

THE **Owner Builder**

BE INSPIRED – REAL STORIES ABOUT REAL OWNER BUILDERS



ARTICLE SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

The Owner Builder magazine operates largely on a goodwill basis, whereby owner builders submit articles that they feel would be of interest. The magazine is a vehicle for owner builders to share their experiences with others; many articles are one-off submissions by owner builder readers, detailing these experiences.

There are some advertiser contributors who provide articles in return for advertising elsewhere in the magazine. These articles are generally of a technical nature and are not advertorial in any way.

Regular contributors are occasionally used, who seek out potential stories and provide professional quality articles, including photographs and diagrams, for submission. They also commit to providing a certain number of articles. In order to become a regular contributor, at least two articles must have been previously printed in the magazine, to determine acceptability of content and style by the readership.

No commitment to accept or print any article will be made by **The Owner Builder** magazine until the text is received. Final acceptance may then be dependant on the photographs/diagrams but the text is generally enough to provide us with an idea as to whether the article will be acceptable. However, we are prepared to discuss ideas for articles before you commence, in order to avoid a situation where we receive an article that is not suitable or a close duplicate of another.

Articles must not be advertorial in any way. A designer, builder or supplier may be mentioned in an article, but only in such a way as to enhance or clarify the article. In some cases, their contact details will be included at the end of the article in the Hot Tips section.

Submissions should include photographs and / or diagrams. Full contact details of the owners and writer must be provided, as well as details of the originator of any content that is to be used i.e. photos, plans. This is especially important with the details of the architect/designer, as technically we have to get their permission to print any sketch plans, and even photographs. Contact details will not be published unless expressly included within the article, but these details are essential for our own records.

Deadlines for each issue are to be strictly adhered to. Articles received after the deadline will only be processed for consideration in the following issue. We work to tight timescales and cannot afford to deal with articles which arrive late. This applies to accompanying illustrations as well as to the text.

The magazine means the printed version, copies made of out of print stock and electronic versions (i.e. CD ROM) made available for sale.

A compilation refers to a compilation of articles relevant to a particular subject eg mud brick construction, in a similar way to how the House Plans booklet is currently produced.

Submissions should not have appeared in another publication prior to appearing in **The Owner Builder**. If they have, we need to know where and when the article appeared. If we agree to publish then you must have the agreement with the original publication that allows the article to be reprinted.

The Owner Builder magazine retains publishing rights to any submissions in the format that they are printed. They are then available to **The Owner Builder** magazine for reference and reprinting in future issues of **The Owner Builder** magazine or compilations. The original contributor will always be credited.

CONTENT REQUIREMENTS

ARTICLE LENGTH

Articles should not be longer than 2500 – 2700 words.

As a guideline:

- **Feature article:** significant supply of photos/diagrams (1500–2500 words)
- **Secondary article:** some photos/diagrams (1000 – 1500 words)
- **Filler article:** significant supply of photos/diagrams (max 500 words)

Features and Secondary Articles

All feature and secondary articles (even if not pure technical articles) should contain some technical information. This does not have to be in the format of exact technical specifications but should include explanations of how some technical aspects of the project were accomplished e.g. unusual window installation, stone flooring, different materials butting up against one another etc.

In feature articles, some of the human aspects of the project are always of interest. Why the decision to owner build or buy an owner built house, how did they go about researching and preparing themselves, how has it affected their lives, has it changed what they do since then, would they do it again etc.

Fillers

Filler articles can be any short story that easily and quickly puts across a point. They can be either technical (e.g. Bricks with a purpose, #120, pg 16) or purely inspirational (e.g. back cover, #119).

We are also interested in short articles on the following subjects:

Craftsmen – featuring building craftsmen, their materials and methods, inspirational stuff.

‘Old’ owner builders – what happens to people once they have finished building their homes? Are they continuing doing other projects? Has it changed their lives?

Other projects – now that the house is built, what do you do with all that creative building spirit? Garden feature, studio, shed etc

All articles

Rough diagrams should be supplied, where possible, with any technical information (materials, dimensions, etc) noted on the diagram. This will then allow us to redraw the diagram accurately. However, if you are a draftsman/engineer, it would be most appreciated if completed diagrams were provided.

We also like to include **Technical Sidebars and Hot Tips** (where appropriate).

A Technical Sidebar will include some technical hints and tips or points of interest, which do not necessarily fit in with the general flow of the story. For an example, see ‘Starting off in Stone, Some handy stone laying hints, #121, pg 24.’

Hot Tips are pointers to other resources that may further expand on the subject covered in the article. These are included at the end of the article and could be websites, books, videos etc but NOT specific suppliers (i.e. not free adverts). For an example, see ‘ColorBond Beauty, #121, pg 28’.

Deadlines for submitting material

The first Tuesday of month of	for inclusion in issue
December	February/March
February	April/May
April	June/July
June	August/September
August	October/November
October	December/January

Content Checklist

A checklist is provided (see page 4), which contains some of the questions that we like to have answers to.

PHOTOGRAPHIC REQUIREMENTS

General Guidelines

- The more the better. Remember to include a number of exterior shots and try to include a full view of the house. Cover shots are generally exterior shots, not interior, and you will stand a far better chance of getting a cover if we have more to choose from.
- Shots in different orientations (portrait and landscape) are required.
- Remember that many photos will be printed in B&W, therefore contrasting tones will make a photograph more interesting. Note: even though photos may be reproduced as B&W, please still supply as colour originals as this gives us the best conversion opportunities.
- Standard size (10cm x 15cm) for printed photographs
- Gloss only (not matt)
- Please include negatives when supplying colour prints.
- No transparencies or slides
- Do not write on the back of the photographs. Please provide captions, but do it on a separate sheet, referenced by the print number (which can be found printed on the back of each photograph) or file name for digital
- All photos and negatives will be returned.

Digital images

Digital cameras

Digital still cameras offer a number of benefits for both photographers and magazine publishers – no materials cost, rapid review of results and no requirement to scan negatives, prints or transparencies. However the quality of the image produced can range from very good to very poor depending on the equipment used and the camera settings chosen. Even if the image looks great on a computer screen, it might look pretty terrible when it has been through the whole printing process. The amount of digital information required for good print reproduction is far higher than needed for onscreen viewing and emailing, so much larger file sizes are involved.

Generally, digital still cameras capable of 6 or more 'megapixel' images should provide suitable postcard size results. For a full page image an 8 megapixel or higher camera would be advisable.

The quality of any digital image is also very dependent on the image settings selected – use the maximum image size and highest quality that your camera offers. Cameras sometimes give a format choice – jpeg, tiff or RAW. Generally jpeg will be fine as long as the highest quality is used, but tiff or Camera RAW will usually give better results.

It is important to avoid any software manipulation of the image as this can seriously affect quality for reproduction. But if you do want to indicate how the photograph can be enhanced please provide the original file as well.

Finally if you are keen to contribute to the magazine it would be a very good idea to send a few sample files to us just to be sure that your system is capable of producing the standard of work we require. If sending samples by email, please only include ONE file as an example.

Scans of original images

If scans of printed photographs are supplied, please ensure that they are scanned at 300dpi when the image is at 100% of its size. Digital images are to be supplied on CD, please do not email them. We cannot guarantee that scanned images will be acceptable and may still require the original photographs and negatives. Please contact us to discuss this or if you wish to supply scans direct from transparencies or negatives.

Please read the section on digital camera images as many of the same general guidelines apply to scanned images.

Supplying Camera RAW files...

- Our first choice for format if available.
- Use the highest quality settings your camera has available.
- Set your colour space to Adobe RGB (sRGB is designed for web and onscreen use and is less suitable for print production). Don't use ProPhoto RGB.
- As well as supplying the RAW files, include low resolution jpegs of the same images.
- There are many types of Camera RAW file – each digital camera manufacturer has their own variation, so it is important that your camera is supported in Adobe Lightroom, which is what we use to work with RAW files.
If you're not sure, please contact us before supplying images in RAW format.

CONTRIBUTOR CHECKLIST

There are a number of items that will be useful when putting together an article. This list is intended to jog the memory about various aspects of the build that you may have forgotten about. Not all will be applicable. All material supplied will be returned to you.

Plans	Do you have a copy of the plans that we could use?
	What are the contact details of the architect/designer/draftsperson who compiled the final plans used for council?
Photographs	Do you have any archival photographs that we could use?
	Do you have any current photographs that you think we may be able to use? If so, in what format and are the negatives available?
	Who are the photographers?
Design Criteria	Was there an underlying philosophy that influenced you?
	What were your initial design criteria? Were any of these compromised or changed, and if so, why?
	Did you have any constraints that you had to work around? e.g. views to the west, large tree that couldn't be moved.
	What is the overall floor area?
Materials and techniques	What materials were used in construction?
	In what quantities? Where sourced? Why did you choose these materials?
	What construction techniques were used? Why were these chosen?
Council	What was the procedure with your council?
	What objections did you come up against and how did you resolve them?
Water	What is your water system?
	Tank capacity? Roof area for collection?
	Do you have filtering/first flush devices?
	What do you plan to do about tank maintenance?
	Do you have any dams?
Waste	How is waster water treated? What system do you have?
	What issues did you have installing it?
Power	Grid connected or solar? If solar, details.
	What did it involve and what was the cost to have it installed?
Hot water system	What hot water system do you use?
Heating	What sort of heating system do you use?
Cooling	What cooling system do you use?
Termites	What sort of termite measures do you have in place?
Bushfire	Are you in a bushfire zone? How did this effect your design & build? Did you have to satisfy any specific regulations?
Costs	Do you have any cost breakdown that would be useful e.g. slab, framing, windows & doors, labour etc.?
Time frame	How long did it take you to build – overall and actual building time?
Labour	How many people were involved in the project?
	What tasks were outsourced to tradespeople, and why?
Insurance	Did you have insurance while building? If so, what were the conditions, who with and what did it cost?

Continued...

Finance	Did you get finance for the project? If so, what were the conditions and who with?
Owner builder regulations	How was the project affected by the fact that you were an owner builder?
OH&S	Are there any safety issues that you think would be of interest?
Specialist tools and skills	What specialist tools or skills were required for the project? How did you come about acquiring them?
Stock/crops	Do you run any stock or plant any crops?
Making a living	How do you make a living? This is especially interesting for remote rural areas where the nearest employment may be hours away.
Building a business	Is your home/project also your business e.g. B&B, cellar door, gallery? If so, what additional criteria did you have to satisfy as OB's and business premises.
Unusual features	Do you have any unusual features, e.g. cool cupboard, cellar, solarium.
Technical sidebars	Is there a part of the project that we could elaborate on? Technical details would assist other readers e.g. constructing a composting toilet, fitting a heater /cooker flue, building in odd sized recycled windows, providing adequate shading.
Location	What is the size of your property?
	Where is your project located (full address and contact details)? Why did you choose that area?
	What level of information are you happy to have included in the article itself? e.g. Dungog Rd, Hilldale OR Hilldale OR Hunter Valley OR NSW Mid Coast or just NSW. A region, at the least, helps the readers to associate your home with climate conditions.
	Would you like your contact details to be included at the end of the article? If so, what details?
Products, Services and Resources	Are there any products or services that you would like to particularly have mentioned?
	What resources did you use e.g. books, internet, evening classes?
Summary	Would you do it again? What would you do differently? What have you learned? Any tips for other owner builders based on your experience?

NEED MORE DETAILS? Please contact us...

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