

## MANUSCRIPT FORMATTING

Your manuscript should:

- 1) Look professional.
- 2) Follow specific guidelines requested by the publisher, editor or contest.

Definitions of “standard manuscripts” vary:

- 1) Margin widths
- 2) Header formats
- 3) Preferred fonts

New trends in manuscript formatting:

- 1) Single-space after a punctuation mark, instead of double-spacing.
- 2) Recently published guidelines suggest the following “non-condensed” fonts: (New Times Roman is considered a condensed font.)

Bookman Old Style

Georgia

Century Schoolbook

Courier (This font is dropping out of style, however.)

### **STANDARD MANUSCRIPT FORMAT**

- 1) Use quality 8 ½ x 11 inch white paper. DO NOT use onion paper, colored paper, or anything unusual.
- 2) Print only on one side of each sheet.
- 3) Double-space.
- 4) Use one-inch margins at top, bottom, left and right.
- 5) Font: Use Times New Roman or Courier, 12 point. DO NOT use *all italics* or “artsy” fonts. (See “New Trends” above for latest information on acceptable fonts.)
- 6) Indent five spaces for the first sentence of a new paragraph. No extra lines between paragraphs, except for scene breaks.
- 7) Leave the right margin “ragged.” DON’T right justify.

### **CORRECT:**

Lieutenant Stevie watched the determination on Captain Brian’s freckled face – the way he licked his lips and crinkled the crooked nose he’d broken when the venetian blinds fell on him last summer. Brian had learned a hard lesson that day – he wasn’t Tarzan.

**INCORRECT:**

Lieutenant Stevie watched the determination on Captain Brian's freckled face - the way he licked his lips and crinkled the crooked nose he'd broken when the venetian blinds fell on him last summer. Brian had learned a hard lesson that day - he wasn't Tarzan.

**SCENE BREAKS**

**EXAMPLE #1:**

Skip a line after the end of a scene. Center an asterisk (\*). Skip another line. Begin new scene.

Her eyes became heavy with sleep and the words in the book began to blur. At last, she lost the battle with Sandman, and the book fell to the floor.

\*

John couldn't remember the last time he'd seen her. He only knew it had been too long.

**EXAMPLE #2:**

Double-space twice between the scenes.

Her eyes became heavy with sleep and the words in the book began to blur. At last, she lost the battle with Sandman, and the book fell to the floor.

John couldn't remember the last time he'd seen her. He only knew it had been too long.

## **HEADERS**

- 1) Headers are included on all pages EXCEPT first (Title) page.
- 2) Formats vary. Examples follow.

### **EXAMPLE #1 – *Writer’s Market***

Manny Scripps – 57

### **EXAMPLE #2 – *Manuscript Makeover by Elizabeth Lyon***

Scary Story/Scripps 57

### **EXAMPLE #3 – *Give ‘Em What They Want by Camenson & Cook***

Scripps/Scary Story 57

NOTE: Many publishers and editors prefer Example #3, because it is easiest to see when reading the manuscript.

## **FIRST PAGE (TITLE PAGE)**

- 1) No header on first page, but include your real name, address, phone number and email address in upper left corner. Include approximate word count in upper right corner.
- 2) Space down approximately 1/3 of the page. Center, and type title in all caps. Double-space, center “by.” Double-space, center and type your name or pseudonym.
- 3) Double-space twice, and start your manuscript. (Indenting five spaces for paragraph is optional.)

NOTE: Most contests do not want the author’s name anywhere on the manuscript. Again, be sure to check the specific requirements for where you’re submitting your manuscript.  
(ATTACHMENT A)

## **NEW CHAPTERS**

Drop 1/3 page down. Center chapter titles or chapter number. Double-space and begin chapter. (Indenting the first line of the first paragraph of a chapter is optional.)

## **THE END**

At the end of your story, double-space, center, and type “The End.” To protect the last page from getting soiled, place a blank piece of paper at the end.

### **EXAMPLE:**

Alas, I have finished my really scary story. I hope it wasn’t too frightening for you.

The End

## **COVER PAGE**

Most manuscripts require a cover page. The cover page should include the following information:

Real Name  
Address  
Phone  
E-mail  
Approximate word count  
Title  
Pseudonym

SEE ATTACHMENT B.

## **REFERENCES**

### BOOKS:

*Chicago Manual of Style*, by University of Chicago Press Staff  
*Give 'em What They Want*, by Camenson & Cook  
*Manuscript Makeover*, by Elizabeth Lyon  
*The Writer's Digest Guide to Manuscript Format*, by Dian Dincin Buchman  
*Writer's Market*, by Robert Brewer

### WEBSITES:

[www.writersdigest.com](http://www.writersdigest.com)  
[www.writermag.com](http://www.writermag.com)  
[www.writing-world.com/basics/manuscript.shtml](http://www.writing-world.com/basics/manuscript.shtml)

### MAGAZINES:

The Writer  
Writer's Digest

If you would like additional copies, please contact me at [janmorrill@sbcglobal.net](mailto:janmorrill@sbcglobal.net)

Thank you,

Jan Morrill  
[www.janmorrill.com](http://www.janmorrill.com)

Your Real Name  
Your Street Address  
City, State, ZIP  
Day and evening phone numbers  
E-mail address

75,000 words

A REALLY SCARY STORY

by

Manny Scripps

The black night flashed with lightning and claps of thunder boomed violently. Catherine gripped the steering wheel and held her breath, as though that might keep the gas gauge needle from moving closer to "Empty." How long before she'd reach the next station on this country road? Heck, it was the middle of the night. Probably wouldn't be open anyway.

Her heart pounded when the engine sputtered and the car lurched. It sputtered and coughed again. She'd barely pulled off the road when it quit gasping and died. All she heard then was rain beating on the windshield.

Your Real Name  
Street Address  
City, State, ZIP  
Phone Number  
E-mail

Word Count

A REALLY SCARY STORY

By

Manny Scripps

ATTACHMENT B