

QST Author's Guide

As the membership journal of ARRL, *QST* strives to present material that appeals to a broad cross-section of readers within the diverse amateur radio community. With that in mind, we're looking for manuscripts that are likely to interest the highest percentage of ARRL members. *QST* is always looking for material, and the editors often work with authors to transform a manuscript that is "almost there" into a publishable state.

We look for a strong "how-to" component in all articles. It is not enough to write up a detailed account of your club's booth at the state fair and say the booth attracted 5,000 visitors, 2,000 of whom accepted printed material about how to get licensed, and that the GOTA station was mobbed all day.

What *QST* readers really want to know is *how* you achieved that success — because they want their club to be able to do the same at their next local event. Therefore, the article needs specific information about the contributing factors: How your group managed the flow of visitors; how you recruited, trained, and scheduled the booth's staff; what sort of follow-up you did with the people who accepted information about how to get licensed, and so on. Whether your article is technical or general interest, readers should come away from the article with specific ideas for how to duplicate your success.

Some Additional Advice on How to Focus Your Manuscript

- ◆ Present a project or idea that is useful and engaging to most hams. For example: A description of an HF antenna that can fit in a small attic is useful to a large portion of the ham community. A discussion of feedhorn design for 24 GHz transmitters is more of a niche interest.
- ◆ Tell an engaging story. If you're writing a story about your amateur operation from a far-flung island, give the reader a sense of what it was like to be there. In addition to the sights and sounds of your surroundings, readers will want to know about the successes and challenges you had while operating. The more you can paint a specific, detailed picture in our minds, the more likely we are to accept your article.

About Queries

We sometimes receive queries from potential authors who want to get a sense of whether a topic or approach is suitable for *QST*, or likely to be published. Please be advised that while the editors of *QST* are able to give general advice on article ideas, we cannot determine, at the query stage, whether a resulting manuscript would be accepted for publication. We urge querying authors to take the next steps — write the manuscript and submit it.

Preparing Your Manuscript

You can email your manuscript to qst@arrl.org as a word-processing file attached to an email. Although we work in Microsoft *Word*, we can read other word-processing formats as well.

When preparing your electronic manuscript for emailing, please observe the following guidelines:

- 1 Non-technical manuscripts should be 1,200-1,800 words. Very technical manuscripts and build projects with step-by-step instructions can be longer, up to approximately 4,000 words.
- 2 Begin your manuscript with the title and your name and call sign. End with a brief (50-75 words) biographical note that includes your email address.
- 3 Please do not embed images or illustrations within the manuscript. Please send images as separate image files, attached to (rather than embedded in) an email.
- 4 Please write captions for all images and illustrations. Put the captions the end of your article, rather than embedded within the main text of your article. Tell us what is going on in each image. Please include the full names and call signs of people included in photos, and the name (and call sign, if any) of the person who took the photos.
- 5 Please make sure your name, call sign, postal address, and email address are included somewhere in the manuscript.

Submitting Your Manuscript

Email your manuscript to qst@arrl.org.

Please note: Our email system can only accept a total of **4 Mbytes** worth of attachments in any single message. If you are sending a manuscript file plus several digital image files, you could easily exceed the limit. When this happens, the email may bounce back to you with an error message, or it may simply vanish. If you think your total file size may exceed 4 MBytes, send the files individually, attached to a succession of email messages.

You can also send your manuscript by postal mail. Please make a copy of your article before sending it to ARRL. (Material sometimes gets lost in the mail.)

Send your manuscript, including all drawings and photographs, to:

ARRL
Attn: Editorial Dept
225 Main Street
Newington, CT 06111

Additional Information for Technical Manuscripts

Technical Illustrations

Any sketches and/or schematic diagrams you supply should be as clear as possible so that our technical illustrator can work from them. We do not require professional line drawings from you. Even pencil drawings are acceptable if they are clear and legible.

All illustrations must include the following:

- ◆ Component labels and values (for example: C3 – 10 μ F)
- ◆ Dimensions of all construction components (PVC tubes, wires, aluminum tubes, etc.)
- ◆ Text captions that clearly describe what is being shown. Note: Schematic diagrams must include captions that list *all* part values.

Tips for Sending Digital Image Files

Ideally, line-art graphics such as data graphs should be exported to a vector file format, preferably PDF. Raster formats tend to distort the text and line quality. We highly recommend exporting or printing to the “Microsoft Print to PDF” print device, which can be found on, or installed on, Windows 7 and later.

If you can only export or save your graphic to a raster format, do not use JPG. Instead, use a lossless format such as PNG, BMP, or TIF. The JPG format was created for photographic-type images, not images that need sharp delineation. If you can only save to JPG, then use “Maximum Quality” on the compression setting, as this will minimize the artifacts generated by the compression.

Project Source Codes

In keeping with the spirit of amateur radio, ARRL supports open-source software. If your project includes a microprocessor or other device that functions with instructions that you have written, the source code must be made available *at no cost* to any reader who requests it. You can supply the code to us for distribution from the ARRL website, or you can distribute it from your own site or via email. *QST* will not accept a project article unless the source codes are freely available to the public.

Photographs

- ◆ We can accept color prints or slides.
- ◆ Digital images must be high resolution in order to print properly in the magazine. Generally speaking, this means using at least a 2 megapixel (or greater) camera with the image resolution (sometimes referred to as “image quality”) set at *maximum*. This is usually the setting that allows your camera to store the LEAST number of pictures.
- ◆ If minors are shown in photos, we require written permission from the minor’s parent or legal guardian before the minor can be depicted in ARRL media. The permission release form for minors is available at www.arrl.org/files/file/Media%20&%20PR/Basic%20Forms%20_%20Permissions/Child%20release%20form.pdf.
- ◆ If you are sending images captured from websites, or scanned from magazines, newspapers, catalogs, or other media you must provide written permission from the author, webmaster, company, etc.
- ◆ Please don’t send prints made on color laser or inkjet printers. The color quality is not sufficient for us to use.
- ◆ If your camera has a date-stamping function that adds the date to images, please turn it off when shooting photos for possible publication.

If Your Manuscript is Accepted

You will receive a decision on your manuscript by email or postal mail, approximately 6-8 weeks after you submit the manuscript. Before we can prepare an accepted manuscript for publication, we must have your written permission to do so. This is the purpose of the *author’s release form*, which is sent to accepted authors along with the acceptance letter. Please be sure to include your Social Security Number on the release form. If the material falls within our compensation guidelines, and you are a US citizen or resident alien, we must have your Social Security Number so that we can report the payment to the Internal Revenue Service.

When your article is ready for publication, we will email a copy to you in Adobe PDF format. This will be your “proof” copy. Check it carefully for errors, and then contact us as soon as possible with any necessary changes.

Compensation

- ◆ Payment for feature articles will be at the rate of \$65 per published page, or part thereof, including photographs, drawings and other related material.
- ◆ Payment will be made upon publication. ARRL and IARU officials (officers, Directors, and Vice Directors, as well as officials of IARU member-societies), and authors of ARRL National Convention articles are not eligible for compensation. For authors who are presently under contract to ARRL (such as Contributing Editors), the provisions of the contract, and not this policy, apply.

Other ARRL Publications

When you submit a manuscript, it is automatically considered for use in all ARRL media outlets, most notably our three bimonthly magazines that serve niche communities in amateur radio.

On the Air

Launched in early 2020, *On the Air* is ARRL’s magazine for beginner-to-intermediate hams of all license classes. Material for *On the Air* is narrowly focused and brief — typically 1,000 words maximum — and uses plain language, with a minimum of ham radio jargon. Because of this specialized approach, *On the Air* is largely staff-written. If you’d like to try writing for the *On the Air* audience, please study several back issues to get a sense of the intentionally limited scope of the articles, the topics being covered, and the level of language the publication uses.

QEX

QEX is a technical, engineering-oriented publication. The *QEX* audience consists of hams with strong technical backgrounds, many of whom are active or retired professional engineers. We accept a much broader range of technical material for *QEX* than *QST*. We’re happy to consider any technical article, as long as the subject matter is relevant to amateur radio. Full guidelines for *QEX* are available at www.arrl.org/qex-author-guide.

National Contest Journal (NCJ)

This is a magazine for hams who love contesting. For *NCJ*, we’re looking for articles that run the gamut from reviews of hardware and software, to antenna designs, to stories about your last contest operation. A friendly writing style is particularly important for *NCJ*. Remember that you are writing for a tight-knit group of competitors who deeply enjoy what they do.