



The write stuff. Write now.

Your guide to getting stuff published in The Ensign and USPS Compass

We need you. USPS publications cannot exist without your support and contributions. Your articles and photos bring the USPS Compass and The Ensign magazine to life. Many contributors have gone on to publish books in the marine field. USPS published articles have also twice won Boating Writers International writing awards. One even captured the \$5,000 grand prize.

We want you. To continue providing fresh, up-to-the-minute information and entertainment, we need your contributions. Even if you don't like to write or doubt your writing skills, your passion and knowledge will shine through. You'll also have the support of a professional editorial staff to polish your prose until it sparkles.

Formatting

Articles: Use minimal formatting in Word, WordPerfect or a plain-text editor. Use a plain font such as 12-point Times or Courier and one-inch margins. Don't forget to include your name and squadron.

Photos: Send original digital files in jpeg or tiff format. Photos should be taken at high resolution so that the print size will be at least 3x5 inches at 300 pixels per inch. Please do not alter photos. We also accept high-quality prints. Please identify people, places and objects pictured in captions at the end of your article or in a separate document.

Artwork: Please send native-format digital files, high-resolution scans or original artwork.

Subject matter

We accept all types of articles, but here are a few ideas to get you started.

How-to articles: Maintenance, repair, safety, seamanship and boat handling tips for both beginners and seasoned boaters

Boating gone bad articles: Cautionary tales of boating blunders

Squadron stories: Civic service projects, educational and social activities, and exemplary members, but please no announcements. Include concrete details specific to your squadron, activity or member, and include photos if possible.

Cruising stories and feature articles: There's nothing like a good boating story or in-depth technical article you can sink your teeth into.

Fun stuff: Articles about how your boat got its name, the history behind your squadron burgee, short humor, nautical expressions, quotes, recipes and more

Boating news: Legislative issues, product information, uncharted hazards and other news

USPS news: Information about USPS-wide projects and programs of interest to the general member. These should go beyond announcements to explain the subject's impact and importance to the reader.

FAQs

How do I submit articles or photos?

E-mail your article and photos as individual attachments (photos should not be embedded in an e-mail message or Word document) to ensign@hq.usps.org. Submissions can also be mailed to The Ensign, P.O. Box 31664, Raleigh, NC 27622.

When will I hear from you?

We try to respond to submissions in a timely manner, but a three-week or longer wait is not unheard of, especially for feature articles.

How long should my article be?

Write enough to tell the whole story. During the editing process, we may request further information or make cuts to fit available space.

Do you pay?

No, but we do send contributor copies upon request. You'll also gain the satisfaction of helping inform your fellow boaters and the pride of seeing your name in print.

Any final words of wisdom?

Keep the reader in mind. Ask yourself why someone would want to read your article, and then write or revise it accordingly. Double-check the spelling of names and other proper nouns. Use specific, concrete language with strong action verbs and clear subjects.

What if I'm still unsure?

Query us at ensign@hq.usps.org with general questions about submissions or specific questions about an article you're writing or want to write. Let us help you get your name in print.