

*What qualities do you look for in a strong poem?*

We believe the best poems often share several characteristics that can be summed up in *intentionality*. Intentional writing is expressed through density, meaning, and artistry. By density we mean that every word is in the poem for a reason; avoid fillers, cliches, or tangents as every line should contribute to the overall message of the writing. Meaning is a driving message or statement behind the poem. Your words are more likely to resonate if they revolve around a clear viewpoint, and even moreso if your work incorporates timeless themes. Artistry is the imagery and syntax that hold everything together.

*What is the best format for submission files?*

The best formats for us are .docx, .doc, or pages files. Though we accept .pdf files, copying the format can be time-consuming.

*What is the average length of a poem accepted at Ellis?*

We are most likely to accept a poem that is at least a third of a page and no more than one page long (though different formats can make it difficult to assign lengths to poems). We do not dismiss longer or shorter poems from a fair review process, and there are certainly exceptions, especially if the length of the poem has been expanded or contracted due to spacing/formatting. However, we tend to find that very short poems do not have enough substance to communicate a meaning, and very long poems often lack density.

*When is the best time of the day/week to submit?*

Any time of the day/week is equally good to submit to Ellis. We file our submissions into a document of that date every day and then read them chronologically. Decisions are not always chronological, however, because some submissions are tabled for further discussion.

*How should I format my email?*

You can format your email any way you please; however, the most effective format consists of a short message to the editors, a brief bio, and 3-5 poems for our consideration. A message to the editors is not required, but it's a great way to introduce yourself personally and open up a dialog.