



## Contributors' Guidelines

*Ol' Skool Rodz* and *Car Culture DeLuxe Magazines* welcome freelance contributions from writers and photographers. Besides our regular staff, we depend on freelance contributors to supply us with some good event and car coverage. We try to get to as many events and places as possible but we cannot be everywhere!

It's a good idea to query first. On event coverage, make sure we don't have someone else covering the event. For vehicle articles, it's good to see if the ride meets our needs at the present time. Send a sample picture or two of any suggested car feature. Different is definitely better. There are plenty of worthy 1932 Ford roadsters and Model-A coupes but not many '41 Hudson rods or '61 Pontiac customs.

In all cases, know your market. Be familiar with *Ol' Skool Rodz* and *Car Culture DeLuxe* and the market we serve. This is most easily accomplished by reading several issues of the magazines. Don't waste your time writing about or photographing events or vehicles that don't fit our market. *Both magazines* feature traditional hot rods and customs. We have no interest in muscle cars, pony cars, trailer queens, fat-tired motorcycles, or billet anything. Steel is the deal, so we *very* seldom feature fiberglass cars. They have to be pretty special and of some *historical significance* to get a second look.

Following are some guidelines for articles and photographs. Adherence to these few suggestions will increase the likelihood of your submissions being accepted and published. Please send all contributions and queries to:

Alan Mayes, Managing Editor  
PO Box 1928  
Tullahoma, TN 37388  
alan@olskoolrodz.com; Tel. 615-305-1028; Fax 615-523-1141

### Text Guidelines:

- English is the language of the land. We prefer articles with proper grammar, punctuation, and structure. Remember that you are writing for a general national audience of 100,000 people or more, so make the article easily understood. Get a good paperback writers' handbook and style manual and keep them by your computer. Strunk & White's or Webster's are both excellent.
- Get your facts right. That includes spelling of names and places. Facts and spellings are easy to check in this age of instant information availability on the internet. Run a Google check and make sure you have it right. When interviewing a car owner about his car, make sure you get the correct spelling of his name and anyone else that helped on the car.
- Most word processing programs have built-in spell check and grammar check. Use it. It won't always be right, because it won't recognize some of the words and names you'll use (like Edelbrock or Studebaker) until you enter them into your own personal dictionary. At least the program will flag a possible discrepancy and give you the opportunity to fix it. Spell check also will not catch the wrong word spelled correctly (right, write, rite; to, too, two).
- Give your story some variety of words. Get a thesaurus if you need to.
- Keep to the subject. If you're writing an article about Joe Blow's 1934 Dodge, there should be no more than a passing reference, if any at all, to other cars he has owned or built. Those can be the subjects of other stories. Likewise, if you are writing about a rod run, the readers are more interested in the run itself and what happened there than in what time you left home to get there,

- how late your buddy was (everyone has a late buddy story), or how much green mold was on the walls in the Hell Motel you stayed in during your journey.
- Include captions for your photos. Captions help the reader decide whether to read an article or not. They also can give some much-desired information. Our readers really seek information about other people's cars.
  - Proofread your work. Either have someone else to go over it, or walk away for awhile and then come back and go over it with a fresh eye.
  - All articles *must* be in electronic format. Send it on a disk or e-mail it. Either one is OK. Don't plan on an editor retyping your story for you...ain't gonna happen!

#### Photo Guidelines:

- High resolution digitals are the preferred format of nearly all major magazine and book publishers these days. We need files that will reproduce at 300 dpi (dots per inch) in the finished size. That usually means you'll need a camera in the 6MP (mega pixel) range at a minimum.
- Second choice for photos is color slides. If 35mm, they need to be mounted in cardboard or plastic mounts. Be sure to number them to match your captions
- Pay attention to the details of your photograph. Watch out for reflections on shiny surfaces like chrome and paint. We don't need any pictures of you reflecting in a fender or spotlight.
- Pay attention to details of the photo subject, too. On a car feature, shoot pictures from every conceivable angle and of every detail of the car. If text mentions a certain feature of the car, there should be at least one picture of it. Shoot pictures of the engine, the interior, and details like taillights, grilles, emblems, pinstriping and dashboards.
- Shoot some vertical photos. The magazine page is a vertical format. Vertical format pictures are better for full page and cover shots.
- Include people in your shots. At events, get greasers and pretty girls. EVERY cover we have done has at least one picture of a pretty girl. EVERY ONE.
- Shoot cars from several different perspectives. At a car show, don't shoot every car from the same angle. Get down on your knees and shoot a few. Watch backgrounds, too.
- People look better photographed at a slight angle. Such a view gives perspective. Have you ever seen a good driver's license photo? No one has. It's because the pictures are taken with harsh light and straight from the front. Even supermodels have lousy DL photos.
- Speaking of light, most editors agree that late afternoon/early evening light makes the best photographs. It's warmer (more yellowish) and has fewer harsh shadows. Slightly overcast days are good too, because the light is diffused. Again, it's better for shadow avoidance. A little bit of fill flash helps with the shadows if nature isn't cooperating.
- Watch the focus. Make sure the camera is focused on the right thing. If you're not careful to place your focusing grid in the right place, auto-focus cameras will sometimes focus on something other than the intended subject, such as on a firewall when you wanted a sharp picture of the valve cover. Sometimes it's best to turn off the automatic focus and dial it in manually.

Last but not least, enjoy yourself. Hot rods and custom cars are fun, so don't take yourself or us too seriously. Include some humor and a little irreverence in your words and pictures. Keep 'em comin'.