



## Write the World's Guide to Writing Flash Fiction

**DON'T SWEAT THE WORD COUNT (AT FIRST).** Write with abandon, letting your story unfurl and wander as necessary. Then start the editing process. Clip a sentence here, prune a paragraph there, shaping your story down to its essence.

**NARROW YOUR VIEWFINDER.** With just 299 words, flash fiction that focuses on a specific event/experience/memory is often most captivating. Let “depth over breadth” be your mantra. Rather than including multiple scenes, for instance, give your attention to one dazzling vignette.

**DIVE INTO ACTION.** You don't have time to wax poetic for a paragraph before getting to the heart of your story, so jump into the juicy stuff in your opening lines, sketching in the backstory later if necessary.

**LEAVE BREATHING ROOM.** Like an iceberg, flash fiction only reveals part of the story. Celebrate the power of suggestion. As you write, ask yourself: What thought or question or feeling will this sentence leave the reader with? How can I open a door without revealing everything on the other side?

**MAGNIFY MOOD.** A small space doesn't lend itself to elaborate plots or a cast of characters. But you can create mood. As your narrative develops, step back and consider what feeling you want the story to elicit in your reader, and then choose your words carefully to help conjure that mood.

**WORK THE WORD COUNT.** Your submission must, in its final form, be under 300 words. Cutting down a long draft might sound like an arduous task, but concision will help you hone in on what's most important and find the most essential story.