

# Sending It Out

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*A Submission Guide for Under One Roof Writers — how to revise one essay on your own and send it to magazines and journals*

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Philadelphia

## Contents

What This Guide Is For

Your Plan After the Course

Step 1: Revise on Your Own

Step 2: Check the Ethics

Step 3: Choose Five Venues

Step 4: Read the Guidelines

Step 5: Format the Manuscript

Step 6: Write the Cover Letter

Step 7: Write Your Bio

Step 8: Submit

Step 9: Track Everything

Step 10: Rejection, Acceptance, and Keeping Going

Honest Odds

Money, Rights, and Warning Signs

The Venue Directory

Tools for Finding More

A Final Word

## What This Guide Is For

In Sessions 11 and 12 of Under One Roof, each writer chose one essay to carry forward. This guide walks you through everything that happens next: revising the essay on your own, choosing where to send it, preparing a professional submission, and keeping going until it finds a home. Submitting is always your choice. Nothing here is required.

*Venue details were checked against each venue's own guidelines on September 27, 2026. Guidelines change often, and reading periods open and close. Always read the venue's live guidelines page before you submit.*

## Your Plan After the Course

| When    | What to do                                                                                                                   |
|---------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Week 1  | Second revision pass: the scene. Cut the first paragraph; dramatize the key moment; rewrite the ending.                      |
| Week 2  | Third pass: the sentence. Read aloud; cut about ten percent; replace abstractions with one concrete detail.                  |
| Week 3  | Check every name, date, and fact. Secure signed consent from any living person named or recognizable.                        |
| Week 4  | Confirm your five venues are open. Prepare the manuscript, cover letter, and bio for each.                                   |
| Week 5  | Send to the first three open venues that allow simultaneous submissions (or to one that requires exclusivity). Log each one. |
| Ongoing | When a rejection arrives, send the essay to the next venue within a week. Start your next essay.                             |

## Step 1: Revise on Your Own

Revision means seeing again. Work in three passes, one at a time, with a day or two between them.

- 1. The whole.** Write your essay's true subject in one sentence at the top of page one. Cut or set aside every paragraph that does not serve it. Find the turn — the

moment the essay moves from its apparent subject to its real one — and ask whether it could come earlier.

2. **The scene.** Most first drafts start too early. Cut the first paragraph and see whether the essay improves. Find the moment you summarized that deserves a full scene: place, action, a line of dialogue, one sensory detail. Rewrite the ending so it looks outward instead of explaining what the essay meant.
3. **The sentence.** Read every sentence aloud and mark where you stumble. Replace general phrases (“a difficult time in my life”) with one specific detail. Cut about ten percent of the words. Check spelling of every name.

#### Revision Checklist

Is the true subject clear in one sentence?

Does the essay begin in a moment, not in background?

Is there a turn?

Are the most important moments shown as scenes?

Can we hear both the person who lived it and the person remembering it?

Are all facts checked and sources noted?

Does the ending open outward?

Is every word your own? (Many venues refuse AI-assisted writing.)

## Step 2: Check the Ethics

- **Consent.** Every living person who is named, quoted, or recognizable has read the essay and signed the Interview Consent and Release Form.
- **Changes.** Change names and identifying details wherever someone asks. If you use a composite, say so in a note (and note that some venues, such as Modern Love, do not accept composites or pseudonyms at all).
- **Privacy.** Remove apartment numbers, phone numbers, schedules, and anything that would help a stranger find a neighbor.
- **The elevator test.** Remember that neighbors may read the published essay. Write nothing you could not say kindly in the elevator.

## Step 3: Choose Five Venues

Match the essay to the venue, not the venue to the essay. Use the directory at the end of this guide and ask five questions:

- 1. Length.** Does the essay fit the venue's word limit? (Count before you choose.)
- 2. Subject and tone.** Does the venue publish essays like this? Upbeat or dark? Local or national? Traditional or experimental?
- 3. Eligibility.** Are you eligible? (Passager: 50 and older. Persimmon Tree: women over sixty. Philadelphia Stories: PA, NJ, or DE connection.)
- 4. Timing.** Is the venue open now? When does its reading period close?
- 5. Rules.** Does it allow simultaneous submissions? Does it accept work posted online? Does it charge a fee?

| If your essay is...                                  | Consider...                                                                                                    |
|------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 100 words                                            | Tiny Love Stories; Reader's Digest True Stories                                                                |
| Under 250 words                                      | Beautiful Things (River Teeth)                                                                                 |
| Under 750–800 words                                  | Brevity; Hippocampus (flash); Under the Gum Tree (flash)                                                       |
| 600–1,000 words, warm or upbeat                      | Christian Science Monitor Home Forum; Broad Street Review (800–1,000); Chicken Soup for the Soul (up to 1,200) |
| On a posted topic, any length                        | The Sun — Readers Write                                                                                        |
| 1,000–2,500 words                                    | Narratively — The Personals; Philadelphia Stories; Sweet Lit (up to 1,500); Modern Love (1,500–1,700)          |
| Up to 4,000 words or more                            | Hippocampus; Pithead Chapel; Passager; Persimmon Tree; The Sun essays; River Teeth; Fourth Genre               |
| About the history of 2601 or a Philadelphia building | Hidden City Philadelphia (pitch); Broad Street Review                                                          |

*Start with at least two welcoming or local venues, where the odds are better, before the most famous ones.*

## Step 4: Read the Guidelines

Read each venue's guidelines twice, then read at least two pieces it has published. Write down the answers to these questions for each venue:

### Twelve Questions for Every Venue

What does it publish, and how long?

Is it open now? When does the window close?

How do I submit: Submittable, another online form, email, or mail?

Is there a fee? Is there a waiver?

Are simultaneous submissions allowed?

Does it accept work already posted online, even on a blog?

Does it read blind (no name on the manuscript)?

Single or double spacing? Any file format rules?

Does it want a cover letter? A bio? How long?

What is its policy on AI?

How long does it take to respond?

What does it pay, and what rights does it ask for?

## Step 5: Format the Manuscript

Unless a venue says otherwise, use this standard format:

- 12-point Times New Roman or Georgia; one-inch margins; page numbers.
- Double spacing (except for venues that ask for single spacing, such as Brevity).
- Page one, top left: your name, city and state, email, phone. Top right: word count.
- Title centered about a third of the way down page one; the essay begins below it.
- Save as a Word file (.docx) named with the title, for example  
Maintenance\_Request.docx.

**Important:** Blind reading. Some venues (for example Hippocampus and Fourth Genre) read without names. For them, remove your name and contact information from the manuscript and the file name, and put your details only in the submission form.

## Step 6: Write the Cover Letter

A cover letter is a courtesy, not a sales pitch. Keep it to about a hundred words: greeting; title, genre, and word count; a note if it is a simultaneous submission; a two-line bio; thanks. Do not summarize or explain the essay.

*The letters below use an invented writer, Eleanor Vance, as an example. Replace every detail with your own.*

### **Sample 1 — The Sun, Readers Write (Submittable or mail)**

Dear Editors,

Please consider my essay “The Last Box” (870 words) for Readers Write on the topic “Roots.”

Eleanor Vance is a retired social worker who lives in Philadelphia. This would be her first publication.

Thank you for reading.

Sincerely,

Eleanor Vance

### **Sample 2 — Christian Science Monitor, The Home Forum (email to [homeforum@csmonitor.com](mailto:homeforum@csmonitor.com); text pasted in the email)**

Subject line: Submission

Dear Home Forum Editor,

I am pleased to offer “The Thinker, at a Distance” (720 words), a personal essay about finally stopping to look at Rodin’s sculpture on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway. It has not been published or submitted elsewhere.

Eleanor Vance, Philadelphia, PA · email · phone

Thank you for your consideration.

**Sample 3 — Brevity (Submittable; single-spaced, no indents)**

Dear Editors,

Please consider my flash essay “Maintenance Request” (340 words). It is a simultaneous submission, and I will withdraw it right away if it is accepted elsewhere.

Eleanor Vance lives in Philadelphia, where she writes about home and the small rituals of apartment life.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Eleanor Vance

**Sample 4 — Philadelphia Stories (online form; third-person bio of about 75 words with your PA/NJ/DE connection)**

Dear Nonfiction Editor,

I am submitting my essay “Roundhouse” (2,150 words), about the Baldwin Locomotive Works site where my Philadelphia apartment building now stands, and my grandfather, who worked for the railroad. This is a simultaneous submission; I will let you know at once if it is accepted elsewhere.

Bio: Eleanor Vance is a retired social worker who has lived in Philadelphia for forty years. She lives in the Fairmount neighborhood and is writing a series of essays about home.

Thank you,

Eleanor Vance

**Sample 5 — Broad Street Review (pitch by email)**

Subject line: PITCH: The roundhouse under 2601 Parkway

Dear Ms. Johns,

I would like to propose a personal essay of about 900 words for Broad Street Review. My apartment building at 2601 Pennsylvania Avenue stands on the former site of a Baldwin Locomotive Works roundhouse. When I brought my ninety-year-old grandfather, a retired railroad man, to see it, he stood in the lobby and said, “They turned engines here.” The essay braids the site’s history, drawn from the building’s published history and local archives, with his story.

I am a retired social worker and a resident of Fairmount. A full draft is ready if you would like to see it.

Thank you for considering it.

Eleanor Vance

**Sample 6 — Hidden City Philadelphia (short query to the editorial director)**

Dear Mr. Bixler,

I live at 2601 Pennsylvania Avenue and have been researching the building’s early years for a writing course taught here. I have a 1,500-word essay that combines the building’s documented history — Paul Cret and Aaron Colish, the 1940 lobby mural The History of Shelter, and the Baldwin roundhouse site — with residents’ memories, used with their permission. Would Hidden City be interested in seeing it? I would be glad to send the draft and my sources.

With thanks,

Eleanor Vance

**Sample 7 — Withdrawal note (send the day an essay is accepted elsewhere)**

Dear Editors,

I am writing to withdraw my essay “Maintenance Request,” submitted on October 12, which has been accepted elsewhere. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Eleanor Vance

## Step 7: Write Your Bio

Write in the third person, 50 to 75 words. If you have never published, that is fine: say where you live and what you write about. Do not list unrelated jobs or apologize for being new.

### Sample Bios (invented writers)

New writer: “Eleanor Vance is a retired social worker who lives in Philadelphia. She writes about home, grief, and apartment life. This is her first publication.”

Writer with a career: “Robert Chen taught high-school chemistry in Philadelphia for thirty-two years. He lives near the Art Museum and is writing a collection of essays about the city’s buildings.”

Writer with publications: “Maria Russo’s essays have appeared in Philadelphia Stories and Brevity. She lives in Philadelphia, where she is at work on a memoir about moving.”

## Step 8: Submit

### Through Submittable

1. Go to the venue’s Submittable page (linked from its guidelines) and create a free account the first time.
2. Choose the correct category, for example “Brief Nonfiction” or “Essays.”
3. Fill in the form: name, email, title, word count. Paste your cover letter where it asks.
4. Upload your manuscript (.docx or PDF, as the venue asks). Pay the small fee if there is one.
5. Click Submit. You will receive a confirmation email. Your Submittable page will show the status.
6. To withdraw later, open the submission in Submittable and choose Withdraw.

### By Email

- Use the exact address and subject line the venue requests (the Home Forum: “Submission”; Broad Street Review pitches: “PITCH:”).

- Follow the instructions about attachments exactly. Modern Love asks for a Word file attached and the text pasted into the email; the Home Forum asks for the text in the email or a shared Google Doc.

## By Mail

- Some venues, including Passager and The Sun, accept paper. Print cleanly, include the cover letter, and put your name and contact information where the guidelines ask.

## Step 9: Track Everything

Keep one row for every submission. A notebook page works; so does a spreadsheet or the free tracker at Chill Subs or Poets & Writers.

| Essay          | Venue              | Sent    | Fee     | Sim.? | Reply by   | Result  |
|----------------|--------------------|---------|---------|-------|------------|---------|
| Maint. Request | Brevity            | Oct. 12 | \$3     | Yes   | Mid-Jan.   | Pending |
| Maint. Request | Pithead Chapel     | Oct. 12 | —       | Yes   | Check site | Pending |
| Maint. Request | Under the Gum Tree | Oct. 13 | Nominal | Yes   | Check site | Pending |
|                |                    |         |         |       |            |         |
|                |                    |         |         |       |            |         |
|                |                    |         |         |       |            |         |

## Step 10: Rejection, Acceptance, and Keeping Going

- **A form rejection.** Most submissions everywhere are declined, usually with a brief form note. It is not a verdict on you. Send the essay to the next venue on your list within a week.
- **A personal rejection.** A personal line, such as “We’d love to see more of your work,” is genuine encouragement. Send that venue something new within a few months.
- **No reply.** Some venues reply only to acceptances (the Home Forum asks for four weeks). Write an “assume declined after” date in your tracking sheet.

- **An acceptance.** Thank the editor; withdraw the essay everywhere else that same day; read the rights or contract note; answer editing and fact-checking questions promptly; tell any neighbor in the essay before it runs.
- **When to revise again.** After three or four form rejections, reread the essay. Revise only if you see a real reason to, or if several editors mention the same issue.

## Honest Odds

Publication is competitive everywhere. A few published figures:

- **Modern Love:** About 7,000 submissions a year for 52 essays (roughly 0.7%). (<https://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/30/insider/inside-modern-love.html>)
- **River Teeth:** Its editors once wrote that they receive more than a thousand unsolicited manuscripts a year and can accept only about ten or twelve. (<https://muse.jhu.edu/pub/129/article/538719>)
- **Brevity:** Editor-reported acceptance rate of about 2% (Chill Subs); writer-reported data on Duotrope shows under 1%. (<https://www.chillsubs.com/magazine/brevity>)
- **The Sun:** More than 2,000 unsolicited submissions every month. (<https://www.thesunmagazine.org/submit/essays-fiction-poetry>)
- **Chicken Soup for the Soul:** An average of 100 stories a day. (<https://www.chickensoup.com/story-submissions/faq/>)

These numbers are a reason for persistence and good matching, not for discouragement. Welcoming and local venues have far better odds, and a first publication in any of them is a real publication. Measure success in essays sent as well as essays accepted.

## Money, Rights, and Warning Signs

- **Fees.** Many venues are free. Others charge about \$2.50 to \$5; several waive fees for hardship or offer free mail submission.
- **Payment.** Payment ranges from contributor copies or a subscription to \$40–\$800 per essay. Both paid and unpaid venues are legitimate.
- **Rights.** Most literary magazines ask for first serial rights (the right to publish first), after which rights return to you. Read any contract before signing.

- **Warning signs.** Be wary of anyone who charges large fees to publish you, sells expensive copies of an anthology you are “selected” for, or asks you to give up all rights permanently. Legitimate editors do not require you to pay to be published.
- **AI policies.** Many venues — among them Brevity, River Teeth, Modern Love, Chicken Soup for the Soul, the Inquirer, Cleaver, and Pithead Chapel — refuse AI-generated or AI-assisted writing. Your essays are your own; keep them that way.

## The Venue Directory

*Checked on September 27, 2026. Always confirm details on the venue’s own page before submitting.*

### Welcoming First Venues

#### The Sun — Readers Write

**Publishes:** True, first-person responses to a monthly topic. “Writing style isn’t as important as thoughtfulness and sincerity.”

**Length:** No set limit; most published pieces run about 300–1,000 words.

**When:** Topic deadlines posted on the site; upcoming topics listed Sept. 27, 2026: “Roots” (due Oct. 1) and “Teamwork” (due Nov. 1).

**How:** Submittable, or typed/handwritten manuscript by mail. No email. Put your name and the topic on page 1.

**Fee:** None.

**Pay:** A complimentary one-year subscription.

**Notes:** Decisions within six months of each topic deadline; The Sun requests one-time rights.

**Guidelines:** <https://www.thesunmagazine.org/submit/readers-write>

#### Chicken Soup for the Soul

**Publishes:** Inspirational, true, first-person stories “about ordinary people having extraordinary experiences.”

**Length:** Recommended maximum 1,200 words; no minimum.

**When:** Book-by-book deadlines on the Possible Book Topics page (for example, a book of funny stories with a deadline extended to Oct. 15, 2026).

**How:** Online form at [chickensoup.com](https://chickensoup.com); choose the book topic.

**Fee:** None.

**Pay:** \$250 one month after the book’s publication, plus ten copies.

**Notes:** Receives an average of 100 stories a day; no rejection letters; no AI-generated or AI-assisted stories.

**Guidelines:** <https://www.chickensoup.com/story-submissions/story-guidelines/>

### The Christian Science Monitor — The Home Forum

**Publishes:** Upbeat first-person essays about a place, person, situation, or everyday event; gentle humor welcome.

**Length:** 600–1,000 words.

**When:** Year-round; time-sensitive pieces at least six weeks ahead.

**How:** Email [homeforum@csmonitor.com](mailto:homeforum@csmonitor.com) with “Submission” in the subject line; paste the text into the email or share a Google Doc. Include contact information and word count.

**Fee:** None.

**Pay:** \$400 per essay, on publication.

**Notes:** Exclusive for four weeks; no simultaneous submissions; replies to acceptances only. Avoids death, aging, medicine, and disease. No AI-generated work.

**Guidelines:** <https://www.csmonitor.com/About/Contributor-guidelines/Contributor-Guidelines-The-Home-Forum>

### Reader’s Digest — True Stories

**Publishes:** Very short true stories.

**Length:** 100 words.

**When:** Rolling.

**How:** Online at [rd.com/stories](http://rd.com/stories).

**Fee:** None stated.

**Pay:** Writer’s Digest reports \$100 for true stories used in the magazine (confirm on the site).

**Notes:** Extremely competitive; excellent practice in compression (Session 4).

**Guidelines:** <https://www.rd.com/stories/>

### Tiny Love Stories (The New York Times)

**Publishes:** “Modern Love in miniature”: true stories about love of any kind.

**Length:** No more than 100 words.

**When:** Rolling.

**How:** Online form at [nytimes.com/tinylovestories](http://nytimes.com/tinylovestories).

**Fee:** None stated.

**Pay:** Not stated on the pages reviewed.

**Notes:** A good home for a flash piece written in Session 4.

**Guidelines:** <https://www.nytimes.com/article/how-to-submit-a-modern-love-essay.html>

## Venues for Older Writers

### Persimmon Tree

**Publishes:** Fiction, nonfiction, and Short Takes by women over sixty.

**Length:** Under 3,500 words; Short Takes 250–500 words on a posted theme.

**When:** Nonfiction any time; Short Takes in brief announced windows.

**How:** Email the piece as an attachment to [editor@persimmontree.org](mailto:editor@persimmontree.org) (Short Takes: [shorttakes@persimmontree.org](mailto:shorttakes@persimmontree.org)). You must be a (free) subscriber.

**Fee:** None.

**Pay:** Not stated.

**Notes:** Simultaneous submissions allowed with notice. Editor in chief: Margaret E. (Peggy) Wagner.

**Guidelines:** <https://persimmontree.org/submissions/>

### Passager

**Publishes:** Poetry, memoir, and short fiction by writers age 50 and older.

**Length:** Up to 4,000 words of prose.

**When:** Annual window July 15–Sept. 15 (the 2026 window closed Sept. 15, 2026, or at 400 submissions); watch for the next call.

**How:** Submittable, or hard copy by mail to Passager, 7401 Park Heights Ave., Baltimore, MD 21208. No email entries.

**Fee:** \$5 on Submittable; free by mail.

**Pay:** A complimentary copy.

**Notes:** Include a cover letter, brief bio, and your name and contact information on each page. Editor in chief: Rosanne Singer. No AI-generated work.

**Guidelines:** <https://passagerbooks.com/winter-issue-submission-guidelines/>

## Philadelphia and Regional Venues

### Philadelphia Stories

**Publishes:** Creative nonfiction essays, especially “positive Philadelphia experiences,” but any well-written essay is considered.

**Length:** Up to 2,500 words.

**When:** Seasonal windows (Summer/Fall 2026 ran June 1–Sept. 1, 2026); check for the next window.

**How:** Online Submission Form for the Nonfiction Editor; include a third-person bio of about 75 words stating your Pennsylvania, Delaware, or New Jersey connection.

**Fee:** None.

**Pay:** \$50 honorarium for print publication.

**Notes:** For writers living in or from PA, DE, or NJ. Simultaneous submissions accepted with notice. Nonfiction Editor: Jenny Burkholder. No AI-generated or previously published work.

**Guidelines:** <https://philadelphiastories.org/submission-guidelines/>

### Broad Street Review

**Publishes:** Essays and op-eds: personal narratives mixed with facts, research, or current events, preferably with a Philadelphia connection.

**Length:** 800–1,000 words.

**When:** Rolling.

**How:** Email a pitch to the editor in chief, Alaina Johns (address on the Writers’ Guidelines page), with a subject line beginning “PITCH:”. Drafts as Word or Google Docs, single-spaced.

**Fee:** None.

**Pay:** \$100.

**Notes:** Prefers a pitch before a finished draft.

**Guidelines:** <https://www.broadstreetreview.com/writers-guidelines>

## The Philadelphia Inquirer — Opinion

**Publishes:** Op-eds on news issues, cultural reflections, and “the occasional personal or explanatory essay,” preferably local.

**Length:** About 700 words (letters to the editor: 200 words at most).

**When:** Rolling; editors ask for five business days before you submit elsewhere.

**How:** Op-eds only through the form on the submission page; letters to [letters@inquirer.com](mailto:letters@inquirer.com). Include 1–2 lines of bio and links to sources.

**Fee:** None.

**Pay:** Not stated.

**Notes:** Must be entirely original and unpublished; no work written with AI. Opinion desk led by Richard G. Jones; commentary edited by Sabrina Vourvoulias.

**Guidelines:** <https://www.inquirer.com/opinion/commentary/philadelphia-inquirer-op-ed-opinion-pitch-submission.html>

## Hidden City Philadelphia

**Publishes:** Stories about Philadelphia’s architecture, neighborhoods, and urban history — a natural home for a researched essay about 2601.

**Length:** Not stated.

**When:** Not stated.

**How:** Pitch the Editorial Director, Michael Bixler, at [mbixler@hiddencityphila.org](mailto:mbixler@hiddencityphila.org).

**Fee:** None stated.

**Pay:** Not stated.

**Notes:** No public guidelines: send a short, specific pitch.

**Guidelines:** <https://hiddencityphila.org/contact/>

## Cleaver Magazine

**Publishes:** Philadelphia-based quarterly publishing fiction, poetry, essays, and craft essays.

**Length:** Varies by category; see the submission page.

**When:** Rolling, year-round.

**How:** Only through its Subfolio portal (no mail or email).

**Fee:** \$5 (waived on request for hardship).

**Pay:** Not stated.

**Notes:** Simultaneous submissions welcome with notice. No AI-generated or AI-assisted work.

**Guidelines:** <https://www.cleavermagazine.com/submission/>

## Painted Bride Quarterly

**Publishes:** Long-running Philadelphia literary magazine.

**Length:** Creative nonfiction up to 5,000 words.

**When:** Currently closed (Sept. 27, 2026); watch for open calls.

**How:** Submittable during open calls.

**Fee:** Not stated.

**Pay:** Not stated.

**Notes:** Simultaneous submissions accepted; no AI-generated work.

**Guidelines:** <https://pbqmag.org/submit/>

## Literary Magazines for Creative Nonfiction

### Brevity

**Publishes:** Flash nonfiction: “crisp, concise essays of 750 words or fewer.”

**Length:** 750 words or fewer.

**When:** September–April.

**How:** Submittable. Format single-spaced, no indentation, a blank line between paragraphs.

**Fee:** \$3.

**Pay:** \$45 honorarium.

**Notes:** Editor: Zoë Bossiere. Aims to respond within 90 days. Chill Subs lists an editor-reported acceptance rate of about 2%. No AI-assisted work.

**Guidelines:** <https://brevitymag.com/submissions/>

### River Teeth and Beautiful Things

**Publishes:** River Teeth: essays, memoir, literary journalism. Beautiful Things: micro-essays.

**Length:** River Teeth: no limit. Beautiful Things: 250 words or fewer.

**When:** Sept. 1–Dec. 1 and Jan. 1–April 1.

**How:** Submittable.

**Fee:** \$3.

**Pay:** River Teeth: \$100, copies, and a subscription. Beautiful Things: a one-year subscription.

**Notes:** Editors: Jill Christman and Mark Neely. No previously published work (including blogs or social media); no AI-assisted work. Responds in three to six months.

**Guidelines:** <https://riverteeth.submittable.com/submit>

## Hippocampus Magazine

**Publishes:** Personal essays, memoir excerpts, and flash creative nonfiction.

**Length:** Essays up to 4,000 words; flash up to 800.

**When:** Essays: Sept. 1–Oct. 31 and March 1–April 30. Flash: Sept. 1–Nov. 30 and March 1–May 31.

**How:** Submittable; remove your name from the manuscript and file name.

**Fee:** \$3 (a Submission Fund covers those who cannot pay).

**Pay:** \$40 honorarium.

**Notes:** Essays Editor: Steph Auteri; Flash Editor: Wendy Fontaine. Typical response: four months for flash, up to six for essays.

**Guidelines:** <https://www.hippocampusmagazine.com/submissions/>

## The Sun — Essays

**Publishes:** Personal essays “too personal for any other journal.”

**Length:** No formal limit; rarely over 7,000 words.

**When:** Rolling.

**How:** Submittable, or by mail.

**Fee:** \$2.50 online; free by mail.

**Pay:** \$200 and up.

**Notes:** Receives more than 2,000 unsolicited submissions a month; simultaneous submissions welcome; about three months or longer.

**Guidelines:** <https://www.thesunmagazine.org/submit/essays-fiction-poetry>

## Modern Love (The New York Times)

**Publishes:** Honest personal essays about contemporary relationships of every kind.

**Length:** 1,500–1,700 words.

**When:** September–December and March–June only.

**How:** Email [modernlove@nytimes.com](mailto:modernlove@nytimes.com): attach a Word file and paste the text in the email body.

**Fee:** None.

**Pay:** \$800.

**Notes:** Entirely true: no pseudonyms, composites, or invented scenes; no AI. The column reported about 7,000 submissions a year for 52 slots (2015).

**Guidelines:** <https://www.nytimes.com/article/how-to-submit-a-modern-love-essay.html>

## Narratively — The Personals

**Publishes:** Scene-driven first-person stories about “one moment, one day, one week, one summer.”

**Length:** Ideally 1,000–1,500 words; never over 2,200.

**When:** Rolling.

**How:** Submittable.

**Fee:** Not stated.

**Pay:** \$300.

**Notes:** One submission at a time.

**Guidelines:** <https://narratively.submittable.com/submit/321516/submissions-the-personals>

## Fourth Genre

**Publishes:** Literary creative nonfiction (Michigan State University Press).

**Length:** Up to 8,000 words.

**When:** General: Sept. 1–Nov. 30. Steinberg Essay Prize: Jan. 1–March 15.

**How:** Submittable; read blind — no name on the manuscript.

**Fee:** \$4 (prize: \$20).

**Pay:** Two contributor copies.

**Notes:** Simultaneous submissions accepted with notice.

**Guidelines:** <https://fourthgenre.submittable.com/submit>

## Under the Gum Tree

**Publishes:** Personal essays and memoir with “authentic vulnerability”; themed departments (family, food, music, travel, flash).

**Length:** Departments up to 2,000 words; flash under 750; features longer.

**When:** Ongoing.

**How:** Online (digital only); no identifying information on the manuscript.

**Fee:** A nominal fee (includes a digital issue).

**Pay:** Contributor copies.

**Notes:** Simultaneous submissions and work posted on your own blog are acceptable.

**Guidelines:** <https://underthegumtree.com/submit/>

## Pithead Chapel

**Publishes:** Personal, memoir, lyric, flash, and experimental essays.

**Length:** Up to 4,000 words.

**When:** Rolling, capped at 300 submissions a month.

**How:** Submittable; name and contact on page one, double-spaced, 12-point.

**Fee:** Not stated.

**Pay:** No payment.

**Notes:** Simultaneous submissions allowed; no previously published work; no AI.

**Guidelines:** <https://pitheadchapel.com/submission-guidelines/>

## Sweet Lit

**Publishes:** Poetry and creative nonfiction.

**Length:** Up to 1,500 words total (two or three short pieces, or one longer).

**When:** CNF in May and June; Flash CNF Contest in November.

**How:** Online submission manager with a brief cover letter and bio.

**Fee:** Not stated.

**Pay:** Not stated.

**Notes:** Simultaneous submissions accepted.

**Guidelines:** <https://sweetlit.org/guidelines/>

## Tools for Finding More

- **Submittable:** The free platform most magazines use. Create one account; every submission, status, and withdrawal lives there. Free for writers.  
<https://submittable.help/en/articles/904856-how-can-i-submit>
- **Poets & Writers Literary Magazines database:** A vetted database of more than 1,000 journals, plus an Open Reading Periods list and a free Submission Tracker. Free. [https://www.pw.org/literary\\_magazines](https://www.pw.org/literary_magazines)
- **Chill Subs:** Searchable listings of thousands of magazines with deadlines, pay, fees, and acceptance-rate data, plus a tracker and cover-letter tools. Free core features. <https://www.chillsubs.com/browse/magazines>
- **Duotrope:** Market listings and response and acceptance statistics compiled from writers' reports. \$5 a month or \$50 a year after a free trial.  
<https://duotrope.com/about/pricing.aspx?cur=usd>

## A Final Word

Every essay in a magazine was once a draft on someone's kitchen table. Send yours out, keep a list, and start the next one. If your work is published, I would be glad to hear about it.

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