

MANUSCRIPT SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

How you can contribute to FSM

Most FSM articles are contributed by modelers, not professional writers. This means that if you have a modeling story to tell, you can be an FSM author! In evaluating manuscripts we look first at the quality of your photos and illustrations, second at how you present your how-to information, and only third at your writing style.

If you have a modeling technique that FSM readers would like to learn about, our editors can rework your writing to the magazine's format and style. Most FSM feature articles concern how-to-do-it technique: How to build a kit into a more accurate or more representative model; how to make parts you can't buy or parts that are better than what you can buy; how to paint a model or how to paint a particular color scheme; how to build a display or diorama; and so on. Virtually every how-to aspect of modeling, including hints, tips, and workshop techniques, is a worthwhile subject for an FSM article.

By far, the best way to learn what FSM needs is to study how stories are presented in current issues. However, we don't consider articles that are submitted simultaneously to other modeling publications, or articles previously published in other magazines.

Preparing a manuscript

We prefer typed manuscripts, and if you can also send your manuscript on a computer disk, that's even better. Almost any format will work. Be sure to enclose a paper copy even if you send a disk. In the upper right corner of the first page of your text, type your name, address, home and work telephone numbers, e-mail address if you have one, and the date you submit the article. In addition to the main text, provide captions for all photos you submit. Provide these on a separate sheet, and please make sure you describe everything shown in each photo.

Writing style

Keep your writing simple and direct, but give lots of detail. Our readers need a clear description of what you did to the model, how you did it, and what tools and materials you used. Be specific. Did you use sheet or tube styrene? Tell us the sizes. What brands and colors of paint – exactly – did you use? What sort of putty – epoxy, acrylic – did you use? Don't simply say "I scratchbuilt the transmission from sheet, tube, and rod styrene." Tell us how you did it, step by step. The best way to do this is to write as if you were telling a friend how to duplicate your modeling project. The best method for organizing your text is in chronological order, from the start of the project to its completion. Be sure to provide a complete list of materials you used and a list of references, if applicable.

Articles should be brief; most range from 750 to 3,000 words. While big features such as "How I Scratchbuilt the Hughes Spruce Goose in 1/24 Scale" are used occasionally, FSM has a greater need for short articles. Such reports usually cover only a single aspect of a project – like *just* the painting, or *just* the conversion, or *just* the detailing. Your best chance for breaking into print is to contribute a short article that focuses on a single modeling technique.

For first-time FSM contributors, we often run a "meet the author" box with a three- or four-paragraph biography (please concentrate on your modeling interests) and a photo showing you engaged in some modeling or research activity. Please include these with your first article.

Before you mail...

We strongly recommend that you send a written inquiry to the Editor describing your proposed article, and ask for comments or interest before preparing a complete article package. We prefer letters or e-mail, but can sometimes clear up our requirements in a brief phone call.

Payment and copyright

FSM pays for feature articles upon acceptance – when we accept a complete feature for publication, you get a check. We normally purchase all rights to the material. We pay based on the estimated length of the published story, and if we underestimate the space your article requires, we issue a second payment upon publication.

Our payment rates vary; they're highest when an author does a particularly good job, or when the material is especially timely or interesting. Articles that include camera-ready scale drawings or how-to artwork also qualify for special rates.

Manuscript checklist

- Manuscript (include sizes of materials, kit numbers, and FS numbers for paints)
- Photos (slides or prints)
- Negatives (if print film used)
- Captions for photos
- References list (title, author, publisher, city, year)
- Materials source list
- Photo and short biography of author
- Story on disk, if available (Microsoft Word or any other well-known word processor program will do)
- Stamped, self-addressed package for return of materials (if you want)
- Cover letter