Submission and Publishing Tips

Useful magazines that list anthology submissions, contests, grants and articles about writing and publishing

*Poets and Writers*
http://www.pw.org/

*The Writer’s Chronicle*
http://www.awpwriter.org/magazine/

*The Writer’s Market*
http://www.writersmarket.com/

Also check out the annual *Writer’s Market*, a thick book of submission info, how to prepare manuscripts, current lists of editors, agents, and publishers in alpha order as well as according to subject matter. A copy of this can usually be found at your local or college library.

Consider Conferences (Local, national and those specific to your genre)

*Most Universities* have them; among the most notable in the Midwest are Iowa and Wisconsin.

*Associated Writers Programs* (Inexpensive general literary conference held annually)

*Romance Writers of America* (National held annually is rather expensive $5-600., but local chapters hold smaller ones for about $100. Meet editors, agents, other writers, and workshop)

*Cave Canem* (For black poets, competitive. Located in NYC, but holds conferences and workshops around the country. http://www.cavecanempoets.org/

*Book Passage* (California org holds both mystery writers’ and a children’s book writers and illustrators conference. http://bookpassage.com/)

*Sleuthfest*, an annual conference sponsored by the Florida Chapter of The Mystery Writers of America http://www.mwaflorida.org/sleuthfest.htm

Check http://writing.shawguides.com/ for an ongoing list of conference and workshops.

Join a writers group or organize your own. They are great for finding a support group or core group of writers with whom you can workshop. An editor or proofreader could cost up to $10. per page.

National groups

*Local*

*Springfed Arts* offers workshops, contests, and performance venues http://www.springfed.org/

*Greater Detroit Romance Writers of America*
http://www.gdrwa.org/

*National*

*The Society for Children’s Book Writers and Illustrators* has events, networking, etc.
http://www.scbwi.org/
Other general considerations

*Never send anything to an editor or publisher that has not been read, **proofread**, and read again. Also, make sure that you follow that format designated by the publisher.

*Most often a **cover letter** or the email equivalent should accompany your submission. It should be brief and include the name of the piece or pieces you are submitting and maybe a line that gives insight into the work, any publications or awards you have achieved, and your contact information (name, mailing address, phone, and email address). Some publishers require a query letter before submission. This letter includes the above information as well as a brief synopsis of the work you wish to submit. **Queries** are for longer works (75,000 to 100,000 words or more), usually novels or memoirs, and are sometimes accompanied by the first three to five chapters of the work. If the editor wants more they will contact the writer.

*Before you send your work anywhere, make sure you have read or are familiar with works they have published. You want to be sure to send things similar to those they have published previously.

*Consider writing smaller works, a short story for instance, and submitting it for publication to magazines, journals and anthologies before tackling a larger work such as a novel. Publishers are more apt to consider your work if you have already been published.

*Self-publishing is always an option, but remember not only do you pay for publication; you must also serve as public relations, distributor and salesperson.

*Don’t be discouraged when you are rejected. Almost every well-known writer has been rejected multiple times. Remember editors are people with specific tastes. Maybe you just are not a particular editor’s flavor, but it is quite possible you will make the next editor’s taste buds beg for more.

*Consider entering **contests**. The magazines listed are a good source of contests. Although there are contests that require no reader’s fee, most charge a fee because small presses usually run them. Under funded, they use the money to print the magazines or chapbooks they are promoting. For poetry and short fiction, the reader’s fee might run $3 to about $15. For novels, lengthy memoirs and plays, the fee can run up to $30. More is too much. Being the winner of a contest looks good on a query letter and may get an editor to actually read your synopsis.

*Consider **online publishing** sources. The submission method is usually less expensive because you can simply email your file and the pay, although small, is comparable to that of small presses. Further, the number of readers is growing and rights usually revert by to the writer after posting.

*Copyrighting can be expensive and cumbersome. A formal copyright costs about $35 and can be done on-line, but it can take months to process. Click on this website for more information: [http://www.copyright.gov/](http://www.copyright.gov/) Writers often send uncopyrighted material to contests and publishers. The idea is to try to send to reputable publishers. It helps to be familiar with the magazine, press or publisher. Check them out on line, buy a copy of the magazine, or go to the library and pick up a copy of one of their books. Bottom line is that everything we write is truly not golden and sometimes we just have to take a chance.

*Whenever you can, attend a **workshop**. Being in the company of other writers can be a motivating force and sometimes it helps just to be in the company of others who are similarly driven. In addition, a fresh perspective can help shake off writer’s block and other funky doldrums. Nevertheless, be aware that criticism is just someone’s opinion, and writers like anyone else can be catty. However, on occasion even artists need humbling. At times it is necessary to recognize there is always room for improvement.