

***Spin Off* Contributor's Guidelines**

Spin Off is a quarterly magazine devoted to the interests of handspinners at all skill levels. Informative articles in each issue aim to encourage the novice, challenge the expert, and increase every spinner's working knowledge of this ancient and complex craft. If you are not already familiar with the style and tone of the magazine, please read a few issues before submitting a proposal. We review both proposals and full manuscripts. If you'd like to get our thoughts before you start writing, please send us an email and tell us about your project or idea. Make sure to include visuals (snapshots or JPEGs are fine).

- *If you are not a spinner, it will be difficult for you to write effectively for this magazine.*
- *If you are a spinner whose idea interests us, but you're an inexperienced writer, we will work with you on presenting your thoughts.*
- *Your projects and/or samples must contain handspun yarns as an essential component; commercial yarns may be used only in supporting roles.*
- *Think of Spin Off as an opportunity to share your experiences and knowledge with your community and to expand our handspinning horizons. Consider how your contribution will serve the reader.*

Articles in a typical issue may include the following subjects.

- 1) Spinning basics:
 - a) Fiber preparation: handcarded rolags or batts, drumcarded rolags or batts, flick carding locks, blending
 - b) Drafting techniques: long draw, short draw, on the fold, semi-worsted, long-draw, etc.
 - c) Creating yarn qualities: soft yarns, hard yarns, active-twist yarns, balanced yarns, yarns for knitting, weaving, crocheting, etc.
 - d) Finishing your yarn: washing, steaming, blocking, etc.
- 2) Methods of dyeing with natural and chemical dyes (always include safety information).
- 3) Tools for spinning and preparing fibers. Teach us about their history, how to use them safely and effectively, and how to maintain them.
- 4) Fiber basics: Focus on a particular fiber and tell us about the characteristics that are appealing to handspinners; tell us how to choose the most appropriate fiber and how to use it effectively.
- 5) Ideas for using handspun yarn in a variety of techniques (knitting, weaving, crochet, felting, rug hooking, lace, etc.).
- 6) The history and/or cultural role of spinning.
- 7) Something surprising!
- 8) New approaches to familiar topics are welcome.

Technical matters

You should display a thorough command of your topic; technical accuracy is a must. Make your information accessible to the reader. Strive for an informal style of presentation. There is a place for first-person accounts of your process and authoritative direction, so choose your style based on the needs of the article.

If you include references to other published sources or if your idea is based on or was inspired by someone else's work, please provide a complete bibliography. You can photocopy the title and copyright pages of each book for us or make a list. For a book, we need full title and subtitle, complete name(s) of author(s), publisher's name, place of publication, date of publication, and pertinent page numbers. For a

magazine article, we need full title and subtitle, complete name(s) of author(s), magazine title, volume number, issue number, and pertinent page numbers.

We reserve the right to edit material as necessary to fit the magazine's style and available space. We will ask you to review the edited article before it is published. Please let us know if you will be out of town or unavailable during the cycle of the magazine that your article will appear in.

Submitting manuscripts or ideas

All proposals are submitted via our online form: [Long Thread Submissions Form](#). If you have already written an article, you can attach a copy of the manuscript, supporting images or drawings, and a brief personal biography. If you are at the idea stage, send a detailed proposal of your subject with any sketches or images you have. Clear snapshots are always useful.

Rights, scheduling, simultaneous submissions, and payment

We purchase first serial rights, paid upon publication of the finished article and materials, and we give byline credit. We generally also retain the right to reuse the material in other ways in the future, such as in eBooks or on our website. Please don't submit your article simultaneously to *Spin-Off* and another publication. You are required to tell us where any material may previously have been published, including blogs and other online venues. If you are sending photos or visuals that you did not take yourself, give us the contact information for the creator, as we will need to make separate arrangements with that person.

We schedule articles several issues in advance, and we'll let you know the issue your article is scheduled for as soon as we know. Before we go to press, we will send you a copy of your edited article for review.

Deadlines

Spin Off is published four times a year, in March, May, August, and November. Once we have scheduled your article, we will contact you to make sure that the deadlines for the completed manuscript, projects, and photography are agreeable to you.

Format

Your article must be computer generated and sent in electronic format via email or service such as DropBox. We strongly prefer Microsoft Word; if this is unavailable, please save your file as .rtf. If we are unable to open your document, we will not be able to accept it. Titles, headings, and subheadings, and captions for photos should be included in your article. Number the photos and write corresponding captions for photos with all people and textiles clearly identified. Include the photo credit with each photo.

Provide a 2–3 sentence author biography at the end of the article written in the third person.

Include important details about spinning

In your article, make sure to tell us all about the fiber (breed, length of locks, etc.), how you prepared the fiber (rolags, batts, combed top, flick carded, spun in the grease, etc.), what tools you used to prepare and spin the yarn (handcarders, combs, spinning wheel, spindle), how you spun the yarn (long draw, short draw, on-the-fold), whether you plied it (two-ply, three-ply) and how (from bobbins, Andean plying). How many yards or ounces did you spin? What is the grist or wraps per inch? How did you finish the yarn (washing, blocking, steaming)?

If you are submitting a project, we will supply a template of yarn requirements and step-by-step directions. The more closely you are able to follow this template, the more likely we are to be able to edit your work accurately.

Length

Length depends on the subject; most articles contain between 500 to 2,700 words and will occupy 1 to 6 pages in the magazine. Your contract will include details about the anticipated word length.

Visuals

Good, solid visual information is an important feature of *Spin Off*. If you can provide clear photos or drawings, we may be able to use them directly; even if we choose not to use them, they will help us produce finished artwork. JPEGs, snapshots, and sketches are wonderful resources. Feel free to send us several image versions.

Photographs: Please send high-resolution digital images for your article. Photographs must be sharp and clear, with good contrast, clear focus, and a simple background. (Contact us for specific details on resolution and good photography tips.) Make sure to include the photographer's name with the image. If you are unsure whether your digital image is high enough quality to publish, send us an example and we'll let you know. If you are unable to provide images digitally, please contact us for details on prints or transparencies.

In most instances, we photograph items, materials, and tools in our studio. When necessary, we'll schedule photography sessions and then ask you to send the objects. We will usually need to have them on hand for between eight and sixteen weeks, although we will do our best to get them back to you as quickly as possible. If you need an item at a particular time, email us before shipping it to make special arrangements.

Drawings and diagrams should be created in black ink on white paper; use white paper with blue graph lines if the grid is helpful. We nearly always re-render drawings here to be sure they will reproduce consistently. Any type of sketch is helpful, even if it's not in the ideal format. Please provide any necessary labels, captions, or explanations. (If possible, we prefer vector files; contact us for details.)

Photos of swatches, yarn, and fiber samples should be included whenever possible. Swatches should be a minimum of 4" x 4", yarn samples at least two yards long, send a couple of photos of locks or ounces of the original fiber. **Remember: Handspinning is the focus of the magazine and the articles.** All proposals should be submitted using our online form: [Long Thread Submissions Form](#).

Receipt of your submission will be acknowledged. Visuals can be submitted electronically as JPEG, tiff, or GIF files. Please note: there is a 1 MB size limit for each attached file. For questions not covered here, email us at spinoff@longthreadmedia.com.