

FSM MANUSCRIPT SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Writing articles for FSM

Most *FSM* articles are contributed by modelers, not professional writers. If you have a modeling story to tell – and you can take clear pictures along the way – you can be an *FSM* author. In evaluating your manuscript, the first thing we look at is the quality of the photos. Second, we review your description of the techniques, tools, and materials used in the project. Only then do we consider your writing style. We can edit your manuscript to our format and style.

The best *FSM* articles demonstrate modeling techniques: how to improve a kit; how to make parts you can't buy, or how to make them better; various ways to paint; how to achieve a difficult color scheme; how to build a display or diorama; and so on. Any aspect of modeling can be a worthwhile topic.

We do not consider articles simultaneously submitted to or previously published in other English-language modeling publications. (Note: Projects posted on the Internet will be considered individually.)

Writing style – get technical

Keep your writing simple, but give lots of detail to clearly describe what you did to the model and how you did it. Be specific: What tools and materials did you use? If you used sheet styrene, what was the thickness? Tubing? What diameter? Wire? What gauge? Don't simply write, "I built a radial engine from styrene and brass." Tell us how, step by step. Imagine someone trying to duplicate what you've done. Refer to products by brand name. Organize your text in chronological order, from the start of a project to its completion. The best way to learn what *FSM* needs is to study how stories are presented in current issues of the magazine.

Structuring your article

Feature articles can range from 750 to 2,500 words. We welcome complex projects, but we have a greater need for short subjects. A brief article on a popular subject – such as repairing and polishing clear parts – is your best bet for a first article. Show us a finished model, but focus on just one aspect of building it. What was remarkable about the construction? How did you paint the camouflage?

Take photos at every step. If you study how *FSM* stories are presented, you'll notice that some articles have a flowing narrative with numbered references to pictures. Other articles have a short introduction followed by a series of numbered photos with detailed captions. Look at each format and decide what works best for you. If you have a lot to say about each and every photo, the narrative might be best. On the other hand, if you feel your story is best told step by step in pictures, consider the caption format; many writers find that format easier. Consider including an illustration or even a simple sketch – our artists can work from your "rough" to produce a high-quality illustration.

Whichever text format you choose, make sure it includes clear references to each photo – and, if you are using the narrative format, write a caption for every photo you want to use. Label your photos by number (not name) using a zero placeholder for single digits (e.g. 01, 02, etc.)

Do not crop or edit the photos. Please see our separate sheet on digital photo guidelines.

Before you begin . . .

We strongly recommend that you send a written inquiry to the editor describing your proposed article. Ask for comments or interest before building an entire article. We prefer letters or e-mail, but often a brief phone call is sufficient.

Payment and copyright

FSM pays for feature articles upon acceptance: When we decide we'd like to publish your article, we send you a contract granting us rights to do so – and when you sign and return the contract, we send you a check. (You don't have to wait until the article appears in the magazine.) Pay is based on the estimated length of the published story; if we underestimate the space your article requires, we issue a second payment on publication.

As *FSM* strives for a balance of subject matter from issue to issue, we keep a deep inventory of purchased manuscripts on file for future issues. If we've already purchased one of your articles, don't let that stop you – we don't publish them in the order in which they were received. So, get going on that article today!

Checklist

- Inquiry to editor
- Body text
- Photos, illustrations
numbered according to
manuscript
- Photo captions
- Materials/sources list
- Reference list (title,
author, publisher, ISBN)
- Text, captions, and
photos in electronic form
- Short bio and a picture
(first-time authors)