



Verb Tenses in Scientific Manuscripts

1 Title

- ★ Titles are often not complete sentences, i.e., no verb is used.

Fully device independent quantum key distribution¹

- ★ If you do want to use a complete sentence, use the present tense.

*What your Facebook profile picture **reveals** about your personality²*



Introduction 2



- ★ Present tense – use when stating general truths.

*Many programmers **rely** on 3-way merge tools to integrate changes from different branches³.*

- ★ Present perfect – use when describing actions that happened in the past but are still relevant today.

*Classification analyses of various sorts **have been used** frequently for structuring document collections⁴.*

- ★ Past tense – use when discussing previous studies or past events.

*The ACM US Public Policy Council (USACM) **was established** in the early 1990s⁵.*

3 Methods

- ★ The past tense is mostly used in the methods section.

*The motion **was generated** by rotating around a central vertical axis at the center of the point cloud using Equation (1)⁶.*

- ★ Occasionally, the past perfect tense and past continuous tense are required.

- ★ Past perfect tense – use when describing an action that occurred before another action.

*Recruitment efforts were stopped once data saturation **had been reached**⁷.*

- ★ Past continuous tense – use when describing an ongoing action that occurred in the past.

*The program team came together during major milestones to verify that the project **was progressing** on-schedule⁸.*



Results 4



- ★ The past tense is mostly used in the results section of hypothesis-based studies.

*We **found** little evidence for the “filter bubble” hypothesis⁹.*

- ★ The present tense is often used when describing new methodologies.

*With Scatter/Gather, rather than being forced to provide terms, the user **is presented** with a set of clusters, an outline of the corpus¹⁰.*

5 Discussion

- ★ As with introductions, a mixture of tenses is used in the discussion sections of scientific manuscripts, including the past tense, the present tense and the future tense.

- ★ Future tense – use when discussing the implications of the study.

*Understanding these privacy norms **will allow** manufacturers to design devices that consumers are comfortable incorporating into their homes¹¹.*



Figure/table legends 6



- ★ Present tense – use when referencing the figures/tables in the text

*Examples **are shown** in Table 1 and Fig. 2.*

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