Unités (SI) used for units ([Units and systems of measure](http://www.cochrane.org/sites/default/files/uploads/Cochrane-Style-Guide_4th-edition_000.pdf#page=54)) |
|  |  | Prefixes: guidance followed ([Prefixes](http://www.cochrane.org/sites/default/files/uploads/Cochrane-Style-Guide_4th-edition_000.pdf#page=26)) |
|  |  | Symbols and special characters: (1) used where appropriate; (2) +, -, <, >, and = have one space either side; and (3) / has no space either side ([Symbols and special characters](http://www.cochrane.org/sites/default/files/uploads/Cochrane-Style-Guide_4th-edition_000.pdf#page=50)) |
|  |  | Statistical and mathematical presentation: numerical results conform to CSG ([Statistical and mathematical presentation](http://www.cochrane.org/sites/default/files/uploads/Cochrane-Style-Guide_4th-edition_000.pdf#page=48)) |
|  |  | Group nouns (eg ‘the government has...’ or ‘the government have…’): used single or plural verbs consistently ([Verbs: single or plural](http://www.cochrane.org/sites/default/files/uploads/Cochrane-Style-Guide_4th-edition_000.pdf#page=55)) |
|  |  | Internal consistency: ensure the following sections are consistent with each other   |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | Section to cross-check | Abstract | PLS | SoF tables | Main text | | Background | X | X |  | X | | Objectivesa | X | X |  | X | | Search methods | X | X |  | X | | Selection criteria | X | X |  | X | | Data collection and analysis | X | X |  | X | | Results | X | X | X | X | | Authors’ conclusions | X | X |  | X | | Data and analysesb | X | X | X | X | | Tables with results | X | X |  | X |   PLS: plain language summary; SOF: summary of findings. aUse exactly the same wording in abstract and main text. bResults reported in the ‘Data and analyses’ are repeated accurately in other sections. |
|  | — | Notes for editorial team: |

# Section-specific checks

## Title

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **No.** | **Y or n/a** | **Check** |
|  |  | Conforms to CSG. ([Titles for Cochrane Reviews](http://www.cochrane.org/sites/default/files/uploads/Cochrane-Style-Guide_4th-edition_000.pdf#page=53)) |
|  | — | Notes for editorial team: |

## Review information

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **No.** | **Y or n/a** | **Check** |
|  |  | Author contact details: alert editorial team if these do not conform to Cochrane Style. ([Author contact details: Cochrane Review](http://www.cochrane.org/sites/default/files/uploads/Cochrane-Style-Guide_4th-edition_000.pdf#page=12)) |
|  |  | What’s new (if relevant) |
|  |  | History |
|  | — | Notes for editorial team: |

## Abstract and plain language summary

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **No.** | **Y or n/a** | **Check** |
|  |  | Abstract |
|  |  | Abstract – objectives: exact wording as the objectives in the ‘main text’ |
|  |  | Plain language summary, including title: also title in sentence case |
|  | — | Notes for editorial team: |

## Background and objectives

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **No.** | **Y or n/a** | **Check** |
|  |  | Background |
|  |  | Objectives |
|  | — | Notes for editorial team: |

## Methods

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **No.** | **Y or n/a** | **Check** |
|  |  | Criteria for considering studies for this review: general copy-edit |
|  |  | Search methods for identification of studies: general copy-edit |
|  |  | Search methods for identification of studies – databases: use all upper-case letters for MEDLINE, EMBASE, CENTRAL, OLDMEDLINE, and CINAHL (not CINHAL) |
|  |  | Search methods for identification of studies – CRG register: listed as Cochrane [insert name] Group Specialized Register, Cochrane [insert name] Group Specialised Register, or Cochrane [insert name] Group Trials Register |
|  |  | Search methods for identification of studies – specific order of databases and registers: Cochrane [insert name] Group Specialized Register (or Specialised Register or Trials Register), CENTRAL, MEDLINE, EMBASE, and any other databases |
|  |  | Search methods for identification of studies – date ranges: listed for each database; for example, CENTRAL (year, issue number), and for most other databases, such as MEDLINE, it should be in the form ‘MEDLINE (month year to month year)’ |
|  |  | Search methods for identification of studies – terms: “text word” (not “textword”) and MeSH (not “MESH”) |
|  |  | Data collection and analysis: general copy-edit |
|  | — | Notes for editorial team: |

## Results, Discussion, and Authors’ conclusions

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **No.** | **Y or n/a** | **Check** |
|  |  | Description of studies: general copy-edit |
|  |  | Risk of bias in included studies: general copy-edit |
|  |  | Effects of interventions: general copy-edit |
|  |  | Effects of interventions: numerical results conform to CSG ([Statistical and mathematical presentation](http://www.cochrane.org/sites/default/files/uploads/Cochrane-Style-Guide_4th-edition_000.pdf#page=48)) |
|  |  | Effects of interventions: results given for each comparison, outcome, subgroup, and sensitivity analysis, as described in ‘Methods’; and (2) outcomes are reported in the same order listed in the ‘Types of outcome measures’ |
|  |  | Effects of interventions: alert editorial team if results are not ordered logically, such as by comparison and then outcome; and (3) outcomes are reported in the same order listed in the ‘Types of outcome measures’ |
|  |  | Effects of interventions: alert editorial team if you notice any inconsistencies with methods described in ‘Data collection and analysis’ |
|  |  | Discussion: general copy-edit |
|  |  | Authors’ conclusions: general copy-edit |
|  | — | Notes for editorial team: |

## Acknowledgements, Contributions of authors, Declarations of interest, Differences between protocol and review, and Published notes

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **No.** | **Y or n/a** | **Check** |
|  |  | Acknowledgements: general copy-edit |
|  |  | Contributions of authors: general copy-edit |
|  |  | Contributions of authors: provided for each author listed on the by-line |
|  |  | Declarations of interest: general copy-edit |
|  |  | Declarations of interest: provided for each author listed on the by-line |
|  |  | Differences between protocol and review: (1) general copy-edit; and (2) if no differences, states this. |
|  |  | Published notes: general copy-edit |
|  | — | Notes for editorial team: |

## Tables

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **No.** | **Y or n/a** | **Check** |
|  |  | Across all tables - footnotes: use superscript letters and refer to CSG for details |
|  |  | Across all tables – blank cells: ensure no blank cells by alerting the editorial team or, if appropriate, inserting an em-dash or ellipsis if the column heading does not apply to the cell, or using NA (not applicable) or ND (no data available) if a distinction is needed (and remember to explain these two abbreviations in the footnotes) |
|  |  | Across all table – terminology: standardize within a table (eg dose/dosage) |
|  |  | Characteristics of included studies: general copy-edit |
|  |  | Characteristics of excluded studies: general copy-edit |
|  |  | Characteristics of studies awaiting classification: general copy-edit |
|  |  | Characteristics of ongoing studies: general copy-edit |
|  |  | Additional tables: general copy-edit |
|  |  | Additional tables – table titles: sentence case and without a full stop at the end |
|  |  | Additional tables – column headings: align left and bottom (unless nested heading – see CSG) |
|  |  | Additional tables – row headings: align left and top |
|  |  | Additional tables – table body: align left and top |
|  |  | Summary of findings: general copy-edit |
|  | — | Notes for editorial team: |

## Studies and references

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **No.** | **Y or n/a** | **Check** |
|  | — | Note: *If many errors need correcting in the references, then the copy-editor may make general recommendations for changes.* |
|  |  | References in the text: (1) citations to references have been formatted correctly; (2) each reference in the reference list is linked to the main text; (3) no references included in text that are not in the reference list. ([References: Citing references in the text of Cochrane Reviews](http://www.cochrane.org/sites/default/files/uploads/Cochrane-Style-Guide_4th-edition_000.pdf#page=47)) |
|  |  | Across all references: conform to CSG (query about whether need to cross-check against PubMed) |
|  |  | References to studies – included studies: general copy-edit |
|  |  | References to studies – excluded studies: general copy-edit |
|  |  | References to studies – studies awaiting classification: general copy-edit |
|  |  | References to studies – ongoing studies: general copy-edit |
|  |  | Other references – additional references: general copy-edit |
|  |  | Other references – other published versions of this review: general copy-edit |
|  | — | Notes for editorial team: |

## Data and analyses

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **No.** | **Y or n/a** | **Check** |
|  |  | Order of analyses: consistent approach used between this section and the ‘Effects of intervention’ (eg Analysis 1 is the first analysis shown in the main text) |
|  |  | Forest plots – group labels: alert editorial team if these have not been changed from ‘Experimental’ and ‘Control’ to the actual intervention group names |
|  |  | Forest plots – graph labels: alert editorial team if these have not been changed from ‘Favours experimental’ and ‘Favours control’ to the actual intervention group names |
|  |  | Forest plots – scales: alert editorial team if scale is not set so the point estimates and confidence intervals can be seen clearly in each forest plot and, where possible, so that the plots are consistent between outcomes on similar scales |
|  |  | Forest plots – totals if one study included: remind editorial team to remove totals in these plots |
|  |  | Forest plots – no studies included (empty): remind editorial team to delete these before publication |
|  | — | Notes for editorial team: |

## Figures

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **No.** | **Y or n/a** | **Check** |
|  |  | Alert editorial team if the figures are not legible and clear with an appropriate and accurate title ([Figures: Cochrane Review](http://www.cochrane.org/sites/default/files/uploads/Cochrane-Style-Guide_4th-edition_000.pdf#page=18)) |
|  |  | Title: general copy-edit |
|  | — | Notes for editorial team: |

## Sources of support, feedback, and appendices

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **No.** | **Y or n/a** | **Check** |
|  |  | Internal sources: general copy-edit |
|  |  | External sources: general copy-edit |
|  |  | Feedback: general copy-edit |
|  |  | Appendices: general copy-edit |
|  |  | Appendices – search methods: conform to CSG ([Search methods](http://www.cochrane.org/sites/default/files/uploads/Cochrane-Style-Guide_4th-edition_000.pdf#page=48)) |
|  | — | Notes for editorial team: |