



## WRITER'S DIGEST PERSONAL ESSAY AWARDS DEADLINES, PRICING, AND NOTIFICATION



*We're looking for personal essays! Think you can write a winning essay in 2,000 words or less? Enter the first ever Writer's Digest Personal Essay Awards for your chance to win! \$2,500 in cash, publication in Writer's Digest magazine, and a paid trip to our ever-popular Writer's Digest Conference!*

Ready to enter the Writer's Digest Personal Essay Awards? See below for pricing and deadline information. All entry fees are due in U.S. Dollars. Entry fees can be paid online by credit card/debit card (MC, V, AMEX & DISC) or PayPal.

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

#### **Early-Bird Deadline\*: September 15, 2020**

\$25 for the first entry; \$20 for each additional entry.

#### **Regular Deadline\*: October 15th, 2020**

•\$30 for the first entry; \$25 for each additional entry.

*\*All deadlines are at 11:59 PM EST, on the specified date.*

**Top Award Winners will be notified by December 31, 2020.** Top winners in each category will be listed in the May/June 2021 issue of Writer's Digest and at [www.writersdigest.com](http://www.writersdigest.com) after the May/June 2021 issue is published. Entrants not selected as winners will not be notified at this time. Non-winning submissions will receive a competition status update in the weeks following the notification of winners.

# WRITER'S DIGEST

## WRITER'S DIGEST PERSONAL ESSAY AWARDS PRIZES AND PROSPECTUS



WD's writing competitions recognize writing excellence on a global scale for nearly 90 years! Enter the first ever Writer's Digest Personal Essay Awards for your chance to win! See below for pricing and deadline information. All entry fees are due in U.S. Dollars. Entry fees can be paid online by credit card/debit card (MC, V, AMEX & DISC) or PayPal.

### THE PRIZES

#### ONE GRAND PRIZE WINNER WILL RECEIVE:

\$2,500 in cash  
Their essay title published in Writer's Digest magazine's May/June 2021 issue  
A paid trip to the Writer's Digest Annual Conference, including a coveted Pitch Slam slot

#### THE SECOND PLACE WINNER WILL RECEIVE:

\$1,000 in cash  
Their essay title published in Writer's Digest magazine's May/June 2021 issue

#### THE THIRD PLACE WINNER WILL RECEIVE:

\$500 in cash  
Their essay title published in Writer's Digest magazine's May/June 2021 issue

#### FOURTH THROUGH TENTH PLACE WINNERS WILL RECEIVE:

\$100 in cash  
Their essay titles published in Writer's Digest magazine's May/June 2021 issue

#### ELEVENTH THROUGH TWENTY-FIFTH PLACE WINNERS WILL RECEIVE:

A \$50 gift certificate for [writersdigestshop.com](http://writersdigestshop.com)

### THE PARTICULARS

You'll find everything you'll need to know in this PDF, including:

- PRIZES
- DEADLINES, PRICING AND NOTIFICATION
- RULES AND GUIDELINES
- PREPARING YOUR ENTRY
- HOW TO ENTER
- FAQ's
- 2020-2021 COMPETITION SEASON PLANNER

- ❖ For questions related to any of the topics above, email us at: [writersdigestwritingcompetition@aimmedia.com](mailto:writersdigestwritingcompetition@aimmedia.com)
- ❖ For questions related to your *Submittable* account, including payment, contact: [support@submittable.com](mailto:support@submittable.com) or the use the handy chat function on their website for the quicker response.

# WRITER'S DIGEST

## WRITER'S DIGEST PERSONAL ESSAY AWARDS RULES AND GUIDELINES



WD's writing competitions recognize writing excellence on a global scale for nearly 90 years! Enter the first ever Writer's Digest Personal Essay Awards for your chance to win! Read our rules and guidelines below...

### RULES AND GUIDELINES

- All entries must be submitted online. Entries must be accompanied by the required entry fee by credit/debit card or PayPal. All entries must be in English. Only original works that have not been published in print, digital or online publications will be considered. Self-published work in blogs, on social media, etc. will be considered.
- Have your necessary information at hand when you are ready to submit your entry.
- Entries exceeding the 2,000 word limit will be disqualified. *Word count* refers to all words making up the story (no matter the number of letters in the word). Do not count the title in the word count.
- All submissions are final. Refunds are not provided for disqualified, withdrawn or non-winning entries. Once a submission has been checked out, it is entered into the competition, and cannot be edited or replaced.
- If the Grand Prize Winner accepts the Writer's Digest Conference portion of their prize they must agree to travel (flying round-trip from the same city) during the conference dates in 2021. The editors or agents who meet with the Grand Prize Winner are under no obligation to read, buy or represent the Grand Prize Winner's work. This prize includes airfare, hotel and conference registration.
- Winners must fill out and submit the appropriate tax related forms in order to receive their cash awards. If the forms are not submitted within 60 days of the request date, cash awards may be forfeited.
- Writer's Digest retains one-time nonexclusive publication rights to the Grand Prize and top winning entries to be published in a Writer's Digest publication. **Authors retain all ownership of their work.**
- Check your spelling carefully including all login information, email addresses etc. Incorrect email addresses may result in the transmission of important information being delayed and/or unsuccessful. Be sure that our email addresses (*Writer's Digest* and *Submittable*) are not blocked, or you may not receive critical information, receipts, confirmations etc. Check your SPAM folder for any expected but unaccounted for email communications.
- The following are not permitted to enter the contest, neither under their legal names nor pen names: employees of Active Interest Media and their immediate family members; Writer's Digest Books authors; Writer's Digest contributing editors and columnists; and Writer's Digest instructors for online courses and live webinars. Grand Prize Winners from the previous three years are not eligible. Ineligible entries will be disqualified.
- Writer's Digest assumes all entries are original and are the works and property of the entrant, with all rights granted therein.
- Writer's Digest is not liable for any copyright infringement on the part of the entrant and will not become involved in copyright disputes.
- Writer's Digest reserves the right to reject work deemed unsuitable for publication or that does not meet all named criteria.
- *Winner Notification* dates refer to the date that all winners will be notified by. Entrants not selected as winners will not be notified at this time.
- Non-winning submissions will receive a competition status update in the weeks following the notification of winners.
- WD writing competitions are open to U.S. and non-U.S. residents; however, due to U.S. Government restrictions we are unable to accept entries from Syria, Iran, North Korea, or Crimea.



WD's writing competitions recognize writing excellence on a global scale for nearly 90 years! Enter the first ever Writer's Digest Personal Essay Awards for your chance to win! To get started submitting your work, see the helpful tips below...

### PREPARING YOUR ENTRY

**We're looking for personal essays! Think you can write a winning essay in 2,000 words or less? Here's how to get started...**

- All entries must be submitted online through *Submittable*. If you already have a *Submittable* account, simply log in! There is no cap as to the number of submissions that can be entered into the competition overall, however each submission (including edited versions being re-submitted) must be checked out separately.
- Please be sure that the email address that you provide will be valid throughout the competition. Competition related updates and winner notifications are sent via: email. Please type carefully and list only one email address. Check your spelling carefully including all login information, email addresses etc. Incorrect email addresses may result in the transmission of important information being delayed and/or unsuccessful. Be sure that our email addresses (*Writer's Digest* and *Submittable*) are not blocked, or you may not receive critical information, receipts, confirmations etc. Check your SPAM folder for any expected but unaccounted for email communications.
- Please submit text only; illustrations are not accepted. We recommend that you select a font which is easy to read; please do not use a decorative or script font. 12-point type size is preferred but not mandatory. We have no requirements as to the number of words per page. We have no rules or requirements regarding subject matter or language etc.
- It is preferred that an entry be formatted as Letter, 8.5 x 11, single sided, Normal 1 inch margins. All documents must be double-spaced.
- The submission file (both the manuscript/story itself as well as the file name) should not include any identifying information. We recommend that you avoid adding symbols/punctuation in file names of the document file which you are uploading. Files are not returned.
- Entries exceeding the word limit will be disqualified. *Word count* refers to all words making up the story (no matter the number of letters in the word). Do not count the title in the word count.
- When filling out the online submission form, you will be asked to upload your entry file. Accepted file formats include: .doc, .docx, .rtf, .odt, .wpd and .pdf. Do not attach zipped files, or documents stored on the web like Google doc's etc . Please name your file the same as your submission title if possible; identifying information should not be included in your file name.



WD's writing competitions recognize writing excellence on a global scale for nearly 90 years! Here's how to Enter!

### ENTERING IS EASY!

Create your free Submittable account by clicking the *SUBMIT* button. If you already have a Submittable account, simply log in!

*\*NEW\* You can now compete in multiple WD competitions with a single login! Check back often for an updated list of competitions.*

When you are ready to submit your work to the **WD Personal Essay Awards** readers, you'll want to have the following information available:

- ✓ **Your contact information** *(be careful that the information provided is accurate). Contact information is to be provided only on the submission form (not on the submission's file upload). Time sensitive information such as credits and contact information (for prize distribution) is taken directly from the submission form. Due to the nature of deadlines, corrections to this information are not guaranteed.*
- ✓ **Your PERSONAL ESSAY AWARDS submission file** *(see the PREPARING YOUR ENTRY tips for more information).*
- ✓ **Your method of payment** *(see the ENTRY PRICING, SUBMISSION DEADLINES AND WINNER NOTIFICATION page for tips for all pricing and deadlines).*

Ready to enter? Click on the link below to get started!

Click here to **Submit**

Powered by Submittable 



WD's writing competitions recognize writing excellence on a global scale for nearly 90 years!

### ANSWERS TO FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS...

For all Writer's Digest Competition related questions and queries, please email: [writersdigestwritingcompetition@aimmedia.com](mailto:writersdigestwritingcompetition@aimmedia.com)

**Having troubles logging in?** For help, go to: <https://submittable.help/en/articles/923459-how-do-i-sign-in-to-my-submittable-account>

**Are there any restrictions regarding content, language, subject matter etc.?** No, we do not have any restrictions or preferences.

**Do you allow simultaneous submissions?** Yes, simultaneous submissions are certainly allowed. Simply inform us of acceptance elsewhere, if applicable.

**Is it okay to have illustration or pictures?** Please submit text only (unless the entry is being submitted into the Self Published Book or eBook Awards).

**How do I determine my word count?** Count all words (except the title) making up your story (no matter the number of letters in the word). Do not include the entry title in your count.

**What are your formatting requirements – any other tips?** To best present your work, we suggest that you select a font that is easy to read; 12-point type size is preferred but not mandatory. We have no requirements as to the number of words per page. It is preferred that an entry be formatted to or printed on 8.5 x 11 white paper, single sided, 1 inch margins. We prefer any standard-formatting styles (although non-conforming entries will not be disqualified).

**Are pen names allowed?** Yes, you may enter under a pen name. Include your pen name on all forms as you would wish for them to appear in any credits. Please be advised (and advise us of it if you are notified as a winner) that we only need your legal name if you are chosen as a winner (in order to issue prizes).

**What if I wanted to submit only part of my story into the competition (in order to stay within the maximum number of words for example)?**

If you submit a portion of a larger work, please understand that what you submit will be judged as a complete story, not part of a larger work. Your submission needs to read as a complete story in and of itself.

**What if I would like to edit or exchange an entry that I have already submitted?** Edits must be done prior to entering. Once an entry has been submitted, we do not accept edits, replacements or exchanges. If you wish to re-enter an edited piece, it is most acceptable and is considered to be a new entry. You may wish to slightly alter the entry title or the file name in these cases, so that you are able to identify the versions-should you be selected as a winner.

**Is there an age limit for entrants?** All contest entrants must be aged 18 years or older or over the age of majority in the jurisdiction in which they reside.

**How do I submit my entry fees?** All entry fees are due in U.S. Dollars. Entry fees can be paid online by credit card/debit card (MC, V, AMEX & DISC) or PayPal.

**Once the competition is over, will you return my entry?** Entries are not returned; please keep a copy for your records.

## WRITER'S DIGEST

## 2020-2021 COMPETITION SEASON PLANNER



*The Writer's Digest collection of competitions, all which are held on a yearly basis, have long-standing respect within the writing community. Nearly 90 years ago, Writer's Digest launched its first writing competition. Today, Writer's Digest holds six competitions, with a combined twenty-eight categories. Honoring writers across a variety of genres and formats including short pieces (fiction and non-fiction), poetry, performance scripts, articles (print or online) and self-published books, Writer's Digest has a competition to highlight your work. Winners are eligible for cash prizes, free trips to our ever-popular Writer's Digest Annual Writing Conference, promotion in our print magazine and website, and more.*

*We hope that you'll join us and share your work in any (better yet--all) of the competitions! Sharpen your pencils, sync your devices, and mark your calendars!*

### WD ANNUAL WRITING COMPETITION

#### Early-Bird Deadline: May 4, 2020

- Poetry entry—\$20 for the first entry; \$15 for each additional\* poetry entry.
- Manuscript entry—\$30 for the first entry; \$25 for each additional\* manuscript entry.

#### Regular Deadline: June 5, 2020

- Poetry entry—\$25 for the first entry; \$20 for each additional\* poetry entry.
- Manuscript entry—\$35 for the first entry; \$30 for each additional\* manuscript entry.

### WD POETRY AWARDS

#### Early-Bird Deadline: October 1, 2020

- First entry—\$20
- Each additional\* entry—\$15

#### Regular Deadline: November 2, 2020

- First entry—\$25
- Each additional\* entry—\$20

### WD SELF-PUBLISHED BOOK AWARDS

#### Early-Bird Deadline: April 10, 2020

- First entry—\$99
- Each additional\* entry—\$85

#### Regular Deadline: May 1, 2020

- First entry—\$125
- Each additional\* entry—\$95

### NEW! WD PERSONAL ESSAY AWARDS

#### Early-Bird Deadline: September 15, 2020

- First entry—\$25
- Each additional\* entry—\$20

#### Regular Deadline: October 15, 2020

### WD SHORT SHORT STORY COMPETITION

#### Early-Bird Deadline: November 16, 2020

- First entry—\$25
- Each additional\* entry—\$20

#### •Regular Deadline: December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020

### WD SELF-PUBLISHED EBOOK AWARDS

#### Early-Bird Deadline: August 17, 2020

- First entry—\$99
- Each additional\* entry—\$85

#### Deadline: September 21, 2020

- First entry—\$125
- Each additional\* entry—\$95

*\*Additional entry discounts are only available when using the linked entry form offered during submission of a full price entry. We cannot offer refunds for discounts not redeemed through the linked form.*