Best Practices for Writing Short Stories

This is an extra resource to go along with the original article: How Writing Short Stories Can Help You Become a Better Novelist

★ Get to the point quickly. Kurt Vonnegut recommends, “Start as close to the end as possible.” This is extremely relevant for a short story as space is limited

★ Dive into the action quickly, too. You don’t have a lot of time to build the story so get right into the action and show as you go.

★ Don’t waste too much time outlining and planning. Create a one-sentence summary of what you’d like the short story to be about and then get to writing.

★ Write the whole. Sure, it’s a short story, but always write more and then edit the piece rather than not writing enough, as this may force you to add more for clarity or pacing.

★ Don’t take too long to write your short story. It’s a short story, and it shouldn’t take months to craft. Get most of it down quickly and then go back and edit.

★ Edit, edit, and edit again. Your first draft is just that—first. It’s definitely not final, even with a short story. The good news is that a short story is a lot easier to edit than a 300-page novel.