

Papa Bear Press Short Story Submissions Guide

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Contents

Document Type.....	3
Manuscript Layout	3
Document Formatting.....	3
Formatting Text.....	3
Formatting Paragraphs	3
Image guidelines	4

Document Type

Works should be submitted to Papa Bear Press in Microsoft Word format (.doc or .docx).

Provide the entire story text in one file. Files must be less than 50 MB.

Please do not include a cover in your file, as we will provide this.

Papa Bear Press currently is publishing only English language works.

Manuscript Layout

In the upper-left corner of the first page of your manuscript, please provide the following information:

- Your name
- Your address
- Your phone number
- Your email address

In the upper-right corner of the first page of your manuscript, provide an approximate word count of your story. Round to the nearest 100 words.

Center the story's title.

Double spaced below the title, place your by-line. This may be the same as your name in the upper-left corner, or it may be a pseudonym.

Begin your story immediately after the by-line. Double-space the entire content of your manuscript.

Document Formatting

Formatting Text

Please submit your manuscript using one of the following fonts:

- Times New Roman (preferred)
- Arial
- Courier New

Set font size to 12 pt.

You may use indentations and headings as they will appear in your story.

Do not use bullet points, page headers, and page footers.

Be judicious with complex formatting (e.g., tables, text sidebars, and insets). These may not export well. If your story requires tables you can insert them in Word by selecting "Insert Table."

Do not set background color on text.

Formatting Paragraphs

Use Left Text alignment throughout your document.

Use First-Line Indent for your paragraphs. **Do not use tab-spacing.** The exception to first line indent is to use no indentation for the first paragraph of a chapter, or immediately after a scene break. You can set first-line indent to occur automatically with the following steps:

1. Select the "Home" menu. In the "Paragraph" section, click on the little box to the right of "Paragraph."
2. A dialog box will appear. Select the "Indents" and "Spacing" tab if it is not already displayed.

3. In the "Indentation" section of the dialog box, on the right side is a drop-down menu titled "Special." Click the down-pointing arrow under Special and you will have two choices, one of which is "First Line." Click on it.
4. The "By" text box will automatically fill in with 0.5 inches for the amount of indentation. This is standard, so you can usually leave it alone. However, you can either type a different number or use the arrows to increase or decrease the indent. (We will convert first line indentation to 1.5 ems before publication).
5. When you have made your selections, click "OK." Your text should now be indented the way you wanted.

Use hard returns (Enter) as opposed to soft returns (Shift-Enter) whenever possible.

Do not insert blank lines of text to create empty pages. Use the "Page Break" function for this purpose.

Do not use borders on paragraphs.

Insert a "Page Break" at the end of each chapter. To insert a page break in Word, click "Insert" at the top menu bar and select "Page Break."

Indicate a scene break by centering the text "####" on a separate line. Do not use a blank line to indicate a scene break.

Image guidelines

Insert images directly into the document using the 'Insert' function in Word. Do not use the copy/paste function. Images should be inserted in JPEG, GIF, BMP, or PNG format with center alignment (don't copy and paste from another source). Select "Insert" > "Picture" > then locate and select the file.

JPEG and GIF images should be no larger than 127KB in size.

Use color images whenever possible and relevant.

Photographs should use the JPEG format with a quality factor of 40 or higher. Photographs should be provided with the highest resolution available to you.

Photographs should not be too small. Please make sure your input photos are at least 600x800 pixels in size, unless you optimize them yourself according to the previous guideline. Photographs of less than 300x400 pixels are much too small and can be rejected.

If your photographs are in GIF format or are too small, simply converting them to JPEG or artificially increasing their size will not improve their quality. You should go back to the original source to create a JPEG image with sufficient resolution.

Provide the original images with your manuscript, in addition to inserting them into your document.

Proof Read Your Manuscript!

Use Spellcheck and Grammar Check, but also manually proofread your file to ensure no errors are missed by the automated checkers. Turn on the "show paragraph" feature (¶) to improve your ability to proof read.

Common errors we have seen include:

- Blank lines. There should be no blank lines in your manuscript. Ever. Before publication, we generally will format each paragraph with 6 point spacing after.
- Paragraphs that begin with one or more spaces.
- Paragraphs that end with one or more spaces.

- Misuse of commas. Our standard is to use the Oxford comma when listing a series of three or more items (comma after the penultimate item, and before the conjunction).
- Misuse of ellipsis points or suspension points (“ . . .”). These can be powerful punctuation points, and are encouraged when used properly. Technically, they are called ellipses points when used to indicate the omission of a word, phrase, line, paragraph, or more from a quoted passage, and suspension points when they indicate suspended thought (e.g., “I wonder . . .”). Both are typed the same way. In your manuscript, you may use the single-glyph three-dot ellipsis character on your word processor (Unicode 2026). Following the Chicago style, we will replace these with spaced periods using non-breaking spaces. You may wish to do this as well. (Non-breaking spaces are created in MS Word for Windows using Ctrl-Shift-SpaceBar instead of just SpaceBar).
- Confusing hyphens (-), en-dashes (–), and em-dashes (—).
 - Hyphens are used to join words (e.g., twentieth-century).
 - The en-dash (Unicode 2013) is slightly longer and used to indicate a span or range of numbers (e.g., 1900–1910). The en dash can also be used between words to represent conflict, connection, or direction (e.g., north–south road or liberal–conservative tension).
 - The em-dash (Unicode 2014) is slightly longer still and used to set off an amplifying or explanatory element and in that sense can function as an alternative to parentheses, commas, or a colon—especially when an abrupt break in thought is called for. An em-dash or a pair of em dashes may also indicate an interruption in dialogue (e.g., “Well, I don’t know,” I said. “I thought I might—”).

Note that there are no spaces before or after hyphens, en-dashes, or em-dashes.

- Use of comma splices. A comma splice is the use of a comma to join two independent clauses (e.g., “He ate the food, then drank the water.”) Strictly speaking, a conjunction should be used to separate two independent clauses (e.g., “He ate the food, **and** then drank the water.”) This is not a hard and fast rule:
 - Comma splices are sometimes acceptable when the clauses are short and alike in form (e.g., “I came, I saw, I conquered.”)
 - Comma splices are considered acceptable by some in passages of spoken (or interior) dialogue and are sometimes used deliberately to emulate spoken language more closely.