

PHYSICAL REVIEW LETTERS
INFORMATION FOR CONTRIBUTORS

(Revised January 2003)

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Papers should be written in scientific **English**, in a style consistent with that of the journal. The total length of a Letter should not exceed 4 journal pages; a Comment, 1 page. [Guidelines for estimating the length of manuscripts appear at the end of some issues of the journal,

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Normally, manuscripts and figures are *not returned* to authors. Authors should indicate (preferably on initial submittal) if they want the manuscript and/or figures returned when correspondence is sent during the editorial process, and/or after a final decision has been made.

When a manuscript is **resubmitted**, please include a summary of changes made and a brief response to all recommendations and criticisms. The interactive resubmission forms available on our Web server may be used for electronic-mail, Web-upload, and hard-copy transmission of modified manuscripts and figures. These forms should also be used when a manuscript previously submitted to one APS journal is resubmitted to another. When **resubmitting electronically**, send the complete file for the text if there have been any changes. Please refer to the online documentation for more detailed instructions. If the resubmission is by conventional mail, send four copies of the revised manuscript (with figures) and include the resubmission form or equivalent information. For any resubmission, please state whether or not the figures have been modified, and supply new PostScript-formatted figures or scanner-reproducible figures if there have been such changes. It is only necessary to resend the “original” figures if the previous versions are no longer valid. Please update any other information (e.g., address and communication information) that has changed or will change since initial submission.

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Material for publication (manuscripts, replacement pages, figures) that is sent by fax is generally unusable for review or production purposes. If you have minimal changes to your paper, we might be able to accommodate them by copying them to the good copy in the editorial office. If the changes are involved or numerous, this will not be possible. You can send pages for substitution but be sure to mark the changes so

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The following are general guidelines for preparation of a conventional manuscript or a compuscript. In addition, memos regarding production requirements appear at the end of some issues of the journal. For **general format and style** consult recent issues of this journal and the *Physical Review Style and Notation Guide* at <http://publish.aps.org/STYLE/>. Additional style guidelines can be found in the Fourth Edition of the *AIP Style Manual*, available at <http://www.aip.org/pubservs/style.html>.

A **manuscript**, comprising all material which is to be set in type, must be typewritten (except possibly for mathematical expressions and Greek letters; see below), double spaced (3 lines per inch, at least 6 mm of white space between lines) in type size such that there are ≤ 90 characters/6 in., on one side only of good quality, white, approximately 8.5×11-in. (or A4) paper, with margins of at least 1 in. along four edges. A clear, sharp, nonerasable, black-on-white reproduction on hard-surfaced paper is acceptable as the “original.” Number all pages (including the title page). Include copies of any figures at the end of the manuscript.

Mathematical expressions should be typed, or neatly written in ink. The prime requisite is that the copy shall be clear to the production keyboarder, who is neither a physicist nor a mathematician. Unusual or ambiguous symbols (see table on page 21 of the *Style Manual*) should be identified by marginal notes at first appearance and subsequently when confusion might arise; for nonalphabetic symbols, give the number found on pages 44 and 45 of the *Style Manual*. Mark superscripts with an inverted caret below, and subscripts with a caret above, if necessary. Three-vectors and dyadics are set in boldface type (mark with a black-pencil, wiggly underline).

Editorial marking by authors, except for the resolution of ambiguities as discussed above, is rarely of sufficient value to warrant the effort.

The author must carefully **proofread** the paper to eliminate grammatical errors, misspellings, and omission of symbols. The text should be directed at a **general readership**, not specialists. Avoid acronyms and jargon, even if they seem of common usage. If unavoidable, define them in the text. **Notation** should be unambiguous, concise, and consistent with standard usage. Introduce new terminology or notation only when clearly

needed. Indent all paragraphs. Use the solidus (slash) only to denote division of mathematical quantities, to denote (optionally) an interface between materials [e.g., Ag/Cu(001)], and in “and/or.” Its meaning when used between words is usually imprecise; use the proper conjunction or punctuation.

The **length** of the paper is crucial. Avoid excess white space in figures; unneeded numbering of displayed equations may add length; references which are incomplete may lead to an underestimate of the length; and note that right-adjusted text or text with very nonuniform line length is subject to greater error in its estimated length. Also note that equations in text (undisplayed) must be simple; some equations which are presented in text may require display for printing and thus add to the length.

Ideally, figures are planned for reduction to final journal size on the basis of their content and detail. The size of lettering should be chosen with this in mind. If the lettering is drafted too small, full reduction will not be possible; the length will have been underestimated. At final reduction, the size of the smallest capital letters and numerals is to be at least 2 mm.

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The **title** should be concise, but informative enough to instruct the nonexpert reader and to facilitate information retrieval. Do not introduce new terminology in titles. There must be an **abstract** (double spaced) of no more than 600 characters, including spaces, which should be self-contained (no footnotes) for reprinting in abstracting journals. Comments and Replies should not include an abstract.

The **names of authors** may be listed in any order in the byline between the title and abstract. If the number of authors exceeds 40, the authors will be listed in the Table of Contents as, e.g., A. Jones *et al.* The author who submits the paper should ensure that all persons listed as authors approve the inclusion of their names, and check that the form of each name is the one normally used by that author.

Byline addresses are set directly under the author names. They are intended to indicate the institution where the research was done. These addresses usually consist of department or division, institution, city, state or country. Street addresses, post office boxes, etc., may be included; zip and postal codes are proper.

A limited number of byline formats are allowed: Authors may be grouped together by institution(s), with the name and location of their institution(s) following each group. It is permissible to have two groups from a single institution (different departments). A more concise presentation is a single list of authors followed by the list of institutions. A variant of this form, to show specific affiliations, is to use a key to link each author to his or her institution(s) unambiguously. The key consists of a superscript numeral, and is placed, in order, at the beginning of each institution listing; each author's name then carries the appropriate key(s). It is also permitted to give a group (collaboration) name in addition to the single full list of authors' names. The group name is put in parentheses, between the end of the list of authors and the beginning of the list of institutions. If the number of authors exceeds 40 the group name will appear in the Table of Contents.

Footnotes to an author's name or address should be limited to those useful for location of, or communication with, an author. Use the symbols (always as superscripts) *, †, ‡, §, ||, ¶, **, ††, ‡‡, §§, |||, ¶¶, (in the order listed) if there are 12 or fewer footnotes. Use lower-case alphabetical a, b, c, etc., if there are 13 or more footnotes. Footnotes giving electronic addresses (e.g., email, fax, or Web) of a corresponding author are encouraged. Footnotes which describe an author's position or title are not acceptable. Information concerning financial support (funding agencies, programs) or affiliations of institutions themselves with larger organizations should be listed in an acknowledgments paragraph.

Punctuate **mathematical expressions** and displayed equations as part of the sentence. In general, use *single-letter* symbols for mathematical quantities in equations and expressions, possibly with subscript or superscript indices or labels and with argument(s) in parentheses. There are a few well established multiletter exceptions, such as the trigonometric functions. Avoid complicated superscripts and subscripts. Avoid frequent repetition of a complicated mathematical expression; represent it by some convenient symbol. Use the form $\exp(\cdot)$ in cases of long or complicated arguments. Except for the square root of a simple quantity without superscripts, use fractional exponents instead of the radical sign. Avoid the use of bars over extended expressions. Avoid the use of diacritical marks (tildes, etc.) over groups of symbols, as well as the use of double oversymbols (e.g., a caret over a tilde). Use the solidus (/) or negative exponents for fractions in running text, and in displayed equations when this does not reduce clarity. When the extent of a denominator is ambiguous, use appropriate bracketing to ensure clarity. Give the base of logarithms (e.g., \ln , \log_{10} , \log_2). "Dangling" decimal points should be preceded or followed by zeros or deleted, as appropriate.

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A final **acknowledgments** paragraph may be used to recognize named individuals who contributed scientifically to the specific research of the paper, to cite the funding agencies that provided financial support for the work, and to note the affiliation of institutions in the byline with a larger system. The statement of thanks for help should be simple and may not be a dedication or memorial. References to memberships, positions, titles, and awards are inappropriate, as are dates associated with funding. It is unnecessary to give the exact form, e.g., fellowship, scholarship, program name, in which funding was granted.

Footnotes, both references *and remarks*, must be numbered consecutively in order of citation, and be given in a double-spaced list at the end of the main text. The journal does not use the bottom-of-page footnotes. Footnotes to the byline (superscript *, †, ‡, etc., or a, b, c, etc.) will lead the list. (Order a reference cited in a figure or table caption as if cited when the figure or table is *first* mentioned in the text.) Cite footnotes

in text, captions, or other footnotes in the form “Smith, Doe, and Jones [2],” “recent experiments [1,4-6],” or “see Ref. [8].” Almost all references should cite each author in the form “F. Jones.” Consider the form “F. Jones *et al.*” (no comma before *et*) only when there are four or more authors. References to papers published in peer-reviewed journals are considered primary references. References to e-print archives should not be used in place of primary references. The reference should cite: journal name, volume number, page, and year (in the case of translation journals, give information for original *and* translation); conference name (or topic), place, year, editor(s), publisher, and year of publication; book title, editor(s), publisher, and year of publication; report issuing institution in full and identification number of the report (give title if number not available). Some examples of proper form follow (also consult recent issues of the journal).

J. M. Smith, R. Brown, and C. Green, *Phys. Rev. B* **26**, 1 (1982); *Nucl. Phys.* **A195**, 1 (1982).

J. M. Smith, *Phys. Rev. D* (to be published); R. Brown, *Phys. Rev. B* **26**, 706(E) (1982).

J. M. Smith, *Molecular Dynamics* (Academic, New York, 1980), Vol. 20, p. 20.

R. Brown, in *Charge Density Waves in Solids*, edited by C. Green, *Modern Problems in Condensed Matter Sciences* Vol. 25 (North-Holland, Amsterdam, 1989).

C. Green, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Report No. MAD/PH/650, 1991.

J. M. Smith *et al.*, in *Proceedings of the Topical Meeting on CP Violation*, Calcutta, June 1990 (unpublished).

It is important to confirm the accuracy of bibliographic information in references. This has become more important now that the journal is online. Hyperlinks will be programmed to enable readers to “click” on references and jump directly to the material cited. If your reference citations are incorrect or incomplete (e.g., missing author name, or an incorrect volume number or page), the associated hyperlinks may fail, and the usefulness of your paper in the online environment may be diminished. Since at the present time such links work only from the reference section, work cited anywhere in the paper, including in figure and table captions and in “Note(s) added,” should be included in the reference section.

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