

# Author FAQ

*The Wandering Words*

## What is The Wandering Words?

A monthly short-story subscription delivered by mail. Each issue holds three original stories from a rotating mix of genres and authors — no screens, no scrolling, just an envelope worth opening.

## What's in each issue?

Three stories, each from a different kind of storyteller: a **Headliner** (an established or recognizable author), a **Wayfinder** (an indie, emerging, or rising author), and an **Inkling** (a contest-winning author).

## What kind of stories do you publish?

Clean, complete short fiction — mystery, romance, suspense, historical, adventure, speculative, coming-of-age, and more. Every story stands on its own, with a real beginning, middle, and ending.

## What does “clean fiction” mean?

Something you can comfortably hand to nearly anyone. Tension, danger, romance, and serious themes are all welcome — we just keep explicit sexual content, graphic violence, and profanity off the page.

## Can I submit a story?

Wayfinder submissions open during designated windows — watch our author list and the For Authors page for announcements. Headliner spots are generally by invitation, and Inkling spots are awarded through our short-story contest.

## What are the word-count limits?

**Headliner:** up to 4,000 words. **Wayfinder:** up to 2,500 words. **Inkling:** up to 1,000 words.

## Is publication paid?

Not currently. Selected authors are unpaid, but do receive five contributor copies, a publication credit, an author bio and links, promotional support, and editorial feedback on request.

## Do I keep the rights to my story?

Yes. You keep your copyright throughout. Selected authors sign an agreement granting us the rights needed to print, distribute, and promote the story, including six months of exclusivity from first publication — after that, the story is yours to use freely.

## How long does publication take?

Selected stories are generally published within twelve months of signing the author agreement. Your exact issue depends on genre rotation and production scheduling.

## What's the Inkling contest?

Our short-story contest, open periodically throughout the year. Contest dates, themes, entry fees, and full rules are announced separately for each window.

## How do I stay in the loop on submission windows and contests?

Join our author email list or check the For Authors section of our website — that's where new windows, contest openings, and author news get posted first.

## Who do I contact with questions?

Email us any time at [info@thewanderingwords.com](mailto:info@thewanderingwords.com) — we're glad to help.

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