Writing (Primarily for Publication) in Statistics

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Why Write and Publish in Statistics?

- NOT as part of some pointless "game" of simply putting lines on a CV

How you should write
Where you should send your manuscript
How you should view and behave in the whole publication process
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  - the Editor gives the paper an initial screening (usually mostly to see if the paper is even potentially appropriate for the journal’s target audience/fits with the journal’s purpose)
if the submission passes the Editor’s screen, it is sent to an Associate Editor (someone who has been recruited by the Editor as a journal staff member for good judgment and technical competence) with technical expertise appropriate for the paper. This person gives that paper a more technical look, asking whether it could be correct and seems interesting, again for the target audience.
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What is needed to bring the paper to something that the journal should publish?
the Editor digests the reports and recommendation, does his or her own technical review of "sticky points," and responds to the author.

Note: Traditionally (and most appropriately) NO MONEY CHANGES HANDS ANYWHERE IN THIS PROCESS. This whole story is ideally about professional responsibility, NOT economics.
More "How Does Work Get Published in Statistics?"

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If this algorithm converges, the paper is published.

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Introductory Comments on Good Writing

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Good writing is not sufficient, but it is *absolutely necessary* for a professional statistician (in *any* realm)
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Good writing is not sufficient, but it is absolutely necessary for a professional statistician (in any realm).

This can only be learned by practice/hard work ... to do a bad job of this because you don’t want to invest the effort to learn is both short-sighted and (more importantly) unethical.
Begin by learning to write "workmanlike" papers/reports ... leave "artistic" or "beautiful" writing for later.
CLARITY IS THE GOAL

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- Clear writing can be thought of as having "macro" and "micro" components

Logical and transparent structure provides the macro framework. This involves coherent use of overall abstract/intro/sections/summary structure, and then the same kind of structure nested within sections, within proofs, etc.

Sedransk is absolutely correct about "signposts".

1. There should be no surprises
2. You should NOT count on a reader beginning at the first line and reading through to the end

Precision puts the micro "flesh on the skeleton".

Word choice matters
Grammar and punctuation matter
Correct typography matters
Style matters (a professional is neither pretentious nor "familiar")
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