

Lab Report Format

Title: Use the title from the lab form.

Purpose:

The purpose should be one or two sentences that identify the reason for doing the experiment. This is usually contained in the laboratory handout.

Data:

This section should include data (any numbers that are read from an instrument) that were collected during the experiment. Data tables may be cut and pasted from the lab sheet or reproduced. Make sure that your data tables always include the appropriate units and significant figures.

Observations:

Observations (changes in color, odor, texture, etc.) should also be included in this section. Record only what you see. There is no analysis in this section.

Calculations:

Include all calculations in this section even if they seem trivial. Make sure to label and organize your calculations so they can be easily followed. If there is an equation associated with your calculations, show the equation before substituting the data and performing the calculation. If there are multiple calculations using the same equation, the first time you must show the equation and the calculation, but for the rest you may list only the answers. All calculations must include the correct units. A number without a unit is meaningless.

Conclusion:

This is the most important section of the lab report. The conclusion answers the purpose using the data, observations and resulting calculations as supporting evidence. Any conclusions that are drawn must have supporting evidence. A portion of the conclusion should include a discussion of possible sources of experimental error and how these errors influenced the results. To simply state that it was “human error” is not an acceptable source of error.

Questions:

Answer any questions included in the lab. The answer to the questions should include a reference to the original question.

Please Note:

- While you are encouraged to discuss your findings with your lab partners, your final lab report must be your own work. Make sure to consult the school’s academic integrity procedure.
- All formal lab reports must be typed.