



POETRY SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

A COMPREHENSIVE HANDBOOK FOR THE
EAGER WRITER

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TABLE OF CONTENTS



HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE	3
INTRODUCTION: ENTERING THE LITERARY LANDSCAPE	4
SECTION I: CURATED LITERARY MARKETS	5
SECTION II: THE MECHANICS OF PREPARING YOUR PACKET	8
SECTION III: INDUSTRY RESOURCES & DATABASES	10
SECTION IV: MANAGING THE WRITER'S JOURNEY	11
GLOSSARY OF LITERARY & PUBLISHING TERMS	13
INDEX	15

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This handbook is designed as an interactive roadmap for your professional journey. It acts as both an educational text and a practical manual. To get the most utility out of these pages, consider your current creative stage and choose the path that matches your needs:

THE GUIDED PATHWAYS

- **The Ready Researcher (If you have 3–5 polished poems):** Start immediately with *Section I (Page 5)* to analyze journal aesthetics. Once you select a match, jump to *Section II (Page 8)* to format your typography and draft your cover letter according to modern standard protocols.
- **The Future Planner (If you are still drafting or revising):** Read the *Introduction (Page 4)* and *Section IV (Page 11)* first. Understanding how editors think and learning about the reality of simultaneous submissions will frame your creative workflow and alleviate anxiety.
- **The Technical Inquirer (If you encounter unfamiliar terminology):** Turn directly to the *Glossary (Page 13)*. It contains foundational definitions for contemporary publishing structures, such as "blind review" and "simultaneous submission," helping you decode industry vocabulary.

Keep a physical journal or a digital spreadsheet open as you read. Mark specific submission deadlines, note stylistic trends that intrigue you, and treat this guide as your companion for navigating the professional poetry landscape.



INTRODUCTION: ENTERING THE LITERARY LANDSCAPE

Welcome to the professional dimensions of your poetic practice. Writing a poem is an act of deep contemplation and artistic rigor, but sending that work out into the world is the vital next evolutionary stage. It transforms your private observations into a public bridge, entering your unique voice into the ongoing global literary conversation.

For voices seeking their very first print or digital journal credits, the modern publishing landscape can initially seem opaque. This booklet is meticulously compiled to de-mystify the process, streamline your practical workflows, and introduce you to exceptionally high-quality literary journals that are actively and eagerly searching for fresh talent.

Every publication begins with a single bold gesture: hitting the submit button. Treat your writing with the administrative respect it deserves, trust your craft, and let this guide illuminate your path toward publication.

SECTION I: CURATED LITERARY MARKETS

The following magazines have been specifically selected due to their transparency, high editorial standards, and verified history of championing talented writers who are early in their publishing journeys. They value aesthetic excellence over preexisting credentials.

1. FRONTIER POETRY

Editorial Collective

AESTHETIC VIBE: Seeking boundary-pushing language, intense emotional resonance, and structural innovation. Completely open to stylistic variety—from formal sonnets to avant-garde free verse.

POEM LIMITS & LENGTH: Up to 5 poems in a single document, max 10 pages total. Each poem must start on a new page.

SUBMISSION WINDOW: Year-round for the "New Voices" category.

SUBMISSION URL: frontierpoetry.submittable.com

COMPENSATION: \$50 per poem upon publication.

James' Insider Insight: Frontier is globally recognized for celebrating writers without expansive publication histories. Ensure your strongest, most visually gripping poem is placed first in your multi-poem packet to immediately capture the reader's focus.

2. RATTLE

Timothy Green

AESTHETIC VIBE: Accessible, clear, and deeply moving poetry. They look for poems that evoke intense emotion, shared human experiences, or immediate clarity, bypassing overly academic obscurity.

POEM LIMITS & LENGTH: Up to 4 poems at a time. No strict line limits.

SUBMISSION WINDOW: Continuous, open year-round.

SUBMISSION URL: rattle.submittable.com

COMPENSATION: \$200 for the quarterly print issue; \$100 for online publication.

James' Insider Insight: Rattle enforces strict "blind" reviews. Do not place your name, email, or cover letter inside the uploaded document text. They also feature a weekly "Poets Respond" category for work written rapidly in response to current world events.

3. THE ADROIT JOURNAL

Peter LaBerge

AESTHETIC VIBE: Highly dynamic, high-energy, and distinct contemporary voices. They love vivid imagery, linguistic risk-taking, and work that balances vulnerability with intellectual curiosity.

POEM LIMITS & LENGTH: Submit up to 6 poems in a single text file. No line maximums.

SUBMISSION WINDOW: Periodical reading periods; check portal for active cycles.

SUBMISSION URL: theadroitjournal.submittable.com

COMPENSATION: Contributor copies and digital distribution to a massive international base.

James' Insider Insight: Adroit was founded by an undergraduate student and continues to maintain a deeply supportive network for emerging students and academic writers through their annual Adroit Prizes.

4. RUST & MOTH

Editorial Board

AESTHETIC VIBE: Striking imagery, brief but hard-hitting stanzas, and a sharp focus on natural, mechanical, or domestic textures. They value immediate resonance.

POEM LIMITS & LENGTH: Up to 3 poems per submission cycle.

SUBMISSION WINDOW: Open during specific blocks: March 1–20, June 1–20, September 1–20, and December 1–20.

SUBMISSION URL: Submissions are processed via email; guidelines at rustandmoth.com/submit

COMPENSATION: Digital publication and print anthology availability.

James' Insider Insight: Rust & Moth is unique because they prefer email. You must attach your poems as a single PDF and include your 50-word biographical blurb directly in the body of the email. They are known for very swift response turnarounds.

5. THRUSH POETRY JOURNAL

Helen Vitoria

AESTHETIC VIBE: Visceral, lyrical, highly musical language. They love poetry that utilizes space, silence, and striking rhythm to make an impact.

POEM LIMITS & LENGTH: Up to 4 poems. Strictly maximum of one page per poem.

SUBMISSION WINDOW: Opens periodically throughout the year.

SUBMISSION URL: thrushpoetryjournal.submittable.com

COMPENSATION: Worldwide digital showcase and permanent archival integration.

James' Insider Insight: Lyrical melody is paramount here. Read your poems aloud before submitting to Thrush—the musicality, cadence, and sonic texture of your words are what the editors prioritize most.

QUICK MARKET COMPARISON TABLE

MAGAZINE	MAX POEMS	METHOD	KEY PREFERENCE
Frontier Poetry	5 Poems	Submittable	Bold imagery, structural diversity
Rattle	4 Poems	Submittable (Blind)	Emotional clarity, narrative drive

MAGAZINE	MAX POEMS	METHOD	KEY PREFERENCE
The Adroit Journal	6 Poems	Submittable	Contemporary, high-energy language
Rust & Moth	3 Poems	Email (.PDF)	Visceral, object-oriented textures
Thrush Poetry Journal	4 Poems	Submittable	Highly musical and lyrical cadence

SECTION II: THE MECHANICS OF PREPARING YOUR PACKET

The manner in which you present your creative work administratively reflects your commitment to the craft. Follow this structured protocol to guarantee your poetry packet meets standard industry expectations.

STEP ONE

Typography and Spatial Layout

Format your poems in a clean, professional, cross-platform typeface such as Georgia or Garamond set to 12-point size. Standardize your line spacing to single or 1.15. Each individual poem must begin on its own separate page. Avoid decorative borders, custom background tints, or unusual colors—allow the typography to remain elegant and un-distracting.

STEP TWO

Managing Title Page and Anonymity

Carefully check the specific guidelines of your target journal to see if they require a "Blind Submission." If they *do not* require it, place your legal name, pen name, email address, and telephone number in the upper right-hand corner of the first page. If they *do* require a blind submission, strip all identifying details from the document text and metadata completely.

STEP THREE

Crafting the Professional Cover Letter

Keep your cover letter exceptionally concise and professional. Editors read hundreds of packets weekly; a respectful, brief letter is highly appreciated. Use this proven template framework:

Dear Editors of [Journal Name],

Please consider the attached poems—" [Poem Title A], " " [Poem Title B], " and " [Poem Title C] "— for publication in your upcoming issue. I am currently a student in James' poetry writing workshop, where I am developing my contemporary voice and experimenting with [brief mention of technique, e.g., lyrical free verse / striking imagery].

My biographical statement is appended below for your reference. Thank you kindly for your valuable time and consideration of my creative work.

*Warm regards,
[Your Name]*

STEP FOUR

Writing Your Third-Person Biography

Draft a short biographical statement of exactly 30 to 50 words written strictly in the third person. Avoid long declarations of philosophy. Focus on simple, concrete facts: your current creative study, regional location, and any writing communities you are engaged with. Example:

"Jane Doe is a contemporary poet studying creative writing under James. Her work explores the intersections of memory and physical geography. She currently resides and writes in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania."

SECTION III: INDUSTRY RESOURCES & DATABASES

To expand your search parameters beyond this handbook, you must familiarize yourself with the central databases where contemporary writers gather market data, review historical acceptance trends, and find active thematic calls.

1. THE SUBMISSION GRINDER

An entirely free, highly accurate crowdsourced database (thesubmissiongrinder.com). It allows you to filter search criteria by genre, length, pay metrics, and specific sub-styles. It tracks average response timelines, showing you exactly how many days a journal typically takes to respond.

2. CHILL SUBS

A beautifully modern, highly accessible platform (chillsubs.com) tailored to strip away the intimidating aura of traditional publishing. It offers transparent breakdowns of editorial vibes, reading fees, response statistics, and actively lists human-centric journals looking for fresh authors.

3. POETS & WRITERS MAGAZINE DATABASE

The historic institutional standard for literary markets (pw.org/literary_magazines). They curate an exhaustive, vetted index of print and digital journals. This is the ideal place to verify the legitimacy, history, and physical circulation of premier publishing houses.

4. TRISH HOPKINSON'S "NO FEE" BLOG

An invaluable resource run by a dedicated advocate for contemporary poets (trishhopkinson.com). Trish continuously updates lists of high-caliber literary journals that maintain an absolute zero-fee submission policy, ensuring publication remains accessible to all.



SECTION IV: MANAGING THE WRITER'S JOURNEY

NAVIGATING SIMULTANEOUS SUBMISSIONS

The vast majority of modern literary journals warmly permit **simultaneous submissions**. This means you are completely free to send the same exact poem packet to multiple magazines concurrently, ensuring your work isn't sitting idle for six months awaiting a single response.

Horizontal rule structures and administrative workflows dictate an unyielding ethical obligation: *If a poem is accepted by Magazine A, you must instantly notify all other journals where that same poem is currently pending under consideration.*

If the submission is via Submittable, open your submission entry and click the "Messages" or "Note" tab to write: **"Please note that the poem titled 'Title' has been accepted elsewhere and is being withdrawn. The remaining poems in this packet remain available for your consideration."** Do not completely withdraw the entire submission unless all poems within it have been taken.

JAMES' PERSPECTIVE ON REJECTION

In the literary ecosystem, rejection is not a declaration of deficiency; it is an inevitable administrative reality. It simply signifies that your specific piece of art did not align with the hyper-specific stylistic mosaic or physical page limits of that exact issue.

An editor might deeply admire your craft, but if they have already slated three poems dealing with familial memory for their upcoming issue, they will pass on a fourth. Every iconic, prize-winning poet in history has acquired thousands of rejection notifications throughout their career.

"Treat submission work as an impersonal administrative ritual that protects and honors your personal creative fire. When a rejection arrives, do not let it linger in your heart. Open your tracking ledger, identify the next target magazine, and send the work back out into the world on the very same day."

By transforming submission into a systematic, respectful, and routine aspect of your creative schedule, you decouple your artistic self-worth from external validation. Your words are valuable, your perspective is necessary, and persistence is the ultimate key that unlocks editorial doors. Keep writing, keep revising, and keep submitting.

GLOSSARY OF LITERARY & PUBLISHING TERMS

Familiarity with the standard nomenclature of contemporary publishing prevents procedural errors and deepens your insight into editorial workflows.

BLIND REVIEW

An evaluation protocol wherein all personal metadata, contact strings, and identifying markers are entirely removed from a poet's manuscript. This ensures a merit-based reading completely insulated from historical reputation or institutional pedigree.

CHAPBOOK

A compact, physically light poetry volume, typically spanning between 20 and 40 pages. Chapbooks are generally organized around a precise narrative or thematic axis and frequently serve as an initial cohesive print collection.

CONTRIBUTOR COPY

A complimentary physical edition of a print journal (or long-term digital comp) delivered explicitly to an author as partial or complete payment for their curated poetry within that distinct issue.

ENJAMBMENT

The structural extension of a syntactic phrase or sentence across a poetic line break without terminal punctuation. Enjambment generates a deliberate dual-resonance, accelerating or delaying cadence while introducing textual ambiguity.

FREE VERSE

Poetry emancipated from a strict, preconceived metrical template or traditional rhyming architecture. Instead, free verse derives its rhythmic coherence from speech cadences, syntactic loops, and organic typographical structures.

MASTHEAD

The authoritative directory of editors, readers, board directors, and production personnel tasked with steering a journal's creative mandate and selecting work for publication.

SIMULTANEOUS SUBMISSION

The administrative practice of sending the identical poetry manuscript or curated packet to multiple publications simultaneously. This maximizes exposure and balances out long editorial response arcs.

STANZA

A collection of arranged lines forming a distinct typographic unit within a poem, typically set apart by white space. Stanzas operate like paragraph frameworks, pacing the thematic architecture.

INDEX

ADROIT JOURNAL, THE	6, 7
AESTHETIC VIBE	5, 6, 7
BIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT	7, 9
BLIND REVIEW	6, 8, 13
CHAPBOOK	13
CHILL SUBS	10
CONTRIBUTOR COPY	6, 13
COVER LETTER TEMPLATE	8, 9
ENJAMBMENT	13
FREE VERSE	5, 13
FRONTIER POETRY	5, 7
LYRICAL RHYTHM	7
MASTHEAD	13
POETS & WRITERS	10
RATTLE	6, 7
REJECTION MANAGEMENT	11, 12
RUST & MOTH	6, 7
SIMULTANEOUS SUBMISSION	11, 14
STANZA	6, 14

SUBMISSION GRINDER	10
THRUSH POETRY JOURNAL	7
TRISH HOPKINSON	10
TYPOGRAPHY RULES	8