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Tips for Formatting Tables

This document provides tips and tricks for creating and formatting data tables, as well as examples of good tables we have created for previous projects. In general, the journal's in-house publishers will edit and format these tables to fit their style in the final PDF, but clear, concise, and easy-to-read tables aid in overall readability and make reviewers happy.

Note: These instructions and examples are secondary to any instructions provided by your target journal's instructions for authors.

Table Tips:

- Do not use grid lines to separate columns. We typically only use grid lines at the very top of the table to separate the row headers from the data, and at the very bottom to signify the end of the table.
- Most journals do not allow shading or colors within data tables.
- Provide units for any data presented with means or medians.
- Provide the full spelling of any abbreviations used in the table in a footnote, in alphabetical order.
- Clarify how the data is presented either in the table footnote or in the row or column header.
- Make sure the numerator, denominator, and percentage for all data is presented

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