

Manuscript preparation guidelines for Dispatch Authors

The **NASG Dispatch** wants to publish layout articles and how-to feature articles from any NASG member. Good quality photographs that accompany the article are necessary for publication.

What we need from you:

A text file, MS Word or a pdf, of 1,200-1,500 words, prepared with no special formatting, typefaces; colors, or symbols. That text length particularly applies to layout features; some how-to features may be shorter or on occasion, longer. Some basic style considerations that you should keep in mind:

1. Use caps and lower case for all text, including titles and sub-titles.
2. Use only a single space after the period at the end of a sentence.
3. Spell check your text file prior to submission.
4. If you refer to an internet web site in your article, include (and double-check) the full Web address.

If you are writing a layout feature, keep in mind that you will be providing a word-and-picture tour of your layout for your readers. Tell them how your interest in S gauge developed and how the concept for your layout originated. Tell them about the things that you feel make your layout special. Include important technical details such as type of track used; minimum diameter of curves; the types of power and control systems used; brands of locomotives, rolling stock, accessories, and structures.

Don't be overly concerned with writing style, punctuation, etc., we'll take care of that. That is what editors do. Just make it a personal and informal account, in your own words, of everything and anything you want a visitor to know about you and your layout.

A good selection of quality photographs or other graphics. For layout features, about 10 images are usually selected to appear in the magazine. However, we like to have many more available to choose from. Some wide shots, some mid-range, and some close-up shots of individual features are desirable. Images must be high resolution. The easiest way to determine this is to set your camera for the least number of photos, or the highest resolution, however that might be designated for the brand of camera you are using. Digital cameras capable of 6+ megapixel images should be adequate. **On-camera flash is not recommended**, and the use of a tripod is strongly recommended. We look for photos that are evenly lighted, have **sharp focus**, and have good depth-of-field. They should have an easily distinguished primary subject. Do not crop your pictures. We will do that if necessary. If you are not doing the photography yourself, the photographer should receive credit. **Sharp focus is important!** We can compensate for bad lighting using PhotoShop, but we cannot improve poor focus.

A track diagram is preferred for all layout features. This diagram can be hand-drawn, our Draftsman will create the final product for publication. Overall dimensions of the layout, length and width, should be noted on the diagram. Any major layout features should be labeled, especially if they are referred to in the text.

A photo of the author/builder is desired. This can be a photo of the author/builder with anyone else they may care to include (spouse, child, friend, pet, mentor, etc).

Author biographic information is needed for both layout and how-to features. This can include anything that the author cares to reveal about himself or herself; career, other hobbies or interests, club affiliations, civic activities, education, etc.

Captions for all the photos are needed. They can be written after the final images have been selected for publication. A thumbnail sheet of the selected images will be sent to the author so captions can be provided.

How-to articles should have a photo for every step in the process plus pictures of any special tools or jigs used. A picture is worth a thousand words.

Submitting the material:

The best way to submit your completed article is on a CD or thumbdrive, sent by **USPS Priority Mail**. That puts everything in one place, and also provides a backup. If the track diagram is drawn on paper, place it in the same envelope, along with a printed copy of the text file. You may e-mail your articles to **dispatch@nasg.org**

If you do not have the use of a computer, you may submit your story as a typewritten manuscript, single sided. Photographs should be glossy finish, a minimum size of 4" x 6".

Send everything to:

Bill Pyper, Editor, NASG Dispatch,
PO Box 885, Salem, OR 97308-0885

If you prefer to use UPS or Fed Ex, address to:

Bill Pyper, Editor, NASG Dispatch
410 Mill Street, #885, Salem, OR 97301

Be sure to retain a backup copy of anything and everything you send to us. We are not responsible for any materials that may be lost. Submitted materials will be returned to the author if requested.

IMPORTANT: Please do not submit any photographs or articles that have previously been sent to other publications. This can cause copyright problems.

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact me at **dispatch@nasg.org**

Bill Pyper, Editor