

Shotgun Sports Writers' Guidelines

Writers for *Shotgun Sports* should have first-hand knowledge of hunting, trapshooting, skeet, sporting clays or hunting or be knowledgeable in other areas of shotgunning, such as collecting, repairing or reloading. Current issues of *Shotgun Sports* are the best guide to our style. Try to create a professional yet friendly article. Most articles in *Shotgun Sports* can be grouped into one of five categories:

- 1. Tests/Reports.** Gun tests/reviews are assigned to our Contributing Editors and must follow our guidelines. Unsolicited gun tests will be read but usually do not meet our criteria. Tests of equipment — new choke devices, triggers, shooting glasses, ear protection or reloading recipes, etc. — are accepted from freelance writers. Photos of unique details should be included, as well as necessary diagrams or specifications, such as price, installation time, where to buy, etc. Roundups work well here. **NOTE:** Reloading stories *must* be accompanied by supporting data and list the source on all recipes used.
- 2. Think Pieces.** Subjective discussions of the merits of one gun type over another, shooting techniques that are unique or revolutionary, or anything that is new, fresh and makes the reader think. These must be crisply written, well-illustrated and authoritative. Provide photos.
- 3. Roundups.** Generalized reports on various aspects of shotgunning — favorite clubs or places to hunt, unusual shooting facilities, unique shotshell reloading setups, etc. Photos of unique details should be included, as well as necessary maps or diagrams and information on price, etc.
- 4. Historical pieces.** The main theme of the article must be related to shotgunning (i.e., trap, skeet, sporting clays, field guns or shotshells). Generally, acceptance is dependent upon freshness of the approach or amount of new material provided. Photos should be included.
- 5. Interviews.** We are interested in interviews with personalities in the shotgunning field; however, We are less concerned with the person's exploits and more interested in "words of wisdom" they can impart which may be useful to our readers. Provide photos.

Quality is the key. We would rather see 1,500-3,000 well-written words than 5,000 that have to be edited and rewritten before they become readable. Photographs of high quality are required. In some cases, we can provide additional photographs from our files*. Check your facts and figures and make sure your story is accurate and complete before you send it in*.

*Payment ranges from \$50 to \$150. We pay *upon publication* (e.g., in the month of publication). *Shotgun Sports* purchases all rights. Short stories or stories submitted without photos will be paid at a lower rate. Any article that requires significant staff time to verify information provided by the author will be subject to reduced payment. We accept stories for *consideration only*. Submitting a story does not guarantee it will be published. We do not pay for photos separately, even those used on the cover — we usually give only credit on photos. If you want credit given on a photo, be sure to include info with photo.

If you have additional questions, contact our Production Coordinator by letter, phone or e-mail (shotgun@shotgunsports magazine.com). Our goal is to continue to make *Shotgun Sports* the finest magazine of its type, and quality freelance writers are its backbone.

Manuscripts*: Text should be typewritten in black ink only, double-spaced, on one side of the paper only. 1,500-3,000 words minimum. Use white 8½"x11" bond paper and provide a 1" margin on all sides. Identify and number each page. Be sure your name, address and phone number clearly appear on the manuscript. **DO NOT** fax manuscripts! You may e-mail manuscripts. **DO NOT** query. Send complete manuscripts only. Electronic submissions **must** be generic or MS Word files. Stories **must** be submitted to our Production Coordinator so they can be properly logged in and tracked -- **DO NOT** submit directly to our Publisher or Editor.

Computer Disks: Manuscripts can be submitted on CD. Text **must** be saved *in a generic form* — .txt or .doc files are usually acceptable (i.e., Microsoft Word 2000 and earlier). **Do not** use special fonts or embedded characters (even those in your computer's symbol set, such as ½). Disks may be for Mac or PC. All CDs should be clearly marked with your name and the subject covered. *Always provide printed hard copy with CD submissions.*

Photographs: Photographs*, with appropriate captions, should be at least 4"x6" black & white or color; color transparencies, 35mm or larger, are also acceptable. Always include printouts and captions with photos. Digital photos should be at least 5" (2000 pixels) at 300 dpi. If submitting large digital files, **please do not e-mail them**. Send a CD or call for instructions for using our FTP site. Include captions that are clearly marked to match each photo. Each photo must be clearly marked with your name or the name of the photographer (if credit is required). We do not return photos unless specifically requested at the time the manuscript is submitted. (See additional info on digital photos enclosed.)

Return Postage: All submissions should be accompanied by return postage. Allow 6-8 weeks for a response.

Finally, a word on rejections. The majority of articles rejected have poor photographs, are too short, do not contain enough helpful information for our readers or have not taken a fresh approach to the subject. While we have an excellent art department, they cannot do much with bad photos. Make sure our readers learn something new from your story! And check all facts and figures before submitting your story. Our readers do not appreciate writers who provide outdated or inaccurate data, nor do we.


Johnny Cantu
Editor-in-Chief