

Physical Therapy Research

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Aims and Scope

Physical Therapy Research is an Open Access journal that aims to foster important advances in physical therapy. The journal publishes a comprehensive and dynamic array of peer-reviewed articles and materials that are of interest to our broad global audience of researchers, practitioners, continuing-education students, and those interested in the field. The article types include Original Articles, Case Studies, Brief Reports, Reviews, and more.

An official journal of the Japanese Society of Physical Therapy, *Physical Therapy Research* is published three times a year. The journal is free to access for all readers and free to publish for most authors.

Manuscript Types

The journal welcomes a range of manuscript types, all of which are subject to peer review.

Original Articles

Novel and original articles that clearly present scientific conclusions. Study protocols are included here.

Case Studies

Articles that describe scientific studies and/or discussions regarding clinical problems and case treatment results.

Case Reports

Articles that describe new findings, adverse effects, unusual complications, and new hypotheses.

Brief Reports

Short study articles that make concise statements in terms of quick announcements or brief study reports.

Others

Articles and reports deemed appropriate for publication by the Editorial Board, such as Systematic Reviews, Clinical Notes, Professional Reports, and Perspectives.

Clinical notes are objective presentations and discussions of treatments and transitions in cases. *Professional reports* present specific and objective information regarding new schemes, interventions, results, and so on from physical therapy studies, education, or clinical practice, with the content of such reports having been deemed beneficial.

Word allowances

Original Articles, Case Studies, Systematic Reviews	10 typeset pages or 5,250 words
Brief Reports	6 typeset pages or 3,250 words
All other articles	8 typeset pages or 4,250 words

Each word limit includes the abstract, main text, figures and references. A figure size of 1/3 of a printed page corresponds to approximately 200 words.

Journal & Ethics Policies

Physical Therapy Research upholds the highest standards in scholarly publishing. Before submitting a manuscript to the journal, authors must ensure that they have read and complied with the journal's policies. The journal reserves the right to reject without review, or retract, any manuscript that the Editor-in-Chief believes may not comply with these policies.

The responsibilities of the journal's authors, editors, reviewers and publisher regarding research and publication ethics are described in full below.

Submission to the journal implies that the manuscript has not been previously published (in part or in whole, in any language), is not in press, and is not under consideration for publication elsewhere.

Authors must inform the editors if any related manuscripts are under consideration, in press or published elsewhere. The availability of a manuscript on a publicly accessible preprint server does not constitute prior publication (see 'Preprints').

If authors choose to submit their manuscript elsewhere before a final decision has been made on its suitability for publication in the journal, they should first withdraw it from the journal.

Submission

The journal welcomes manuscript submissions from members and non-members of the Japanese Society of Physical Therapy based anywhere in the world.

Submission of a manuscript to the journal implies that all authors: have approved it, warrant it is factual, have agreed to its submission, and have the right to publish it.

Originality

Submission to the journal implies that the manuscript is original work. The journal uses Crossref's Similarity Check plagiarism software to screen manuscripts for unoriginal content. By submitting a manuscript to the journal, authors agree to this screening.

Any manuscript with an unacceptable level of unoriginal material may be rejected or retracted at the Editor-in-Chief's discretion.

Preprints

To support the wide dissemination of research, the journal encourages authors to post their research manuscripts on community-recognized preprint servers, either before or alongside submission to the journal. This policy applies only to the original version of a manuscript that describes primary research. Any version of a manuscript that has been revised in response to reviewers' comments, accepted for publication or published in the journal should not be posted on a preprint server. Instead, forward links to the published manuscript may be posted on the preprint server.

Authors should retain copyright in their work when posting to a preprint server.

Scooping

When assessing the novelty of a manuscript submitted to the journal, the editors will not be influenced by other manuscripts that are posted on community-recognized preprint servers after the date of submission to the journal (or after the date of posting on a preprint server, if the manuscript is submitted to the journal within 4 months).

Authorship

List as few author names as possible in the order of magnitude of their contribution to the study/writing.

Submission to the journal implies that all authors have seen and approved the author list. Changes to the author list after manuscript submission – such as the insertion or removal of author names, or a rearrangement of author order – must be approved by all authors and the editor.

Authors are encouraged to consider the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) Recommendations on '[Defining the Role of Authors and Contributors](#)'.

The ICMJE recommends that authorship is based on four criteria: making a substantial contribution to the conception or design of the work, or the acquisition, analysis or interpretation of data for the work; drafting the manuscript or revising it critically for important intellectual content; approving the final version of the manuscript for publication; and agreeing to be held accountable for all aspects of the work.

Any contributor who has met all four criteria should be an author on the manuscript. Contributors who do not meet all four criteria should not be authors of the manuscript but may be included in the Acknowledgments section instead.

Data falsification, data fabrication and image integrity

Authors must not falsify or fabricate data. Authors may digitally manipulate or process images, but only if the adjustments are kept to a minimum, are applied to the entire image, meet community standards, and are clearly described in the manuscript. All images in a manuscript must accurately reflect the original data on which they are based. Authors must not move, remove, add or enhance individual parts of an image. The editors reserve the right to request original, unprocessed images from the authors. Failure to provide requested images may result in a manuscript being rejected or retracted.

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Availability of data and materials

Authors must disclose the source of publicly available data and materials, such as public repositories or commercial manufacturers, by including accession numbers or company details in their manuscript, as appropriate.

Authors may make their own data and materials available in Supplementary Material, or by linking from their manuscript to relevant community-recognized public databases or digital repositories. All data sets must be made available in full to the editors and reviewers during the peer review process, and must be made publicly available by the date of publication. Authors commit to preserving their data sets for at least three years from the date of publication in the journal.

The journal encourages authors to grant reasonable requests from colleagues to share any data, materials and experimental protocols described in their manuscript.

Research ethics

Authors of manuscripts describing experiments involving humans or materials derived from humans must demonstrate that the work was carried out in accordance with the principles embodied in the [Declaration of Helsinki](#), its revisions, and any guidelines approved by the authors' institutions. Where relevant, the authors must include a statement in their manuscript that describes the procedures for obtaining informed consent from participants regarding participation in the research and publication of the research.

Authors of manuscripts describing experiments involving animals or materials derived from animals must demonstrate that the work was carried out in accordance with the guidelines approved by the authors' institution(s).

For either or both cases, as relevant, the name of the ethics committee and the acknowledgment number (or date of acknowledgment) must be provided. If approval has not been provided by an ethics committee, please state this fact.

Clinical trial registration

The journal adheres to the ICMJE policy on [Clinical Trials Registration](#), which recommends that all clinical trials are registered in a public trials registry at or before the time of first patient enrollment as a condition of consideration for publication. Manuscripts describing clinical trials must include the registration number of the trial and the name of the trial registry.

Reporting guidelines

The journal requires authors to follow the EQUATOR Network's [Reporting Guidelines](#) for health research. Study types covered by these guidelines include, but are not limited to, randomized trials, observational studies, systematic reviews, case reports, qualitative research, diagnostic and prognostic studies, economic evaluations, animal pre-clinical studies and study protocols.

Author competing interests and conflicts of interest

In the interests of transparency, the journal requires all authors to declare any competing or conflicts of interest in relation to their submitted manuscript. A conflict of interest exists when there are actual, perceived or potential circumstances that could influence an author's ability to conduct or report research impartially. Potential conflicts include (but are not limited to) competing commercial or financial interests, commercial affiliations, consulting roles, or ownership of stock or equity. Manuscripts must be compliant with the [ICMJE standards](#) on this matter.

Authors should list all funding sources for their work in the Acknowledgments section of their manuscript.

Confidentiality

The journal maintains the confidentiality of all unpublished manuscripts. By submitting their manuscript to the journal, the authors warrant that they will keep all correspondence about their manuscript (from the Editorial Office, editors and reviewers) strictly confidential.

Self-archiving (Green Open Access) policy

Self-archiving, also known as Green Open Access, enables authors to deposit a copy of their manuscript in an online repository. The journal encourages authors of original research manuscripts to upload their article to an institutional or public repository immediately after publication in the journal.

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J-STAGE preserves its full digital library, including the journal, with Portico in a dark archive (see <https://www.portico.org/publishers/jstage/>). In the event that the material becomes unavailable at J-STAGE, it will be released and made available by Portico.

Peer Review Process

Editorial and peer review process

The journal uses double-blind peer review. When a manuscript is submitted to the journal, it is assigned to the Editor-in-Chief, who performs initial screening. Manuscripts that do not fit the journal's scope or are not deemed suitable for publication are rejected without review. The Editor-in-Chief assigns each of the remaining manuscripts to an Editorial Board member and a reviewer according to the field of the manuscript, who undertake peer review.

Once the Editorial Board and the reviewer have completed the review, the Editorial Board and the Editorial Board Leader of the relevant field hold a discussion and make an initial decision on whether the manuscript requires revision. Authors who are asked to revise their manuscript must do so within two months, otherwise it may be treated as a new submission. The Editorial Board member may send revised manuscripts to peer reviewers for their feedback or may use his or her own judgement to assess how well the authors have responded to the comments on the original manuscript. The Editorial Board member then makes a recommendation to the Editorial Board Leader, who makes the final decision on the manuscript's suitability for publication in the journal. The Editor-in-Chief acts as an arbitrator when necessary.

Reviewer selection, timing and suggestions

Reviewers are selected based on their expertise in the field, reputation, recommendation by others, and/or previous experience as peer reviewers for the journal. Reviewers are asked to submit their first review within 3 weeks of accepting the invitation to review. Reviewers who anticipate any delays should inform the Editorial Office as soon as possible.

When submitting a manuscript to the journal, authors may suggest reviewers that they would like included in or excluded from the peer review process. The Editorial Board member or Editor-in-Chief may consider these suggestions but are under no obligation to follow them.

Reviewer reports

It is the journal's policy to transmit reviewers' comments to the authors in their original form. However, the journal reserves the right to edit reviewers' comments, without consulting the reviewers, if they contain offensive language, confidential information or explicit recommendations for publication.

Acceptance criteria

If a manuscript satisfies the journal's requirements and represents a significant contribution to the published literature, the Editorial Board member may recommend acceptance for publication in the journal.

Articles in the journal must be:

1. technically rigorous
2. novel and original
3. important to the field
4. within the subject area of the journal's scope
5. well-constructed and written
6. of high interest to the journal's audience

If a manuscript does not meet the journal's requirements for acceptance or revision, the Editorial Board member may recommend rejection.

Editorial independence

The Japanese Society of Physical Therapy has granted the journal's Editorial Board complete and sole responsibility for all editorial decisions. The Society will not become involved in editorial decisions, except in cases of a fundamental breakdown of process.

Editorial decisions are based only on a manuscript's scientific merit and are kept completely separate from the journal's other interests. The authors' ability to pay any

publication charges has no bearing on whether a manuscript is accepted for publication in the journal.

Appeals

Authors who believe that an editorial decision has been made in error may lodge an appeal with the Editorial Office. Appeals are only considered if the authors provide detailed evidence of a misunderstanding or mistake by a reviewer or editor. Appeals are considered carefully by the Editor-in-Chief, whose decision is final. The guidelines of the [Committee on Publication Ethics](#) (COPE) are followed where and when relevant.

Confidentiality in peer review

The journal maintains the confidentiality of all unpublished manuscripts. Editors and reviewers will not:

1. disclose a reviewer's identity unless the reviewer makes a reasonable request for such disclosure
2. discuss the manuscript or its contents with anyone not directly involved with the manuscript or its peer review
3. use any data or information from the manuscript in their own work or publications
4. use information obtained from the peer review process to provide an advantage to themselves or anyone else, or to disadvantage any individual or organization.

In addition, reviewers will not reveal their identity to any of the authors of the manuscript or involve anyone else in the review (for example, a post-doc or PhD student) without first receiving permission from the Editor.

Editor and reviewer conflicts of interest in peer review

A conflict of interest exists when there are actual, perceived or potential circumstances that could influence an editor or reviewer's ability to act impartially when assessing a manuscript. Such circumstances might include having a personal or professional relationship with an author, working on the same topic or in direct competition with an author, having a financial stake in the work or its publication, or having seen previous versions of the manuscript.

Reviewers and members of the journal's Editorial Board undertake to declare any conflicts of interest when handling manuscripts. An editor or reviewer who declares a conflict of interest is unassigned from the manuscript in question and is replaced by a new editor or reviewer.

The Editor-in-Chief and Editorial Board members try to avoid conflicts of interest when inviting reviewers, but it is not always possible to identify potential bias.

Errata and retractions

The journal recognizes the importance of maintaining the integrity of published literature.

A published article that contains an error may be corrected through the publication of an Erratum. Errata describe errors that significantly affect the scientific integrity of a publication, the reputation of the authors, or the journal itself. Authors who wish to correct a published article should contact the editor who handled their manuscript or the Editorial Office with full details of the error(s) and their requested changes. In cases where co-authors disagree over a correction, the Editor-in-Chief may consult the Editorial Board or external peer reviewers for advice. If a Correction is published, any dissenting authors will be noted in the text.

A published article that contains invalid or unreliable results or conclusions, has been published elsewhere, or has infringed codes of conduct (covering research or publication ethics) may be retracted. Individuals who believe that a published article should be retracted are encouraged to contact the journal's Editorial Office with full details of their concerns. The Editor-in-Chief will investigate further and contact the authors of the published article for their response. In cases where co-authors disagree over a retraction, the Editor-in-Chief may consult the Editorial Board or external peer reviewers for advice. If a Retraction is published, any dissenting authors will be noted in the text.

The decision to publish Errata or Retractions is made at the sole discretion of the Editor-in-Chief.

Editors as authors in the journal

Any member of the journal's Editorial Board, including the Editor-in-Chief who is an author on a submitted manuscript is excluded from the peer review process. Within the journal's online manuscript submission and tracking system, they will be able to see their manuscript as an author but not as an editor, thereby maintaining the confidentiality of peer review.

A manuscript authored by an editor of the journal is subject to the same high standards of peer review and editorial decision making as any manuscript considered by the journal.

Responding to potential ethical breaches

The journal will respond to allegations of ethical breaches by following its own policies and, where possible, the guidelines of [COPE](#).

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Article Processing Charge

There is no submission fee and publication fee if you are a member of the Japanese Physical Therapy Association (JPTA).

If one or more of the authors holds a current Japanese physical therapy license, but are not members of JPTA, then the submission fee and publication fee described in Table 1 below will be levied.

For physical therapists with licenses from countries outside of Japan, as well as other researchers, no submission or publication fees are levied.

An excess page fee applies if manuscripts exceed the stated limits; in such cases, a fee of 11,000 Japanese yen (tax included) per journal typeset page is levied.

Color art is free of charge for online publication. Color reprints charges are also not levied.

Table 1 Fees structure

	Submission fee	Publication fee	Excess page fee
Member of JPTA	Free	Free	
Non-member of JPTA (Physical Therapist with Japanese License)	11,000JPY (tax included)	11,000JPY (tax included) per typeset page (A4 size)	11,000JPY (tax included) per excess page
Non-member of JPTA (Other occupations)	Free	Free	

1. The submission fee will be collected from any author who is a registered Japanese physical therapist but not a member of the JPTA (including those who have been suspended from JPTA; the same shall apply hereinafter).
2. Any submission fee is charged upon submission of the manuscript and is non-refundable.
3. The publication fee will be collected from any author who is a registered Japanese physical therapist but not a member of the JPTA.

4. The publication fee is charged upon the submission of the final manuscript and is non-refundable. This includes, but is not limited, to cases such as the withdrawal of the manuscript.
5. If payment of the submission fee is not completed within a reasonable timeframe, the submitted manuscript will be deemed withdrawn.
6. If payment of the publication fee is not completed within a reasonable timeframe, the manuscript will not be published.

Manuscript Submission

All manuscripts must be submitted via the journal's online submission system, Editorial Manager at <https://www.editorialmanager.com/ptr-journal/>.

Organize the manuscript in the following order: title page, copyright agreement form, declaration form for conflicts of interest, main text, figures and tables, and appendix (optional), certificate of English proofreading (if your first language is not English).

The manuscript text must be submitted as a Microsoft Word file. Figures and tables must NOT be embedded within the manuscript file. Submit Tables and Figures as separate files. If included in the submission, each set of materials listed below must be cited appropriately in the manuscript text. A title for each Table, Figure or Video must be included.

The allowable file formats are:

- 1) Text (Title page, Abstract - Legends): Word
- 2) Tables: Word, Excel, PowerPoint (Tables must not be images.)
- 3) Figures: PowerPoint, JPEG, TIFF
- 4) Video: AVI, MOV, MP4, MPEG (Each Video file should be no larger than 5 MB.)

If you have any questions or encounter any problems with online submission, please contact the Editorial Office: journal@japanpt.or.jp.

Manuscript Preparation

Style

Manuscripts must be prepared in Microsoft Word, with 30 lines per page. Line and page numbers must be included. Line numbers should appear on the left side of the body texts in increments of 5 (i.e. 5, 10, 15, etc.) and should restart on each page.

English standards

Manuscripts should be written concisely in clear, grammatically correct English and should avoid unnecessary jargon. Authors whose native language is not English are required to have their manuscript checked by a proficient English editor or by an editing

service prior to submission. If a manuscript is not clear due to poor English, it may be rejected without undergoing peer review.

Cover Letter

A cover letter may be included which includes the title of the manuscript and the contact details of the corresponding author. Authors should summarize the aims and outcomes of their work and how and why the work is appropriate for publication. Details of any relevant consent and/or ethics approvals, and other such items must be included in the cover letter.

Title page

The title page should comprise the following.

- 1) Manuscript Type
- 2) A concise but informative title. Only the first letter of each word should be capitalized, except for conjunctions, articles, or prepositions unless the first word of the title.
- 3) Running title (with 60 or fewer letters)
- 4) Authors' full names with academic degrees, job category, and affiliation numbers. JPTA Membership number is necessary if you are a JPTA member.
- 5) Full names of the department(s) and institution(s) in which the research was done, together with the location (city, state, and nation). Use superscript numbers to indicate authors from different institutions.
- 6) Corresponding author's contact details (name, department, institution, full address, telephone and fax numbers, and e-mail address).

Title

The title should be concise and informative; it should describe the content of the article briefly but clearly and is important for search purposes by third-party services. Do not use abbreviations in the title, except those used generally in related fields and avoid formulae where possible. The first letter of each word except for conjunctions, articles, or prepositions should be capitalized, both in the manuscript file and in the manuscript submission system.

Authors and affiliations

Provide the full names of the author(s). In addition, provide the full names and addresses of institutions (including laboratory, department, institute and/or university, city, state and country). When authors belong to different institutions, their respective addresses should be indicated by superscript numbers. When authors have new addresses, they should be given in a footnote and should be indicated by superscript symbols (such as * and **).

Keywords

List three to five keywords. The first letter of each word except for conjunctions, articles, or prepositions should be capitalized, both in the manuscript and on the system.

Running Title

State also a running title of 60 characters or fewer (a simple title). It can be the same as the title if the title is 60 characters or fewer.

Abbreviations

Each abbreviation should be defined in parentheses together with its non-abbreviated term when it first appears in the text (except in the Title) and legends of each figure and table.

Units

SI or SI-derived units should be used. More information on SI units is available at the [Bureau International des Poids et Mesures \(BIPM\) website](http://www.bipm.org).

- 1) Length: m
- 2) Mass: kg
- 3) Time: s
- 4) Temperature: °C

Method of stating the names of devices

For all equipment and products mentioned in the text, include the model name/number, the manufacturer and its location (city, state, country) in parentheses in the text. For statistical software, specify the version, manufacturer, and manufacturer's location.

Abstract

The Abstract can be up to 250 words and must be structured into 4 sections with the following headings: Objectives, Methods, Results, and Conclusions. Paragraph headings may be altered when needed in articles other than Original Articles and Brief Reports. If it is essential to refer to a previous publication, omit the article title (e.g. Maekawa, T., Smith, S., and Roskol, H. (2015). *Therapy J.*, 19: 187–193).

Main text

As a general rule, the main text should be divided into sections with the headings as listed below. However, the headings may be altered when necessary for articles other than Original Article and Brief Reports.

In the main text, information that can identify the authors (e.g., author name; name of affiliated institution; name of city, ward, town, or village; name of ethics committee; ethics committee approval number; research grant approval number; or acknowledgments) should be covered with black highlights. The same applies to identifying information in figures, tables, and other documents.

1 Introduction

State the background of the study, its clinical significance, objectives, range of the subject covered, and specific connections to past studies.

2 Methods

State the study method so that a third party can make a supplementary examination. State any ethical considerations.

3 Results (outcomes)

Results should be clear and concise.

4 Discussion (analysis)

This should explore the significance of the results of the work, not repeat them. Avoid extensive citations and discussion of published literature.

5 Conclusions

The main conclusions of the study may be presented in a short conclusion section.

6 Acknowledgments

All contributors who do not meet the criteria for authorship should be listed in an Acknowledgments section. External sources of support should also be listed here.

7 Conflicts of interest

All authors must disclose any financial or personal relationships with other people or organizations that could inappropriately influence (bias) their work. Examples of potential conflicts of interest include employment, consultancies, stock ownership, honoraria, paid expert testimony, patent applications/registrations, and grants or other funding.

References

Within the main text, references should be cited using consecutive numbers in superscript.

In the References section at the end of the manuscript, references should be listed in order of citation in the manuscript and numbered consecutively.

For journal articles, provide the details in this order: name of author(s), article title, journal title, year of publication, volume number, and pages (first to last).

For books, provide details in this order: name of author(s), book title, name of editor(s), name and location of publisher, year of publication, and page number(s). For book chapters, add the chapter authors' names and the title of the chapter, before providing the book details and the relevant page numbers (see the example below).

For online materials, write the details in this order: name of webmaster, page title, URL, last access date.

Abbreviations of source names should follow the method used by the [US National Library of Medicine](#). If there are three or more authors for a reference, state only the first two authors and add “*et al.*”.

Illustrative examples are provided below.

Journal Article

Luvizutto GJ, Silva GF, *et al.*: Use of artificial intelligence as an instrument of evaluation after stroke: a scoping review based on international classification of functioning, disability and health concept. *Top Stroke Rehabil.* 2022; 29: 331–346.

Book Chapter

Kocher MS: Evaluation of the medical literature. Chap 4. In: Morrissy RT and Weinstein SL (eds): *Lovell and Winter’s Pediatric Orthopaedics*. 6th ed, Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, Philadelphia, 2006, 97–112.

Online Material

Cabinet Office of Japan: Situation of the aging population. In: Annual report on the aging society 2021. <https://www8.cao.go.jp/kourei/whitepaper/index-w.html> (in Japanese) (Accessed December 10, 2022)

Tables

Number tables consecutively using Arabic numerals (Table 1, Table 2, etc.). A title should be given to each table. Explanatory material and footnotes should be typed below the table and should be designated with superscript letters, such as a) or b). Units of measurement should be included with numerical values at the top of columns. Avoid detailed explanations of the experimental conditions used to obtain the data shown in tables (which should be included in other sections as relevant). Do not use vertical lines in tables unless necessary.

Figures

Submit figures, photography, graphs or diagrams in PowerPoint, JPEG or TIFF. Figures should be of high enough resolution for direct reproduction for printing. Note that ‘figures’ includes line drawings and photographs, as well as charts. Magnifications of photographs should be indicated in the legends and/or by scales included in the photographs. Illustrations must be self-explanatory and they should be numbered consecutively with Arabic numerals (i.e., Fig. 1, Fig. 2, etc.). Each figure should have a short title. Figure legends should be typed together on a new page after the References section. Figure

legends should include sufficient experimental details to make the figures intelligible; however, duplicating the descriptions provided in other sections should be avoided.

Supplementary material

Supplementary material adds, but is not essential, to a reader's understanding of a manuscript. Authors are encouraged to submit supplementary material for online-only publication. Supplementary material may comprise data, text, audio or movie files, and is published online alongside the accepted manuscript.

As supplementary material is peer-reviewed, authors must submit it in its final form as part of their manuscript submission. After a manuscript has been accepted for publication, authors may not make any changes to the supplementary material.

Accepted Manuscripts

Manuscripts that are accepted for publication are copyedited and typeset by the journal's production company before publication. The journal is published 3 times per year. All communication regarding accepted manuscripts is with the corresponding author.

Proofs

Page proofs are sent to the corresponding author, who should check and return them within 48 hours. Only essential corrections to typesetting errors or omissions are accepted; excessive changes are not permitted at the proofing stage.

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