Servir

Writer's
Guide

Table of contents

Technical data

Frequency of publication:	Bi-monthly Every second Wednesday (or Thursday, if a holiday falls during the week)
Deadlines for submissions:	Every second Monday (or Tuesday, if a holiday falls during the week)
Circulation:	3,500 copies
Website:	www.journalservir.com Approximately 2,500 visitors per month

Why write for *Servir*?

You may have several good reasons for submitting material to *Servir*:

- Important changes are occurring in your unit;
- Someone from your unit distinguished himself/herself at a special event;
- Your unit is being rewarded for its performance;
- You are organizing a fundraising campaign or a special event;
- Your unit is participating in an exercise or operation;
- Members of your unit are being promoted or decorated, or are retiring;
- Etc.

Who contributes?

You may write your own articles and submit them to the newspaper. You may also contact us to give us new reporting ideas.

▶ Before writing

Before putting pen to paper (or fingers to keyboard), remember these important points:

ϟ Since each issue is read by about 10,000 people **in a hurry,** it is important to grab their attention. A reader usually spends only **30 seconds to a minute** reading each page!

ϟ **People read things in the following order**: First they look at the **picture**, then the **title**, the **caption** (under the photo) and, lastly, the **lead**. If the first sentence of the lead doesn't hook the readers, you lose them. It is therefore in your interest to be **concise**, to write about subjects of **interest** and to use a **lively, dynamic** style.

ϟ Since our readership includes military members' families as well as the civilian community, contributing writers must make the information **accessible**. For instance, acronyms and abbreviations, though common in the Canadian Forces, pose an obstacle for outside readers.

▶ While you write

Are there any tricks for getting readers' attention? Yes!

Remember that most readers decide whether or not to keep reading based on the **first paragraph** of an article, and that readers' familiarity with a topic can vary widely. With that in mind,

ϟ Begin your article with the most basic parts of the news item. Pretend you have to **sum up** the story to someone you have just run into in a hallway and who is in a hurry. That is the **lead** of an article.

ϟ Try to answer the following six questions at the beginning of your article: **Who? What? When? Where? Why? and How?**

↳ Begin your article with the most important facts and gradually work your way down to the least important ones. Remember to keep something interesting for the end!

↳ Write out all **numbers** less than 10 **in letters**.

↳ **Vary the way you present the facts**. You can begin your article with a personal impression, anecdote, question, proverb, pun, etc.

↳ Try to **focus your article on people**. Readers will feel more involved and will be able to identify with the people in your text.

↳ Use **short, active** sentences. They make reading and comprehension easier.

↳ Write out people's **ranks, first names and last names in full**. Don't forget to write their function and home unit.

↳ Before using an **abbreviation**, make sure it is well known to readers. If it is not well known, write it out in full the first time, followed by the abbreviation in parentheses.

> *Eg: 25 Canadian Forces Supply Depot (25 CFSD) is located at Montreal Garrison. Lieutenant-Colonel Jean-Claude Collard is the Commanding Officer of 25 CFSD.*

↳ **Include quotations** (ie, someone else's exact words in quotation marks) whenever possible. It adds credibility and varies your style.

↳ **Double-check** ranks, names, ages, units, locations, dates, spelling, and facts. Accuracy is the most important quality of good journalism!
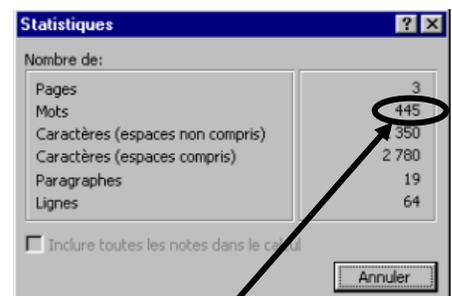
↳ Insert **subheadings** between your paragraphs. They mark out a text's progression, space out the text and sharpen the readers' interest.

↳ **Illustrate** your news item with **photos or logos**. A picture is worth a thousand words.

☹ ↳ Avoid writing **sentences of more than 25 words**.

↳ **Do not make your article too long**. It should have a maximum of 400 to 600 words (not including photo captions). Readers get bored with details beyond that point and stop reading. To see how many words you have, in **Word**, go to **Tools** and click on **Word Count**.

Statistiques	? X
Nombre de:	
Pages	3
Mots	445
Caractères (espaces non compris)	350
Caractères (espaces compris)	2 780
Paragraphes	19
Lignes	64

☐ Inclure toutes les notes dans le calcul

Annuler

Number of words in a text

↳ Avoid using **jargon or overly technical terminology**. To be understood, you need to put the information in plain language. You may want to use a thesaurus.

Before submitting your article

Here are a few things to consider before submitting your article to *Servir*:

▶ Photos

✔ **Take pictures of people in action** and opt for **close-ups** of people so readers can see them clearly and recognize them. Stay close to your subject!
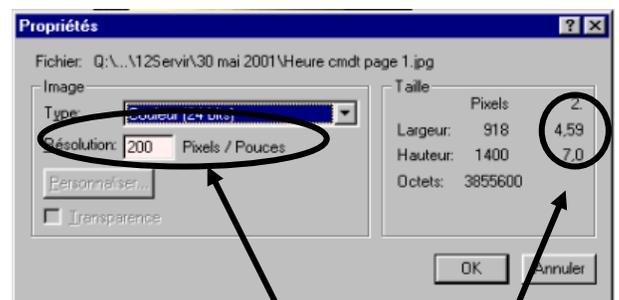
✔ **Clearly identify people** in your photos (rank + first name + last name). Remember to include the **date, place and event.**

✔ For each of the photos, **provide a caption and identify the photographer.** To do that, include the filename of your picture at the end of your article and, underneath it, a caption. Under the caption, put the name of the person who took the photo. Do this for each photo.

> *Eg: Photo IMG_2731.jpg*
> *Sergeant Paul Tremblay won the badminton championship.*
> *Photographer: Pte Pierre Gagnon*

✔ The **caption** can provide information about the photo that the image itself does not make clear. Be creative!

✔ Photos must have a resolution of **200 pixels per inch**. To ensure that your photo meets that requirement, open the file (jpg) in **Photo Editor**; go to **File** and choose **Properties.** Ensure that your photo is at least 4″ x 6″ at that resolution. We prefer that photos be saved in **JPG** format (level 7). We also accept BMP and

Propriétés

Fichier: Q:\..\12Servir\30 mai 2001\Heure cmdt page 1.jpg

Image
Type: Couleur (24 bits)
Résolution: 200   Pixels / Pouces
Personnaliser...
☐ Transparence

Taille
                Pixels   2.
Largeur: 918   4,59
Hauteur: 1400   7,0
Octets: 3855600

OK   Annuler

Dimensions in inches

TIF files.

✔ If you are sending your photos via Outlook, **disable the Optimize Attachments button**—if you don't, Outlook will automatically resize photo files, and their resolution will be affected. To disable the feature, open your email window and click the Optimize Attachments button. The green check mark will turn into a red X.
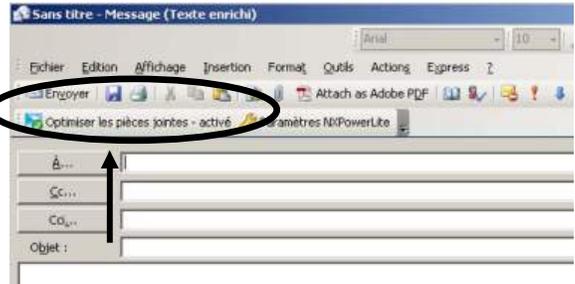
▶ Text

✔ **Do not insert graphic files or photos** into your Word document. Send your images and photos as separate files.

✔ **Avoid montages and special formatting**. Justify your text to the left, without columns, tabs (except for tables), section breaks, bullets, etc.

✔ Do not write in capital letters and avoid underlining. Use **bold** and *italics* instead.

Sending in material

Submissions can be sent on the Intranet to *+journal servir@5gss uss@stjean* or on the Internet to *servir@forces.gc.ca*. You can also submit your material directly to:

Guylaine Fortin, Editor
guylaine.fortin@forces.gc.ca
450-358-7099, extension 7426

Daniel Rancourt, Journalist
daniel.rancourt@forces.gc.ca
450-358-7099, extension 7330

▶ Modification, postponement and rejection of texts

Most texts submitted to *Servir* are published without major changes. The editor reserves the right to modify an article for the sake of readability.

Articles submitted may also be condensed or postponed (when the content is not time-sensitive) until a later issue because of limited space. That often happens when the topic is promotions and decorations.

Occasionally, some articles may be rejected when their content is deemed inappropriate or unsuitable, or if too much time has passed between the event and the date the paper is published.

▶ Deadlines

To learn our deadline and publication dates, download our publication calendar from the paper's website at www.journalservir.com under the "Articles Submissions" tab.

If you know that you will not be able to send in your material by the deadline, call us in advance. We'll make the necessary arrangements, if possible.

Bear in mind that a paper is assembled four pages at a time. *Servir* therefore has 20, 24, 28 or 32 pages. On the deadline date, we determine how many pages the issue will have based on the amount of material received. If you send in your article late, we may have already determined the number of pages

(and we won't be able to simply add a single page for your article, unfortunately).

Need help?

Our staff is available to help you. Need writing advice? Want to know when the best time would be to share your information? Need help editing an article? Don't hesitate to get in touch with us!

450-358-7099, ext 7426 or 7330

Your contribution is important to us and our readers. Your articles keep community members informed.

We hope to read your articles soon!

▶ **Headlines**

☹ **Softball tournament**

☺ **Saint-Jean Garrison hosts second softball tournament**

_____

☹ **Blood drive**

☺ **51 Field Ambulance to hold blood drive**

_____

☹ **Blood drive**

☺ **Blood drive on September 9**
At the rotunda at Saint-Jean Garrison

☹ **New Health Promotion programming**

☺ **Health Promotion unveils its fall programming**

_____

☹ **Quebec City International Festival of Military Bands**

☺ *August 22 to 24*
   5th edition of the Quebec City International Festival of Military Bands

▶ **Use of capital letters**

Air **C**adets are recruiting…
- Capitalize "cadets" when referring to the organization.
- Capitalize "air" when referring to the element (**A**rmy, **N**avy and **A**ir).

The **c**adets took their places on stage . . . .
- Use a lower-case letter when referring to the young people themselves.

Saint-Jean **G**arrison will receive a visit from the **M**inister of **N**ational **D**efence.
- "Garrison" is capitalized when it refers to the organization.
- "Minister" is capitalized because it is a title referring to a specific person and is used as a substitute for that person's name.
- "National Defence" is capitalized because it is the name of the department.

The Saint-Jean **g**arrison is located in the city of Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu.
- The word "garrison" is lowercased because here it refers to a physical location rather than to the organization.
- The word "city" is lowercased for the same reason.

Mont Saint-Hilaire is located in **M**ont**-**Saint-Hilaire
- The first instance of "Mont" is capitalized because it is part of a geographical name (just as the names of rivers and bridges are capitalized).
- The second instance of "Mont" is capitalized for the same reason. It is hyphenated because that is the custom for place names in French.

▶ **Other examples**

The **U**nited **N**ations
The **M**ontreal region
The **S**econd **W**orld **W**ar
The **C**anadian **F**orces **L**eadership and **R**ecruit **S**chool
Operation **PALLADIUM**
Exercise **Aventurier**
La Presse newspaper
A **h**igh school **d**iploma
A **b**achelor's **d**egree
A CEGEP
The **R**eserve **F**orce and the **R**egular **F**orce
Capt Pierre Beausoleil, **S**taff **O**fficer for 5 ASG
Sgt Guy Alarie was promoted to the rank of **w**arrant **o**fficer

Lexicon

Here is a brief lexicon of elements used in formatting an article:

- **Overline:** Small heading above the headline. Helps to situate an event.*

- **Headline:** Heading in bold characters (usually includes a conjugated verb).

- **Subtitle:** Small heading under the headline. It complements the headline.

    * Usually an overline <u>or</u> a subtitle is used, but not both with the same headline. Both are optional.

- **Byline:** Identifies the author: rank, first and last names, role and unit.

- **Lead:** First paragraph of the body of the article, in bold. Briefly presents the subject. A kind of introduction.

- **Text:** The rest of the body of the article.

- **Subheading:** Small headings between certain paragraphs. These reference points for readers space out the text, making it easier to read.

- **Inset:** Sentence taken from the article and used to attract attention. A visual element that can be used instead of a photo.

- **Photo, logo or vignette** (illustration)**:** Used to attract attention and make information easier to process.

- **Caption:** Explains the photo. Also presents elements of the article.

- **Photo credit:** Identifies the person who took the photo: first and last names and rank.