ARRL Author's Guide

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Revised May 30, 2018

QST

Despite the common misconception, *QST* is *not* a technical or engineering publication. *QST* is a *membership journal* that appeals to a broad cross-section of readers within the diverse Amateur Radio community. With that in mind, we're looking for articles that are likely to please the highest percentage of our readership.

QST does not consider manuscript queries or ideas for articles. The best way to find out whether the editors of *QST* would be interested in your idea is to write the article and send it in for consideration.

Feature articles published in *QST* fall into one of two broad categories: **technical articles** and **general interest articles**. Technical articles outline a construction project or a technical concept. General interest articles are "everything else" — anything that's not a technical article: recaps of DXpeditions, grid expeditions, or public service activities; personal accounts of trying a new mode or style of operating; anything relating to operating or the ham radio avocation.

We look for a strong "how-to" component in technical articles as well as general interest 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 our readers really want to know is *how* you achieved that success. 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 articles:

A **technical article** that has the best chance of being accepted for *QST* is one that:

- Presents a project or idea that is useful and engaging to most hams. Example: A description of an HF antenna that can fit in a small attic is useful to a large portion of our readership. A discussion of feedhorn design for 24 GHz transmitters is not (this type of article would be better suited to *QEX*, *QST*'s sister publication).

- Is written in a natural, conversational style. We like articles that speak to the reader as if the author was chatting with the reader over a cup of coffee.

A **general-interest article** that has the best chance of being accepted for *QST* is one that:

- Tells 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.

- Appeals to a national audience. Articles that are meant as advance promotion for a local event rarely work for *QST*. We tend to run promotional articles only for events that are national or global in scope (such as Hamvention®).

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. That said, we still expect good writing for *QEX;* a conversational style will make your article stand out among the candidates.

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.

Preparing Your Manuscript

You can email your manuscript to ARRL HQ as a word-processing file attachment. Although our editorial departments work primarily in Microsoft *Word*, they are capable of reading other word-processing formats as well.

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

(1) DO NOT attempt to format the document to look like a magazine page. Type your article as you would type a report.

(2) DO NOT embed images or illustrations within the manuscript. Send them as separate image files.

(3) DO include captions for all images and illustrations. Put the captions the end of your article, rather than embedded within the main text of your article. Please include the full names and call signs of people included in photos.

(4) DO make sure your name, call sign, postal address, and email address are included within the manuscript file.

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. That means that 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 spread over a course of several email messages.

You also have the option to send your manuscript to us by postal mail. The top of each manuscript page should have a heading that includes the author's name, a key word or two from the title, and a page number. It's is a good idea to make a copy of your article before sending it to ARRL HQ. (Material sometimes gets lost in the mail.)

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

ARRL

ATTN: Editorial Dept

225 Main St.

Newington, CT 06111

Important! Send material to only one potential publisher at a time. It is our policy to automatically reject any submissions that have been sent simultaneously to other magazines or websites. Multiple submissions can lead to copyright infringement problems for publishers. By the same turn, we do not consider previously published material.

Photographs

- We can accept color prints or slides.

- We can also accept digital images if the resolution is sufficient. 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.

- All photos, digital or otherwise, must include captions. Tell us what is going on in the photo, where it was taken and so on. If people are shown prominently in the photographs, you must supply their names and/or call signs. If any minors are shown in photos, we require written permission from the minor's parent or legal guardian before the minor can be depicted in *QST*. 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**. Don't write directly on the front or back of prints. Type photo credit or descriptive information on a piece of paper and tape the paper to the back of the print.

- *DO NOT* send images captured from websites, or scanned from magazines, newspapers, catalogs, or other media without obtaining the written permission of the author, webmaster, company, etc.

- *DO NOT* 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 every photograph, TURN IT OFF when shooting photos for possible publication.

Illustrations

Any sketches and/or schematic diagrams you supply should be as clear as possible so that our technical illustrator can work directly 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 μF)
- 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.

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 Web, 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.

How the Article Selection Process Works

Manuscripts submitted to *QST* are reviewed by a panel of editors and, in the case of technical articles, technical advisors. In the case of specialized subject matter, manuscripts may be circulated to ARRL staff members who are experts in that subject. As mentioned earlier, manuscripts that have relevance to the highest percentage of our readership are most likely to be accepted for publication. *Decisions of the editorial committee are final.*

If you've submitted a technical article, it will be reviewed by our Technical Editorial Committee, which consists of ARRL in-house editors and a group of volunteers with expertise in various engineering disciplines. Articles are evaluated on the following criteria:

- Technical accuracy

- Quality of writing
- Quality of photography (if applicable)
- Editorial need

Every technical article submission is considered not only for *QST*, but also for *QEX*, *NCJ*, and even *The ARRL Handbook*. The committee decides which venue is best for every accepted article. However, if you want your article to be considered for one publication only (say, *QST*), please note this clearly in your submission.

General interest articles are reviewed in much the same way, except that the General Interest committee is comprised strictly of ARRL Headquarters staff. Quality of writing, photography, and editorial need are the major evaluation criteria.

The editorial committees meet once every 4-6 weeks, so please be patient.

If Your Manuscript is Accepted

If your manuscript is accepted, you will receive a notice by postal mail. Articles accepted for publication become the property of The American Radio Relay League, Inc. In other words, we acquire all rights to your article. We must do this because ARRL has sharing agreements with our IARU sister societies worldwide. To fulfill these agreements, our articles must be available for publication overseas, without copyright encumbrances from the original authors.

That said, it is important to point out that we only acquire rights to your article *as it is published in our media*. We do *not* hold rights to your ideas, designs, software, etc.

Before we can prepare a 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. The release form specifies that the material you have submitted is original, except as noted; has not been submitted or published elsewhere, except as noted; and contains suitable credit for circuits or ideas borrowed from already published material. 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.

Please be advised that once your article is accepted for publication, it could be up to 1 year before your article appears in print, especially in the case of a technical article. Many factors figure into planning editorial for a monthly publication, and we are not always able to tell an author when his or her article will appear.

When your article is ready for publication, we will either post, fax, or 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

ARRL compensates authors of certain material published in *QST* according to these guidelines:

- Payment will be made for *QST* articles and Hints and Hacks items. Payment for articles will be at the rate of $65 per published page, or part thereof, including photographs, drawings and other related material. For *QEX* the rate is $50 per page. Authors of Hints and Hacks items will be compensated at the rate of $20 per published item. We do not pay for material published in *NCJ*.

- 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.