Format for AOAC 
Official Methods of Analysis

The language of the method should be concise and completely free from ambiguity. Conciseness is desirable, both to ensure clarity and to save space. Whenever there is a conflict between clarity and style, clarity is more important.

Present Tense and Imperative Mode
Check sentences that do not begin with a verb and change them, if feasible, to the imperative mode (e.g. Pipet 10 mL, Str., etc.). Exceptions are: use of adverb modifier (“Accurately weigh...”), prepositional clause (“For refined sugars, use...”), permissive statements (“Ferric hydroxide may be used...”), and statements in the “Principle” section.

Abbreviations
Most abbreviations are the same as those used by Chemical Abstracts. Do not use abbreviations in titles and headings. See the Definitions of Terms and Explanatory Notes.

Repetition and Redundancy
Eliminate repetition and redundancy as far as possible; use only for emphasis. Do not use “distilled” with water, “concentrated” with common acids, “95%” with alcohol, or “ACS” with reagents covered by ACS specifications. These are understood by definition.

Terminology, Formulae and Chemical Names
For names of chemical compounds, use the spelling, hyphenation, and word division given in Chemical Abstracts. Use a national pharmacopoeia for names for drugs. Use ISO nomenclature for pesticides and Codex nomenclature for names of food additives and color additives.

Consistency
Watch for internal contradictions in the text: volumes that do not add up or that exceed the capacity of the container; too abrupt a transition from one operation to another (a line may be omitted); and impractical or impossible numbers (e.g., 100 g NaCl will not dissolve in 100 mL water).

Cross-references
All new AOAC methods should be written as complete and self-contained as practical. Do not refer to other AOAC methods. If part of a procedure in an Official Method is taken from material previously published elsewhere, incorporate those steps in the method rather than referring the analyst to another publication.

Definitions
The section “Definition of Terms and Explanatory Notes,” Official Methods of Analysis of AOAC INTERNATIONAL, is the basic guide to conventions and consistency.

Illustrations and Tables
If symbols are used on the figure, include an explanation in the caption or text. Provide descriptive titles for tables. Explain any obscure headings in a footnote.

Bibliographic References
Check all references for accuracy. Use standard Chemical Abstracts abbreviations for Journal titles. In general avoid references in method. Cite background references in the “Introduction” or “Discussion” section of the collaborative study manuscript -- not in the method. If part of a procedure in an Official Method is taken from material previously published elsewhere, incorporate those steps in the method rather than referring the analyst to another publication.

Safety
All methods must be reviewed for safety and potential hazards. Methods should automatically incorporate cross-references to the safety statement(s), or present questioned conditions to the attention of the Committee on Safety for resolution.

Online Technical Resources

Method Development, Optimization & Validation
- OMA - Appendix F - Guidelines for Standard Method Performance Requirements
- Homogeneity
- Guide for Writing Methods in AOAC Format
- Statistics Protocol Review Form
- OMA - Appendix D: Guidelines for Collaborative Study Procedures to Validate Characteristics of a Method of Analysis
- OMA - Appendix G: Procedures and Guidelines for the Use of AOAC Voluntary Consensus Standards to Evaluate Characteristics of a Method of Analysis
- OMA - Appendix I: AOAC INTERNATIONAL Methods Committee Guidelines for Validation of Biological Threat Agent
- Methods and/or Procedures
- OMA - Appendix J: AOAC INTERNATIONAL Methods Committee Guidelines for Validation of Microbiological Methods for Food and Environmental Surfaces
- OMA - Appendix K: Guidelines for Dietary Supplements and Botanicals
- OMA - Appendix L: AOAC Recommended Guidelines for Stakeholder Panel on Infant Formula and Adult Nutritional (SPIFAN) Single-Laboratory Validation
- OMA - Appendix M - Validation Procedures for Quantitative Food Allergen ELISA Methods: Community Guidance and Best Practices
- Safety Checklist

Method Review
- Examples of Statistical Analysis
- Statistics Manuscript Review Form
- OMA - Appendix A: Standard Solutions and Reference Materials
- OMA - Appendix D: Guidelines for Collaborative Study Procedures to Validate Characteristics of a Method of Analysis
- OMA - Appendix H: Probability of Detection (POD) as a Statistical Model for the Validation of Qualitative Methods

Miscellaneous
- Definition of Terms and Explanatory Notes
- OMA - Appendix B: Laboratory Safety
- OMA - Appendix E: Laboratory Quality Assurance
- OMA - Appendix C: Reference Tables

All resources are accessible at http://www.aoac.org/vmetry/guidelines.htm

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The AOAC style used for preparing methods for publication in the Official Methods of Analysis of AOAC INTERNATIONAL includes the following essentials:

- Standardized format that follows the order of laboratory operations.
- Use of the imperative mode.
- Cross-references to identical reagents, apparatus, and operations.
- Use of standardized definitions, terminology, and style.
- Use of accepted abbreviations and simplifications.
- Use of SI units.
- Methods should be written as complete and self-contained as practical.
- Normality should be referred in terms of Molarity.
- ppm should be changed to mg/kg or mg/L.
- ppb should be changed to ng/g or ng/mL.
- ppt should be changed to pg/g or pg/mL.

## FORMAT OF AOAC® OFFICIAL METHODS of ANALYSIS OF AOAC INTERNATIONAL

**Title:**
- Includes analyte being determined, type of matrix (matrices), and analytical technique used for analysis.

**Applicability:**
- Includes list of matrix(es) along with specific matrix types and range or limits of determination or detection.

**Precautions:**
- Makes an analyst aware of hazardous materials used in analysis.

**Data Collection:**
- Table(s) that presents performance parameters including matrices tested in a collaborative study, levels of analyte(s), % recovery, RSDR, S, sR, HORRAT, number of observations, etc.

**Principle:**
- Explains scientific premise on which the method is operates specifically the mechanism of the analysis.

**Apparatus:**
- Lists the equipment that requires assembly or that has specifications critical to the method performance. Describe equipment in terms of performance characteristics.

**Reagents:**
- List the reagents with amounts and appropriate units needed to conduct the analysis and describe the reagents in terms of performance characteristics.

**Sample and Test Portion Preparation:**
- Describe the preparation of samples and the test portion.

**Determination:**
- Describes the actual analysis.

**Calculations:**
- Section that explains how to calculate final results; presented in a form of equation or description.

**Other sections as needed**

## REFERENCING AOAC® OFFICIAL METHODS℠

When referencing AOAC® Official Methods℠, only the method number should be used as seen in the following example: