

The Tiny Book Course™

Workbook

The book journey: step by step

You want to write and self-publish a book?

This workbook shows you every single step of the journey—along with instructions for each step.

If you feel confused, stuck, overwhelmed, or have a question, please email us (hello@youcangetitdone.com) anytime during the course.

It's our honor to help you get your book done.

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Step 1: Welcome + Important Info

Welcome to The Tiny Book Course!

Welcome to the course!

There are so many powerful reasons to write a book.

Maybe you want to write a book, because you have an idea that's been knocking around in your head for 5 years, and it will not leave you alone.

Maybe you're doing this, because you want to prove to yourself that you can start a project and actually finish it.

Maybe you want to write a book, because you know it will open up new doors for your career—it might lead to new clients, media appearances, or opportunities to speak onstage and get paid to do it.

Or maybe creating a book just sounds like FUN, and you're craving beauty and joy in your life right now. A project that is purely just for you.

Whatever your reasons may be, welcome, and we're so glad that you're here.

Over the last several years, more than 500 people have graduated from this course, and hundreds of books have been born.

We have one graduate who wrote a book in her 80s, because she wanted to share her memories and reflections on life with her family.

We have another graduate who wrote a book in collaboration with her son. She wrote the text, and he did the illustrations.

We've had graduates who wrote poetry books, children's books, cook-books, memoirs, journals, workbooks, books filled with advice, books about wellness, mental health, business, finance, fitness, astrology, parenting, pets, and so many other topics.

Some of our graduates have even won awards for their books!

Whatever kind of book you want to create, you are in exactly the right place. We hope you absolutely love this experience. And we can't wait to celebrate with you once your book is done.

How did this course get started?

This is Alex, co-founder of Get It Done and The Tiny Book Course.

Many years ago, I got the idea to host a small writing workshop in my home. At the time, I lived in Portland, Oregon, in a funky, artsy apartment. The apartment used to be a restaurant, and then it got converted into a living space. Concrete floors. Tall ceilings. Huge windows. It was a really unique and vibrant space. I invited 8 clients and friends to come over and spend the afternoon with me. I told them, "I'm doing a workshop on how to write a book."

I rented a couple of extra tables and chairs. I brewed a big pot of coffee. I put out some pastries and fruit. I gave each client a notebook and pen. And then, over the next few hours, I led the group through a few writing exercises. And I explained, "Here's how I approach writing a book..."

By this point in my career, I'd written a few books of my own, plus I'd ghostwritten numerous books for clients, too. I've gone through the process several times, so I had some good tips to share.

I said to the folks in the room, "Okay, if you want to write a book, but you don't know where to begin, here's what I recommend. Step 1, set your intention for the project and decide why this matters to you. Step 2, choose a topic. Step 3, make an outline. And so on."

I walked people through the whole process, start to finish.

The afternoon flew by so quickly. Everyone was jotting down notes. And the conversation around the table was beautiful. People shared their book ideas. People shared insecurities and doubts. People pledged to keep in touch and help one another finish their projects. New friendships formed during that workshop. It was a powerful day.

Afterward, I found myself thinking, "That was really special. I want to do it again."

So, I decided to do another workshop—but this time, in a different city, and with a larger group of people. I was visiting my friend Lindsey in Pennsylvania, and she offered to co-host the next book workshop with me. Lindsey is a bestselling and award-winning author, the founder of a publishing house, and a literary agent. She is extremely knowledgeable about the publishing industry. I knew she would add so much to the experience. And she DID.

Lindsey and I ended up co-teaching the book workshop a couple more times. Each time, we presented the material in a one-day format. It was beautiful, however, we noticed that some participants seemed a bit overwhelmed. It's a LOT of information to cram into someone's head all in one day.

So then Lindsey had a genius idea. She said, "What if we start teaching this material online? That way, we could build an online classroom. People can go through the material at their own pace. No rush. Plus, if we do it online, then we could help hundreds of people write books instead of just 10 or 15 people at a time."

You know what I said to Lindsey's brilliant idea?

"No, thanks."

YES! This is no joke. My first reaction was, “I don’t want to do that.” Reason being, at this exact moment in time I was going through a horrific break-up, moving to a new state, and struggling with grief and depression. I had zero energy to take on a big new project. So I told Lindsey, “If this is something you really want to do, I totally support you. Feel free to do it. But I don’t think I can be involved right now.”

Lindsey was very understanding and said, “No worries. I get it.”

But then here’s what Lindsey did next. She started building the on-line classroom for the book course. She hired a designer to create a cute logo for the course. She set up all the materials online and made everything look amazing. She also developed a beautiful box that would be shipped out to every client via snail mail with a notebook, stickers, and custom pens inside.

She texted me and said, “Hey, I know you said you weren’t interested in teaching this course online, but...take a look at how beautiful everything looks!” She texted photos and tantalized me.

I was like, *Okay, you had me at CUSTOM PENS!* I called her and said, “Okay I changed my mind. I’m in. Let’s do this.”

It took me a while to come around, but once I did I was ALL IN.

Lindsey and I co-presented the course online for the first time that year. We decided to call it The Tiny Book Course—for two reasons. Number one, because during this course we encourage you to write a tiny book. That means, a short book that’s around 30 to 80 pages long. Especially if it’s your first time writing a book, we suggest that you do a tiny book that’s brief and not so overwhelming. That way you’ll be more likely to actually finish your project. Kinda like running a 5k before you attempt a marathon. And, number two, because we break down the book process into tiny, achievable steps. Tiny is one of our favorite

words. Tiny books are a big deal. Tiny projects can make a big difference in the world. And tiny wins are worth celebrating.

After Lindsey and I presented the course online, we had a phenomenal experience and decided to do it again, year after year. Five years rolled by. Enrollment for the course doubled in size nearly every year. At this point, we have more than 650 graduates and hundreds of books written. Each year, we fine-tune the course a bit more and make it even better than the previous year. We refine things based on feedback from our clients who are doing the course, and based on changes in the publishing industry. So, each year, the course is truly the BEST version yet.

One of our favorite things is checking our company inbox and seeing emails from The Tiny Book Course graduates. Sometimes we'll get an email from someone who says, "Hey, I bought the course a year ago, I started my book, but then life happened, and I got derailed. But I got back to it and I finished it! Look! Here it is!" We always love getting updates from people and seeing the incredible books that are being born.

So, THAT is the story of how this course started. It all began with a group of friends in my living room and a big pot of coffee. Then Lindsey came on board and enhanced the course so much, adding her expertise. Then we shifted to teaching online which allowed us to connect with so many new people. This course has taken on a life of its own, and it's been magical to watch the ripple effect spread, far and wide.

I hope this story inspires YOU to take the first step with a project that's calling to you, whether it's a book, teaching a workshop, doing a comedy show, or anything else.

Take that first step, even if it's very humble like practicing in front of a few friends in your home. Because the first step is like a stone in a pond, creating ripples. You never know where those ripples may lead.

How long will it take to complete this course? 60 days? Less? More?

One of the most common questions that people ask is, "How long will it take to complete this course? How long before my book will be all done?"

Answer: it varies.

On the first day of the course, we email you and show you how to log into the classroom.

In the classroom, you will find a list of steps to complete, such as (1) Welcome + Important Info (2) Get Prepared (3) Begin Working (4) Write Your Book (5) Edit Your Book, and so on.

Start with Step (1). Follow the instructions that we provide. Complete those tasks. Then move along to Step (2). Complete those tasks. Keep going until you reach the very end.

Once you complete Step (7) Publish Your Book, you will have a beautiful book that is hardcover, paperback, eBook, or several formats, if that's what you choose.

We provide **instructions** on how to complete each step. Instructions are provided in written form, audio form, and (for certain steps) in a tutorial video as well. We provide multiple formats to be inclusive to all learning styles and abilities.

Now, how long is it going to take you to complete all the steps and finish creating your book? We've had clients do it in 3 days, 10 days, 30 days, 100 days, 2 years. Every project is different. Please go at your own speed.

Good news: all the materials in the classroom are yours to keep forever. This means, you don't have to rush and finish the steps by a particular date. You can take all the time you need. You can use these materials this year, next year, the year after that, and so on.

What will you have by the end of this course?

By the time you complete the final step of this course, you will have a completed book.

Your book will be hardcover, paperback, eBook, or multiple formats if that's what you choose to do.

If you want to self-publish your book and make it available for sale—in bookstores and on retail sites like Bookshop, Barnes & Noble, and Amazon—you can do that.

If you prefer NOT to make your book available for sale—because you want this book to be a private project that's just for you, your family, or a few friends—you can do that, too.

We show you how to do both options.

By the end of this course, in addition to having a completed book, we also hope that you have:

- * Greater confidence in your writing abilities.
- * A feeling of pride and satisfaction, because you started a project and finished it.
- * A feeling of momentum—perhaps you'll want to create another book, and then another, or a podcast, or do another creative project (the floodgates are open!).

Writing a book is a life-changing experience. Along the journey, you will grow as a writer and also as a human being. You might learn important lessons about prioritizing, time management, setting boundaries, the importance of simplifying, patience, or releasing perfectionism. We hope this course helps you stretch your creativity and grow as a person, too.

Thank you for being here.

The Tiny Book Course schedule + Zoom links

The following are all important meetings and dates for The Tiny Book Course. Be sure to put them in your calendar and set reminders!

For both the Orientation and the Graduation Celebration Meetings:

Zoom link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83732542614?pwd=NDJKUXBwcmFLMXFrQjNXUkFHazcwUT09>

Passcode: TINYBOOK

For all Co-Working Sessions:

Zoom link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88150511962?pwd=WWdOOOW5Da20wd0ZpbzlxUTFybm9SZz09>

Passcode: TINYBOOK.

Can't make it? We post Zoom recordings here shortly after each meeting. Watch at your convenience.

Wednesday, August 23, 2023: Orientation meeting

Come learn how this course works, what to expect, and how to set yourself up for success.

1 pm Pacific / 4 pm Eastern. 60 minutes.

Wednesday, August 30, 2023: Official first day of the course

The classroom is open! No meeting today, but please check your email for instructions on how to log into the classroom.

Thursday, September 7, 2023: First co-working session

Join Tracie Kendziora (aka amazing Get It Done Book Coach) and fellow writers to work on your book. Same time. Together.

11 am Pacific / 2 pm Eastern. 120 minutes.

Wednesday, September 20, 2023: Second co-working session

Led by Get It Done co-founder, Lindsey Smith, this is another opportunity to work on your book surrounded by community energy. Let's get it done. Together.

8 am Pacific / 11 am Eastern. 120 minutes.

Thursday, September 28, 2023: Social hour.

Get to know fellow writers (and The Tiny Book Course team!) in a relaxed gathering. Bring your favorite beverage and connect.

1 pm Pacific / 4 pm Eastern. 60 minutes

Tuesday, October 3, 2023: Third co-working session

Book Coach Tracie is at the helm again today. Join her and other Tiny Book writers to get those words on the page.

6:30 am Pacific / 9:30 am Eastern. 120 minutes.

Monday, October 16, 2023: Fourth co-working session

Whether you are putting the final touches on your book or writing your very first word, come to this final co-working session. Write, edit, or work on your book cover design, and get things done!

10:30 am Pacific / 1:30 pm Eastern. 120 minutes.

Wednesday, October 25, 2023: Graduation Celebration

Join us for our Graduation Celebration. Show off your completed book. Or share your book-in-progress, if you're not quite finished yet.

1 pm Pacific / 4 pm Eastern. 60 minutes.

Sunday, October 29, 2023: Final day of the course

The official last day of The Tiny Book Course. Today is the final day for you to submit your writing for feedback from our Book Coaches.

If you can attend each meeting, wonderful.

If you need to skip a few (or prefer to watch recordings at a later time) that's great, too.

How to email the Book Coach team and ask for help.

The Tiny Book Course includes 60 days of support from our expert Book Coach team.

For the 2023 course, you may contact the team from August 30, 2023 to October 29, 2023. Please submit any final questions before the end of the day on October 29.

We have a team available to answer your questions. This team includes best-selling and award-winning authors, expert editors, and other publishing professionals who are knowledgeable and kind, and want to help you succeed.

What to Do

If you need help, please email hello@youcangetitdone.com and put "TBC" in your subject line. That's short for "Tiny Book Course." That way, we'll know you're a current client and your email will be our top priority.

Our team is excited to help you write your Tiny Book! You are invited to send in up to 3 questions in one email at a time. Once we've responded to your email in full (sometimes multiple Book Coaches will answer one email, depending on the topics), you can then send in up to 3 more questions in another email, repeating as needed, until October 29.

Please be **brief**. Keep your email to 200 words or less.

Please make a **specific request** in your email. Such as, "Do you have any advice on dealing with perfectionism?" Or, "Which cover design option do you prefer: option A or B?" If you send a long, stream-of-consciousness email that doesn't include a specific request, it's going to be difficult for us to figure out what you need. Please help us...help you. :)

Please use one of the following **email formats** (or something similar) when contacting the team.

QUESTION FORMAT

Subject: TBC

Hello, Book Coach team!

My book is about [topic].

I am struggling with [thing].

My question is: [state your question].

Thanks for any help you can provide.

DECISION FORMAT

Subject: TBC

Hello, Book Coach team!

I have several different book ideas including [idea] and [idea] and [idea].

I can't seem to decide which book I ought to choose.

Do you have any suggestions to help me decide?

Thank you.

CAN'T FIND FORMAT

Subject: TBC

Hello, Book Coach team!

I think you mentioned that you have a resource on [topic] somewhere in the classroom.

I have looked around, but I can't find it.

Can you please show me where it is?

Thank you.

ENCOURAGEMENT FORMAT

Subject: TBC

Hello, Book Coach team!

I am having a moment of [doubt, overwhelm, insecurity, imposter syndrome, etc.] and I feel like giving up on my project.

I could use a pep talk.

Can you please send me some encouraging words?

Thank you.

Response Time

We check the inbox Monday to Thursday. We don't check on Friday, Saturday, or Sunday. When you email, you can expect to hear back in 1-3 business days. We answer every single email that we receive.

Thank you! We hope these instructions feel clear and easy to follow. We look forward to helping you.

How to request feedback on your writing.

You wrote something and you'd like us to take a look? We'd be happy to do so.

The Tiny Book Course includes feedback on up to 30 pages of material.

For the 2023 course, you may contact the team from August 30, 2023 to October 29, 2023. Please submit any final questions before the end of the day on October 29.

We have a team available to provide feedback. This team includes best-selling and award-winning authors, expert editors, and other publishing professionals who are knowledgeable and kind, and want to help you succeed.

If you enjoy getting feedback on your writing, please ask! If you don't want or need feedback, that's fine, and there's no pressure to do so. It is optional, not required.

What to Do

If you want feedback, please email hello@youcangetitdone.com and put "TBC" in your subject line. That's short for "Tiny Book Course." That way, we'll know you're a current client and your email will be our top priority.

Please attach the piece you've written to your email as a Word doc.

Please submit up to 10 pages at a time.

Please use the following email format (or something similar) when contacting the team to request feedback.

FEEDBACK FORMAT

Subject: TBC

Hello, Book Coach team!

My book is about [topic].

I have attached a piece, and I'd like to get your feedback.

This piece is [briefly describe what we're about to read: "the Introduction of my book," "the first chapter," "a story about my grandma and what she taught me about tenacity," etc.]

My question is: [state your question].

I look forward to hearing your feedback. Thank you!

When requesting feedback, it's very helpful to ask a specific question. Such as, "Can you recommend 1 way to make this piece stronger?" Or, "Could you suggest a different closing line for this piece?" Or, "Can you suggest a way to make this piece less serious and more funny?" When you ask a specific question, it helps us to provide the kind of feedback that's going to be most useful to you.

Response Time

We check email Monday to Thursday. We don't check on Friday, Saturday, or Sunday. When you email, you can expect to hear back in 1-3 business days. We answer every single email that we receive.

Thank you! We hope these instructions feel clear and easy to follow. We look forward to reviewing your work and providing feedback!

Step 2: Get Prepared

Create a calm, inspiring writing workspace.

As The Tiny Book Course begins, we encourage you to create a calm, inspiring writing workspace for yourself.

Claim an area of your home or office that is all yours. Your special writing zone.

Clear distractions out of the way. Messy files, receipts, papers, that phone with notifications going off every two seconds—get it all outta there.

Make your space beautiful. Add a healthy plant, a photo of someone you love, or anything that energizes you.

This is also a great time to gather any special items or materials you think you'll need and put those in your workspace.

For instance, if you plan to include family photos in your book, gather those photos now.

If you plan to include a collection of poetry in your book (poems you've already written over the last few years) get organized and gather the poems you want to use.

As much as possible, gather everything you need, so it's all at your fingertips and you're ready for action!

By creating a beautiful workspace, you're signaling to yourself, "I'm on

my path to becoming an author. I'm taking this goal seriously. I'm really doing this."

Extra credit: if you feel like it, email us (hello@youcangetitdone.com) and send us a photo of your beautiful workspace. We'd love to see!

Declutter your schedule. Free up time to work on your book.

Many people think, "I would love to create a book, if only I had more time..."

We encourage you to take a discerning look at your schedule and your to-do list, make some adjustments, and create the time you need.

Get help with housework

The average full-time working adult spends 21 hours per week* doing housework: cooking, cleaning, laundry, and other tasks around the home.

Perhaps you could ask your teenager, partner, roommate, or someone else to handle housework for one week. Not forever, just one week, as a special gift to you. Or, if it's doable for your budget, you could hire someone to help for one week.

Just like that, you reclaimed more than 20 hours! You could use that time to focus on your book.

Step away from social media

The average American adult spends 144 minutes per day** (more than 2 hours) scrolling, reading, watching videos, posting, commenting, and lurking (consuming content but not interacting) on social media.

Take a break from social media—even just for one week—and you'll reclaim more than 14 hours of your life. Use that time to work on your book.

Make other changes, too

Cancel an unnecessary meeting that nobody really wanted to attend anyway.

Check email once a day, instead of checking all day long.

Get groceries delivered, instead of driving to the store.

Set a healthy boundary with a loved one—that person who likes to call you to whine, moan, and vent for a whole hour, leaving you so drained you can't do anything besides collapse in bed.

At home, at work, and everywhere in between, there are thousands of ways you can free up more time.

Make a few adjustments, and you might find yourself with an extra 5, 10, 15, or 20 hours per week (or more!) that you didn't have before! Hello, book time!

** As reported in the American Time Use Survey.*

*** Source: Daily social media usage worldwide 2012-2020.*

Schedule time to work on your book. Put book appointments into your calendar.

When you put an appointment into your calendar—like your best friend's birthday party or a doctor's appointment—then it's pretty likely that you're going to show up.

When you *don't* put something into your calendar, then it's easier to forget, get distracted, or put it off until later. Or until never.

That's why we encourage you to schedule time to work on your book—and put those book appointments into your calendar. Make it official.

Science fact

As reported in *Entrepreneur* magazine, the American Society of Training and Development did a study on goal setting and discovered the following:

If there's a goal you want to achieve, there are 3 things that make it significantly more likely that you will succeed.

1. Getting an accountability partner (like a friend, mentor, or coach) who promises to check in regularly and see how you're doing.
2. Scheduling consistent appointments (at least once a week) to work on your goal.

3. Giving your accountability partner an honest update on your progress (“This is what I did...This is what I haven’t done yet”) every week.

With those 3 things in place, you become 65% to 95% more likely to achieve your goal—any goal, whether it’s writing a book, finding more clients, earning more money, or anything else.

During this course, we will email you regularly to check in and see how you’re progressing with your book. And we’ll ask you to give us an update on your progress. So, those pieces are all set.

But it’s up to you to schedule time to work on your book—and put those book appointments into your calendar.

There are different ways to approach this.

Scheduling approaches

Quick bursts

You can schedule a 30-minute book appointment, every morning, 5 days a week.

Some people enjoy this approach—chipping away a little bit, day after day, until the book is done.

Long chunk

If quick bursts aren't your thing, you can schedule a bigger chunk of time.

For instance, you can schedule a 4-hour book appointment, once a week. Maybe Friday afternoons from 12 pm to 4 pm will be your special book-time. A weekly ritual.

Book-cation

Another option: schedule a book appointment that's combined with a trip. Get out of the house for 1 night, 1 weekend, 1 whole week, whatever you're able to do.

Go to a cabin, cottage, retreat center, or hotel. Take a book-cation.

If travel isn't possible right now, try to create vacation vibes while staying home.

Silence your phone. Light a fragrant candle. Put on a fluffy robe. Play calming music. Clear all the distractions. Use this time to make lots of progress on your book.

One way or another, put the time into your calendar

Whether it's a daily appointment, a weekly appointment, a trip or retreat or getaway, please do whatever you want to do. Different approaches work for different people.

But the bottom line is: schedule time to work on your book and put this time into your calendar. Make it official.

Talk to your partner, kids, housemates, and other important people in your life. Ask for their support.

Creating a book takes a village.

It's important to talk to the people closest to you—especially the people who live in your home—and ask for their support as you work on this project.

We encourage you to talk to your partner, kids, housemates, close friends, employees, and other important people in your life.

Tell people:

- * Why you're writing a book.
- * Why this project is so important to you.
- * One specific thing they could do to support you.

For instance, you could say something like this to your partner or spouse:

I'm writing a book about my struggles with infertility.

This project is so important to me, because I want to share my story with other women, share what I've learned, and help others to feel less alone.

I'm going to be working on this book for the next several weeks.

One thing that you could do to help would be to handle dinner on Tuesday and Thursday nights for the next couple weeks. I'm planning to do a writing session every Tuesday and Thursday, so if you handle cooking on those nights that would help out so much.

Is that something you're willing to do?

Conversation format

Try using this format:

I'm writing a book about _____.

This project is so important to me, because _____.

One thing that you could do to help would be _____.

Is that something you're willing to do?

Invite your community to support you

Rather than working on this project completely alone, invite your community to help you get it done.

- ✱ Ask your partner to watch the kids or handle laundry while you write.
- ✱ Ask a friend to send you encouraging text messages and pep talks.

- * Ask your assistant to take on some new responsibilities to free up your schedule so that you've got more time to work on the book.
- * Ask your nephew if they'd be willing to help out with editing and proofreading, once it's time to do that.
- * And so on.

Spend a little time thinking about, "What's the kind of support I need? What would make it easier for me to finish this project?" And then, go ask.

Flex your asking muscles

Creating a book is an opportunity to grow as an artist and to grow as a human being.

This is a chance to flex your asking muscles—a lot—and become more assertive in asking for what you need.

At the end of your book, you can include an Acknowledgments section, which is a list of all the people who helped to make this book possible!

That's a beautiful place to say thank you to all the folks who supported you all the way to the finish line.

Step 3: Begin Working

Decide what kind of book you want to write: cookbook, how-to book, list book, letter book, activity book, question book, journal, or something else?

It's time to decide what kind of book you want to write.

Do you want to create a family history book that includes stories about your parents and grandparents?

Do you want to create a helpful how-to guidebook for your clients that explains how to achieve a particular goal?

Maybe you'd like to write a children's book? You'll write the manuscript and your kids will do the illustrations?

Now is the time to pick a concept.

Quick heads up

This is the longest lesson in the entire course! That's because there are so many types of books you could create, and we want to give you a wide range of options to consider.

Please read (or listen) to this lesson when you've got some time to relax and settle in, because it's a bit longer than the others.

Types of books you could create

Here are a few types of books you could create.

For each category, we've provided a couple examples.

Each example is a beautiful book written by a Tiny Book Course graduate.

How-to book

A how-to book is a book where you explain how to do something.

For instance: a book on how to meditate, how to make more money, how to improve your communication skills, how to heal after trauma, how to bake show-stopping pies, etc.

A how-to book doesn't necessarily need to include the phrase "how to" in the title. It might or might not. It could also have a word like "system," "method," "process," "steps," or "framework," instead.

EXAMPLES

How to Create a Burlesque Solo ... From the Inside Out
Kellita Maloof

*The Idea System: A Simple Process to Help Children
Find Success in Their Days*
Carol Nissen

Why All Fish are Biased and How to Tackle Prejudice
Lyndsey Oliver

Collection book

A collection book is simply a collection of something.

It could be a collection of poetry, collection of lessons, collection of short essays or short stories, collection of wisdom gathered from various people, collection of family recipes, or something else.

You can put your collection into a specific order or not! The pieces can appear in no particular order.

You can create a collection book that's comprised of things you already wrote in the past. For instance, maybe you've already written 10 essays about grief. You could bundle those together into a book. No additional writing required.

EXAMPLES

Healing While Hurting: Poetry and Reflections
Carolina Ayala

17 - Poems for a Pandemic / Essays for Quarantine
Lisa Van Ahn

The Book of Divine Love: Heart Opening Poems
Mary Burnett Brown

Patterns from My Heart: Memories, Muses, and Miracles.
Life Seen Through the Lens of an Eighty-year-old Grandmother
Pat Pack

Joyful Mornings: Mindful Poems for Inviting Happy Days
Kayla Floyd

10 Reasons Dogs Are the Absolute Best: A Book of Tiny Tails
Amanda Gist

Letter book

A letter book is a letter presented in the form of a book.

It could be a letter to your future self, a letter to your spouse, a letter to young women everywhere, a letter to Santa Claus, a letter to God, any kind of letter.

It could be an uplifting letter—a pep talk to brighten your reader's day. It could be a serious letter. It could be a letter filled with advice, or humorous anecdotes, or hard-won wisdom that you learned along the way.

It could be one long letter. Or a series of short letters.

EXAMPLES

*So, You F*cked Up: A Pep Talk for When You've Made a Mistake*
Mandi Kane

*Little Little: Love Letters on Weaving Ayurvedic Wisdom
into Everyday Life*
Pleasance Silicki

Mom Break: Pep Talks for New Parents
Steph Simkins

Question book

A question book includes a list of questions for the reader to consider and answer.

You could make a very simple question book that includes the questions—and not much else. Brief and simple.

Or you could include questions, plus other things, too—like a personal story you want to share, resources for the reader to check out, photos, illustrations, or anything else you want to include.

EXAMPLES

50 Questions to Answer When You Reach 50.

A Guide to Help Women Shine and Thrive in Their 50s and Beyond
Kwavi Agbeyegbe

Questions You'll Wish You Asked: A Time Capsule Journal for Mothers and Daughters

Melissa Pennel

List book

A list book is a list presented in the form of a book.

Make a helpful list for your reader to enjoy. It could be a list of ideas, list of suggestions, list of things to remember, list of experiences to try, or something else. Boom. You just wrote a book.

Around here at The Tiny Book Course, we love ourselves a good list book!

Most people intuitively understand how to make a list—making this a simple, quick, and relatively easy type of book to write. A great option for first-time authors.

EXAMPLES

Slow the Fuck Down: 30 Reasons Why Your Joy Matters More Than Your To-Do List
Ashley Looker

50 Ways to Celebrate Life after 50: Get Unstuck, Avoid Regrets and Live Your Best Life Suzy Rosenstein

JOY PIE - 8 Simple Ingredients for Manifesting a Sweeter Life
Jodi Scott

28 Secrets to Glow Up
Mariane Talkovski

Activity book

An activity book includes a bunch of activities for the reader to do.

These could be activities to do alone, activities for parents and kids to enjoy together, activities to stimulate the mind, activities to de-stress and chill out, activities to create better health, anything you want.

Give your reader a collection of activities to do. Provide brief instructions for each one.

EXAMPLES

Play: Simple & Creative Activities to Inspire and Engage

Stéphanie McGuirt

Deeply Rooted: Mindful Practices for Cultivating Self-Compassion, Self-Acceptance & Healing

Peggy Oliveria

Children's book

A children's book usually contains a powerful lesson or message—expressed in a simple way. This lesson might be something like, “always trust your gut,” “be kind,” “be brave,” or “everyone is beautiful in their own way.”

It might be a classic message that's already been expressed one million times before, and that's totally okay. You can take a timeless message and make it feel new again by delivering it with a new story.

EXAMPLES

Dancing the Navaratri Nights

Mayuri Amarnath

Bubbles Took a Trip: A Mostly True Tale About an Adventurous Dog from the Canadian Prairies

Billi J. Miller

Love, Santa: Letters with Life Lessons from the North Pole

Carol Cross

Journal or Workbook

When you create a journal, the goal is to prompt your reader to pause, reflect, and write down their thoughts.

A journal typically includes lots of blank space inside, so the reader can write things down.

You could make a relationship journal for couples to fill out together, a baby journal for parents to record memories about their newborn, a business journal for entrepreneurs to write down their plans, and so on.

You might wonder, “What’s the difference between a journal and a workbook?” There’s not really a big difference. They’re very similar. They’re both books with blank space inside.

Generally, journals tend to be more focused on “being” (feeling, reflecting, no need to achieve anything in particular), whereas workbooks tend to be more focused on “doing” (working, striving, trying to accomplish something specific).

For instance, you could make a workbook with exercises to help your reader develop better listening skills, or a workbook with critical reasoning exercises for students to complete as a homework assignment.

EXAMPLES

My Tender Loving Self-Care Journal:
The Workbook that Makes Self-Care Easy
Mandy Kubicek

A Guide to Empower Your Inner Superhero: Journal
Tammy Holt

A few more types of books for you to consider

Family book

A book that's filled with information about your family. Family history, family stories, family photos, family recipes, or perhaps inside jokes that only your family will understand.

Tribute book

A book created in honor of someone special. For instance, a book all about your grandma in honor of her 90th birthday. Or a book to celebrate a colleague who is retiring after 40 years at the same company.

A tribute book can include pieces contributed by friends, colleagues, family, and other folks who know and love this special person.

Memoir book

A book filled with stories from your past.

A memoir can be chronological or can be a collection of various memories in no particular order.

Often, memories will contain a central theme—like resilience, tenacity, courage, faith, or serendipity. For instance, a memoir where you share things that have happened to you—and you share important lessons you've learned about resilience along the way.

Interview book

A book where you interview people and then publish their statements.

For instance, you could ask 50 people of all ages—from toddler to grandparents—to answer one question: “What does it mean to be in love?” Compile all of their responses and publish that as a book.

Or you could interview 10 small-business owners and ask each person why they decided to start a company and their biggest piece of advice for new entrepreneurs.

Or any other type of interview.

Cookbook

A cookbook includes recipes. Some cookbooks provide recipes for food and that’s that, plain and simple. Other cookbooks include recipes, plus more. For instance, next to each recipe, you could include a personal story, a little-known fact, a self-care tip, or a piece of information about a particular culture or country.

Fiction book

When you make up a story from your imagination, that's called fiction. The *Harry Potter* series is a work of fiction. So is *50 Shades of Grey*. Whereas, when you tell a completely true story, or you write a book that includes facts, information, or education, that's called non-fiction.

You could write a fictional book with one story inside. Or a collection of short stories.

Just like non-fiction books, fiction books come in every style and every size.

The Grownup by Gillian Flynn is 64 pages long.

The Alchemist by Paulo Coelho is around 150 pages long. This is one of the best-selling fiction books of all time, with more than 60 million copies sold.

The first book in the *Harry Potter* series is about 220 pages.

City of Girls by Elizabeth Gilbert is more than 500 pages.

War and Peace by Leo Tolstoy clocks in at 1,225 pages.

As you can see, fiction comes in all sizes. Tiny books can be just as powerful as longer ones.

Recap

There are so many different types of books you could write.

To name just a few:

- * How-to book
- * Collection book
- * Letter book
- * Question book
- * List book
- * Activity book
- * Children's book
- * Journal or Workbook

As well as:

- * Family book
- * Memoir book
- * Interview book
- * Cookbook
- * Fiction book

You might create a book that combines a few genres together. For instance, you could write a list book that's also a children's book. Or a memoir that's also a collection. Or a question book, plus activity book.

Maybe you want to create something that we didn't mention—like a coloring book or history book or something else. Go for it.

No matter what type of book you're envisioning, this course will show you how to get it done.

The first book of many

If you're feeling like, "I have twenty different books I want to write! It's so hard to pick just one!" ...take a breath.

This is just the beginning of your journey as an author.

This doesn't have to be the one and only book you ever write.

This can be the first book of many!

We encourage you to pick whatever book idea feels the most exciting to you right now—and run with it. All those other ideas you've got? Save those ideas for your second, third, or fourth book. You can work on those later.

Too many ideas? Still can't decide which one to do first?

If you have tons of different book ideas and you're struggling to pick one, here's what we recommend:

Write down all of your ideas. Consider each idea, one by one. As you consider each book idea, notice how your body feels.

Which ideas feel like a “should” (heavy, tense, boring, obligation) and which ideas feel like a “want” (light, expansive, exciting, inspiring)?

Often, people tell us things like, “I’m a business coach, so I feel like I should write a book filled with business tips, but what I really want to do is write a book about astrology.”

We encourage you to write the book you truly “want” to write, not the book you think you “should” write.

If you try to force yourself to create the “should” book, it’s going to be a miserable process. You will struggle to get started. You will probably abandon the project when it’s halfway done and never finish it. It will feel like a slog.

Whereas, if you allow yourself to create the “want” book, the words will flow! Working on this project will feel like a vacation rather than a chore. You will get it done.

Once you finish your first book and you experience the joy of completion, the floodgates will open! You’ll realize, “Wow, I did that. What else could I create next?”

You might feel motivated to write a second, third, or fourth book, make an audiobook, create a course, or something else. You’ll feel unstoppable.

Good questions to consider

- * What's the book I feel like I "should" write?
- * What's the book I really "want" to write?
- * If there are tons and tons of books that I "want" to write, what's the book I'd like to write first? (I can always write the other ones later!)
- * If there are tons and tons of books that I "want" to write, what's the book idea that feels like it would be the simplest to complete?
- * If there's some reason why I need to write the "should" book (for instance, I already promised my clients I would do it and I want to keep that promise), then how could I make this "should" project feel more like a "want" project? What would make this more inspiring and less tedious?

Inspiration

Read Melissa's inspiring story about choosing "want" instead of "should" and what happened next for her tiny book. We're so proud of her.

Don't have much time? Consider doing a very quick book that only takes 1 hour, 5 hours, or 10 hours to write.

You want to write a book, but you have basically zero time to do it?

These quickie options might be perfect for you.

If you only have 1 hour...

SUGGESTION: WRITE A QUESTION BOOK.

Your book could be called something like:

- * *Fresh Start: 10 Questions to Ask Yourself on New Year's Day*
- * *Before You Launch: 20 Questions to Answer Before You Start a Business*
- * *30 First-Date Questions That Aren't, "So, What Do You Do for Work?"*
- * *Rich Conversations: 40 Questions to Ask Your Family Around the Dinner Table*

Set a timer for 1 hour. Light a candle. Play some music you love. Write a list of questions.

Keep going until you can't think of any more questions or until the 1-hour timer goes off.

Boom. Your book manuscript is done!

If you only have 5 hours...

SUGGESTION: WRITE A LETTER BOOK.

Pretend you're writing a letter to someone you care about.

Perhaps you're writing a letter to a friend, family member, client, colleague, or perhaps to a small child, teenager, a new parent, a newly-divorced person, someone who just got diagnosed with cancer, or someone else.

Write a long letter. Or write a short letter. Or write a series of letters.

In your letter, share your thoughts. Share advice. Share words of encouragement. Whatever you feel moved to say.

Your book could be called something like:

- * *Dear New Dad: A Letter from One Father to Another*
- * *Dear Freshman: How to Succeed at College and Why It Really Has Nothing to Do with Your Grades*
- * *You Don't Need to Check the Stove Again: A Loving, Compassionate, and Humorous Letter to Anyone Who Struggles with Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (From Someone Who Understands)*

Set a timer for 5 hours. Pour yourself some coffee, tea, or the beverage of your choice. Write your letter. Once 5 hours is over, set it aside and allow yourself to be “done.”

The letter might pour out of you in 20 minutes and...boom. You're done. (This has happened for Tiny Book Course graduates in the past!)

Or it might take longer before you feel complete.

Challenge yourself to write from the “hut” (heart + gut) without overthinking, just as if you were writing to a friend.

Don't worry about hitting a particular word count. Whether your letter is 200 words long, or 20,000 words, any length is just fine.

Even if your letter is very brief—say, 200 or 300 words—you can still turn this into a beautiful printed book. Perhaps you'll include 1 sentence of your letter on each page of the book, so that the finished book eventually becomes 40 or 50 pages long, or more.

If you only have 10 hours...

SUGGESTION: WRITE A COLLECTION BOOK.

To save time, this could be a collection of something you've already created.

For instance, a collection of essays or poems you already wrote, recipes you already wrote and published on your blog, or worksheets you already created for clients in the past, etc.

Your book could be called something like:

- * *Hold On, This Won't Last Forever: 7 Essays About Resilience and Faith*
- * *Prairie Song: 21 Poems About Small Towns and Kind People*
- * *Ooh, That's Fancy: 30 Healthy Dinner Recipes with a Luxurious Vibe*

Set a timer for 10 hours. Pour yourself some coffee, tea, or the beverage of your choice. Pull together your collection.

Paste each piece into a document. You can put things into a specific order—or not. It's okay if things appear in no particular order.

If you want, you can write a brief introduction for the beginning of your book. Something like, "Why I decided to write this book," or perhaps a thank you note to your future reader.

And then, you are done! You just created a book manuscript. Sometimes, creating a book is simply a matter of pulling together the "best of" the materials you've already made.

Creating a book doesn't need to take "forever"

Depending on what kind of book you decide to make, you could realistically finish writing your manuscript in 1 hour, 5 hours, or 10 hours.

We've had Tiny Book Course graduates write their entire book manuscript and even finish all the design and publishing steps in a matter of

just a few days. This is completely possible.

If you have a very busy schedule and limited free time, this doesn't mean you can't write a book. It just means you'll want to choose a book concept that fits the reality of your life right now.

Choose a book idea that feels swift and easy to do.

Set yourself up for success rather than setting yourself up for disappointment.

Even if you literally just have 1 hour and that's it, you can make something beautiful.

Decide who's going to read your future book. Is this book just for your family and friends? For your clients? Students? The whole wide world?

Do you want to write a book that's intended for your kids and nobody else?

Do you want to write a book you'll give to clients and perhaps a few other colleagues?

Are you dreaming about writing a book you will eventually sell online and in bookstores around the world?

All of these paths are wonderful and meaningful in different ways. Whatever you want to do is beautiful and we applaud you!

Take some time to think about your intentions for this book.

Decide if you want to share this book publicly—or if it's a more personal, private project.

If you're not sure yet, and you want to decide later, that is completely fine.

Good questions to consider

✧ Do I want this project to feel personal and private—or public?

- * When I imagine my completed book, do I see myself sharing the book with a small circle of people—like family and friends?
- * Do I see myself sharing the book with my students? Colleagues? Clients? Or with another group or community?
- * Do I want to sell my book online or get it sold in bookstores and other shops?
- * Would I like to donate copies of my book to public libraries?
- * Where else would I like to share my book? What would feel good?

Make a list of 5 reasons why you want to write this book. Why is this important to you?

Why are you writing a book?

Why is this important to you?

Make a list of 5 reasons why project this matters to you.

EXAMPLE

I am writing a book...

- 1. Because I want to prove to myself that I can tackle a creative project and actually finish it.*
- 2. Because I've dreamed of doing this for years, and I want to be a DOER not just a dreamer.*
- 3. Because I have advice that can really help people! I want to package the "best of" my advice and share it with my clients in a book.*
- 4. Because I want to be a role model for my kids and show them, "Look, it's possible to set a goal, try something you've never done before, and get it done!"*
- 5. Because I want to throw myself a book release party and celebrate with people I love!*

Make your list

Make your list of 5 reasons (or more than 5, if you want). Keep this list close by. Put it on your desk or wherever you're working on your book.

In the future, if you have one of those days when you feel like giving up, return back to this list. Read it back to yourself.

Remember why you started this journey.

This will help you find the will and commitment to finish this project.

Set your intention for the book.

When you set an intention for your day, then your day tends to flow a lot better.

It's exactly the same when it comes to writing.

When you set an intention for your book, then your writing tends to flow a lot better.

Before you start outlining or writing your book, first, take a moment to set your intention.

With this book, my intention is _____.

For example:

- * With this book, my intention is to make my reader laugh out loud. That's it. I just want to make people laugh.
- * With this book, my intention is to show my reader how to handle workplace conflict in a successful way. I want to provide 5 important things to keep in mind.
- * With this book, my intention is to add beauty into my reader's life. My hope is that each poem will remind my reader that there is so much beauty and wonder to be found in everyday life.

Want to go deeper? Try: Feel, Know, Do.

Another way to set an intention for your book is to use Alex's Feel, Know, Do exercise. To do this, answer the following 3 questions:

Feel

What do I want my reader to feel as they're reading my book?

Know

What do I want my reader to know (or learn) from reading my book?

Do

What do I want my reader to do after reading my book?

EXAMPLE

Feel

What do I want my reader to feel as they're reading my book?

I want my reader to feel comforted, supported, and hopeful.

Know

What do I want my reader to know (or learn) from reading my book?

I want my reader to know that there are many, many ways to create a family. Even if you're not able to have a biological child on your own, you can still create the family you long to have.

Do

What do I want my reader to do after reading my book?

I want my reader to follow the gentle suggestions that I provide in the book. And I want my reader to go create the family of their dreams, whether that includes children or not, whatever “family” means to them personally.

Set your intention

Whether it’s with a quiet promise to yourself, a statement you write down, or something else, find a way to set an intention for your book.

When something—a book, a meal, a room—is crafted with care and intention, people can feel it. Start your book project on an intentional note.

Simplify, simplify, simplify. Find a way to make this process easier for yourself.

As human beings, we love to make things more complicated than they really need to be.

We love to add, add, add, and overload ourselves with unnecessary work.

For instance:

You decide what kind of book you want to write.

You decide what's going into your book and you write out a simple, delightful plan.

You start writing.

But then!

You think, "Well, I could also add THIS to my book! And I could include THAT! Oh and of course, I should insert THIS! And maybe also THIS!"

And before you know it, your simple plan has ballooned into a massive, overwhelming project that's going to take you 100 years to complete.

Everything feels too hard. You give up and never finish it.

That sad story we just described?

We don't want that to happen to you.

Find a way to make this process easier for yourself, not harder.

Making it hard

"I'm going to write 50 completely brand-new original poems and then turn that into a book. I'll need to start from scratch."

Making it easier

"I already have a collection of 50 poems that I've written over the last decade. I will take those and turn that into a book. Writing: already done! Project: easy!"

Making it hard

"I'm going to interview 20 of the world's leading experts on meditation and then turn their greatest teachings into a book."

Making it easier

"I'm going to make a list of 20 ways to meditate—simple practices that everyone will enjoy, even if you normally hate meditating—and then turn that into a book. I don't need to write a huge explanation about each practice. I can describe it briefly and that's that!"

Making it hard

"I'm going to write a New York Times bestseller about the history of racism in America from the nation's founding all the way to today."

Making it easier

"I can write a short book about racism in the workplace. My book will include 5 situations that are very common. I will describe each situation and share suggestions on what to do if you find yourself in that situation, including what to do if you don't feel safe speaking up to your colleagues."

Good ways to make things easier.

Create a book that doesn't include that much writing.

For instance, you could make a 50-page book that has 1 interesting question on each page, followed by blank space where the reader can write their response. That way, all you need to do is write 50 questions and you are DONE!

Create a book that includes material you've already created in the past.

You have essays, blog posts, worksheets, and other things you've already made? Compile those together, add a quick introduction, and boom! You're all set.

Create a list book.

Most people find it pretty easy to make a list. It's a format that our brains instinctively understand.

Unlike writing an essay or fictional story (which might not come naturally to you), writing a list is something you probably intuitively already know how to do.

Make a list of "21 activities to do with your toddler," "15 breakfast ideas that aren't toast," or "10 small ways to heal the environment." And you've got yourself a book! If you can write a list, then you can write a book.

Good questions to consider

- * Think about the book you want to write. Are you making things extremely hard for yourself?
- * Are you planning to write a book that (realistically) is going to require years of interviewing, research, fact checking, or extremely mentally taxing work? Is that really the kind of project you want to do at this moment in your life? If so, cool! If not, change your plan.
- * How could you make things easier?
- * What could you simplify or subtract?
- * What would make this project feel energizing and joyful?
- * What's a type of book you could realistically write in one weekend? One day? One morning?

**Make a list of what's going inside your book.
This is called an outline.**

Keep it simple. The simpler, the better.

Once you decide what kind of book you want to write, the next step is to make a list of what's going inside your book.

This is called an outline.

Keep it simple. The simpler, the better.

Sample outline

Let's say you're writing a book called *Peace Every Day: 21 Tiny Ways to Take Care of Your Mental Health*.

Your outline could look something like this:

~~~~~

*Peace Every Day: 21 Tiny Ways to Take Care of Your Mental Health*

### **Dedication**

A brief dedication (less than 1 page) to my spouse, my kids, my therapist, and other people who support me on the journey of life. This book is dedicated to you.

## **Disclaimer**

A brief disclaimer (less than 1 page) explaining this book provides information and inspiration, but is not a substitute for receiving treatment from a qualified mental health professional.

## **Introduction**

A brief introduction (approximately 1-2 pages) to welcome my reader to this book. In the Introduction, I will mention:

- What inspired me to write this book.
- My personal definition of “peace,” what this word means to me.
- How to use this book—a few gentle suggestions for my readers.

## **21 Tips / Things to Try**

A list of 21 tiny ways to take care of your mental health. Very small things that my reader can realistically do, even if they feel depleted and tired. For instance:

1. Make your bed.
  2. Splash cool water onto your face.
  3. Try Yoga Nidra aka sleepy-time yoga.
- ...and so on.

For each tip, I will provide brief instructions/suggestions (less than 1 page per tip) the reader can try out at home.

## **Open Space**

At the very end of my book, I will put a few blank pages where my reader can write down their own self-care ideas, too. Open space to brainstorm.

## **Acknowledgements**

A brief statement (1-2 pages) saying thank you to all the people who helped make this book possible.

## **About the Author**

A brief statement (less than 1 page) with information about me. My credentials, my website, where readers can find out more about my work and keep in touch.

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A few tips on creating an outline

Keep it simple

Remember, this is just a list of stuff that's going to be inside your book. It's a simple list. That's it. Nothing more. Try not to overcomplicate this.

You already know how to make a list. You've probably made plenty of lists in your life. Shopping lists. Holiday gift lists. Dream vacation lists. To-do lists. Creating a book outline is just making a list of things that you intend to put into your book.

You can do this.

Set parameters

If it feels helpful to you, give yourself parameters like "each tip will be 1 page or less" or "the dedication will be 2-3 sentences long."

This will help you keep things brief and prevent you from making this project longer and more complicated than it needs to be.

Know that it's just a starting point

This outline is a starting point—like an "initial plan" for your book. It's not rigid. It's okay if you change things later.

Once you start writing, you might decide to change the outline a bit and that's fine!

You might decide to put things into a different order, add a new section, remove a section, or something else. That's great. You don't have to stick to your initial outline exactly. It's just a starting point.

That being said...a word of caution.

Resist the urge to add more, more, more

Once you begin writing, please resist the temptation to add more, more, more to your outline.

If you notice yourself thinking "Instead of 20 tips, I could share 100 tips!" Or "I could interview 30 world-renowned experts on this subject and include their thoughts in the book, too!" Whoa, Nelly...slow down!

Before you start adding tons of new things to your book outline—and before you create tons of additional work for yourself—pause and reconsider.

Do you really need to add more? Is it truly necessary? Do you really have the time and energy to do all that extra legwork? Would it be better to save those terrific ideas for a future project, instead?

Pause before you add. Less is more. Simplicity is powerful.

Sample outline

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Sample outline

Buckle Up: 5 Road Trips That Changed My Life

Foreword

My best friend Siobhan will write a Foreword for the book. In it, she'll share one of her favorite road trip memories.

Acknowledgements

A brief statement (1-2 pages) saying thank you to all the people who helped make this book possible. A brief thank you note to my last 3 cars, too.

The trips

I will tell my reader about 5 road trips that changed my life.

Trip 1. That time I drove from LA to Vegas.

Trip 2. That time I drove around the Great Lakes.

Trip 3. That time I drove from coast to coast.

Trip 4. That time I drove nowhere in particular.

Trip 5. That time I drove home.

For each trip, I will write approx. 4-5 pages and share:

- Where I drove
- What was happening in my life at that time
- One important, wild, or unexpected thing that happened during that trip
- The greatest lesson I gained from that particular trip

Road trip resources

A list of 10 to 20 resources especially for road trippers. Good cars that use the least amount of fuel. Great places to stay. Excellent guide-books and maps. Etc.

About the Author

A brief statement (less than 1 page) with a little information about me.

Sample outline

Baby's First Month: A 30-Day Journal for New Parents

Dedication

A brief dedication (less than 1 page). I dedicate this book to my mom—the most amazing parent and grandparent. The woman who inspires me to be present and love fiercely every day. Love you, mom!

How to use this journal

A brief note (less than 1 page) to congratulate my reader(s) on their new child and explain how to use this journal.

30 days, 30 memories

I will give my reader(s) 30 questions or statements. They can read each one and then write their answer in the blank space below—recording memories from their baby's first month.

Day 1. When you look at your child, what is the very first thing you notice?

Day 2. Describe how your baby smells.

Day 3. Does your baby have any hair yet? Is it curly? Fine? Light? Dark? What do you notice?

And so on, all the way to Day 30.

Resources

A list of 10 resources for my reader to check out—helpful websites for new parents, great podcasts, support groups, and so on.

Acknowledgements

A brief statement (1-2 pages) saying thank you to all the people who helped make this book possible.

About the Author

A brief statement (less than 1 page) with a little information about me, my company, and where readers can find me and stay connected.

Sample outline

Dear Wife: 5 Love Letters In Honor Of 5 Years Together

Dedication

This book is dedicated to the world-famous magician David Blaine. Just kidding. Obviously, it's dedicated to my wife.

Introduction

A brief introduction (less than 1 page) where I explain why I decided to write this book.

The letters

5 letters for my wife to read. For her eyes, only.

Letter 1: What I remember about our very first date.

Letter 2: Our first big fight, what I learned from that experience, and how it made me a better person.

Letter 3: A few things you do that are so incredibly sexy to me.

Letter 4: One of my all-time favorite memories from the last 5 years.

Letter 5: My dreams for us, and for our family, as we move into the next 5 years.

Each letter will be approximately 2-3 pages long, maybe shorter, maybe longer, TBD.

Acknowledgements

A brief statement (1-2 pages) saying thank you to all the people who helped make this book possible.

About the Author

A very pompous, fancy, and professional-sounding author bio which will make my wife laugh out loud.

Sample outline

Build Your Dream School: How to Homeschool Your Kids

Dedication

A brief dedication (less than 1 page). I dedicate this book to every worried parent out there who is wondering, "How can I do what's best for my child?" This book is for you.

Introduction

A brief introduction (approximately 2-3 pages) to welcome my reader to this book. In the Introduction, I will mention:

- What inspired me to write this book.
- A little information about me and my family.
- What a typical school day looks like for me and the kids.
- What the reader can expect to find inside this book.

How to create a homeschool, step by step

10 steps for my reader to follow.

For each step, I'll write 3-4 pages to explain this step and how to do it or, at least, how to get started. I won't be able to fit "everything" into this short book, but I can give my reader a good place to begin.

Step 1: Decide if homeschooling is truly right for you.

Step 2: Find out your state's homeschooling requirements.

Step 3: Connect with other parents and build your support network.

- Step 4: Create a budget and decide if you're going to hire help, such as private tutors.
- Step 5: Map out your homeschool curriculum.
- Step 6: Set up your homeschooling classroom.
- Step 7: Create a schedule for classes and activities.
- Step 8: Schedule a review session to pause, reflect, and assess how everything is going so far.
- Step 9: Set up a meeting with a seasoned homeschool pro to discuss all the questions you've got.
- Step 10: Celebrate the victories that are already happening for you, big and small.

Closing thoughts

A few closing thoughts for my reader. Uplifting words of encouragement. A big reminder that you can do this!

Resources

A list of 10 to 20 resources for my reader to check out—helpful websites, great podcasts, programs, and so on.

Acknowledgements

A brief statement (1-2 pages) saying thank you to all the people who helped make this book possible.

About the Author

A brief statement (less than 1 page) with a little information about me, my website, and where readers can find me online and keep in touch.

Sample outline

Absolute Chills: 10 Horror Writers Share the Spookiest Story They've Ever Written

Dedication

A brief dedication (less than 1 page). I dedicate this book to everyone who is obsessed with ghost stories, haunted houses, unsolved mysteries, and things that go bump in the night. This book is for you.

Introduction

A brief introduction (approximately 1-2 pages) where I explain why I decided to create this book and how it all came together.

I asked 10 writer-buddies from my fiction writing group if they'd like to contribute a scary story. All 10 said "yes." I compiled all the stories together. Just like that—a book! Huge gratitude to everyone who got involved.

The stories

Story 1: The screaming tree.

Story 2: Did you feel that?

Story 3: Empty syringes.

Story 4-10: don't know what they'll be yet, will decide later. TBD.

Acknowledgements

A brief statement (1-2 pages) saying thank you to all the people who helped make this book possible: writers who provided a story, early readers who helped proofread and catch typos, patient spouses and friends, etc.

About the Authors

A brief bio for each person who contributed a story.

Choose a title (or working title) for the book.

(You can always change it later. You can call it *My Untitled Tiny Book* for now.)

What's your book going to be titled?

You can pick a title before you start writing, during the writing process, or at the very end.

If you're stumped and can't think of a title right now, we encourage you to pick a temporary title (this is called a "working title") for now. You can always change it later.

Title vs. subtitle

Some books have a title. Some books have a title, plus a subtitle. Either approach is totally fine.

How to Draw Cool Stuff: A Drawing Guide for Teachers and Students
by Catherine Holmes

In this example, *How to Draw Cool Stuff* is the title. *A Drawing Guide for Teachers and Students* is the subtitle.

This Is How We Rise: Reach Your Highest Potential, Empower Women, Lead Change in the World by Claudia Chan

In this example, *This Is How We Rise* is the title. *Reach Your Highest Potential, Empower Women, Lead Change in the World* is the subtitle.

The title is the first part. The subtitle is the second part, and it's usually added to provide a little more detail about what readers can expect to find inside the book.

Book title ideas

Here's a collection of book title ideas to inspire you.

Very simple title

You could give your book a very simple title. No mystery. Extremely clear. Tell the reader exactly what to expect from this book. Simplicity is a beautiful thing!

A FEW EXAMPLES:

The Little Book of Calm by Paul Wilson

100 Best Vegetarian Recipes by Carol Gelles

Walks of a Lifetime: Extraordinary Hikes from Around the World by Robert Manning and Martha Manning

How to title

If you're writing a book where you explain how to do something, you might want to include the phrase "how to" right in the title.

A FEW EXAMPLES:

How to Draw Cool Stuff: A Drawing Guide for Teachers and Students by Catherine Holmes

How to Start a Successful Nonprofit by Niaja Farve

How to Win Friends & Influence People by Dale Carnegie

However, you don't necessarily need to include the phrase "how to" in the title.

FOR INSTANCE:

The Complete Book of Mah Jongg by Amy Lo

Bonsai: The Complete Step-by-Step Guide for Beginners by Hikaru Yamasaki

Advice title

If you're writing a collection of advice, these titles might inspire you.

Life Advice from a Snarky Scorpio by Fiona Jefferies

Tiny Beautiful Things: Advice on Love and Life from Dear Sugar by Cheryl Strayed

Together Forever: Gay and Lesbian Couples Share Their Secrets for Lasting Happiness by Eric Marcus

This Is How We Rise: Reach Your Highest Potential, Empower Women, Lead Change in the World by Claudia Chan

Your Next Level Life: 7 Rules of Power, Confidence, and Opportunity for Black Women in America by Karen Arrington

Letter title

If you're writing a letter book—a collection of letters or one long letter you're publishing as a book—these titles might spark ideas for you.

Dear Strong Black Woman by Jennifer Sterling

Dear World: A Syrian Girl's Story of War and Plea for Peace by Bana Alabed

Dear Me: Letters to Myself, For All of My Emotions by Donna Tetreault and Elisena Bonadio

Dear Teen: We're in This Together by Macy Gerig

Letters to My Future Self by Lea Redmond

Love Letters to Myself: Practical Tips for Turning Anxiety and Depression into Strength by Julia Kay and Kaye Draper

Funny or punny title

Not every book needs to be heavy and serious! The world needs joy, levity, and laughter, too. If you're writing a humorous book, check out these titles for inspiration.

A FEW EXAMPLES:

Catflexing: A Catlover's Guide to Weightlifting, Aerobics & Stretching by Stephanie Jackson

Who Peed on My Yoga Mat? And More Stories from a Perfectly Imperfect Life by Lela Davidson

You Look Tired: An Excruciatingly Honest Guide to New Parenthood by Jenny True

Wishful Drinking by Carrie Fisher

Big message title

Are you writing a book to deliver a big, important message to the world? What do you want your reader to know, remember, or believe? Take your big message and make that the title of the book.

A FEW EXAMPLES:

Never Give Up by John Mason

Don't Sweat the Small Stuff by Richard Carlson

We Should All Be Millionaires by Rachel Rodgers

You Are a Badass by Jen Sincero

Mysterious, intriguing title

You could give your book a title that is mysterious and intriguing. Something that piques curiosity and makes the reader think, "Hmm...I wonder what this power is all about? I want to read it and find out."

The Power by Naomi Alderman

The Ancestor by Danielle Trussoni

The Hate U Give by Angie Thomas

Nine Perfect Strangers by Liane Moriarty

Fill-in-the-blank phrases

Fill in these blanks to brainstorm titles and subtitles for your book.

Dear _____

The Adventures of _____

What Nobody Tells You About _____

How to _____

The Complete Book of _____

Read This Before _____

A Brief History of _____

The Essential Guide to _____

7 Stories About _____

50 Ways to _____

A Tiny Book About _____

The Uncomfortable Truth About _____

10 True Stories About _____

A Step-by-Step Guide to _____

A Celebration of _____

What to do if you come up with a book title that you love, but (arrrgh!) it's already being used by somebody else.

Try to choose an original title that's never been used before, if possible. This is always the best option.

However, sometimes two books (or more than two books) will get released with the same title. It happens more often than you might think. More than 1 million new books get published every single year, so crossover and duplication are almost inevitable. Sometimes, it just happens and it's nobody's fault.

Let's say, hypothetically, that three books all get released in the same year. By chance, they're all titled *Bouncy Time*.

To differentiate your book from others with the same title, you can add a subtitle. Instead of just calling your book *Bouncy Time*, you could call it:

Bouncy Time: A Memoir

Bouncy Time: A Love Story

Bouncy Time: A True Story

Bouncy Time: The Surprising History of Rubber Balls

Bouncy Time: 50 Ideas for Parents with Toddlers at Home

...or add some other subtitle, so it's clear your book is different from the others. This is a good way to clear up confusion.

A few websites we love

While you're brainstorming a title for your book, you might enjoy these sites and resources.

Title generator

Click a few buttons, get a random book title generated for you.

<https://blog.reedsy.com/book-title-generator/mystery/>

The Free Idiom Dictionary

Find common phrases and sayings.

idioms.thefreedictionary.com/

The Online Etymology Dictionary

Research the origins and history of words.

etymonline.com/

RhymeZone

Find rhymes!

rhymezone.com/

Punrise, Punset

Puns for everyone!

punrisepunset.blogspot.com/

Wordroid

Generate made-up words.

wordoid.com/

Portmanteaur

Combine two or more words into a portmanteau, like "bromance" or "chillax."

portmanteaur.com/

**Gather materials you need in advance (if any).
Photos, painting supplies, a particular textbook or
research materials. Get everything in one place.**

Are there any special materials you need in order to write your book?

If you haven't already done so, now is a great time to gather any items you think you'll need and put those in your workspace.

For instance, if you plan to include family photos in your book, gather those photos now.

If you plan to include a collection of poetry in your book (poems you've already written over the last few years), get organized and gather together the poems you want to use.

If you think you're going to need a particular textbook for research, a pair of scissors, watercolor paints, or something else, go get that stuff and put everything in your writing workspace.

Or maybe you need some digital materials. Maybe there are some articles, essays, blog posts, or research studies you intend to mention in your book. Bookmark the links or put all the links you need into a document. Gather things together.

It's much more joyful to create a book when you've got all of your supplies in one place.

Mise it out!

In the culinary world, there's a French term—mise en place—which means "putting everything in its place."

If you're a cool chef, you say: "Mise it out!"

Meaning: "Set everything up in an orderly fashion— ingredients, knives, herbs, oils, cutting boards—so I can get down to business."

If you want to exercise daily, mise it out: lay out your running shoes and gym outfit the night before, at the foot of your bed.

If you want to start each morning by writing a letter to someone you love, mise it out: put your paper, pen, and stamps right next to your coffee maker.

If you want to finish writing your book, mise it out: charge up your computer, queue up your favorite music, get your headphones, block out the time on your calendar and treat it with the same level of seriousness as your best friend's wedding or an urgent doctor's appointment.

Get all your materials organized in one place. You'll be way more successful that way.

Step 4: Write Your Book

Hang a Do Not Disturb sign on your door and start writing!

You set up your workspace.

You asked your family and friends for support.

You made an outline, aka list of what's going into your book.

Maybe you came up with a title or working title.

You're organized and ready.

If you haven't already started, now is the time to start writing!

Hang a Door Not Disturb sign on your door. [Here's one we made for you!](#) You can print it out at home.

How long will it take to finish writing?

People often ask us, "How long will it take for me to finish writing my book?"

It depends on what kind of book you want to write, and it depends on your personality and writing style.

Depending on what kind of book you want to create, writing the book might take a couple of months, a week, one weekend, one day—it just depends.

If you're writing a question book—20 questions to ask yourself before you buy a home—the questions might pour out of you in 2 hours and, whoosh, you're all done!

If you're writing a family history book (featuring stories about your parents and grandparents), things might take a couple weeks, because perhaps you'll need to email people, schedule interviews, talk to them, collect stories, and so on.

Writing the book might happen faster than you think. It might happen slower.

One thing is for sure: the sooner you start, the sooner you will be finished!

Want to write faster and enjoy the process a lot more? Clear distractions

Most people live and work in a state of constant distraction.

You sit down at your desk and you've got 15 tabs open on your browser, email notifications coming in, dings from your phone every time you get a text, your social media feed is poppin' with new messages, plus, your housemates or kids barge into the room asking for things every other minute.

When you're distracted, you're putting your brain into a high-stress, low-performance state.

When your brain is in this state, a task that might ordinarily take one hour is going to take four hours.

The more distracted you are, the longer it's going to take to finish writing your book

Plus, when you're distracted, it's significantly more likely you'll make a mistake—like forgetting to save your document (yikes), or misquoting someone in your book (whoops), and other blunders.

Researchers at the University of Sydney did a study recently. They studied 98 nurses and 4,000 patients. They observed the nurses while they administered medicine and treated the patients. And they found a direct connection between interruptions, distractions, and dangerous mistakes.

After doing observations for more than 500 hours, the researchers found that the nurses who were constantly interrupted were 12% more likely to make a mistake—like missing an important detail on a patient's chart or even giving the patient the wrong medication. Not good.

Moral of the story

Distractions and interruptions make it really difficult for your brain to function at its best.

Eliminate distractions from your workspace, as much as you possibly can.

You'll feel better. You'll write better. Words will flow faster. You'll get more done in less time with fewer mistakes and frustrations along the way.

Obviously, life isn't perfect, and you can't exert complete control over your environment. But try to reduce distractions as much as you can.

Give your brain every possible advantage. Small changes, like silencing your phone or closing your email tab, make such a big difference.

Try the “email to a friend” exercise, if you feel stuck and the words are not flowing.

Feeling stuck? The words are just not flowing?

Instead of telling yourself, “I’m writing a book, ugh, this is so hard...” play a little trick on your brain.

Tell yourself something like:

- * “I’m writing a letter to a friend.”
- * “I’m telling a funny story to my sister.”
- * “I’m writing a helpful email to a colleague.”
- * “I’m just making a list of tips. No big deal.”

When you tell yourself “letter,” “email,” “list,” you might notice that you relax, things feel more doable, and the words begin flowing.

Try the “email to a friend” exercise

Let’s say you’re a relationship coach.

You want to write a book for people who are wondering, “Should I stay in my marriage or leave?”

You want to provide some words of comfort, some advice, and resources.

You're trying to write but you feel stuck.

Pretend a close friend just emailed you. Pretend this friend says to you:

Hi. I've reached a really bad place in my marriage, and I don't know how to make things better. Staying in my marriage feels impossible. Divorce feels impossible, too. I am so stuck and feel like I can't move forward. How can I make this decision? How can I make sure I'm not making a terrible mistake I will always regret? Should I stay in my marriage or leave? I am wondering if you have any advice for me. Any words of comfort, any resources, any guidance—anything you can share, I would be so grateful to hear. Thank you.

If a friend emailed you like that—pleading for help—what would you say in response? What would you say to your friend?

Would you tell a true story to bring comfort to their heart?

Would you recommend a particular resource to check out?

Would you give them a helpful checklist to alleviate anxiety and overwhelm?

Whatever you would share with your friend...

...that's exactly what you can share in your book.

Every book is a 1-on-1 conversation

A book is a 1-on-1 conversation between you and your reader.

You can write your book as if it's private, personal, and meaningful conversation with someone you care about. Because that's exactly what it is.

Pretend you're giving advice to one person, telling a funny story to one person, or revealing a secret to one person.

You know how to write an email to help a friend. You've probably done this a thousand times before. So, you know how to write a book. It's the same skill—just a different format.

Keep it simple.

Write to a friend.

Still feeling stuck or uninspired?

Try a writing prompt to get new ideas flowing.

Sometimes, for whatever reason, you just feel blah and uninspired.

Maybe it's because you didn't sleep well last night, you're drained from a big project at work, you're hungry or dehydrated, you're struggling with self-doubt, or all of the above.

If you're feeling really stuck with your book project, consider stepping away for a day or two. Give yourself permission to stop writing for a little while. Take a break.

During your break, try a writing prompt to get new ideas flowing.

What is a writing prompt?

A writing prompt is a question or statement that's designed to spark ideas. It's a good way to unclench and relax your brain and get back into a writing groove.

How to use writing prompts

Get as relaxed and comfy as possible. Play some music you love. Pick a prompt from the following list.

You'll notice some of the prompts we provide are very light-hearted

and others are more serious. Choose any prompt you like. Start writing and respond to the prompt.

You can give yourself a time frame (like 10 minutes per prompt) or just write as long as you want without any parameters. See what flows out.

This may help you reconnect with the joy of writing—writing purely to express yourself, just because it feels good, without any pressure or big agenda.

Once you're back in a joyful groove, then return to your book project. You might feel refreshed and ready to tackle it again.

Writing prompts

What's one of your most treasured possessions?

A scarf your grandma gave to you? A wallet you've had since you were 15 years old? Write about your most treasured possession. Describe how it came into your life. Describe what it represents for you.

What's the worst hairstyle you ever had?

We've all had one. Or more than one. Describe the worst haircut, color, or style you ever had. Be as detailed as possible. Or describe your favorite look of all time!

Can you remember your first kiss?

Describe that moment. All the details. What you were wearing. Where you were. Who it was. How you felt. What happened next.

Do you have a pet?

Describe one of your pets. What do they look like? Smell like? Feel like? Do you sometimes feel like they're trying to speak to you? What are they saying?

What is something you secretly do when you're alone?

When you're alone in the car, the restroom, the kitchen...what's something you secretly do when you're all by yourself? Do you sing to yourself? Interview yourself and talk aloud? Eat peanut butter by the spoonful, instead of making an actual dinner? Describe one of your alone-time habits.

Can you remember a time when you felt bullied, teased, or shamed as a kid?

Maybe someone told you that you were stupid, your science project was dumb, the "cool kids" wouldn't let you hang out with them, or someone made fun of your body, skin color, hair, or clothes.

What happened? What did you feel in that moment?

Imagine a kid—or a grown-up—who's going through a similar experience right now. Feeling bullied. Feeling teased. Feeling scared. Feeling worthless.

If you were sitting down with that person over a cup of tea, what would you like to say to them? What do you want them to know?

Can you remember a time when you felt really betrayed or disappointed by someone close to you—like a friend, client, employee, or a romantic partner?

What did they do? How did you feel? What did you learn from that experience? If you could do things over, what would you do differently?

Can you remember a time when you felt really lost, alone, afraid—a “rock bottom” type of moment?

Maybe you got really sick. Maybe you were unemployed. Maybe someone broke up with you. Maybe your mom died.

Think back to a really challenging time in your life. How did you get through that time in your life? What helped you to keep moving forward? What helped you to survive?

Now imagine someone who’s dealing with that exact same scenario or something pretty similar. What words of advice, comfort, or encouragement would you give to that person? What do you want them to know?

Write a letter for future historians to discover.

2020 and 2021 have been very challenging years, to say the least. Big lows. Big fears. Big uncertainty. Remarkable, beautiful things, too—like communities coming together and neighbors helping one another.

Write a letter about “What the Pandemic Has Been Like.” Pretend you’re going to put this letter into a time capsule and it will be opened 100 years from now. What do you want future historians to know about what’s happening right now?

Still struggling? Do something to de-stress. When you feel better, you write better.

Science fact

When you feel stressed out, your brain goes into a low-functioning state.

As your stress levels rise, you temporarily lose 10 to 15 IQ points.

For context, losing 10 points is similar to being hungover or sleep deprived. Not good!

When you're stressed, it's very difficult to think creatively, see all the options, solve problems, and make good choices.

When you feel frustrated and tense, best thing to do is step away from your computer and go do something to de-stress.

Bring your stress levels down. Bring your IQ back up. Put your brain back into a high-performance state. This makes it much easier to focus, concentrate, think creatively, and write your book.

De-stress ideas

- * Spend time in nature, whether it's a public park, beach, forest, backyard, anywhere you can go.

- * Move your body in any way that feels good to you.
- * Get or give a hug, massage, or some other kind of soothing physical touch.
- * Play with your pet.
- * Instead of looking down at your phone, look up at the sky.
- * Do something to complete the stress cycle* and signal to your body, "We're okay, we're safe, the threat is over." Splash cool water on your face. Clap your hands. Exercise. Or do something else that signifies a "shift" to you.

**Read the book *Burnout: The Secret to Unlocking the Stress Cycle* written by sisters Amelia and Emily Nagoski to learn more about the science of stress—and how to allow your body to fully relax. Fascinating stuff.*

Inspirational true story

Lin-Manuel Miranda, creator and star of the hit Broadway musical *Hamilton*, got the idea for *Hamilton* while on vacation.

Miranda was feeling worn out after a very busy couple of years and decided to go on vacay with his family.

On a whim, he brought along a copy of a biography about the life of Alexander Hamilton. He figured he would read the book while lounging by the beach or pool.

While relaxing on vacation, reading the biography, the concept for

Hamilton dropped into his mind—like a lightning bolt out of nowhere. He went home refreshed and filled with exciting new ideas.

It took more than 7 years to create the lyrics and score for *Hamilton*, Miranda's masterpiece, which became one of the most successful musicals in the history of Broadway.

And it all started...on a vacation.

Moral of the story: take a long bath, take a walk, take a vacation, bottom line: take a break!

Your best ideas tend to arrive when you're relaxed and not striving and pushing so hard.

Step away from your desk. That's when genius drops in.

Stay committed to your book outline.

Resist the temptation to add more, more, more and to overcomplicate the project.

As you're writing your book, you might feel tempted to add more, more, more and overcomplicate the project.

For instance, perhaps you start with a simple vision.

"I'm going to write a book that includes 30 unplugged activities you can do with your kids. Fun activities for the whole family that don't require a digital screen."

Wonderful!

You start writing. Things are going well. Ideas are pouring out. You're almost done writing your list of 30 activities. But then you feel the urge to add more to your book. You start thinking:

"Maybe I could include an interview with a child psychologist, and a neuroscientist, and several other experts too! And a chapter about the history of personal computing devices! And I could include advice I collect from 10 parents! And I could get a famous parenting coach to write a Foreword for the book..."

All of these ideas are great.

There's nothing wrong with adding more to your book, if you truly want to.

However, we encourage you to pause and reflect...before you add.

Just because you “could” add more to your book doesn’t necessarily mean you “should” or “must.”

Adding more doesn’t necessarily make the book better or stronger. In fact, many times, it’s the opposite. Adding more, more, more to your book can make the book bloated and overwhelming for people to read.

If you create a simple book with a clear message, that’s a gift to your reader.

If you create a complicated book with a hundred different things crammed into it, that’s not necessarily a gift to your reader. In some ways, that could be a disservice.

Remember that simplicity is powerful.

By sticking with a simple concept, you’ll be able to finish writing quickly. You’ll actually get this book finished—in a relatively short time frame—instead of getting overwhelmed and abandoning the project.

If you feel the urge to add more, you certainly can. It’s your book. It can be anything you want it to be. Just take a moment to pause and reflect before doing it.

Good questions to consider

- * Why do I feel compelled to add more to my book? Do I feel insecure about my own ideas? Do I feel like I need to insert statements from “experts” in order to make this book valid or useful? What’s driving me to do this?
- * If I add this additional stuff, will that be helpful to my reader?
- * Instead of adding this additional stuff, could I save these additional ideas for a second book, third book, or perhaps a blog post, article, essay, or newsletter? Could I use this material elsewhere?
- * Realistically, do I have time to create all of this additional stuff? Do I have the bandwidth to do this? Or am I setting myself up for disappointment and stress?

Remember that simplicity is a gift to your future reader. Less is more.

What do the following books all share in common?

Chicken Soup for the Soul by Jack Canfield and Mark Victor Hansen.

The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up by Marie Kondo.

Oh, the Places You'll Go! by Dr. Seuss.

All of these books are beloved, best-selling titles. Millions of copies, sold. Millions of lives, touched.

And all of these books have a powerful quality of simplicity.

Chicken Soup for the Soul is a simple book. Simple but powerful. The two authors, Canfield and Hansen, went out and compiled 101 true stories from ordinary people. 101 stories to provide hope, comfort, and encouragement. Like a comforting bowl of soup to soothe your spirit. They published these 101 stories in a book.

This became one of the bestselling books of all time—and eventually become a popular series with hundreds of sequels, like *Chicken Soup for the Kid's Soul*, *Chicken Soup for the Nature Lover's Soul*, and even *Chicken Soup for the Golfer's Soul*.

The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up is another book that shines with powerful simplicity. The author, Marie Kondo, brings a simple

message to her readers: *Declutter your home and this will transform your entire life.*

She offers a simple technique to do this. *Touch every item in your home. Ask yourself, "Does this spark joy?" If it does, keep it. If it doesn't, get rid of it.*

Kondo's work has become so incredibly popular, in part, because of its simplicity. Anybody can follow her instructions. It's all so clear, sensible, simple.

And there's a reason why people love the work of Dr. Seuss. Each Dr. Seuss book provides a big lesson expressed in a simple way.

As you're working on your book, remember that simplicity is a gift to your future reader. Less is more.

We've already emphasized this point numerous times during the course, but it's so important and it bears repeating: *keep it simple.*

Simplicity doesn't mean that your book is shallow or "dumbed down." Simplicity can be deep and powerful.

Struggling to keep things simple? Please reach out. We're here to help.

If you're struggling with your book, and you feel like you're making things more complicated than they need to be, please email us: hello@youcangetitdone.com.

Tell us what's going on.

We're happy to take a look at your outline, or manuscript, or listen to your situation.

We can give suggestions on how to simplify things. Reach out anytime during the course.

Remember the world needs all kinds of books: short books, long books, joyful books, serious books, helpful books, entertaining books, simple books.

As you move along through the book journey, you might notice doubt and self-criticism creeping into your mind.

You may find yourself thinking:

“Everybody else in the course is writing such a serious, important book. Meanwhile, my book is so frivolous and fluffy in comparison!”

Or you may think:

“Maybe my book is too simple? Too light-hearted? Just plain stupid?”

If you start feeling like your book is “too silly” or “unimportant” or “just not good enough,” —or if you start feeling like everyone else is writing a book that’s more valuable than yours—we have a reminder for you.

The world needs all kinds of books

Serious books. Entertaining books. Joyful books. Provocative books. Long books. Short books. Every type of book is important and needed.

Think about things from a reader’s perspective.

As a reader, there are moments when you want to read a serious,

thoughtful book that dives into difficult topics.

And, as a reader, there are times when you want to escape into a world of fantasy and adventure and take a break from the real world and all of its problems.

There are times when you need simple advice delivered with compassion.

There are times when you just need a good laugh.

And there are times when you need a sweet story about puppies to read to your child at bedtime. (Or to yourself!)

Every book contains a form of medicine that readers need. Joy is a form of medicine. Laughter is medicine. Beauty is medicine. Feeling seen and validated is medicine, too.

Remind yourself:

"My book will provide a form of medicine the world needs."

Your book is just as precious and important as anybody else's.

If you start losing your motivation, go back and read your list of “5 reasons why I want to write a book.” Remember why you started.

At some point in the book journey, you'll probably hit a wall.

Maybe you'll feel tired, bored, or discouraged. Maybe you'll be having a difficult week at work, or at home, and your energy-tank is running low.

There will probably be a moment when you feel like giving up.

That's when voices come into your head saying:

“This is just too hard, and it's taking too long.”

“I'm never going to finish writing this book. Ugghh.”

“I always start projects but never finish! I always do this!”

“I shouldn't have signed up for this course. My schedule is just too busy this year, it was a mistake to even sign up.”

“I have so many important things to do. This book just isn't a priority anymore. I quit.”

If you start losing your motivation, go back and read your list of **5 reasons why I want to write a book**. The list you made earlier in this course.

Read that list back to yourself.

Remember why you started this project.

This will give you the burst of motivation you need to get back to your workspace and finish it.

Authors who almost quit...but didn't

There are so many examples of writers who experienced discouragement, burnout, or rejection. Writers who wanted to quit, could have quit, almost quit...but didn't.

After getting rejected by 27 publishers, Dr. Seuss felt so discouraged, he was planning to burn all of his manuscripts. On the very day he pledged to burn everything up, he serendipitously bumped into an old friend who encouraged him to keep the faith and keep going. Thank goodness for that friend who gave that pep talk on that fateful day!

Louisa May Alcott, the author of *Little Women*, once received harsh words from a publisher who rejected her manuscript. She was told: "Stick to your teaching, Miss Alcott. You can't write."

So many authors experience creative droughts, writer's block, criticism from others, criticism from within. This is part of the journey.

Don't isolate. Reach out for help.

If you ever find yourself in a difficult moment or feel like giving up on your book, don't isolate. Reach out for help.

Please email us: hello@youcangetitdone.com.

Tell us what's going on.

If you're feeling too busy to write, too tired, overwhelmed, whatever is going on, let us know.

Email anytime during the course. We will listen with compassion and zero judgment. We've been there, too. And we'll offer a few suggestions that might help.

Write a short description of your book.

Before your book goes out into the world, it's a good idea to write a short description to quickly sum up what the book is all about.

This description can go onto the back cover of your book, on Amazon, on your website, in a press release, and lots of other places.

This description can be fairly short. Think: 100 to 400 words long.

Not sure how to write a book description?

We have 6 examples to help you out—different genres, including non-fiction, fiction, essay/poetry collection, and memoir.

Each example is followed by a fill-in-the-blank template, so you can customize it with your own info.

Sample book description

Non-fiction book: How-to, instructional, inspirational

The Checklist Book

Alexandra Franzen

Description

Too much to do, too little time? Feeling overwhelmed and stressed? Go back to the basics by writing out a simple checklist.

The Checklist Book: Set Realistic Goals, Celebrate Tiny Wins, Reduce Stress and Overwhelm, and Feel Calmer Every Day is your guide to a simpler, more beautiful day.

In *The Checklist Book*, learn:

- The history of the checklist and why it remains so relevant and effective today.
- The science of checklists and why it feels so incredibly satisfying to make a list and check things off.
- How to create a daily checklist, seasonal checklist, annual checklist, self-care checklist, marketing checklist, and checklists for challenging situations like moving to a new city or navigating a divorce.

Checklists will change your life.

Fill-in-the-blank version

Too much [negative thing] and not enough [positive thing]? Feeling [unpleasant emotion]? This book is for you!

[Title] is your guide to [a calmer day, a stronger marriage, more peace at home, a happier relationship with your body, less stress in the kitchen, or whatever positive outcome/benefit your book provides].

Inside, you'll learn:

- [One cool thing your reader will learn]
- [Another cool thing your reader will learn]
- [Yet another cool thing your reader will learn]

[Finish your description by emphasizing the big message of the book—for instance: Today is not over yet. / You can get into your dream college—this book shows the way! / Passion doesn't have to fizzle out and disappear. Your marriage can feel like a honeymoon for decades. / Or whatever your central message might be.]

Sample book description

Non-fiction book: Collection of true stories by the author and other voices

You're Going to Survive

Alexandra Franzen

Description

Having a tough day at work? Maybe you're dealing with a hysterical client. A job interview that goes nowhere. A vicious 1-star review about your latest project. Or just a general sense of confusion. "Who am I? What is my purpose? What am I doing with my life?!"

If you're having one of those rough moments, curl up with *You're Going to Survive*.

Each chapter is filled with honesty, humor, and heartfelt encouragement to help you stay motivated, keep marching, and never give up (even when things feel incredibly tough).

No matter what's going on in your career right now, this isn't the end of your story. You're going to survive.

"This book is your new best friend on a bad day. Keep it by your bedside table, in your dashboard, in your purse, or in your freezer next to a big pint of ice cream. Alexandra will always be there to tell you that you can do it, you must keep going, and you are meant for greatness."
—Vanessa Van Edwards, bestselling author of *Captivate*

Fill-in-the-blank version

Dealing with [unpleasant/painful situation]?

Or maybe you're wondering, "[Big question your ideal reader is probably wondering—"How can I ____?" Why does ____ feel so hard?" "If I want ____, what should I do?"]].

If that's your situation right now, curl up with [Title].

Each chapter is filled with [encouragement, advice, checklists, recipes, whatever each chapter contains] to help you [navigate grief, get your dream job, create a daily meditation practice, prepare for parenthood, or whatever this book helps readers do].

[Put a short testimonial/endorsement for the book—written by a friend, colleague, fellow author, anyone you want—briefly summing up why it's so awesome.]

Sample book description

Non-fiction book: How-to, career, professional development

Your Next Level Life

Karen Arrington

Description

Winner: NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Instructional Literary Work

How Big Do You Want to Live?

If you're feeling stuck or trapped by other people's expectations of what you can achieve, it's time to stop playing small and start redefining what success can mean for you. It's time to get that upgrade.

Karen Arrington—founder of the Miss Black USA Pageant, creator of the Next Level Women's Summit, and mentor to thousands of confident, successful young black women—is your guide to getting your next level life.

With the seven simple rules, you'll learn how to bring your career, income, and lifestyle to that next level.

Your Next Level Life will show you how to:

- Create all the money you need
- Position yourself like a star
- Connect with other powerful women

- Bring your life to the next level, whatever that means for you!

Your Next Level Life is where Gay Hendricks' *The Big Leap* meets Shonda Rhimes' *Year of Yes*.

If you love personal development books like *Believe Bigger* and *Don't Settle for Safe*, you'll love *Your Next Level Life: 7 Rules of Power, Confidence, and Opportunity for Black Women in America*.

Fill-in-the-blank version

[If your book has been mentioned in the media, won an award, got an awesome review, you can mention that detail.]

[Intriguing question to pique the reader's attention, like: How big do you want to live? / If you had 24 hours to live, what would you do? / What if sales could be fun? / What if divorce could be a win-win for everyone involved, even the kids?]

If you're feeling [negative emotion], it's time to stop [unhelpful pattern] and start [new, exciting thing].

[Your name]—describe your job title, qualifications, credentials—stylist, life coach, mother of four, etc.—is your guide to [new, exciting thing].

[Title] will show you how to:

Create _____.

Avoid _____.

Complete _____.

And experience the joy of _____!

If you enjoy books like [another book title] and [another book title], then you'll love [Title].

Sample book description

Fiction

So This Is the End: A Love Story

Alexandra Franzen

Description

In this inspiring tale of romance, a young woman meets her soulmate—with only 24 hours to live. Perfect for fans of JoJo Moyes and Jill Santopolo.

If you had just one day to live, what would you do?

In a world where doctors can revive the dead for a single day, Nora Hamilton has just received the extraordinary gift of an extra 24 hours of life.

One more day. One more chance to tell her family how much she loves them, to listen to her favorite song, and to feel the grass beneath her feet. And she's determined to make every moment count.

Enter: Renzo. Ren, for short. He's strong, compassionate, and unfairly attractive, with a face that makes Nora's stomach explode into stars. Their connection is immediate and undeniably intense. Nora is wracked with bittersweet joy and confusion as she realizes, "I've finally met the love of my life...on the last day of my life."

Should she tell Ren the truth about her condition? Or simply try to enjoy their brief time together? Is it wrong to fall in love when there's no

chance for a future? Or is love a precious gift, no matter how long it lasts, even if it's just for one day?

So This Is the End is a story about taking chances, making your own rules, and the power of living like there's no tomorrow.

Fill-in-the-blank version

[Have you written a fantastical adventure that fans of the Harry Potter series will love? Would fans of the show Downton Abbey adore your historical fiction? Is your book's style a mash-up of Malinda Lo meets Maggie Stiefvater? Try opening with "Fans of _____ will love this new book..." or "A riveting story that combines the drama of _____ with the hilarity of _____."]

[Intriguing question to pique the reader's attention, like: If you had 24 hours to live, what would you do? / What if you were the only human being left on Earth? / If someone offered you a pharmaceutical drug that allows you to stay madly in love with your partner forever, would you take it?]

[State your main character's dilemma at the beginning of the book. She's embroiled in a lawsuit. He's 55 years old and has never been kissed. They just woke up to discover that aliens have landed on Earth, etc.]

[Hint at what happens next without giving too much away. She goes on a wild adventure around the world to collect evidence for her case. He falls in love when he least expects it. They team up with the aliens to reinvent Democracy and try to build a better world.]

[Sum up what this novel is all about. What's the main theme? Or central ideas? Title of your book is a story about _____, _____, and _____.]

Sample book description

Collection of essays, poetry, and photography

Glad to Be Human: Adventures in Optimism

Irene O'Garden

Description

In a world so often filled with distressing news and bewildering violence, being “human” often gets a bad rap. Rejoice in everyday reasons to smile, think positively, and enjoy the gift of life.

Take a walk on the bright side.

In *Glad to Be Human: Adventures in Optimism*, award-winning writer Irene O'Garden reminds us of the radiance of human existence. From kitchens to gardens to busy city streets, all around, in your everyday life, you can find plenty of reasons to feel gratitude and hope, peace and joy.

It's the little things.

In this collection of essays, O'Garden explores a wide range of practical reasons to celebrate life—just look closely around you. In one essay, she describes the simple pleasure that comes from clearing clutter off a desk; in another, the thrill of visiting the Statue of Liberty. The book's grand finale is the Pushcart Prize-winning essay, “Glad to Be Human.”

One simple message.

Through contemplation, meditation, and with literary style, *Glad to Be Human* invites readers to view life through a positive lens. From small, daily activities to journeys overseas, O’Garden has a knack for finding beauty and meaning in all life’s adventure—even in our deepest pain and suffering—helping all of us feel glad to be human.

If you enjoy Anne Morrow Lindbergh and Anne Lamott, or books like *Risking the Rapids*, *The Book of Joy*, *The Book of Delights*, and *The Gratitude Diaries*, you’ll love O’Garden’s *Glad to Be Human*.

Fill-in-the-blank version

[Explain how your book provides a kind of “medicine” the world needs right now: In a world so often filled with _____ [title of your book] provides _____.]

[Explain what this book offers to the reader. Does it offer a message of hope and solace? Does it feel like a fiery call to action? Does it feel like sitting down with a friend? This is a book that feels like _____ and that invites readers to _____.]

[State the gist of what your book includes. Travel essays from a 5,000-mile journey around the world? Poems about undersea creatures and the lost Kingdom of Atlantis? What can readers expect to find inside? Inside, readers will find: _____.]

[State the central message of your book. What’s the main message readers will take away? This is a book that reminds readers to _____.]

If you enjoy [another author, essayist or poet] and [another person], then you will love [title of your book].

Sample book description

Memoir

A Drop of Midnight: A Memoir

Jason Diakité

Description

World-renowned hip-hop artist Jason “Timbuktu” Diakité’s vivid and intimate journey through his own and his family’s history—from South Carolina slavery to twenty-first-century Sweden.

Born to interracial American parents in Sweden, Jason Diakité grew up between worlds—part Swedish, American, black, white, Cherokee, Slovak, and German, riding a delicate cultural and racial divide. It was a no-man’s-land that left him in constant search of self.

Even after his hip-hop career took off, Jason fought to unify a complex system of family roots that branched across continents, ethnicities, classes, colors, and eras to find a sense of belonging.

In *A Drop of Midnight*, Jason draws on conversations with his parents, personal experiences, long-lost letters, and pilgrimages to South Carolina and New York to paint a vivid picture of race, discrimination, family, and ambition. His ancestors’ origins as slaves in the antebellum South, his parents’ struggles as an interracial couple, and his own world-expanding connection to hip-hop helped him fashion a strong black identity in Sweden.

What unfolds in Jason’s remarkable voyage of discovery is a complex and unflinching look at not only his own history but also that of generations affected by the trauma of the African diaspora, then and now.

Fill-in-the-blank version

[Your name]'s inspirational journey from [situation or place] to [situation or place].

[Describe your origin story—where you were born, your parents, your upbringing, the roots of your story.] Born to _____ parents in _____ grew up believing that _____.

[Describe the problem or conflict that moved you to write a memoir. Examples: Never fitting into any one specific culture. Getting married and then divorced at age 23. Leaving a repressive religious organization. Coping with a parents' alcoholism.]

After experiencing _____, [your name]'s life changed forever. She embarked on a journey that would challenge everything she knew about _____.

In [title of your memoir], _____, recounts her experiences as a _____, how she _____, and ultimately how she found _____.

What unfolds is a remarkable voyage of discovery—a story about _____, _____, and _____.

Write a short author bio.

It's time to write your author bio.

This is a brief statement that's all about you.

Your bio will eventually go onto the back cover of your book once it's printed, or inside the book, on your website, on a site like Amazon, and so on. It can be used in various places.

We encourage you to keep your bio brief. Around 100 to 200 words is perfect.

You might already have a bio laying around. Great! Use that.

Or you might need to write one from scratch. We've got tips for you.

Here are 3 different ways you could write your bio.

Note: the following bios are imaginary people that we made up—just to provide you with some language examples. But don't you wish they were real people so you could be friends? :)

Light, joyful, playful bio

Victoria Von Edwards is a Marriage Coach and the author of *Textual Tension: A Guide to Writing Steamy, Saucy Texts That Drive Your Partner Wild—Even If You’ve Been Married for a Thousand Years*.

Fans praise her “wicked sense of humor” and “simple, practical suggestions for making married life feel like a continual honeymoon.”

She lives in Maryland with her husband of 15 years, two kids, one parakeet, and a frightening number of hair scrunchies, even though she can never, ever find one when she actually needs one.

Fill-in-the-blank version

[Name] is a [Job Title/Profession] and the author of [Book].

Clients praise her [a few nice things people have said about you].

She lives in [place] with [various delightful things in your home].

Serious, scholarly, impressive bio

Dr. Tonia Green is a retired astronaut, current NYU professor, and the founder of Girls on the Moon, an organization that helps young women launch their careers in aerospace technology.

Her mission is to bring more women into traditionally male-dominated industries, especially S.T.E.M. fields. She holds a PhD in Robotics from Georgia Tech, and is a regular contributor to *Wired* magazine. She lives in Manhattan.

Fill-in-the-blank version

[Name] is a former/retired [career], current [career], and the founder of [something you founded: a website, company, organization, initiative, summer camp, etc.].

Her mission is [summarize your mission]. She holds a [degree] from [university], and [one more impressive detail about you]. She lives in [place].

Super simple bio

Marvin Papanastasiou is a chef. He was born in Greece but now resides in Los Angeles. He loves waffle fries, avocados, his dog named Potato, and writing, but not necessarily in that exact order. This is his first book, though probably not the last. Find Marvin's recipes and more at: WaffleParty.gov.

Fill-in-the-blank version

[Name] is a [vocation/career]. [Another fact about you.] [He / She / They] loves [things you love], but not necessarily in that exact order. This is [his / her / their] first book, though probably not the last. Find [recipes, articles, coaching services, inspiration, etc.] at: [your website].

Add a dedication to your book.

While it's entirely optional, you might want to add a dedication to the beginning of your book.

This is a brief note where you dedicate the book to someone or to a group of people.

It can be extremely brief (think: 5 words) or it can be longer. It can be tender, funny, mysterious, anything you want.

Examples

A few examples of what a dedication can look like:

This book is dedicated to every person who has ever wondered, "How is it possible that I am so fabulous and lovable and, yet, so single?"

Dedicated to my kiddos. E, W, and R. You are the best things I've ever made.

This book is dedicated to Wilbur. You know why.

For the Book Brunch Ladies. Your secrets are safe with me.

For my mom. For all the reasons.

Add an acknowledgments section to your book.

While it's entirely optional, you might want to add an acknowledgments section to your book. This can go at the very beginning of your book or the very end.

This is a brief (or sometimes, not so brief!) note where you say thank you to all the people who made this book possible.

You can say thank you to your spouse or partner, your kids, your parents, your colleagues, your writing coach, all the friends who cheered for you along the way, and so on.

This is also a great place to acknowledge your teachers, mentors, and other people who have strongly influenced your work.

Example

An acknowledgments section can look something like:

Writing a book truly takes a village. Tremendous thanks to...

Danielle, for telling me to "stop whining and just write the dang book," which I honestly really needed to hear. A lot.

Shawn, for being willing to read the first draft and give honest (but very kind) feedback.

Mrs. Metzemaum, my 9th grade English teacher, the first person who really made me fall in love with reading and writing.

Kris, for always having just the perfect thing to say, or the perfect music playlist, whenever I needed a boost of energy.

My clients, for giving my professional life so much purpose, and for courageously allowing me to share their stories in this life. Thank you for granting me permission.

Approximately one million other people that I am forgetting right now. Thank you. Everyone.

Add a copyright note to your book to protect your intellectual property.

If you're planning to sell your book, then we recommend you add a copyright note to your book manuscript. This usually goes towards the beginning of the book.

This lets people know this book is your original work—your intellectual property—and people can't copy it or use it without your explicit permission.

Here's a template you can use. *(Note: If you use one of our design templates, the copyright language is included there as well.)*

Wherever you see **blue text**, replace those parts with your own information.

If you haven't decided on a publisher name yet, or you don't have an ISBN yet, no worries. We will cover that stuff later. Leave those parts blank for now. Fill those in later, once you've got the info.

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Copyrights and Permissions

In this document, we're covering different copyright and permission terms, their definitions, what they mean to you as an author when referencing another author's work, and what they mean to you as an author protecting your own work.

Once we have a fuller understanding of each term, we'll go over the steps needed to officially copyright your own work.

What is a copyright?

A copyright refers to a legal right and statement of intellectual property.

What is a permission?

A permission refers to the ways copyrighted materials may be used. The most common forms of permission include Fair Use, Public Domain, and Creative Commons.

Important terms and definitions

Copyright - A legally enforceable statement that declares ownership of content and the right to use, print, sell, distribute, and give permission for others to use the content.

Permissions - A condition of citing copyrighted or trademarked materials. The copyright holder provides permission on how their work may be used. There are conditions and circumstances where copyrighted materials may be used and determined by either direct permission or prohibition, and those that allow for use on a certain basis.

Fair Use - A permission of an existing copyright that grants certain rights for others to use copyrighted material without contacting the copyright owner for the purposes of news reporting, teaching, criticism, commenting, and research. Fair Use is officially determined at the discretion of a public court, in the event that the copyright holder of the source material takes issue with the use of their materials.

Specific conditions for Fair Use include:

- * Commercial vs. nonprofit use of the Fair Use material
 - For example, if you wrote a book about decluttering your home, you mentioned Marie Kondo within the book without permission, and your book seeks to profit off of the brand likeness of Marie Kondo, this is not technically grounds for Fair Use.
 - If under the same circumstances you mention Marie Kondo, and your book is part of charity or non-profit work, this is more likely to be considered grounds for Fair Use.

- * Creative vs. factual research nature of the Fair Use material
 - For example, if you chose to cite Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* (a non-fiction work on ecology) in your book, this is more likely to be considered grounds for Fair Use.
 - If, instead, you chose to cite Octavia Butler's *Parable of the Sower* (a science-fiction novel) in your book, this is less likely to be considered grounds for Fair Use.

* Amount of Fair Use material used

- For example, if you chose to cite a sentence or two from bell hooks' book *all about love* to defend a point that you are making, this is likely to be considered grounds for Fair Use.
- If, under the same circumstances, you chose to cite large portions of bell hooks' work to defend several points in your book, this is less likely to be considered grounds for Fair Use.

* Positive vs. negative use of Fair Use material

- For example, if you chose to reference or cite the television show based on Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* and your reference or citation is in positive or neutral attitude, in your own words, this is more likely to be considered grounds for Fair Use.
- If, under the same circumstances, you chose to reference or cite the television show based on Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* and your reference or citation is in negative attitude, in your own words, this is less likely to be considered grounds for Fair Use.
- The same goes for all trademark materials. (For example, Coke, Nike, Warner Brothers, Disney, etc.) Consider it more of a problem to talk negatively about trademark materials.

Public Domain - A right of the public to use materials whose copyrights have expired, been waived, or are exempt from copyright stipulations. The most common kind of Public Domain reference is in regard to classic works of deceased authors and artists.

Specific conditions for Public Domain include:

* Age of material

- Works created after 1978 will become Public Domain 70 years after the copyright holder's death.
- Works created prior to 1978 are within the Public Domain, if not renewed by the copyright holder during their renewal period.

* Original state of material

- Public Domain refers specifically to the original copyrighted material in its original state.
- Reprints of Public Domain works can be considered copyrighted materials.
- Translations of Public Domain works can be considered copyrighted materials.

Creative Commons - A license giving specific permissions for the use of copyrighted materials by the public for the purposes outlined by the specific license.

Specific conditions for Creative Commons vary, based on the copyright holder. Creative Commons uses a code of symbols to indicate how the work license may be used. [Go here to see the full details and code of symbols.](#)

How does this pertain to you?

As an author looking to quote, reference, or cite another author:

1. Copyright: You, as an author looking to reference copyrighted work, are required to contact the copyright holder for permission to use their copyrighted work. (See: Fair Use)
2. Fair Use: You, as an author looking to reference copyrighted work, are required to ensure that the ways in which you use the copyrighted work are entitled to Fair Use.

- Specific terms of Fair Use are determined by the courts. The following are guidelines. It is more likely to be considered Fair Use (but not guaranteed), if you:
 - i. Use the materials in a noncommercial manner
 - ii. Cite research or factual information
 - iii. Use only a small portion of the materials
 - iv. Show the material in a way that does not create a negative disruption to the personal or professional integrity of the copyright holder
- 3. Public Domain: You, as an author looking to reference copyrighted work on the basis of Public Domain terms, are required to determine if the age of the copyrighted materials and the translation/print edition of the copyrighted materials are within the terms of Public Domain.
 - For example, if you wish to cite the Persian mystic Rumi, the Tao philosopher Lao Tzu, or Russian author and philosopher Fyodor Dostoevsky, you must make sure the translation you are using is within the terms of Public Domain.
- 4. Creative Commons: You, as an author looking to reference copyrighted work on the basis of a Creative Commons license, are required to determine that the way you wish to use the copyrighted work is in accordance with the work's specific license terms.

As an author protecting your own work:

1. Copyright: You, as an author, have the exclusive rights to print, publish, and distribute your work. All other individuals or businesses who wish to use any part of your work must do so in writing and are only guaranteed approval if you agree to the use.
2. Fair Use: You, as an author, have the right to determine, in the event that another author uses your copyrighted work, that the use of your work is fair or an infringement of your copyright and to take appropriate legal action.

3. Public Domain: You, as an author (of works after 1978), are not obligated to renew your copyright, and your work is protected as a copyright for the duration of your life and an additional 70 years after death.
4. Creative Commons: You, as an author, may choose to give your copyrighted material a license to be used for specifically approved purposes.

How do you officially copyright your book?

1. Visit www.copyright.gov and create an account. The US Copyright Office is the only reputable source to register your copyright.
✳ [Here is an extensive list](#) of video resources showing you exactly how to complete each step of your registration.
2. Once your account is created, you will be directed to your dashboard. On the left under "Register a Work," click "Standard Application." This will direct you to begin the application process.
3. Complete each portion of the application. If you are feeling unsure about the application process, refer back to the video resources [here](#).
4. Pay the requested copyright fee via www.pay.gov, when prompted.
✳ Your literary work registration fee is \$45. [Here is a full list](#) of US Copyright Office fees.
5. Once your payment is complete, you will be prompted to receive a shipping label for mailing a hard copy of your copyrighted work to be held on file. **You must send a copy of your book to the US Copyright Office, in order for your copyright registration to be complete and active.**

If you want to include someone else's work in your book (for instance, a song lyric, quote, recipe, photo, etc.), reach out to the creator.

Ask for permission to include their work.

If you want to include someone else's work in your book—for instance, a song lyric, quote, recipe, photo, etc.—it's important to reach out to the creator.

Ask for permission to include their work in your book.

They might say, "Sure, go for it!"

Or they might say, "No, please don't."

We advise you to reach out and check, just to make sure.

If you want to be super official and formal, you can ask them to sign a document saying they granted you permission. But, depending on your book goals, this may not be necessary.

We provide a sample email you can use to reach out.

What if I reach out but they never reply?

If this happens, we suggest you don't include their work in your book.

What if I want to use something but the creator is no longer alive?

If the creator has passed away, see if you can contact whoever holds the rights to their copyrighted work. This might be their child, grandchild, or someone else.

What if I want to use something really small, like literally just 10 words from a song? Do I still need to get permission for something that tiny?

We suggest: yes. It's always wise to ask for permission.

Different countries have different laws regarding when it's okay to use someone else's copyrighted work and when it's not. Just to be on the super-safe side, we advise you to ask the creator for permission—always.

Can't get permission?

If you're unable to get permission, try to find a creative workaround. You can allude to the piece without quoting it or using it directly.

For instance, if you're writing a novel, let's say you wrote something like this:

Gloria brushed her teeth while Taylor Swift's "Willow" came on the radio. With minty foam in her mouth, she closed her eyes and sang along to the lyrics.

And then, you include Swift's lyrics in your novel. Uh-oh. This might be

a risky move unless you've got permission from Ms. Swift to do that.

A better option would be to write something like this:

Gloria brushed her teeth while a soft, romantic country-folk song came on the radio. With minty foam in her mouth, she closed her eyes and sang along to the lyrics.

That way, you're still painting the same image for your reader, but without using another artist's copyrighted work.

Have more questions?

[This article](#) is a great resource with a flowchart for copyright questions and a sample letter for asking for permission to use published quotes.

Sample email to ask for permission - copyrighted work

Hey Ben,

I hope you're having a great day.

I'm an author, and I'm working on a new book called Peace Every Day: 21 Tiny Ways to Take Care of Your Mental Health.

On your blog, you posted a story about your personal struggles with depression. Your story really moved me.

I'm wondering if I could include a very short piece of your blog post—around 3-4 sentences—in my book. I would give you full credit, of course, and include a link to your blog as well.

Please let me know if that is okay. If so, great! If not, no problem.

I've pasted the part I'd like to use down below. Thanks for taking a look.

Fill-in-the-blank version

Hey _____,

I hope you're having a great day.

I'm an author, and I'm working on a new book called [title].

[Mention the piece you'd like to use: blog post, photo, story, song lyrics, etc.]

I'm wondering if I could include [describe specifically what you want to use] in my book. I would give you full credit, of course.

Please let me know if that is okay. If so, great! If not, no problem.

I've [included, pasted, etc.] the part I'd like to use down below. Thanks for taking a look.

If you want to include a story about someone else in your book (for instance, a story about a client and her divorce), reach out to that person.

Ask for permission to include their story.

If you want to include a story about someone else in your book—for instance, a story about a client of yours and her divorce—reach out to that person.

Ask for permission to include their story.

Make sure it's okay.

They might say, "Yes, go ahead and include my story."

Or they might say, "No, please don't. I want to keep that private."

Or they might say, "You can use my story, but please change my name."

Not everyone wants their personal information to be aired publicly, so it's always good manners to reach out and ask.

And, depending on your profession and the type of book you're writing, it might be unethical to share a client story in the book. Every profession has different regulations about client confidentiality. If you're not sure, discuss your book situation with a lawyer.

What if I can't get ahold of the person because they're dead, or we no longer speak, or I can't reach them for some other reason?

In that situation, trust your "hut" (heart + gut) and make a decision on your own.

You might decide to tell the full story using real names, real dates, real details, the full monty.

Or you might decide to tell the story but with a few changes to protect everyone's privacy—theirs and yours, too.

Maybe you won't mention their real name, or you'll omit a few identifying details.

Instead of saying:

The person who broke my heart is named Jack Herringbone from Evansville, Indiana, Class of '99, and he drives a red Tacoma truck.

You could say something like this instead:

The summer before senior year of high school, my heart got shattered by a tall guy in a red truck with the most dazzling smile. Let's call him Jones.

When telling a story about somebody else, check your intentions

What's your intention in sharing this particular story?

Do you want to publicly shame and humiliate someone for behaving badly in the past? Do you want to ruin their life or wreck their reputation? Do you want revenge, plain and simple?

If that's your intention, we advise you to pause and reconsider. Do you *really* want to do that? Once a book is published, your words are out there forever; there is no turning back.

Maybe there's a better way to harness the anger you feel.

Perhaps your intention is to tell the truth about a difficult situation, to seek justice for those who have been wronged, or to help readers (people struggling with a similar situation) to feel less alone. Those are noble intentions. Those would be good reasons to tell this story publicly.

We encourage you to check your intentions before you hit "publish."

Make sure your intentions are in the right place. Hopefully your intention is to help, not harm.

And make sure you're telling a story that you'll still feel proud to tell one year, or ten years, from now.

Sample email to ask for permission - personal story

Hey Rachel,

I hope you're having a great day.

I have some exciting news. I'm writing a book! It's called Peace Every Day: 21 Tiny Ways to Take Care of Your Mental Health.

A couple months ago, you told me a story about getting laid off, being unemployed, and the surprising way you found a new job.

I keep thinking about that story. It's so powerful. I especially loved hearing about how you prioritized your mental health during those months of unemployment.

I know your story will provide hope and inspiration to others. So, I am wondering...May I include your story in my book?

Down below, I've pasted your story (as I've written it). When you have a moment, please take a look and let me know A, B, or C:

A. "Yes! You can include my story in your book. Looks great as-is. No changes needed."

B. "Yes! You can include my story in your book. But I'd like you to make a few changes."

C. "No, please don't use my story."

If your answer is "Yes," please let me know if it's okay to use your real name, or if you'd prefer to be anonymous. Thank you so much.

Completely no pressure, either way. I honor your privacy. So, please let me know what's comfortable for you.

Fill-in-the-blank version

Hey _____,

I hope you're having a great day.

I have some exciting news. I'm writing a book! It's called [title].

A couple months ago, you told me a story about [describe the story].

I keep thinking about that story. It's so powerful. I especially loved [mention something you especially loved].

I know your story will provide [hope, inspiration, insight, joy, etc.] to others. So, I am wondering...May I include your story in my book?

Down below, I've pasted your story (as I've written it). When you have a moment, please take a look and let me know A, B, or C:

A. "Yes! You can include my story in your book. Looks great as-is. No changes needed."

B. "Yes! You can include my story in your book. But I'd like you to make a few changes."

C. "No, please don't use my story."

If your answer is "Yes," please let me know if it's okay to use your real name, or if you'd prefer to be anonymous. Thank you so much.

Completely no pressure, either way. I honor your privacy. So, please let me know what's comfortable for you.

Referencing sources in your book

If you'll be using quotes or ideas from other books or articles, you'll want to cite the book, article, blog, etc. in your book.

There are several different styles for citing works and compiling references. The most common are Chicago Manual of Style, MLA and APA.

This resource offers a great high-level overview of these styles as well as guidance on choosing the one most appropriate for your book.

This resource offers an exhaustive list of citation examples for all types of sources in each of the three styles. This is another great resource for easy examples of both inline and expanded citations for APA and MLA.

Let this be easy! Don't stress about which style to use. Simply pick one and roll with it. The most important thing is that you're referencing your sources.

If you're still uncertain which to choose, another great strategy is to thumb through a few books on your own bookshelf similar to yours to see how those authors handled their references. If you don't have a book in your collection similar to what you're writing, head to your local library or your favorite bookshop and pull a few titles off the shelves there.

Step 5: Edit Your Book

Edit your book—or have someone do this for you.

When you take a book manuscript and improve it, that's called editing.

Editing can include adding things, subtracting things, rearranging things into a different order, or adjusting wording so your message comes through more clearly.

You can ask a friend, colleague, or family member to edit your book.

You can hire a professional to do it.

You can do it yourself.

There are plenty of options.

Whether you're doing it yourself or handing things over to somebody else, here are some suggestions for you.

Suggestions for editing

Go back to your original intention

Remember when you wrote down your intention for the book? Go back and read that. Your intention might be something like:

✧ *With this book, my intention is to make my reader laugh out loud. That's it. I just want to make people laugh.*

Or something like this:

✱ *With this book, my intention is to show my reader how to handle workplace conflict in a successful way. I want to provide 5 important things to keep in mind.*

Read the intention you set back at the beginning of this project. As you edit, keep this intention in mind.

Did you remain true to your intention? Is your intention coming through clearly? Will readers feel it?

If you've asked somebody else to edit the book manuscript for you, tell them your original intention. Ask them, "Based on what you're reading, do you feel my intention is coming through clearly?"

Read everything out loud

Read the book manuscript out loud from start to finish.

Reading aloud can help you identify areas that sound clunky, confusing, or unnecessarily repetitive.

Remove things that feel unnecessary, off topic, out of place

Let's say you're writing a book with a list of 21 tips to take better care of your mental health.

In tip number 7, you suddenly go off on a long tangent about the interesting history of helicopters.

That's an interesting side note, but it's kinda off topic and probably not

“crucial” or “necessary” for this particular book. It might be a good idea to remove this particular section. Think of it like getting rid of clothing that just doesn’t fit.

On the other hand, if you feel this helicopter anecdote is hilarious and insightful or somehow adds to the power of the book, keep it! This is a situation where you need to listen your “hut” (heart + gut) and trust your creative instincts about what to keep and what to delete.

Add things to strengthen your message

Editing isn’t just about subtracting and deleting.

Editing can also mean adding things to strengthen your message.

For instance, perhaps you say to your reader, “It’s really easy to create a budget for your first semester at college.” Could you add a sample budget to provide an example of what you mean? This might be very helpful for your reader to see.

Or you say to your reader: “It’s never too late to go after your goals.” That’s a beautiful message. Could you add a true story about an inspirational person who achieved a major goal later in life, while in their 70s or 80s? By adding a true story, you’ll prove to your reader that this really is possible.

Or you say, “It’s incredible how many young people suffer from depression and anxiety.” Could you add a statistic to back up this claim? Or mention a research study that recently came out?

Consider adding an example, a true story, a statistic, or some other form of evidence to support and back up what you’re saying. Don’t just

say it. Show it or prove it.

Give yourself a time limit

If you have a perfectionistic personality, it's important to give yourself a time limit for editing. Otherwise, you could wind up editing for 10,000 hours and still feel like your book isn't "good enough" or isn't "done yet."

We encourage you to give yourself a time limit—for example, 3 hours, 1 workday, or whatever timing feels good to you—so you don't spiral into a never-ending loop of perfectionism.

Remind yourself, "My book will never be 'perfect'. Perfection is not attainable. I'm going to do my best and enjoy this process, while also placing a time limit on this project."

Perfection is not the goal

Remember your intention isn't "to create an absolutely perfect book that is a staggering work of genius."

Your intention is simply to "make someone laugh" or to "help someone feel less alone" or to "provide a few tips." Remember this, because it will help you to relax and enjoy the editing process.

Proofread your book—or have someone do this for you.

What is editing vs. proofreading?

Editing usually means that you're tweaking the book manuscript to make things stronger and clearer. You're making sure your intention is coming through clearly. You're checking to make sure things flow. The big stuff.

Proofreading usually means you're reviewing the manuscript with a fine-toothed comb to clean up typos, misspelled words, duplicate words, missing words, and whatnot. The little stuff.

However, some people refer to proofreading as editing or copyediting.

We're not fussy about what you call it. Call it whatever term you prefer. But we encourage you to do it.

Just like with editing, you can do proofreading all by yourself.

Or you can have somebody else do it for yourself.

You can ask a friend, colleague, or family member to proofread for you.

Or you can hire a professional to do it.

You can also use a free online tool like Grammarly ([grammarly.com](https://www.grammarly.com)) and have a very smart artificial intelligence computer program do the proofreading for you!

Lots of options.

Even bestselling books contain typos

If you proofread your book but you accidentally miss something—oops, there's a typo on page 42!—that is okay. This happens all the time.

Even books released by top publishing houses have typos. It happens.

The very first edition of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* by J.K. Rowling contains a typo. The word “wand” appears twice, accidentally, on one page.

The play *Cymbeline* by William Shakespeare contains a typo, too. One of the character's names is misspelled in one part. Oops.

Even Webster's New International Dictionary contains a couple typos.

If Rowling, Shakespeare, and even the Dictionary all contain typos, then, hey, we can all relax and calm down. We're only human.

Even if you hire 5 different proofreaders to review your book, mistakes can still happen and it's okay. It doesn't mean your book is garbage and, honestly, most readers won't even notice.

Plus, if someone points out a glaring typo you didn't notice, you can always update your book and then publish a revised edition. Problem: solved.

If you want, give your book manuscript to someone you trust. Ask for their feedback. (Or not. This is completely optional.)

Some authors love getting feedback before publishing their work. Others don't.

This is a personal choice. We encourage you to trust your “hut” (heart + gut) and do what feels right to you.

Ask the right person

Be mindful about who you're asking for feedback. Don't ask just anybody.

If you have a colleague who is super critical, sees the negative side of everything, or has a harsh and snarky personality—well, this is probably not the ideal person to ask.

We suggest you find someone who represents the “intended reader” for your book. If you're writing a book for teenagers, ask a teenager to give feedback. If you're writing a book for new dads, ask a new dad. And so on.

Ideally, ask someone who is honest but also caring and kind.

Ask for what you want

If you hand your book manuscript to someone and say, “Here! Please read this and tell me all of your feedback,” that’s not the best process. It’s too vague and broad.

The person giving feedback will probably feel overwhelmed and won’t know what to say or how to help you.

That’s why we encourage you to be more specific. Don’t just ask for any and all feedback. Ask for the specific kind of feedback you want.

Here are some statements you can use when asking for feedback:

- * With this book, my intention is _____. Based on what you’re reading, do you feel that my intention is coming through clearly? Yes, no, kinda?
- * With this book, the message I really want my reader to know is _____. Do you feel that message is coming through clearly? Do you have 1 idea on how I could make this message come through even more strongly?
- * My goal is to keep this book simple and brief, so I don’t want to add too much more. With that said, is there anything you think I should definitely add?
- * Is there a part of the book where you’d like to see more details? For instance, is there a certain part that left you feeling curious and wanting more information, more context, more evidence, or something else?

- * What is your favorite part of the book and why?
- * If you could give just 1 suggestion to me, what would it be?

Ask, if you want, but ultimately go with your “hut”

Just because someone gives you a piece of feedback, that doesn't necessarily mean you need to rush off and change your book.

If one person says, “I didn't understand the ending,” or “That character was so annoying,” or “This seems too basic and rudimentary,” that doesn't mean every reader will feel the same way. This is one person's opinion. Different people will have different responses to your book. A piece of information that seems “so basic” to one person might be new and life-changing for another.

If you're getting lots of feedback that's causing you to feel doubtful and overwhelmed, stop asking for feedback. Reduce the outside noise, so you can hear yourself think.

Ultimately, trust your “hut” (heart + gut) on any decisions you make.

Sample email - "Would you please take a look and give feedback?"

Hi Devon,

I'm so grateful you're willing to take a look at my book. Thank you so much. It means the world to me. The manuscript is attached.

Once you've read the book, here are my top 3 questions for you.

1. With this book, my intention is to help my reader feel a sense of hope. Hope that recovery from addiction is possible. Hope that things won't always feel this hard. Hope that the future can be better than the past. As a reader, do you feel my intention is coming through clearly? Yes, no, kinda?

2. What is your favorite part of the book and why?

3. If you could give just 1 suggestion to me, what would it be?

I'd love to hear your answers to those 3 questions. Thank you so much.

If you could send me your replies sometime in the next 10-14 days, that would be amazing.

I'm putting a thank you section at the end of the book and your name will absolutely be there. Thank you so much.

Fill-in-the-blank version

Hi _____,

I'm so grateful you're willing to take a look at my book. Thank you so much. It means the world to me. The manuscript is attached.

Once you've read the book, here are my top 3 questions for you.

1. *[put your first question]*

2. *[put your second question]*

3. *[put your third question]*

I'd love to hear your answers to those 3 questions. Thank you so much.

If you could send me your replies sometime in the next [timeframe] days, that would be amazing.

I'm putting a thank you section at the end of the book and your name will absolutely be there. Thank you so much.

Create a Good Enough List, so you'll know when your book manuscript is "good enough" and ready for design and printing.

This will help you avoid spinning in circles and feeling like the project is never done.

Do you struggle to figure out when a piece of writing is "done"?

You stare at your computer screen for an hour, two hours, ten hours, days, weeks, months, fiddling with your writing and trying to make things "perfect"...

...but no matter how many changes you make, you always feel like it's never "finished" or never quite "ready" to be shared publicly?

If this happens to you, here's what we recommend:

Make a Good Enough List

A Good Enough List is a short checklist you can use to determine when your book manuscript is "good enough" and "done" and it's time to stop editing.

Basically, it's a checklist that shows you, "Okay, my book is good enough! I've done my best. No more fiddling. It's time to move on to the next phase of this project."

It goes like this:

Good Enough List

- ☐ *I chose a book topic that excites me.*
- ☐ *I set an intention for this book project.*
- ☐ *I made an outline.*
- ☐ *I wrote the book manuscript.*
- ☐ *I read through the manuscript out loud to see how it sounds.*
- ☐ *I did one round of editing/proofreading to focus on the big things: add material, subtract material, move things into a different order, make sure my message is coming through clearly.*
- ☐ *I did a second round of editing/proofreading to focus on little things: fix typos, remove duplicate words, etc.*
- ☐ *I asked a friend (or hired someone) to proofread the book one last time, to clean up anything I missed.*
- ☐ *I enjoyed the process of creating this book.*
- ☐ *Even though this book isn't "perfect" (and it never will be), I feel confident this book is good enough. This book will help at least one reader out there in some way. In its current "imperfect state," this book will make a positive impact in someone's life.*

When you're spinning with indecision or perfectionism, refer back to your Good Enough List

The next time you're wondering, "Is my book good enough to go out into the world?"...take a look at the Good Enough List.

Can you tick off each box? If so, then yes. Your book manuscript is good enough. It's done. It's time to move forward.

Could you spend another ten hours fiddling with it to try to make it "better"? Sure, you could. You could spend another ten hours, or twenty, or five hundred, if you want.

But would that really be the highest and best use of your time? And would that really make your book significantly "better" than it already is? Probably not.

Your writing is never going to be perfect. Perfect doesn't exist.

By glancing at a Good Enough List, you'll have a specific list of criteria you can realistically hit. This can help you to stop stalling and spinning and help you move forward.

Like the saying goes, "done is better than perfect."

Any last changes, additions, or subtractions you want to do to your manuscript before your book gets designed and ready for printing?

Now is the time!

You made an outline. You wrote the book manuscript. You edited. You proofread. Maybe you asked a few people for feedback, or not.

Now is the moment to make any last changes to your manuscript before your book gets designed and ready for printing.

It's time for those final edits!

You want to add a Foreword to the book? You want to add an inspirational true story to the beginning? You want to add a list of Resources to the end? Whatever you want to add, subtract, or change, please do it now.

Next up: interior layout and cover design!

You'll turn this project from a plain old document into an actual, beautiful book.

Will I have a chance to make changes in the future?

Yes! After design, and before printing, you'll have one more opportunity to review the book and make final tweaks. So, please exhale and unclench those tight shoulders. You'll have another opportunity to make changes, if you want.

Step 6: Design Your Book

Choose Paper Type, Ink Color and Cover Finish

Now that your manuscript is written, it's time to start thinking about your physical book!

You'll need to select which paper you'd like as well as whether this will be a full-color or black and white book. Finally, you'll select whether you'd like a matte or glossy cover.

Remember, all of these choices are all about personal preference. There's no right or wrong choice for any type of book or genre. If you're confused about what to choose, we recommend pulling books off your own bookshelf at home or walking through a bookstore or library and checking out books similar to yours.

Paper Type

IngramSpark offers three different paper options for black and white books. The number next to the paper type indicates the paper weight, or how thick it is. There is no price difference between any of these options; it's simply about your personal preference.

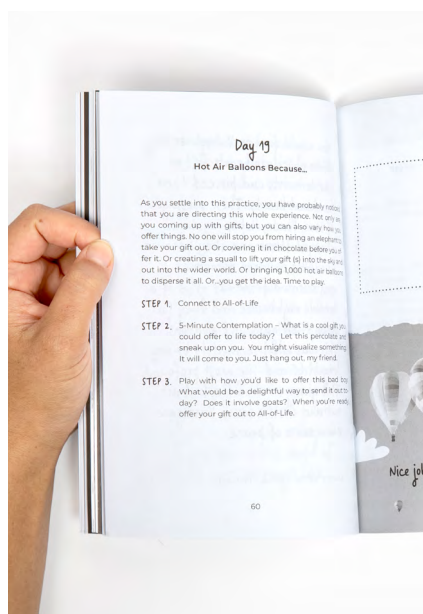
White is normal, bright white paper. Crème is off-white. And ground-wood is the company's sustainable option. Note that groundwood is thinner than the other two paper types.

- * Groundwood 38 lb / 56 gsm – Available in black-and-white printing and select, small-format trim sizes in the U.S. and U.K
- * Crème 50 lb / 74 gsm – Available in black-and-white printing
- * White 50 lb / 74 gsm – Available in black-and-white printing and standard color printing
- * White 70 lb / 104 gsm – Available in standard and premium color printing options

Full-color books are all printed on white 70lb paper.



Crème



White



Groundwood

Ink Color

Unless you're doing a children's book, gift book, photo-driven coffee table book, or some other type of book where images are important to the core message, we recommend sticking with black and white ink to print your book. Using even one color in your interior design means the book is considered full-color, and the cost rises significantly.

This does not, however, include the cover. All covers are printed in full color, even if your book's interior is black and white.

If you'd still love to do a full-color book, go for it! You can always adjust your retail price to be higher to offset the increased printing costs.

For example, a 60-page paperback book in a trim size of 6x9 will cost \$2.12 per book to print. But if you take those same specs and now make it a full-color book, the cost goes up to \$3.42 per book to print. We'll talk more about pricing in another lesson, but you can use the [IngramSpark compensation calculator](#) to play with different specs and how they'll affect your book's price.



Black and White



Color

Cover Finish

The cover finish is the coating that is applied to your cover. You have a choice of either a matte or glossy cover.

Matte covers feel soft to the touch and have no shine or glare.

Glossy covers feel slick to the touch and have a high-shine, smooth finish.

We recommend checking out other books to see what you're most attracted to.



Glossy



Matte

Decide what format you want your book to be: hardcover, paperback, or eBook.

You can pick more than one, if you want.

Now we're getting to the really fun part: transforming your book manuscript into an actual, finished book!

This is a good moment to decide what format you want your book to be: hardcover, paperback, or eBook.



Hardcover



Paperback



eBook

eBooks are digital books folks can read on a Kindle or another kind of eReader app or device.

eBooks are absolutely “real books.” Many authors love creating eBooks because they’re environmentally friendly (no paper, no printing, no shipping) and can be sold for a lower price—making them very appealing to readers.

If you want to include lots of hyperlinks in your book (for instance, a link to a research study or link to a video), an eBook will be the best format for this.

Hardcover books have (you guessed it) a hard cover. There are many types of hardcover books—cloth case with book jacket, hard-case binding, and so on.

Paperback books have a softer cover. They are usually (not always, but usually) cheaper to print than hardcover books.

Which format is right for your book?

Take a look at your bookshelf or grab a few books from your local library. Hold them. Feel them. See which type of format calls to you most strongly.

You don't have to pick just one

You can pick more than one format, if you want.

For instance, you can release your book in two formats: paperback and eBook. Or you can do all three formats.

You can also do one format for now and then release additional formats later.

There are no wrong choices here. Pick whatever sounds good to you.

Decide what size you want your book to be.

In this course, we provide templates for the following sizes: 5x8, 6x9, 7x10, 8x8, and 8.5x11 inches.

What size do you want your printed book to be?

In the Tiny Book Course, we provide templates for the most common industry standard book sizes. These are: 5x8, 6x9, 7x10, 8x8, and 8.5x11. These specific sizes are available in all formats—hardcover, paperback, and/or eBook.

The printer recommended in our course (IngramSpark) has a variety of size options, but not all of them are available in ALL formats. Also, not all retailers will carry sizes outside the industry norm.

You can definitely opt not to use the templates and to choose a book size outside of the industry norms, but we recommend checking [our resource here](#) to make sure IngramSpark prints the size you're considering, and that it's available in the format you want. (hardcover and/or paperback)

Note: the phrase "trim size" means "book size." Same thing. You might hear us occasionally say trim size and this just means the size of your book. For instance, 5x8 is a trim size.

Which size is right for your book?

Think about your intention for the book.

Do you want to create a small book that a reader could tuck into their bag or purse and take to the beach? If so, a smaller size (5x8 inches) would be perfect.

Or do you want to create a book with lots of space for the reader to scribble and write things down inside? Like a workbook? If that's your intention, then a bigger size (8.5x11 inches) might be just right.

Grab a couple books from your bookshelf, and a ruler to measure them, to see what size feels right to you. Trust your "hut" (heart + gut) on this decision.

Download the interior template that corresponds to whatever size you want.

Hooray! You've decided what size you want your book to be.

Next, download the interior template that corresponds to whatever size you want. Click the link and save the document to your computer.

We provide templates in Microsoft Word and Apple Pages formats. Use whichever you prefer.

Tiny Book Templates

5x8 inches

[Word](#)

[Pages](#)

6x9 inches

[Word](#)

[Pages](#)

7x10 inches

[Word](#)

[Pages](#)

8x8 inches

[Word](#)

[Pages](#)

8.5x11 inches

[Word](#)

[Pages](#)

Journal Templates

5x8 inches

[Word](#)

[Pages](#)

6x9 inches

[Word](#)

[Pages](#)

7x10 inches

[Word](#)

[Pages](#)

8x8 inches

[Word](#)

[Pages](#)

8.5x11 inches

[Word](#)

[Pages](#)

Working with an illustrated book?

If your book is an illustrated book, or a book of quotations that has lots of images and less text, you may find it easier to work with Canva, an free, online design program.

Here are the links for the Canva Templates:

5x8 inches [Template](#)

6x9 inches [Template](#)

7x10 inches [Template](#)

8x8 inches [Template](#)

8.5x11 inches [Template](#)

Looking for something different?

If none of those templates appeal to you—or if you want your book to be a different size from the ones we provided—you can:

- * Design your own template.
- * Hire a professional designer to make a custom template for you.
- * Visit a site like www.BookDesignTemplates.com where you can purchase templates starting at \$19. (We're not affiliated with this site, but we love their products.)
- * Or check out the design templates provided by IngramSpark (www.IngramSpark.com)

Creating Your Interior Layout Using Microsoft Word

Using Your Template

It's time to shape your manuscript into a book! Follow the steps below, using the template you selected.

1. WORKING WITH TEMPLATE STYLES

We're going to begin working with Styles. Styles, in Microsoft Word, is going to help format your interior to look like a book.

To prepare, simply open the template you selected.

While we normally provide written instructions, as well as audio/video, in this instance, it's much easier to show, rather than tell.

[Please watch this instructional video.](#)

2. COPYING + PASTING YOUR MANUSCRIPT INTO YOUR TEMPLATE

It's time to copy + paste your book manuscript text into the template you chose.

Simply open the template in Microsoft Word, as well as your manuscript file

While we normally provide written instructions, as well as audio/video, in this instance, it's much easier to show, rather than tell.

[Please watch this instructional video.](#)

3. ADDING IMAGES TO YOUR INTERIOR (OPTIONAL)

Adding images - To add a picture to a Word document, place your cursor where you want the image to be inserted and click Insert > Pictures.

From here you have two options:

Photo Browser - If you choose this option, you'll be able to select an image from existing photo sets on your computer. When you find the picture you want to use, click on it, and then drag it into the document.

Picture From File - This option lets you insert an image from another location on your computer. Find the image file, select it, then click Insert.

Please note: While you can import many image formats into Word, JPG and PNG work best.

Resizing an image - To resize an image in a Word document, click on the picture.

Press and hold the Shift key, then click and drag one of the sizing handles either towards or away from the center. Holding the Shift key ensures that the proportion of the picture is retained. Otherwise, it would become distorted.

You can also resize the picture to a specific length or width.

Click on the picture, then click on the Picture Format tab.

Type the length or width you wish the image to have.

Cropping an image - To crop an image in Word, select the picture.

Then go to Picture Format > Crop > Crop.

Black cropping handles will appear on the sides of the picture. Pull the side handles until the image appears as you'd like it to. Click outside the image to apply the crop.

4. EXPORTING YOUR INTERIOR AS A PDF

Reviewing your interior

Once you're done working on the interior, review it to make sure that all of your chapter headings, body text, and subsections look how you want throughout the book.

Exporting your interior as a PDF

Next, export your interior to a PDF, so it will be finalized and ready to upload.

While we normally provide written instructions, as well as audio/video, in this instance, it's much easier to show, rather than tell.

[Please watch this instructional video.](#)

Creating Your Interior Layout Using Apple Pages

Using Your Template

It's time to shape your manuscript into a book! Follow the steps below, using the template you selected.

1. WORKING WITH TEMPLATE STYLES

We're going to begin working with Styles. Styles, in Apple Pages, is going to help format your interior to look like a book.

To prepare, simply open the template you selected.

While we normally provide written instructions, as well as audio/video, in this instance, it's much easier to show, rather than tell.

Please watch this instructional video.

2. COPYING + PASTING YOUR MANUSCRIPT INTO YOUR TEMPLATE

It's time to copy + paste your book manuscript text into the template you chose.

Simply open the template in Apple Pages, as well as your manuscript file.

While we normally provide written instructions, as well as audio/video, in this instance, it's much easier to show, rather than tell.

Please watch this instructional video.

ADDING IMAGES TO YOUR INTERIOR (OPTIONAL)

Adding images - To add a picture to a Pages document, place your cursor where you want the image to be inserted and click Media > Photo.

From here you have two options:

Photo Browser - If you choose this option, you'll be able to select an image from existing photo sets on your computer. When you find the picture you want to use, click on it, and then drag it into the document. On a Mac, that includes photos in iPhoto and Photo Booth. When you find the picture you want to use, click on it, then drag it into the document.

Picture From File - This option lets you insert an image from another location on your computer. Find the image file, select it, then click Insert.

Please note: While you can import many image formats into Pages, JPG and PNG work best.

Resizing an image - To resize an image in a Pages document, click on the picture.

Press and hold the Shift key, then click and drag one of the sizing handles either towards or away from the center. Holding the Shift key ensures that the proportion of the picture is retained. Otherwise, it would become distorted.

You can also resize the picture to a specific length or width.

Click on the picture, then click Format > Arrange.

Type the length or width you wish the image to have.

Cropping an image

To crop an image in Pages, select the picture.

Then, double-click on the image.

Black cropping handles will appear on the sides of the picture. Pull the side handles until the image appears as you'd like it to. Click outside the image to apply the crop.

4. EXPORTING YOUR INTERIOR AS A PDF

Reviewing your interior

Once you're done working on the interior, review it to make sure that all of your chapter headings, body text, and subsections look how you want throughout the book.

Exporting your interior as a PDF

Next, export your interior to a PDF, so it will be finalized and ready to upload.

While we normally provide written instructions, as well as audio/video, in this instance, it's much easier to show, rather than tell.

[Please watch this instructional video.](#)

Creating Your Interior Layout Using Canva

Using the Templates

It's time to shape your manuscript into a book! Follow the steps below, using the template you selected.

1. COPYING + PASTING YOUR MANUSCRIPT INTO YOUR TEMPLATE

It's time to copy + paste your book manuscript text into the Canva template that corresponds with the book size you chose.

As a reminder, here are the links for all the Canva templates:

5x8 inches [Template](#)

6x9 inches [Template](#)

7x10 inches [Template](#)

8x8 inches [Template](#)

8.5x11 inches [Template](#)

Using Canva to design your quote or picture book is incredibly simple.

Each Canva template includes directions on where to place text and images.

To prepare, open your manuscript and your Canva template.

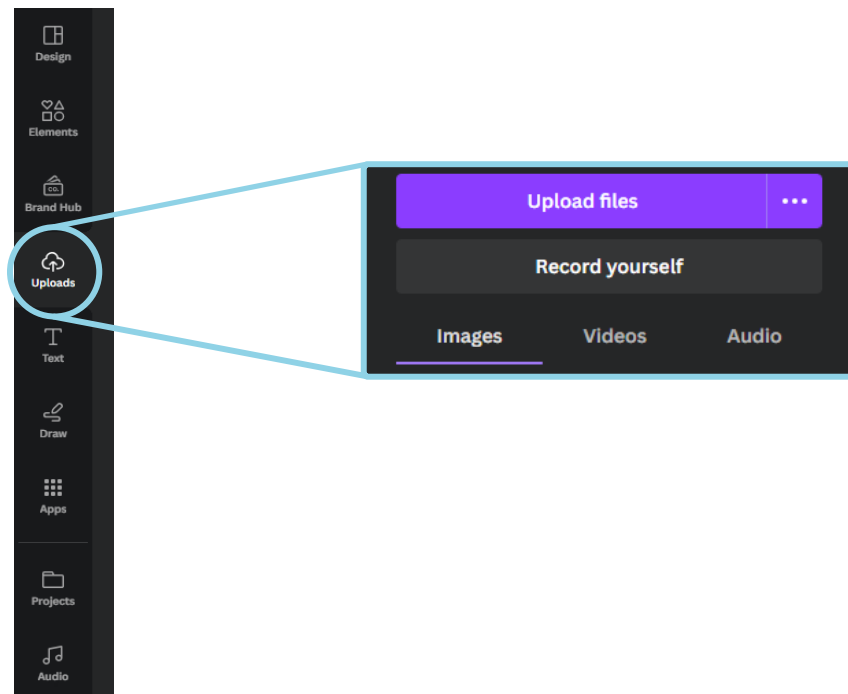
Working from your manuscript, copy and paste your manuscript text into the text boxes provided.

2. IMAGES TO YOUR INTERIOR

Adding images - To add your images, select the photo in the template.

Go over to the sidebar menu and select Uploads.

The option to Upload files will then appear.



Click Upload files.

Upon clicking, the Photo Browser will open on your computer.

Find the image(s) you want to add to your book and then click Enter.

Your images will upload directly to Canva.

Once the image(s) have been uploaded, click on the one that you want to have on the page, and drag it to the frame where the template photo is.

Resizing an image - To resize an image, click on the image in the interior template.

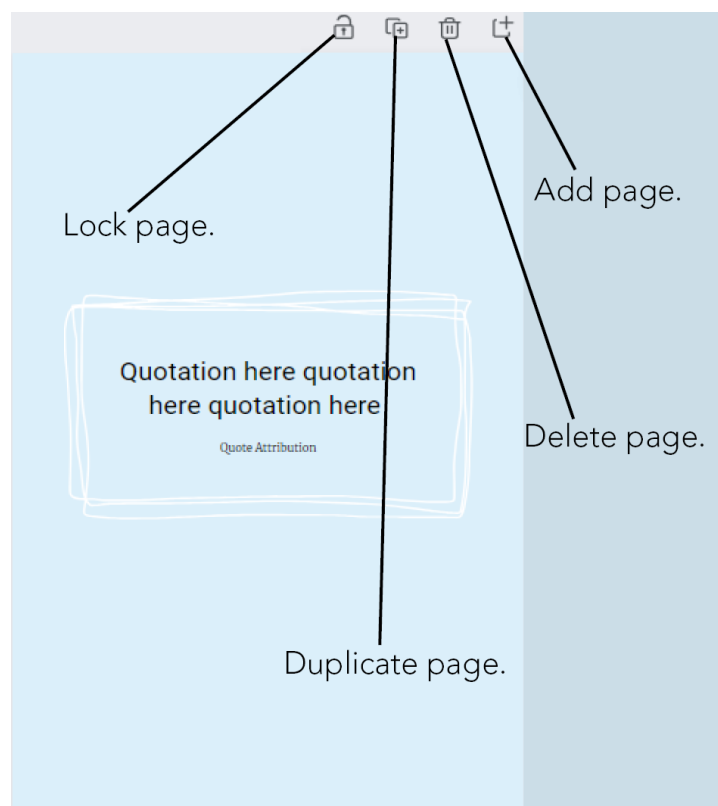
Upon clicking on the image, a dot will appear on each corner of the image.

Click on the dots and drag them to the size you want.

Please note: the image will keep its proportions, only becoming smaller or larger. You don't need to worry that the original shape will stay the same.

3. MAKING ADJUSTMENTS TO YOUR INTERIOR

To show you some background on making simple adjustments and additions to your interior template, please see the diagram below:



As a precaution, you can lock your pages by clicking the Lock Page icon shown in the diagram above to ensure nothing gets moved or deleted while working on your interior.

If you want to choose just one page style in your interior template, you can delete those you don't want by clicking the Remove Page icon shown in the diagram above, and simply duplicate those you do by clicking the Duplicate Page icon shown in the diagram above.

If you wish to add a blank page, you can add one after any page in your interior template by clicking the Add Page icon shown in the diagram above

4. EXPORTING YOUR INTERIOR AS A PDF

Reviewing your interior - Once you're done working on the interior, review it to make sure that all of your photos and text look how you want throughout the book.

Exporting your interior as a PDF - Next, export your interior to a PDF, so it will be finalized and ready to upload.

While we normally provide written instructions, as well as audio/video, in this instance, it's much easier to show, rather than tell.

[Please watch this instructional video.](#)

Create the front cover and back cover design for your book—or hire someone to do this for you.

It's time to create your cover design!

If you're not a skilled artist, don't worry.

If you can post a photo on Instagram or Facebook, or make a Powerpoint presentation, then you can design a book cover. It's simpler than you think.

Please watch this video to learn how to do this.

We suggest you use Canva (<https://www.canva.com>) to make your book cover. It's free and easy to use. You'll see us using Canva in the demonstration video.

However, if you want to use a different design tool instead, go for it. If you want to obtain royalty free stock images or graphics for your book cover or interior, check out www.unsplash.com, www.pexels.com, or www.FlatIcon.com.

Need help?

If you have questions, or you're struggling to create your cover design, please email us: hello@youcangetitdone.com.

Struggling? Feeling confused?

Email us and tell us what's going on.

We will do everything within our power to help you out.

Every author is different. For some, writing is the hard part, while design is easy. For others, writing comes naturally but all the design and technical stuff—not so much.

If you're feeling overwhelmed by the design steps, please email us and ask for help.

We'll do everything in our power to help you out.

Don't be shy. Please reach out, if you're feeling stuck.

We want 100% of our Tiny Book Course clients to complete a book and enjoy the process. But we can only achieve that goal, if you tell us what's going on and give us an opportunity to help.

Reach out anytime during the course (August 30, 2023 to October 29, 2023) to ask for anything you need. Email us: hello@youcangetitdone.com.

Thank you!

Step 7: Publish Your Book

Get educated about how self-publishing works.

Self-publishing is an amazing tool to get your work out into the world quickly, easily, and professionally.

The great thing about self-publishing today is you can set up your books to be print-on-demand, meaning you don't have to buy thousands of copies. Instead, your book will print and ship when someone purchases it—hence the name “print-on-demand.”

While there are many print-on-demand book companies, we recommend using IngramSpark. We are not sponsored by IngramSpark, and we do not benefit monetarily from students publishing with IngramSpark.

Of course, you can select any company you want, but we have tested all of them and find IngramSpark provides the most competitive prices, the easiest distribution, and come vetted and utilized by booksellers and Top 5 publishers.

Plus, IngramSpark has the largest global book distribution network with access to more than 40,000 independent bookstores, online stores, chain stores, libraries, and universities.

Some students choose to publish with Amazon's print-on-demand arm - Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP) - in addition to or in lieu of IngramSpark. [This resource page](#) discusses some of the pros and cons of publishing with KDP and provides links for you to pursue that on your own if you'd like.

Print-on-demand: overview

When you self-publish your book on a platform like IngramSpark, this makes your book available at thousands of retail outlets on-demand.

That means that there is no physical stock for your book, but the listing is available.

When a customer purchases your book on Amazon (or another retail site), IngramSpark will print the book and ship it to Amazon and/or Amazon's customer. You receive your royalty and/or commission on each book that is sold.

Print-on-demand: step by step

Here are the steps in the process to give you a better idea of how it works.

DATA GOES OUT

Once you have uploaded your final files to IngramSpark, you will have the option to distribute your book. If you choose to distribute, this means IngramSpark starts sending out all the data to the bookstores and retailers they work with.

YOUR BOOK APPEARS FOR SALE ONLINE

Within a day or two, you will usually see your book listing on Amazon and Barnes & Noble. Over the next several weeks, it will start to be available on other outlets like Bookshop.org, and possibly other outlets like Target and Indiebound.

AFTER A CUSTOMER PURCHASES, THE BOOK IS PRINTED AND SHIPPED

Let's say someone purchases a copy of your book on Amazon. IngramSpark will then print and ship that book for Amazon. They will also note this sale directly in your IngramSpark account.

YOU EARN MONEY!

You then receive a royalty and/or commission directly from IngramSpark. Payment periods for book sales typically have net 90-day terms, so your first royalty check will come in 90 days later.

BUT YOU DON'T GET PAID IMMEDIATELY

If you sell 50 books in January, you will receive that commission in April. This is due to the nature of the relationship IngramSpark has with the retailers purchasing the books and the agreements they set up.

YOU CAN BUY BOOKS YOURSELF, ANY TIME

At any time, you can also purchase your book at-cost directly through IngramSpark. These books will be shipped directly to you, and you can distribute whatever way works for you. You can use these to give to friends, family, or clients, sell at events, or sell directly on your website, if you choose to ship your books out directly.

Print-on-demand = Pretty amazing

Print-on-demand is an amazing tool. You don't have to print thousands of copies or negotiate contracts with retailers. Instead, you can focus on promoting and sharing your book, knowing the rest of the details are sorted out for you!

Additional resources (if you're curious to learn more)

- * [Learn more about self-publishing and print-on-demand.](#)
- * [Learn how you receive payments on IngramSpark.](#)
- * [Learn more about how wholesale distribution works.](#)

If you haven't already done so, decide whether you want to release your book publicly (customers can buy it online) or privately (not available for sale to the public, only you are allowed to order copies).

Do you want to release your book publicly?

This means that customers can go online—to places like Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Bookshop.org, and other retailers—and buy your book.

Or do you want to release your book privately?

This means your book is not available for sale to the general public. You can order copies for yourself. You can order as many copies as you want, and then you can give books away to friends, family, clients, and other folks.

Take a moment to think about this and make the decision that feels right to you.

Whatever you decide, public or private, either option is great.

And your decision doesn't have to be permanent. You can choose one option and then change it later. For example, maybe you want to release your book privately for now, but then change it to public in a couple months. Totally fine.

The next few steps in the checklist focus on how to publish your book publicly and make it available for sale. If you're not interested in doing that, you can skip some of the following steps.

If you're planning to sell your book online, decide what the "publisher name" for your book will be.

It can be your name, the name of your company, or something else.

When you visit a website like Amazon or Barnes & Noble, you'll notice that every book has its own special webpage. This page has information about the book—things like a brief description about the book, info about the author, and a section that says "Publisher."

A few top publishers are Penguin/Random House, Hachette, Harper Collins, Simon and Schuster, and Macmillan. You probably recognize a few of those names.

But when you self-publish a book, **you** are the publisher.

Now is a good moment to decide what you want to use as your publisher name.

We'll walk you through the options. You can:

Use your business name

If you run a business, you can use your business name as your publisher name.

For instance, if your business is called Get It Done, then your publisher name can be Get It Done. Simple as that.

Use your personal name

If you don't have a business and don't want to start one, you can also use your name as the publisher.

For instance, if your name is Lindsey Smith, then your publisher name can be Lindsey Smith.

Create a publishing imprint

If you don't want to use your business name or personal name, another option is to create your own publishing imprint.

By doing this, you're essentially creating your own publishing company. You can release books you've written or books written by other authors, too, if you want.

Setting up a publishing imprint requires a few additional steps. This is not the easiest or fastest option, but it's something to consider.

If you already have a business, you can create a DBA (Doing Business As) name attached to your company name and set up an imprint that way.

If you don't have a business, you can set up a business just for your book and create a publishing name you will publish under.

We advise you to chat with a lawyer, accountant, tax preparer, or another financial professional before going forward with creating your own publishing imprint. They can help you file the necessary paperwork and make sure you're doing things right.

When you start your own publishing imprint, you can pick any name that you want, as long as it's not a trademarked term or something that's already being used by someone else.

It could be Golden Snickerdoodle Press, Zuki's Doghouse Book Emporium, or whatever you want.

Or use no name at all

Lastly, one final option is not to put any particular publisher name.

If you get a free ISBN for your book, then you are still the publisher, but the publisher name that shows up in listings will say "Independently Published."

Which option is best for you?

Think about your goals.

Do you plan on writing more books? If so, maybe investing in setting up your own publishing imprint might be a good idea.

Do you already have a business and just want to move through the process quicker? Use your business name.

If you don't have a business, consider using your personal name and/or obtaining a free ISBN from IngramSpark.

There is no right or wrong way to publish. You have to do what is best for your goals, your budget, and what feels right for you!

Trouble deciding?

Not sure which option is right for your situation? Want to discuss? Email us at hello@youcangetitdone.com for support.

What is an ISBN?

An ISBN (International Standard Book Number) is a unique number assigned to a book to globally track a book's distribution and sales for the purposes of ordering, listing, and stocking books.

Do you need an ISBN for your book? Or is this optional?

It is optional. It depends on your goals for your book.

If you want to sell your book in distribution outlets such as Barnes & Noble, Amazon, Bookshop.org, and other book retailers, then you need an ISBN.

If you're not planning to sell your book to the general public—maybe you want to give your book as a gift to friends and family, or you're going to give your book to clients who attend a workshop you're leading—then you don't really need an ISBN.

However, if you plan on selling your book online with retailers, an ISBN is a must.

What if you want to release your book in multiple formats like hardcover, paperback, and/or e-book? How many ISBNs do you need?

You will need an ISBN for each format you wish to publish. One for paperback, one for hardcover, and one for e-book.

Where do you get an ISBN?

While ISBNs work the same globally, reputable and trusted sources for purchasing ISBNs are specific to the country of publication.

Please don't purchase an ISBN from an unknown source.

Here is a list of common reputable sources:

- * United States - [Bowker](#)
- * Canada - [National Library and Archives Canada](#)
- * United Kingdom - [Nielsen](#)
- * Australia - [Thorpe-Bowker](#)
- * For all other countries, visit the [International ISBN Agency](#) to identify a reputable source.

How much does an ISBN cost?

In the US, a single ISBN costs around \$125. Bowker offers a significant discount when purchasing in bulk. We highly recommend purchasing more than one ISBN, if you plan on publishing multiple formats of your book or plan to publish additional books in the future. [Here is a full list of pricing available from Bowker.](#)

- * In the US, you have the option to receive a free ISBN when publishing your book through IngramSpark. Please note: this offer is limited to the US only.
- * Using the free ISBN from IngramSpark does set some limitations on publishing your book. These limitations include:
 - It is exclusive to the US
 - IngramSpark will be listed as your publisher, rather than a name of your choosing
 - Your book may only be published with IngramSpark. If you choose to publish your book elsewhere, you will need to purchase your own ISBN
- * [Here is a full list of pros and cons of paid vs. free from IngramSpark.](#)

In Canada, the federal government provides free ISBNs to citizens here. A condition of the free ISBN is that you submit copies of your book to the National Library and Archives Canada.

In the UK, a single ISBN costs roughly £91. Nielsen provides a massive discount when you purchase in bulk. [Here is a full list of pricing available from Nielsen.](#)

In Australia, a single ISBN costs around \$44. Thorpe-Bowker also provides a steep discount when you purchase in bulk. [Here is a full list of pricing available from Thorpe-Bowker.](#)

For all other countries, please refer to the International ISBN Agency to identify the costs from the reputable source in your part of the world.

When purchasing your ISBNs, a reputable seller will ask if you want to purchase barcodes with your ISBNs. Don't worry about purchasing those. More info on that next!

What is a barcode?

A barcode or UPC code is an image made up of unique bars used to identify and track a product's sales and put them into data to be read by distributors universally.

Where do I get a barcode?

When publishing with IngramSpark, you are given a free barcode when you download your book cover design template. Unlike the free ISBN, there are no limitations on your barcode. It will be recognized universally.

What is an LCCN?

You may have seen an LCCN on the copyright pages of other books. This is a Library of Congress Control Number and is used by the library to catalog books in its collections.

You are not required to submit your book to the Library of Congress, but if you would like to include your book in the Library of Congress collections, you just need to [create an account and apply for a preassigned number here](#).

Registering your book is 100% free!

Once you have completed your registration and your book is published, you are required to send a copy of your book to the Library of Congress to be logged into their collections.

Other National Libraries to register your book.

- * Canada - [Library and Archives Canada](#)
- * Australia - [National Library of Australia](#)
- * UK - [British Library](#)
- * A full list of National Libraries is available [here](#).

Regardless of whether you intend to sell your book or not, create an account at IngramSpark.com.

This is where you will upload your files for self-publishing and printing.

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IngramSpark is where you will upload your files for self-publishing and printing.

Creating an account at IngramSpark is simple.

Simply go to www.IngramSpark.com and click "Create Account." Follow the instructions: put your name, your email, and create a password.

Once you've done that, you'll be prompted to fill out a few more items, such as:

- * Business or Legal Name
- * Contact Name
- * Form of Business (If you don't have a business, sole proprietor is the best option)
- * Address

- * Security Questions (In case you ever forget your password or get locked out of your account)
- * Agreements (These are various agreements IngramSpark has in place with certain retailers)
- * Compensation (This will set you up to get paid via bank transfer or PayPal, depending on your country. Additionally, they will require some information for tax purposes.)
- * Payment Method (They do require you to have a credit card on file. They will never charge it without your consent, but it is a part of their process.)

Once you do that, you are good to go and your profile is confirmed to upload your book and get paid for books sold!

For visual instructions on how to create your IngramSpark account, [take a look at this.](#)

If you're planning to sell your book online, decide on a price for your book.

How much will your book cost?

Pricing your book is a personal choice you have to feel confident about.

Let's look at what your book will likely cost, what a typical book commission/royalty will be, and how to use this information to choose a price for your book.

Look at the Compensation Calculator

First, take a look at the [IngramSpark Publisher Compensation Calculator](#).

This will help you get a better understanding of how much your book will cost to print, how much discount you will give retailers for purchasing, and how much you will earn from each book.

You can use this calculator to decide a price that works best for your book.

Plug info into the Calculator

When you look at the Compensation Calculator, you'll see a few sections to fill out like Trim Size, Interior Color and Paper, Binding Type, and so on.

Try this out. Go ahead and plug in the information for your book.

The section called List Price is the price your book will be when it's available for sale.

Maybe you're thinking about charging \$20 per book. Try that out. Put \$20 into the List Price section and then click "Calculate."

The form will provide a calculation for you.

Depending on your book's Trim Size, Interior Color and Paper, Binding Type, and other factors, the calculation might say something like Print Charge: \$5 and Publisher Compensation: \$15.

This means, based on the information you put into the form, if a customer pays \$20 for your book, then the printing cost is going to cost approximately \$5, and you, as the author/publisher, would keep \$15.

That's just one hypothetical example. The actual numbers for your book might be totally different.

What about the wholesale discount?

In the Calculator, there's a section called Wholesale Discount.

This is the discount you give retailers (like Barnes & Noble, Target, etc.) to purchase your book at a lower price, so they can turn around and sell it to make a profit.

If you want your book to be desirable to the greatest number of retailers, IngramSpark recommends you discount your book at 53% off your

list price. You can plug “53” into the Wholesale Discount section to see what the final calculation would be.

Play around with the Calculator

Play around with this Compensation Calculator and see what feels right for your pricing.

Everyone is different in how they price their book, so do what feels right for you.

On average, most authors try to ensure their compensation is around \$4 to \$5 per book after the wholesale pricing is calculated in. But if you want to earn more per book, then you can raise the List Price to achieve that.

Still confused about pricing? Want some help? Contact us

As always, we’re here for you. Email us anytime during The Tiny Book Course to ask for help: hello@youcangetitdone.com.

The final day of the course is March 25, 2023, so please submit your questions before then. Thank you!

Understanding Distribution and Book Returns

When you self-publish your book with IngramSpark, not only is it available via major online retailers worldwide (like Amazon, Target, Wal-Mart, Barnes & Noble and more), but it's also available for bookstores to purchase to carry in their stores.

As we already discussed in the [How Self-Publishing Works](#) lesson, IngramSpark offers print-on-demand service, which means that your book is printed only once someone has purchased that book. In the case of bookstores, things work a little differently.

When you upload your book, you will have the option to choose whether or not you'd like to make your book "returnable." This means that a bookstore who takes a chance on your book could return that book to IngramSpark if it doesn't sell and recoup their cost. Most bookstores won't purchase books unless they are returnable.

When a bookstore decides to purchase your book, they are sold the print copy at a wholesale price. Although you will see the book as "sold" in your sales dashboard, that sale isn't truly complete until the bookstore then sells that book to a customer.

If the book doesn't sell, the bookstore then has the option to return that book. Since you were already paid a royalty on a book that didn't actually sell, IngramSpark will charge your account to recoup that already-paid royalty that you received when the bookstore first purchased the book.

Set Up Your Preorder Campaign

When setting up a preorder, you have two options. Allow retailers to handle your preorders, or handle the preorders and shipping yourself.

In the document below, we teach you both ways.

Preorder Campaigns

A preorder campaign is a great way to take your time while building excitement around your book.

With this time, you can:

- * Market your book
- * Send out advanced copies to individuals and the media, for review
- * Offer special incentives for preordering your book
- * Set up speaking engagements to discuss your book and to boost your mailing list

Retailers (like Amazon, B&N, etc) Handling Your Preorders

HOW DO I SET UP A PREORDER WHEN PUBLISHING?

In The Tiny Book Course, we recommend using [Ingramspark](#) for your book publishing and distribution needs.

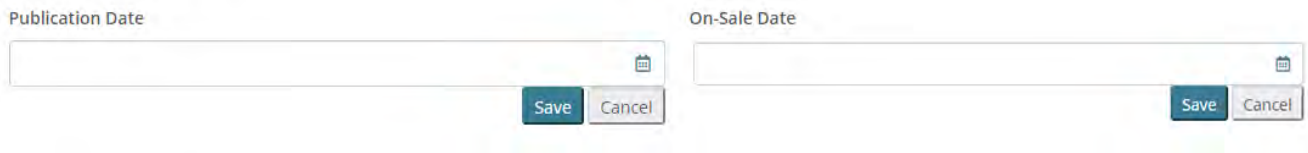
Currently, only IngramSpark allows you to set up your book for pre-sale campaigns. If you are using another self-publisher like KDP or Lulu, you

are unable to set up a presale campaign as your print book will launch once approved.

When you set up your book to upload on IngramSpark, you will be asked for two dates:

- * On Sale Date
- * Publication Date

Release Dates



These two dates need to be exactly the same.

If you are ready to release your book into the world immediately, you can set those dates to the current date, and continue onto the next step.

If you want to allow preorders of your book, both of the dates above need to be the same, and you will select a future date for when you want your book to be shipped to your readers.

WHAT SHOULD MY LAUNCH DATE BE?

Your launch date can be any date in the future that you choose. It could be your next birthday or another important date. Launching a book for the holiday season is typically a great time, as it offers a gifting opportunity.

The more time you give yourself for your launch, the more outreach and excitement you can build.

HOW WILL I KNOW WHEN MY BOOK IS AVAILABLE FOR PREORDER FROM RETAILERS?

After you upload your book and approve it for distribution, your book will begin to populate to popular retailers. Not every retailer has the same processing time, so it may take up to seven business days for your book to appear on all of them.

When your book is available from a retailer, your book will appear for sale.

If you are publishing a paperback and/or hardcover book, your book will be available for purchase, but it will say that the book ships on the launch date you selected.

If you upload your book and approve it for distribution on, let's say, June 12, and you selected your launch date to be October 1, then your book will be available for presale, and the book will be shipped to the customer on October 1.

If you are publishing an e-book either on its own or alongside another format, your e-book will be available for purchase, but it will say that it will be delivered automatically to the customer's device on the launch date you selected.

If you upload your e-book and approve it for distribution on June 12, and you selected your launch date to be October 1, then your ebook will be available for presale on June 12, and the e-book will be directly delivered to the customer's device on October 1.

Handling Preorders on Your Own

WHAT IF I WANT TO DO A PREORDER ON MY OWN WEBSITE?

Setting up a preorder on your own site is a great way to be in control of your earliest book sales and receive a larger profit than the percentage earned from retailers!

CAN I DO A PREORDER ON MY WEBSITE AND HAVE AMAZON SHIP THEM TO MY CUSTOMERS?

No. If you want to do a preorder on your own site, you will need to ship the books to your customers on your own.

WHERE DO I START?

There are a few things that you will need to have in order to handle selling and shipping your own books.

1. Webstore - A place online to sell products directly to customers

2. eCommerce Platform/Host Site - A website, your own or a service provider's, where you keep your webstore. Here are some popular options:

WIX

Squarespace

Shopify

Big Cartel

There are other options for selling directly, but these are the ones that either offer a presale option built-in or allow you to inform your customers of a presale.

Keep in mind that having a website with an eCommerce platform does have its costs, and costs vary by provider.

Big Cartel offers the option of selling five items on its platform for free, and the option of using a custom domain. Purchasing a domain has its own fee, but this is a cost-effective option to have a webstore with your name on it for next to nothing.

3. Shipping Solutions - A service provider to purchase and print labels from shipping providers to deliver products to customers. Here are some options:

[USPS Click-N-Ship](#)

[Shippo](#)

[Shipstation](#)

Options for shipping vary on the size and weight of the package you wish to send. USPS Click-N-Ship offers only USPS options. Companies like Shippo and Shipstation offer an array of options that include USPS, UPS, FedEx, and DHL.

For shipping a single or a small number of books, USPS is the most recommended option.

- Media Mail is a flat-rate shipping solution that is for media and learning materials only. It provides the cheapest option, but its drawback is its shipping speed.
- First Class Mail is an option for shipping packages up to 1lb. The average cost of shipping a single book is around \$4. This offers a cost-effective option with faster shipping.

4. Shipping Materials - Bubble mailers/Boxes/Tape/Label Printer/Sleeves for Nonadhesive Labels. Here are some options:

[ULINE](#)

[PackagingSupplies](#)

[ShippingSupply](#)

[Amazon](#)

[STAPLES](#)

HOW DO I GET BOOKS TO SHIP TO MY CUSTOMERS?

In The Tiny Book Course, we recommend using [Ingramspark](#) for your book publishing and distribution needs. Once you have an Ingramspark account, you'd uploaded your book, and approved the book to be printed, you simply need to place an order.

If you are using another printer, that is okay! You will simply just need to place an order of books and have them shipped directly to you.

WHEN DO I NEED TO ORDER MY BOOKS?

If you have the means to purchase books for your campaign right away, you can do so at any time in advance of your launch, and ship them on your official launch day.

If you don't have the means, that is okay. You can accept preorders and use funds from that campaign to order the books that you will ship to your customers.

Regardless of which option you choose, plan accordingly to allow time for the books to be printed and shipped to you so that you can ship the books to your customers on time.

WRAPPING UP.

When you choose to handle your own preorders, you are assuming full responsibility for printing and shipping your own books. It is important that you meet your obligations when having a preorder. You must offer total transparency to your customers, and you must deliver what you say that you will deliver.

This article from IngramSpark goes into great detail about this process and helps authors understand the pros and cons of making their books returnable for bookstores to purchase. **We recommend reading it thoroughly**, as returns do happen from time-to-time, and it's important to understand the process and the costs involved.

Remember, you can always choose to make your book non-returnable and avoid this risk altogether. It will still be sold print-on-demand at the major online retailers. It just lessens the likelihood that it will be purchased by a brick and mortar bookstore.

Take a look at the Upload Checklist to make sure you have everything you need for a smooth and successful upload.

Ooh, so exciting!

It's almost time upload your book to IngramSpark so you can officially get it printed and hold the book in your hands!

Once you are logged into IngramSpark, click "Add a Title."

After you click "Add a Title," you will be asked whether you want to publish a book that is just for you (private, not available for sale), or a book that is for sale to the public.

If the book is just for you

If the book is just for you, then the process is very quick. You just put your name, book title, trim size, upload your files, and you are done!

If the book is for sale

If the book is going to be for sale to the public, then the process is longer and has more steps.

You will be asked a host of questions, such as: Is your book intended for adult readers, teenagers, or young children? What's your ISBN? And so on.

We encourage you to make all of these decisions, and gather all of this information, ahead of time—before you start filling out the upload form.

Get organized before you upload. That way, you'll be all set for a smooth and stress-free experience.

Take a look at the Upload Checklist to make sure you have everything you need.

If you've got everything on the following list, then you are all set! Move along to the next step. Go upload!

Upload Checklist

Before you upload your book to IngramSpark, you will need the following things.

Make sure you've got everything ready.

We recommend you type out all of your info, so you can copy-paste into the IngramSpark title set-up form.

Basic Information

* **Book Title**

* **Subtitle (if applicable)**

* **Language**

English, French, Spanish, etc.

* **ISBN Number(s)**

Author and Contributor Information

* **Author First Name**

* **Author Last Name**

* **Author Location: Country, State, City (Optional)**

* **Author/Contributor Bio (Optional, but recommended)**

If your book has more than one author or contributor, collect a bio for each person.

*** Author/Contributor Prior Work (Optional)**

This is a list of any books you've written in the past, if applicable.

*** Author/Contributor Affiliations (Optional)**

This is a list of important corporate, organizational, or institutional affiliations. This might include businesses or non-profits you have worked with, schools where you studied, taught, or conducted research, clubs, groups, or professional associations, media or publications you have written for.

Categorize Your Title

*** Select Imprint (aka Publisher Name)**

This will be your personal name, your business name, your imprint name (if you started one), or no name (which will appear as "Independently Published").

*** BISAC Subject Categories**

Choose 3 categories that best describe your book:

<https://bisg.org/page/bisacedition>

For instance: Philosophy, Self-Help, and Social Science.

*** Audience**

Who is the intended audience for your book?
Select one that fits best:

College (Textbook)

Elementary/High School (Textbook)

Juvenile (Child 0-12)

Professional/Scholar (Adult)

Trade/General (Adult)

Young Adult (Child 13-18)

*** Regional Subject (Optional)**

*** Theme Subject (Optional)**

*** Table of Contents (Optional)**

*** Review Quotes (Optional)**

You can always add testimonials, endorsements, and reviews later, once your book is published.

Title Description

* Full Book Description

A description of your book. Describe what it's about, what readers can expect to find inside, anything that might convince someone to buy the book.

* Short Book Description (Optional, but recommended)

Just like the full description, except shorter.

* Keywords

A few words to describe your book. For instance: marriage, couples, love.

Print Information

* Trim size

Will your book be 5x8 inches? Or 6x9? Or another size?

* Binding

Paperback or hardcover?

* Paper color

Black and white or color?

* Paper finish

White, crème, or groundwood?

* Cover finish

Matte or gloss?

* Pricing

How much do you want to charge per book?

* Wholesale Discount

You have the option of setting a discount within the range of 30% (minimum) to 55% (maximum). We recommend 53%, if your goal is to sell as many books as possible. A 53% discount will make your book more desirable to the greatest number of retailers. But you can do whatever discount you want—or no discount at all.

* **Return Policy**

You can decide if you want your book to be returnable or not.

In order to be seen by the largest number of retailers, IngramSpark offers your book to be available for return—meaning if a bookstore purchases your book and doesn't sell it, they can return it. Returned books will then get delivered to you and you will be charged your book rate.

Most independent bookstores require books be returnable, so agreeing to this will help your book have the chance to get picked up by more places.

For most authors, returns in general are very low, but it's up to you and depends on your goals. You can read all about returns [here](#).

Print Options

* **Enable Look Inside the Book**

This allows buyers to get a sneak peek of the first few chapters of your book. Depending on how long your book is, this may or may not be something you want to enable.

* **Large-Text Edition**

If you set up your text for large-text edition, you would click this button. Most likely, this button will not be clicked.

* **Right-to-Left Content**

Books written in Arabic or languages that require reading from right-to-left would enable this.

* **Publication Date**

Publication date is your “book birthday.” This is the date your book will be available to the public.

Customers can pre-order the book before the publication date. For instance, if your publication date is January 15, customers could start pre-ordering the book in November or December—or even sooner than that.

If you want to get your book out into the world ASAP, you can choose “today” as your publication date.

Or you can pick a date that is 4-6 weeks in the future, or even several months in the future. This will give you more time to promote the book and get those pre-orders rolling in, if that’s important to you.

All done?

You've got all that information ready to go?

You made all those decisions about pricing and publication and what-not?

Then you are READY to proceed onward!

NOT all done?

You're confused about something? You need help?

Email us: hello@youcangetitdone.com.

Let's get you across the finish line!

Once you have completed everything on the Upload Checklist, it's time to upload your book.

Can you believe it?!

It's time to upload your book files!

Here is a video on how to upload your book files to IngramSpark, if your book is private, not for sale.

Here is a video on how to upload your book files to IngramSpark, if your book is public, intended for sale.

Watch and follow along.

What happens next?

Once you've uploaded your book, Ingramspark will begin to work on your digital proof.

A digital proof is a digital copy of your book, so you can do one final check to make sure everything looks good before anything gets printed on paper.

It may take up to 3 business days before you receive your digital proof.

Common upload errors

You've made it to the point where you're ready to upload your final files (Hooray!), but just as you push the button to upload, an error screen appears.

Don't worry...we got you!

[This article](#) from IngramSpark is a great place to start. It covers many of the common upload errors as well as how to fix them.

Also, below are a few common errors we have seen over the years with our suggestions for troubleshooting them:

ICC vs CMYK Color Error

This has to do with the way your colors are set up. It's quite technical and can generally be ignored.

If you worked with a designer for your interior or book cover, let them know that the colors need to be CMYK (these are the colors used for printing).

If you worked with our template and Canva for your cover, you can ignore this error and click through the error screen. Please note though that the printed colors may appear slightly different than on your computer screen.

Embedded Font Error

This has to do with how fonts are saved within your document. You can check if your fonts are embedded using Adobe Acrobat.

1. Open your PDF file in Adobe Acrobat
2. Click File > Document Properties
3. Click on the Fonts Tab to display the list of all fonts
4. All fonts are either Type 1 or TrueType fonts
5. All fonts should show as "Embedded Subset."

In order to fix your fonts to be embedded:

1. Go back to the original version of your document in Microsoft Word (not the pdf version you exported)
2. Within Microsoft Word click File > Save As
3. From the "Save As Type" drop down menu choose "PDF"
4. Click on "Options"
5. Under "PDF Options" check the box for "ISO 19005-1 compliant (PDF/A)"
6. Click "OK" to create the PDF
7. The fonts should now be embedded

Low-Resolution Photos Error

Oftentimes this is because the images you used are too small. [See our image guide](#) for information on how to check your image size and properly scan images or download images that are big enough.

If you check all your photos and they are 260 dpi or above, you can proceed without worrying that they will look pixelated in the print ver-

sion. Simply click to ignore this error and continue to the next step in the uploading process.

If an image is below 260 dpi, unfortunately there isn't a way to make a photo that's too small big enough. You'll either have to rescan your images, or download a different image. [See our image guide for more info.](#)

Look at your digital proof (PDF) and make sure everything looks good.

If there's anything you want to change, go ahead and make the change, then upload your print files again, just like before.

After you upload your book, IngramSpark will send you a digital proof—a digital copy of your book that will look something like [this](#).

Take a look at your digital proof.

Make sure everything looks good.

Do you see any glaring typos? Or any other issues?

If you're happy with everything, then you can go ahead and approve your title.

If you see something that needs to be fixed, then you can reject the files, fix the files, and then re-upload.

IngramSpark saves all the info that you entered before (book title, publication date, etc.), so you don't have to do that again! Phew! You can just re-upload the files.

Order your print proof copy—this is a physical, printed version of your book, so you can do one more final check.

When you get it in the mail, check it out and make sure it all looks good.

You took a look at the digital proof.

But maybe you'd like to see a print proof, too. You want to see what the book is going to look like, once it's actually printed out.

Good news: you can do that!

To order your print proof, log into your IngramSpark account.

Select "approve, but don't distribute." This means you'll be able to order a copy of your book for yourself—so you can take a look and make sure everything looks good—but nobody else will be able to order the book.

After you select "approve, but don't distribute," find the "order" button. Click that.

Order one copy of your book, or two, or more. As many copies as you want to get printed and shipped to you.

Once you get the physical book via snail mail, you can review it one final time and make sure you're happy with it,

If you decide to make any changes, go ahead and do that, and then re-upload your files to IngramSpark just like before.

Once you're satisfied and happy with how everything looks, click "approve" in IngramSpark to officially publish your book.

You looked at your digital proof. You looked at your print proof. Everything looks good! No further changes! This book is all done!

Once you reach that moment, this means it's time to click "approve" in IngramSpark, if you haven't already done so.

Click, "Approve for distribution."

Approve for distribution

When you select this, this means your book will become available in major retail outlets like Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and Bookshop.

Please note that distribution channels do not typically work at the same speed. This means that it could take up to a week to see your book at the retailers above.

Remember your book does not get printed and shipped out to customers until the publication date.

For instance, if you picked January 15 as your publication date and you entered that date into IngramSpark, that means customers won't receive your book until January 15 or later.

Customers can pre-order the book before January 15, but they won't actually receive the book until that date or later.

Click **"APPROVE"**

Hooray! You did it!

This is a huge moment!

You just became an AUTHOR!

Step 8: Market Your Book

Your book is DONE!

Celebrate this momentous occasion in your own way—dance party, dog snuggles, cake and coffee, whatever feels good to you.

YOU DID IT.

Holy macaroni! Sweet crumbcake! Glory to dog! YOU DID IT! You are an AUTHOR!

Please celebrate this momentous occasion in your own way—dance party, snuggles with your kids, snacks and coffee, whatever feels good to you.

We always love seeing what Tiny Book Course graduates do to celebrate, once their book is done.

One year, a group of graduates got together and co-hosted a book launch party at their favorite local bookstore. They got a cake, invited all their friends, and congratulated one another on a job well done.

Another year, one author contacted a bakery and ordered cookies that looked just like her book! Each cookie was decorated to look like her book cover. Book cookies. Bookies!

Celebrate in your own way, whatever that means for you. You could:

- * Take yourself out for a fancy dinner. Or order something delicious and get it delivered to your home.
- * Text your closest friends and tell them "MY BOOK IS DONE!" and then allow them to shower you with praise.
- * Go on a vacation or stay-cation and do fun, relaxing things that have nothing to do with writing. Give yourself a well-deserved break.
- * Or maybe a virtual celebration with some new friends you made during The Tiny Book Course.

Tiny book. Big celebration. Go make today a very special day.

Email us to share the happy news! “My book is done!”

It goes without saying, but we want to celebrate with you once your book is done!

Email hello@youcangetitdone.com with the happy news: “My book is done!”

Extra credit: send us a photo of your book, or perhaps a photo of you holding your book. We’d love to see.

(And, yes, digital books (aka eBooks/Kindle books) totally count as a real book! If you chose to release your book in digital format, we want to see it, and we’re stoked for you.)

Order copies of your book to share with friends, family, and people you love.

Consider donating one or two copies to your local public library, too.

You can order copies of your book by logging into IngramSpark.

Log into your account at www.IngramSpark.com and click "ORDER."

Get one book, two, three, hundreds, however many you want.

You won't pay the List Price that customers on Amazon (and other sites) pay. You'll pay much, much less per book, because you're the author!

Give books to people you love, to colleagues and clients, to your local public library. Enjoy the thrill of handing someone a book you wrote!

Announce your book to the world.

This could mean texting your family to share the happy news, sending a press release to the media, doing a quick post on your website or blog, or something else.

Once your book is done, it's time to announce your book to the world!

You can do a big, splashy announcement. You can do something quiet and intimate.

And it's possible you don't want to make an announcement of any kind. Perhaps this particular book is a private project that's just for you, or just for your family, not for the general public.

Please do whatever kind of announcement feels right to you.

Announcement ideas

You could:

- * Text your family to share the happy news, if you haven't already done so. "It's here!"
- * Do a quick post on your website, blog, or somewhere else. "So, I wrote a book..."
- * Get a banner to put into your shop or office window. "Come see the new book!"

- * Send a newsletter to your mailing list to give them a peek. "Check out a sneak peek of my new book, before anybody else!"
- * Reveal the news on your podcast. And, perhaps, read a portion of your book aloud to your listeners. "My first book is here!"
- * Do a book announcement that's combined with a contest or giveaway. "Post below. Tell me your favorite way to de-stress. I'll pick one answer (randomly) and that person wins a signed copy of my new book."
- * Send snail mail to announce your book. You could make a list of special people who are important to you—friends, colleagues, mentors—and mail each person a copy of your book with a personal note inside.
- * Stand atop a mountain and cry into the heavens: "FOR IT IS SO, I HAVE WRITTEN A BOOK!" Haha! Kidding. Or maybe not?
- * Or anything else you want to do.

Sample announcement

Here's a sample announcement to let folks know, "My book is here!"

You can send this announcement to your mailing list, if you have one.

You can post it on social media, if that's where you like to connect with people.

You can post the announcement on your blog, website, or you could put this language into a letter or card you snail mail to people.

You can also read this announcement out loud, like a script, in a video or on a podcast episode.

Adjust the language to make it feel more like "you." You can make it shorter, longer, sillier, more serious, whatever fits your personality.

You can address this announcement to one person (Dear Gloria), to a group (Dear Clients), or to the entire world (Hey, Everyone!)

In this sample, underlined text means it would be a hyperlink.

Dear World,

I can barely believe that it's true, but...I wrote a book!

It's called Peace Every Day: 21 Tiny Ways to Take Care of Your Mental Health.

I wrote this book because I know from personal experience that when it comes to our health and wellbeing, small things can make a big difference.

You may not be able to do the big things—like see a therapist—every single day. But there are lots of tiny things you can do to reduce stress and feel stronger every day.

Please join me in celebrating the “birthday” of this new book.

My hope is this book will find its way into the hands of people who need it most.

A few things you can do to support this book:

- *Join me for a virtual book release party this Friday at 3 pm Eastern. I'll read a bit of the book aloud and give away 10 books to folks in the audience. A fun, relaxed, and welcoming event. [More info here.](#)*
- *[Purchase the book for yourself](#) or for someone you love.*
- *Contact your local public library. Ask if they'd be willing to order the book. That way, it will be available for everyone in your community.*

Thank you. I hope this book creates a positive ripple effect in the world. I appreciate your support.

And if you have a book (or another project) inside of you that wants to come out, I urge you to write it. You can do it. One tiny step at a time. Tiny steps add up to big, beautiful things.

Fill-in-the-blank version

Dear [friends, clients, world, etc.],

I can barely believe that it's true, but...I wrote a book!

It's called [title].

I wrote this book because [share one reason why you wrote this book].

[Share a little bit of info about the book—the big message, what's inside, anything you wish to share].

Please join me in celebrating the “birthday” of this new book.

My hope is this book will [share your highest hope for this book].

A few things you can do to support this book:

- *[State one thing people can do to support the book—for instance, join you for a book release party.]*
- *[State another thing people can do—for instance, purchase the book.]*
- *[State another thing people can do—for instance, tell a friend about the book or ask their local bookstore or library to order it.]*

*Thank you. I hope this book creates a positive ripple effect in the world.
I appreciate your support.*

*And if you have a book (or another project) inside of you that wants
to come out, I urge you to [share your advice for aspiring authors out
there].*

If you want to sell your book, put together a marketing plan.

Make a list of action steps you can take to generate book sales.

(We have a few ideas for you to consider.)

If you want to sell your book, this section is for you.

If you're not intending to sell your book—maybe you created a book that's just for your family and friends, not for sale—then you can skip this part!

If you want to sell your book, we encourage you to put together a marketing plan.

This plan doesn't have to be super complicated. We've got a few ideas to get you started.

10 marketing ideas to consider

Here are 10 marketing ideas for you to consider.

You can do everything on the following list, if you want. Or, if that feels too daunting, start by picking a couple ideas from the list. Maybe 2-3 things. Maybe more, depending on how much time and energy you've got.

Once you've decided which marketing ideas you're willing to do, put things into a list—like a marketing checklist. Then, work your way down the checklist. Once you complete a task, check it off. Keep going until everything on your plan is complete.

1. Throw yourself a book launch party

Whether it's an in-person party, or a virtual celebration online—organize a party.

Invite everyone you know. You can invite your family, friends, colleagues, mentors, teachers, coaches, fellow writers, clients, customers, everyone in your community.

At the party, you can:

Read a portion of your book aloud.

- * Say thank you to everyone who made this book possible.
- * Do a Q&A session and answer questions from the audience.
- * Sell books or give them away for free.
- * To make things extra festive, do something to surprise and delight your audience. Perhaps an unexpected musical guest, a magic show, or cupcakes for everyone.

Doing a book launch party is a great way to commemorate this big milestone in your life—while creating excitement and buzz about your book.

2. Send thank you notes

Make a list of 10, 20, 30 people (or more) who helped make your book possible. Anyone who helped in any way, big or small.

This could be your high school English teacher, your favorite professor from college, your old boss who encouraged you to write more, your Book Club friends, and so on.

Send a thank you note to each person. Send a copy of your book, too, if you want. Tell them, "You might not realize it, but you're part of the reason why this book came into being."

They will be so surprised and moved by this gesture! And they'll probably go tell everyone they know, "I know someone who just wrote a book. It's so beautiful, check it out." They'll spread the word on your behalf.

One tiny thank you note can start a big ripple effect.

3. Put a note about your book into your email signature

A typical working professional receives more than 100 emails a day.

If there's something you want to sell—say, your new book—put a link into your email signature.

For instance, I could make my Gmail email signature look like this:

Alexandra Franzen

Co-Founder, [Get It Done](#)

Feeling stressed? Read my latest book: [The Checklist Book: Set Realistic Goals, Celebrate Tiny Wins, Reduce Stress and Overwhelm, and Feel Calmer Every Day.](#)

If you typically deal with 100 emails a day, and you work at least 250 days a year, that's 25,000 emails per year.

Put a little note into your email signature and that's basically like advertising your work—for free—25,000 times!

A great way to gently remind your community about your book and point them where they need to go.

4. Give a special reward to everyone who buys the book by a particular date

Give customers a special reward—a gift, a treat, a surprise, something exciting that they will definitely want—in exchange for buying the book by a particular date.

Post a message on your website (or somewhere else) and tell folks something like:

“Buy the book before December 31, and then, please email me some form of proof that you did it. This could be a photo of your receipt, a screenshot, an order confirmation, any kind of proof.”

Once someone emails you proof of purchase, send them a special reward.

The reward can be anything you want.

If you wrote a cookbook, the reward could be a bonus recipe that's not included in the book.

If you wrote a book about self-care, the reward could be a link to a

beautiful music playlist with all your favorite calming, de-stress music.

If you wrote a book about how to handle conflict and have difficult conversations, the reward could be a bonus video that displays a mock-conversation, so people can see your principles in action.

People love gifts and free stuff! A timeless, universal human truth.

5. Mail the book to people you admire

Snail mail your book to several people that you admire.

For instance, mail it to your favorite author, a CEO you respect, the President of a local business organization, or another influential person who might love your book's message.

Include a personal note along with the book.

Tell them, "We've never met, but I admire what you're doing in the world. I wanted to send you my new book because your work has influenced me and inspired me. Please keep the book or pass it along to someone you love. Thank you. Enjoy!"

You never know what might happen. They might absolutely love your book. They might tell their colleagues about it. They might write back to you. They might help bring greater visibility to your book.

Even if they don't reply or do anything in particular, you had an opportunity to say "thank you for inspiring me" and that's always a good thing.

You can usually find people's snail-mail address by going to their website and looking on the Contact page. If you can't find it, email them and politely ask.

6. Tell the world “why I wrote this book”

On your blog, in your newsletter, on your podcast, or some other place, tell your community why you decided to write this book.

Did something happen? Was there a conversation, event, or situation that inspired you to write it? Is it fiction but loosely based on your real life? What compelled you to write this book?

People are always curious to find out the “backstory” behind a creative project.

Share why you wrote the book, and you’ll pique people’s curiosity to buy it and read it.

7. Give the world an exclusive sneak peek at your book

On your blog, in your newsletter, on your podcast, or some other place give people an “exclusive sneak peek” of your new book.

You could read a short portion of the book aloud on your podcast, publish an excerpt on your blog, or send a tiny snippet to your mailing list.

Tell folks, “I hoped you enjoyed that little peek! If you enjoyed that, and want more, please go get the book.”

8. Ask people to spread the word about your book

Ask your clients, colleagues, blog readers, podcast listeners, friends, family members, and other people to spread the word about your book in whatever way they can.

Ask, "Would you be willing to interview me on your blog, so I can discuss my new book?"

Ask, "Would you ask your Book Club buddies if they'd be interested in reading my book next?"

Ask, "Could you please introduce me to that podcast host you know? I'd like to see if I can be a guest on their show."

Flex your asking muscles. Ask, ask, ask. Challenge yourself to do 10 "asks" in 1 week. More, if you want.

If asking makes you feel stiff and awkward, try our Give-Ask-Receive method. Every time you ask for something, give something, too. Balance it out.

For instance, if you ask a colleague to do you a big favor and help promote your book, later that same day, you could drop off some freshly baked cookies at your neighbor's house. Ask and give. Give and ask. You can do both, all within the same day or week.

9. Give a free presentation—like a class, workbook, or panel event

Do a free presentation (in-person or online) that's related to your book topic. Invite everyone you know to come attend the presentation: family, colleagues, neighbors, clients, etc. Ask those folks to bring their friends!

If you wrote a book about how to create an anti-racist business, host a panel event with a few speakers who can share their thoughts on this topic.

If you wrote a book about how to switch to a plant-based diet, host a free cooking class and teach people how to whip up one of the recipes from your book.

If you wrote a children's book about your pet iguana, host a "come meet the lizard" event and read the beginning of the book aloud to the kids.

During the presentation, let folks know your book is available for purchase. If you're doing the event online, make sure to provide the link, so people know where to buy it.

After attending the presentation and interacting with you, people will be even more excited to go buy the book.

10. Pitch yourself to the media (podcasts, radio, TV, etc), get booked for appearances, during media appearances, talk about your new book and tell audiences where they can find it

Getting featured in the media is always a great way to get your book in front of new audiences.

You can start with smaller media platforms—like your friend's podcast—to get some practice, build up your confidence, and then gradually work your way up to bigger platforms, like a TV show.

Not sure how to pitch yourself to the media? Lindsey has a great template you can use, and it's free! [Here you go.](#)

So many possibilities

From sending a newsletter...to getting featured on a podcast...to organizing a panel event and beyond...there are thousands of ways to promote your book. It can feel dizzying.

But you don't have to exhaust yourself. That list of 10 options is a good place to start. Pick 2-3 things from that list that you're excited to do. Start there. Once that's done, you can do more, if you want.

For even more marketing options, [you might enjoy Alex's list of 20 marketing ideas that don't require social media.](#)

When to begin?

You might wonder, "When should I start promoting my book and encouraging people to buy it? Should I do this before the book officially comes out? After the book comes out? Both?"

The answer depends on your goals, as well as the time and energy you've got available.

If your goal is to sell as many books as you possibly can, then the earlier you start promoting the book, the better.

Many authors will start encouraging people to pre-order their book 3-6 months before the book actually comes out.

However, it's up to you.

You can create a very robust marketing plan that begins 1 year prior to your book's release—book tour, national media appearances, a big kaboom!

Or you can do a very chill, relaxed marketing plan where you make a few announcements once the book is out, throw a quiet book launch party, and that's that.

Do whatever feels right to you.

Sample marketing plan

Book

Peace Every Day: 21 Tiny Ways to Take Care of Your Mental Health

Goal

Sell 1,000 copies of the book by December 31.

Why this goal matters to me

Millions of people struggle with their mental health. My hope is this book will provide a tiny bit of relief to those who are suffering.

I want to remind people that small daily habits make a big difference to how you feel.

I want to get this book into the hands of the people who need it most.

Marketing Team

- Myself
- My administrative assistant, Lauren
- My web designer, Omar
- Might hire a publicist later. TBD.

Marketing Checklist

BUILD WEBPAGES

- Create a webpage with photos of the book, brief book description, and instructions on how to order.
- Create a webpage with information about the book launch party on November 1, and instructions on how to RSVP and attend.

SEND ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Send a newsletter to my mailing list to announce, "The book is here!"
- Send a newsletter to my mailing list to announce, "I'm doing a book launch party on November 1."
- Send a newsletter to announce, "Book launch party is happening tomorrow!" to provide one last reminder to folks who intend to come.
- Mail a copy of the book to 10 friends and colleagues, along with a personal note stating why I wrote this book.
- Mail a copy of the book to 10 people I admire (business leaders, physicians, mental health specialists, etc.), along with a personal note stating why I wrote this book.

GIVE GENEROUSLY

- Give 50 copies of the book away for free to public libraries, schools, and other organizations. Get it out there!
- Give a special gift (guided meditation to help people unwind and de-stress) to the first 100 people who order the book.
- Secretly place the book in 10 locations around town (park, coffee shop, bus stop, etc.) with an anonymous love letter inside, so the “right person” can stumble across it, find it, and take it home.

ASK FOR SUPPORT

- Send a newsletter encouraging my mailing list subscribers to spread the word about this book. Provide 2-3 ideas on what they could do to help.
- Reach out personally to 10 friends and colleagues via email. Ask each person to support the book in some way, big or small. Provide 2-3 ideas on what they could do to help.
- Big ask! Ask Sandra to please introduce me to her friend who writes for *Real Simple* magazine, so I can see if I can get the book featured in the magazine.
- Big ask! Ask Fatima to please introduce me to her friend who hosts the mental wellbeing podcast, so I can see if I can get booked as a guest on the show.
- Big ask! Ask Stevie if they would be willing to mention the book in their newsletter which goes out to 10,000 readers.

CONTACT THE MEDIA

- Make a list of 10 people who work in local media: newspaper, radio stations, etc. Email each person with, "I wrote a book and I'm available for interviews."
- Make a list of 10 podcasts I'd love to be on. Email each host to inquire, "Are you looking for guests for future episodes? I'd love to be considered."

CELEBRATE WINS

- Once the first book sale comes in, celebrate with a fancy coffee drink!
- Once the 100th book sale comes in, celebrate with a special dinner!
- Once the 500th book sale comes in, send a gift to Lauren and Omar and other team members to say, "Thank you for all of your hard work."
- Remember that not every "win" comes in the form of book sales and revenue. Celebrate the emotional wins, too: positive feedback from readers, making a difference in people's lives. All the wins.

Book Marketing Plan

Book

Goal

Sell copies of the book by

Why this goal matters to me

Marketing Team

Marketing Checklist

BUILD WEBPAGES

☐

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SEND ANNOUNCEMENTS

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GIVE GENEROUSLY

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ASK FOR SUPPORT

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CONTACT THE MEDIA

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CELEBRATE WINS

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ADDITIONAL THINGS TO DO

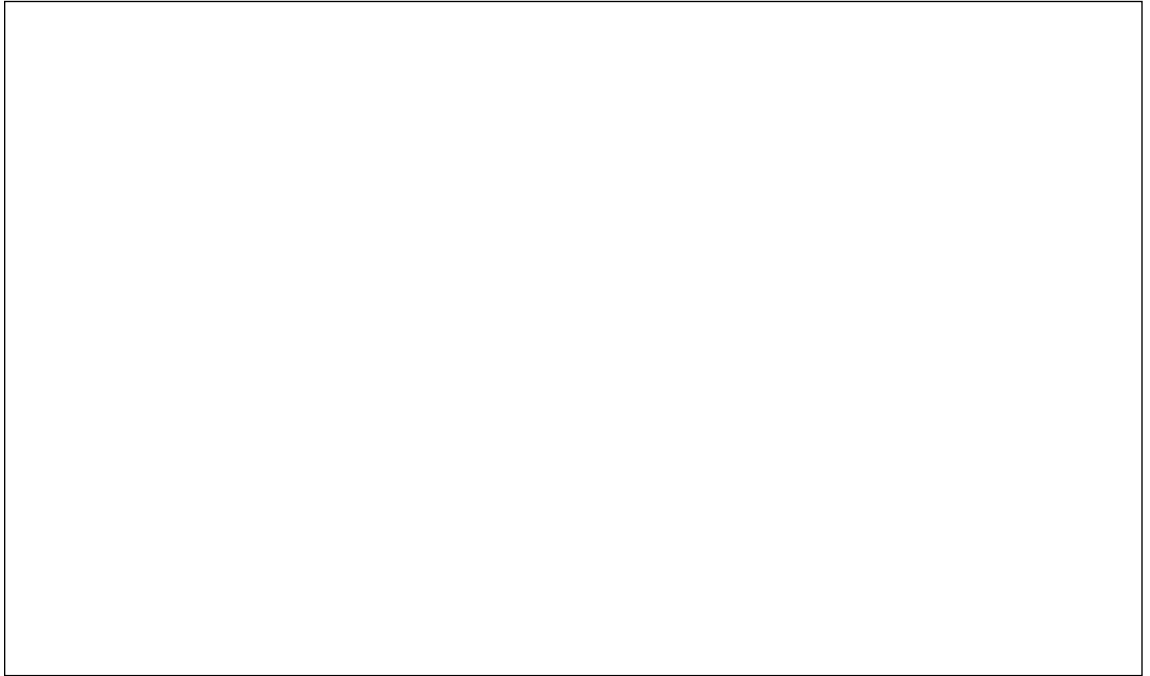
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NOTES / IDEAS

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for writing or drawing.

Send a thank you to all the people who helped make this book possible.

Let each person know, "You were an important part of this project, whether you realize it or not."

Around here at The Tiny Book Course, one of our all-time heroes is a man named Fred Rogers.

If you grew up in the United States between the years 1968 and 2001, then you probably remember Fred as the host of *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood*, a children's television show. It's a show about empathy and compassion, a show that teaches kids (and grown-ups) how to be a kind person and good neighbor.

Fred Rogers' work ultimately made him incredibly famous, but he was an unusual celebrity. He didn't crave attention, praise, or validation. His intention was never to collect accolades, but simply to make a difference in people's lives.

When he gave his Lifetime Achievement Award acceptance speech at the 24th Annual Daytime Emmy Awards, he got onstage and posed a question to the audience.

"All of us have special ones who have loved us into being. Would you just take, along with me, ten seconds to think of the people who have helped you to become who you are?"

He invited the packed auditorium to take a moment of silence, to send

quiet prayers and gratitude to all the people who helped them along their journey to success. The parents, guardians, and caregivers. The teachers, coaches, and mentors. The friends and neighbors. The clients, customers, and the viewers at home.

As the camera pans across the room, you can see audience members' eyes filling with tears in this simple moment of gratitude.

Fred's invitation reminds us: there are so many people we need to thank. And, unfortunately, amidst our busy, demanding lives, we often forget to pause and say thank you. Let's correct that, today.

Now that your book is complete, take a moment to say thank you to all the people who love you, and who supported you, in any way, shape, or form.

The food delivery person who dropped off dinner, so you could focus on writing.

Your spouse who handled laundry while you designed your book cover.

The colleague who offered to edit and proofread.

The clients who inspired your book in the first place.

The grandparent who is no longer on Earth, but who gave you your very first notebook or typewriter and encouraged you to write.

In whatever way feels good to you—with a text, an email, a call, an audio message, a snail-mail card, or perhaps a silent blessing—say thank you to each person.

Let each person know, "You were an important part of this project, whether you realize it or not."

Saying thank you creates a ripple effect in the world.

Your thank you might inspire somebody else to say thank you. It might help someone realize they're more important and influential than they think. It might even inspire someone to read your book or pass it along to a friend.

Make a list of people you need to thank. If that's too overwhelming, start with just one thank you today. Maybe tomorrow, one more. Go from there.

One thank you can lead to so many good things.

Sample thank you letter

Dear Monique,

This year, I wrote a book called Peace Every Day: 21 Tiny Ways to Take Care of Your Mental Health.

This book just came out, and I still can't fully believe it's real.

I wanted to say thank you. You might not know this, but you were an important part of this project.

You were my very first therapist, way back in the day.

You always encouraged me to create more space for self-care, and to do things that bring me joy.

When I mentioned that I always had a desire to write, you encouraged me to do it more often.

When I mentioned an interest in going back to school to get a degree in counseling, you celebrated this decision with me.

All those years ago, you planted tiny seeds in my heart that would eventually grow into this book. Thank you for being such a positive influence in my life.

I've included the book along with this letter. I hope you enjoy it. Or feel free to pass it along to a friend as a gift.

Thank you for everything. You've made such a difference in so many lives, including mine.

Fill-in-the-blank version

Dear [name],

This year, I wrote a book called [title].

This book just came out, and I still can't fully believe that it's real.

I wanted to say thank you. You might not know this, but you were an important part of this project.

[State one way that this person influenced your life or helped you to create this book—how they encouraged you, supported you, motivated you, educated you, handled chores so you could write, etc. State more than one way, if you want to add more.]

I've included the book along with this letter. I hope you enjoy it. Or feel free to pass it along to a friend as a gift.

Thank you for everything. You've made such a difference in so many lives including mine.

Celebrate even more. Seriously.

Congratulations on becoming an author!

This is a major achievement. It's something millions of people fantasize about but never actually do.

Keep celebrating this big milestone! Treat yourself to a fancy meal or something else you want.

Just like becoming an Olympian or earning a PhD, this is an achievement that lasts forever and can never be taken away from you.

You did it.

VICTORY!

Maybe you're already dreaming about writing a second, third, or fourth book? Amazing.

Write down ideas.

Now that you've gone through the journey once, the second time will be so much easier.

Around here, there's something we call "Tiny Book Fever."

It's when you write one tiny book, you fall in love with the publishing process, and then you just can't wait to do a second, third, fourth book, and beyond.

Your creativity is exploding, and you just want to keep going!

If you've caught Tiny Book Fever, congratulations! The only cure is to keep writing more books.

Now that you've gone through the process one time, the second time will be even easier. You know what to expect. You know how to set yourself up for success. Pretty soon, you'll be a seasoned pro.

Whenever you're ready to start writing your second book, use this Book Checklist and take yourself through the steps all over again!

Even after the Tiny Book Course is over, you can keep using this checklist and all the course materials we provided. They're yours to keep forever.

Ideas for your second book

- * If your first book provides basic information for beginners, then your second book could provide advanced information for those who want to go deeper. Kinda like level one followed by level two. Beginner and then mastery.
- * If your first book focuses on a very serious topic, maybe you want to lighten the mood and make your second book something more fun, joyful, and playful. Or vice-versa.
- * If your first book is a tiny book (approximately 30 to 70 pages), maybe you'd like to tackle a longer project (more than 100 pages) for your second book. Now that you know the process, you might feel more confident about writing a longer book.
- * If you're writing fiction, maybe you'd like to write a sequel to your first book, or write a spin-off story where a side character in your first book gets to be the lead character in your second book.
- * Or maybe you want to turn your first book into an audiobook, course, workshop, program, card deck, or present the material in another format. That's amazing, too!

So many possibilities! Our advice is the same as with your first book—pick the book idea that you truly “want” to write, not the book that you feel you “should” write. Want, not should.

Enjoy the journey—all over again!

Come to the Graduation Celebration

The Graduation Celebration is our favorite part of The Tiny Book Course.

Definitely bring your tissues and be prepared to cry. It's an emotional day—in the best possible way. Super inspiring.

At the Graduation Celebration, you'll see a presentation of completed books by your fellow classmates as well as inspiring nuggets of wisdom and uplifting stories about the experience in the class.

Prior to the big day, we will email you to provide instructions for submitting your work for the presentation. Stay tuned.

We can't wait to celebrate with you on the big day!

Additional Resources

Create a budget for your book. How much are you willing to spend to get this project done?

Now is a good moment to create a budget for your book.

How much are you willing to spend to get this project done?

Your budget can be zero dollars

It's completely possible to create a book and spend nothing.

That's exactly what we teach you to do in this course.

We show you how to complete every step in the book process, including writing, editing, proofreading, design, and publishing—all by yourself.

Once you know how to do everything by yourself, this means you don't have to hire anybody or spend any money.

However, even if you *know* how to do everything by yourself, you might not *want* to do everything by yourself. You might want to hire people to do certain steps.

That's why we encourage you to create a budget for your book.

Just as one example, maybe you want to set aside \$200 to pay a professional editor to review your book manuscript and clean it up. And

then \$200 to hire a professional artist to make a cover design for you. And then \$50 to hire someone to do a couple of the final tech steps, like uploading your final files for publishing. That means you'll spend around \$450 in total to hire all those folks.

Take some time to decide, "What's an appropriate budget for me right now and for this particular project?"

Take a look at the Sample Budgets

Take a look at the [Sample Budgets](#) we provide to see what your budget might look like.

There are so many ways to bring a book into the world. You can do it for zero dollars. You can set aside \$500 dollars. You could invest \$50,000, if you want! There's a huge range of possibilities, so just choose the budget that works for you and stick with that.

Don't want to make a budget right now? Skip it!

If creating a budget feels too overwhelming right now—or you want to wait and make these decisions later—skip this part. Move along to the next section.

You can always come back to this later, if you want.

Creative money-generating ideas

Perhaps you've decided you want to outsource certain tasks and hire some help. But you're on a very tight budget and you don't have tons

of extra cash just laying around. So, now what?

To quote financial-empowerment author Rachel Rodgers, “You have the power to generate more money whenever you want to, or need to.”

You have this ability inside of you. You can do this. No matter what your situation or circumstance may be, there is always a way to get the funding you need.

A few money-generating ideas to consider:

Apply for a grant

Billions of dollars are awarded in grant money every year. Somebody is going to win the grant. Why couldn't it be you?

Google and find a grant that's applicable to your profession or book project. Check out this list of [Grants for Writers](#) or look at [Funds for Writers](#) to get started.

Ask for a “book birthday present”

If you have a birthday, wedding, anniversary, or another big celebration coming up soon, tell your loved ones: “In lieu of a traditional gift, please chip in some cash to help me publish my book. Your gift will help me hire a professional illustrator and other folks. Thank you.”

Invite people to contribute any amount they're comfortable giving—\$5, \$50, \$100, whatever they can do

Sell stuff you don't want or need

That treadmill you haven't used in 5 years. That chair that you don't even like. Those corporate blazers from your previous career, the ones that don't fit anymore.

Consider hosting a garage sale to declutter your home while generating some cash.

Co-write a book with another author and split the costs

Maybe you'd like to co-write a book along with your best friend, your mom, or someone else? Write the book together. Share the workload. And split the production costs.

Ask previous clients to hire you again

If you're a freelancer or entrepreneur, circle back to previous clients/customers from the past. See if they'd like to purchase from you again.

Ask: "Would you like to book another session?" "Are you interested in hiring me for another project?" "Are you running low? Would you like to refill your order?"

Reach out and ask. You never know. They might say, "Absolutely, yes! I am so glad you reached out!" Hello, instant cash!

Do a book pre-sale

You can invite people to pre-order your book before it officially comes out.

Let's say you plan to release your book on May 1. You can invite people to pre-order the book in November, December, January, or whenever you want. Get those book orders coming in early!

Then, use money you earn from pre-orders to hire people to help you create the book.

We hope those suggestions spark some money-generating ideas for you. Where there's a will, there's a way. There is always a way.

And even though we said this before, we'll repeat it again: you don't necessarily need to spend any money to create your book. Investing money is optional, not mandatory. You can do this for free. We're excited to show you how!

Sample budgets

Sample budget: \$0

Task or Purchase	Notes	Cost
Writer	Doing this myself	\$0
Editor	Doing this myself	\$0
Proofreader	Doing this myself	\$0
Design	Doing this myself	\$0
Marketing	Doing this myself	\$0
ISBN	Choosing the free ISBN option	\$0
TOTAL		\$0



Sample budget: \$500

Task or Purchase	Notes	Cost
Writer	Doing this myself	\$0
Editor	Spouse will do this	\$0
Proofreader	Hiring a freelancer	\$100
Design	Hiring a freelancer	\$275
Marketing	Doing this myself	\$0
ISBN	Purchasing one ISBN	\$125
TOTAL		\$500

Sample budget: \$6,125

Task or Purchase	Notes	Cost
Writer	Doing this myself	\$0
Research assistant	Hiring a freelancer	\$500
Fact checker	Hiring a freelancer	\$300
Illustrator/Artist	Hiring a freelancer	\$1,000
Photographer	Hiring a freelancer	\$1,000
Editor	Hiring a freelancer	\$300
Proofreader	Hiring a freelancer	\$100
Design	Hiring a freelancer	\$300
Marketing	Doing this myself	\$0
ISBN	Purchasing one ISBN	\$125
Writing retreat	Going away for 5 days to a cabin	\$2,500
TOTAL		\$6,125

Based on your budget, decide if you want to hire professionals to help you complete this project—or not.

You came up with a budget for your book.

Maybe your budget is zero dollars, \$10, \$500, \$10,000, or whatever amount you've chosen.

Based on your budget, now is a good moment to decide if you want to hire professionals to help you complete this project—and who you're going to hire.

What you've already got

Because you're doing The Tiny Book Course, you already have:

- * Step-by-step instructions for every part of the process: writing, editing, proofreading, design, and publishing.
- * Sample book outlines, sample author bios, samples book descriptions, and a sample book marketing plan.
- * Design templates to make your book look beautiful.
- * Access to a team of Book Coaches who are available to answer questions, read your writing, and give feedback.

Folks you might want to hire

Maybe you want to hire some extra help on top of what this course includes.

Perhaps there are certain steps you just don't want to do yourself, even though you could.

You may want to hire:

- * A professional editor or proofreader who can review your book manuscript with a fine-toothed comb and fix every single typo.
- * A professional artist, photographer, illustrator, or designer.
- * A historian, research assistant, or fact checker.
- * A virtual assistant who can help complete some of the technical steps, like getting your final files ready for uploading and self-publishing.
- * A voice artist who can record the audiobook version of your project.
- * A publicist who can help you line up media appearances and interviews to help promote your book.
- * Or something else.
- * Or none of those!

Start by making a list

We encourage you to make a list of all the folks you'd like to hire—your dream team.

Then, start visiting websites and checking out rates, so you can find people who match your budget.

We have a list of recommended professionals for you to check out—people we know and trust. That list is a good place to start.

Small budget? No problem

If you're working with a small budget, we encourage you to think creatively and find options that cost nothing.

For instance, maybe your niece is a university student and getting a degree in English. You could ask her to edit your book (for free) as a school assignment. You get free editing. She gets extra credit at school. Win-win.

Ask your kids to illustrate the book for you, instead of hiring a professional artist. Pay the kids in cookies.

Barter with someone to get the services you want. If you've got a friend who's a technology wizard, maybe she could help you with some design and tech steps for an hour or two. In exchange, maybe you could babysit her kids for a night, or something else.

There is always a way to get the help that you want.

It doesn't need to be expensive. It can be low-cost or free. You can trade, barter, negotiate, fundraise, and find resourceful ways to pull it off.

We'll say it once again

We mentioned this before, but we'll say it again:

If figuring out a budget feels too overwhelming right now—please skip this part.

Move along to the next section.

You don't necessarily need to make final decisions about this stuff right now. You can always come back to this later.

If you decide you want to hire people, reach out via email (the sooner the better) to see if they're available.

If you've decided, "Yes, I definitely want to hire some extra help," then we encourage you to start emailing people you'd like to hire to see if they're available.

If you're thinking, "But I don't know who to hire? Who? Where? Where do I even begin?" ...we made something to help!

We have a list of recommended professionals for you to check out—people that we know and trust. That list is a good place to start.

Reach out and inquire if they're available

Let's say you've decided you want to hire a professional to edit and proofread your book.

You found someone who seems great. You peeked at their website. It feels like a good fit.

You want to reach out to see if they're available to work with you.

When you email that person, you can say something like this:

Hi Greg,

I'm writing a short book for students about how to take care of their

mental health while they're in college.

It will be around 30 to 70 pages, once it's printed. I will be self-publishing the book.

I'm interested in hiring you to edit and proofread the book manuscript. The manuscript will be finished in a few weeks.

Could you please let me know if you're interested in doing this project?

If you'd like to do it, please let me know how much you'd charge, your turnaround time for this type of project, and what the next steps would be.

Please let me know if you have any questions for me. Thank you so much!

Fill-in-the-blank version

Hi _____,

I'm writing a short book [briefly describe your book].

It will be around [number] pages, once it's printed. I will be self-publishing the book.

I'm interested in hiring you to [describe whatever you want them to do].

Could you please let me know if you're interested in doing this project?

If you'd like to do it, please let me know how much you'd charge,

your turnaround time for this type of project, and what the next steps would be.

Please let me know if you have any questions for me. Thank you so much!

Start reaching out to folks now.

Even if you haven't even started writing your book yet, it's a good idea to reach out and see who's available and who's not.

Some freelancers are very popular and busy and might be booked up weeks or even months in advance.

Reach out early to start the conversation. This makes it more likely you'll be able to work with the people you want most.

Professionals we recommend

We're proud of the services we offer. But, we're not the only service providers on earth. There are plenty of people you could hire, too.

Here is a list of service providers that we trust and recommend.

We are not officially affiliated with any of the following people.

We don't earn a commission for referring clients to them.

We're recommending them purely because we think they're great.

Editing and proofreading services

Sally McGraw

Website: <https://sallymcgraw.com/>

Contact: sally@sallymcgraw.com

Alison Chino

Website: <http://alisonchino.com/>

Contact: alisonchino@gmail.com

CM Savage

Website: <http://cmsavage.com/>

Contact: author@cmsavage.com

Megan Kaplon

Contact: megan.kaplon@gmail.com

Jess McKeldon

Website: <http://www.jessmckelden.com/>

Contact: jmckelden@gmail.com

Laura Gates-Lupton

Contact: lauragateslupton@gmail.com

Tia Ross

Website: www.tiarosseditor.com

Iris Grattan

Website: www.irisgrattan.com

Designers and illustrators**Joanna Price**

Website: <http://joannapricedesign.com/>

Contact: joannapricedesign@gmail.com

Mariah Behrens

Website: <https://www.mariahbehrens.com/>

Contact: mariah@dearloismag.com

Rebecca Pollock

Website: <https://rebeccapollock.com/>

Contact: rebecca@rebeccapollock.com

More places to find great freelancers

Fiverr (<https://fiverr.com>) is a great place to hire freelancers for all kinds of projects—editing, proofreading, book design, website design, marketing services, anything you want.

Upwork (<https://upwork.com/>) is another great site, similar to Fiverr, full of freelancers who are eager to help you out.

99 Designs (<https://99designs.com/>) is another site where you can hire freelancers.

On 99 Designs, you can start a “design contest” in which multiple freelancers submit designs and the winning design gets the financial compensation. Prices start around \$299.

Sample email to reach out to see if someone is available.

Hi Greg,

I'm writing a short book for students about how to take care of their mental health while they're in college.

It will be around 30 to 70 pages, once it's printed. I will be self-publishing the book.

I'm interested in hiring you to edit and proofread the book manuscript. The manuscript will be finished in a few weeks.

Could you please let me know if you're interested in doing this project?

If you'd like to do it, please let me know how much you'd charge, your turnaround time for this type of project, and what the next steps would be.

Please let me know if you have any questions for me. Thank you so much!

Fill-in-the-blank version

Hi _____,

I'm writing a short book [briefly describe your book].

It will be around [number] pages, once it's printed. I will be self-publishing the book.

I'm interested in hiring you to [describe whatever you want them to do].

Could you please let me know if you're interested in doing this project?

If you'd like to do it, please let me know how much you'd charge, your turnaround time for this type of project, and what the next steps would be.

Please let me know if you have any questions for me. Thank you so much!

Illustrated Books

If you are looking to create an illustrated book, like a gift book or children's book, here are some additional resources for you.

Who's Creating the Art?

YOU:

If you are creating the artwork—awesome! The biggest thing to ensure is that your image files are print-ready. We created [a guide for you](#) to use, so all your illustrations are ready to go.

SOMEONE ELSE:

If you are looking to hire someone to create the artwork for your book, we have resources for that, too!

Here are some well-known places to find designers and illustrators:

www.99designs.com

www.fiverr.com

Expected Costs: This varies widely based on the type of book you are creating and the level of detail you are looking for in the illustrations. Simple illustration and design can be a few hundred dollars, going up in cost for more detailed landscapes and characters.

Pro tip: Research various artists and designers, asking for quotes from each. This will help you decide the best fit for your book project.

Other Options

If you are a little tech-savvy, there are ways to source images for use in your book to help cut costs.

Creative Market Creative Market is a platform featuring more than 4 million designs, illustrations, fonts, and more. You'll need some basic design-program knowledge, but they have a variety of affordable packages for purchase to help create characters and scenes.

Canva The Tiny Book Course shows you how to use Canva for your book cover design, and it can be used for interior design, too. They have many royalty-free images available, or you can import your own images or those purchased on Creative Market.

If you are new to Canva, here are a couple resources to help you get started:

Getting Started With Canva

Canva Tutorials

Canva Templates

As a reminder, with your purchase of The Tiny Book Course, you have access to Canva templates to build your book's interior.

For easy access, you can also find templates directly on Canva:

5x8 inches Template

6x9 inches Template

7x10 inches Template

8x8 inches Template

8.5x11 inches Template

Kindle direct publishing resource guide

What is KDP?

Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP) is the print-on-demand publishing arm of Amazon. Authors can self-publish e-books, paperbacks and hardbacks (limited sizes) through KDP for distribution on Amazon.

What is the difference between KDP and IngramSpark?

Both KDP and IngramSpark are print-on-demand publishing companies. The main difference is their distribution channels. While KDP primarily distributes via its parent company - Amazon, IngramSpark distributes globally to major retailers like Barnes & Noble, Target, Wal-Mart, Bookshop and Amazon. KDP recently added "expanded distribution," however they actually use IngramSpark to achieve this.

What is the benefit of publishing with KDP?

Some authors prefer to publish with BOTH IngramSpark and KDP. The benefit of also publishing your book with KDP versus letting IngramSpark handle the Amazon distribution include:

- * Minimizes issues with your Amazon listing.

The most common issue we have seen is a book being listed as "unavailable" or "out of stock" on Amazon and then listed for a higher retail price by a 3rd party seller on Amazon who is sourcing the book through IngramSpark (usually Book Depository).

- * KDP sales dashboard allows you to see how many books are being sold on Amazon specifically
- * Greater royalty percentage for books sold on Amazon printed via KDP
- * Slight quality differences. Some authors prefer KDP color printing, while others prefer IngramSpark.
- * Free to upload your book

Why doesn't the Tiny Book Course use KDP?

At *Get It Done* and the *Tiny Book Course*, we are all about ease, simplicity and efficiency! We strive to make the self-publishing process as straight-forward and stress-free for our aspiring authors, and we find that IngramSpark checks all the boxes for 95% of authors' publishing needs.

IngramSpark is a family-owned business with a long track record in the self-publishing industry. They are the global leader in indie book distribution, and they have the most extensive selection of book sizes and formats of all the self-publishing options.

Our company does not receive any financial incentive for recommending IngramSpark to our students. We simply believe they're the best all-around choice for self-published authors wanting wide distribution.

That being said, we realize the publishing industry is ever-changing, and we also want to advise our students to the best of our ability, which is why we created this how-to resource for those wanting to also publish with KDP.

Should you publish on KDP or IngramSpark first?

We recommend publishing first on IngramSpark and then on KDP.

IngramSpark has a much larger distribution channel which already includes Amazon, and there's a chance you may upload your book and not necessarily experience any Amazon listing problems at all.

Then, if you're still interested in uploading to KDP for the increased Amazon royalty, KDP sales dashboard and printing differences, you'll already have all the metadata information you'll need to upload there as well. And, while you wait for KDP to approve your listing, your book will already be listed and potentially getting sales on Amazon via your IngramSpark listing.

What happens to the IngramSpark listing when the KDP listing goes live? Will there be two listings?

When KDP approves your book on their end, they automatically replace their listing with the previous IngramSpark listing. If you used all the same metadata and the same book description, you likely won't notice a difference between the two listings.

If you uploaded a paperback book to KDP but still have a hardback version of the same book listed with IngramSpark, KDP will automatically have these listings linked under the same book listing. Again, the consumer won't notice any difference in the listings. They'll simply see one title with the option to purchase paperback or hardbound.

How do you receive book royalties if you publish with KDP?

Just like with IngramSpark, when you sign up for an account with KDP, you'll be asked to include your tax information and your bank account information. Any book royalties earned via Amazon for the KDP version of the book will be paid to you by KDP.

Likewise, any books sold on Amazon via the IngramSpark version of the book (if you have a hardback listed through IngramSpark, for example) will be paid out via IngramSpark.

This means that if you have your book uploaded and listed on IngramSpark for a week before you upload to KDP, any books sold on Amazon before the KDP listing goes live will be printed and distributed via IngramSpark and will be accounted for on the IngramSpark side of things. Once the KDP listing goes live, any books sold via Amazon will be counted in your KDP dashboard with royalties paid via KDP.

How do you publish with KDP?

For the most part, the KDP upload process is similar to IngramSpark. You can use the same metadata you prepared for your IngramSpark upload as well as the same ISBN you used for your book (as long as you purchased your own ISBN via Bowker).

The main details you'll want to check are: (1) that KDP prints the same size book as the IngramSpark version of your book and (2) that you've re-formatted your cover for the KDP cover specs.

Below are the steps/links you'll need to upload your book via KDP:

STEP 1: Obtain a [KDP account](#)

STEP 2: Once logged into your account, press the "+ Create" button to enter info for your book. You'll need all the same information you needed for your IngramSpark upload.

STEP 3: Consult [KDP's Help Center](#) for help on formatting your files to meet their standards. KDP has an incredible help section, and we suggest reading their articles thoroughly and carefully when re-formatting your book.

STEP 4: Publish! KDP usually takes 24-72 hours to approve a title for publication, and then it will be immediately available on their platform. If you'd like to receive a print copy BEFORE publishing, you need to click the "order author copies" link in your KDP bookshelf BEFORE you approve your book.

Audiobook Publishing

Overview

As author-owned publishing of print media has become more accessible to those looking to distribute books on their own terms, so have audiobooks.

As an author, you have a number of choices in everything from recording your book yourself with production assistance, producing via a narrator in a studio, and deciding on distribution.

You can record yourself (or a narrator) reading your book and then distribute it, however you see fit. However, to maintain an industry-quality standard, it is recommended to seek assistance or hire professional services.

Below you will find information on major, reputable companies who offer production services, production assistance, and distribution.

Distribution

The top 5 leaders in author-owned audiobook distribution are ACX (Amazon/Audible), Lantern Audio, Findaway Voices, Scribe, and Author's Republic.

ACX - Distributes to Audible, Amazon, and iTunes.

Lantern Audio - Distributes to Audible, Apple Books, iTunes, Audiobooks.com, Scribd, Nook Audio, Google Play, Playster, Odilo, Down-Pour, Kobo, Walmart, Libro.fm, Storytel, Audiobooksnow.com, and Lanternaudiobooks.com.

Findaway Voices - Distributes to Audible, Apple Books, iTunes, Audiobooks.com, Scribd, Nook Audio, Google Play, Playster, Odilo, DownPour, Kobo, Walmart, Libro.fm, Storytel, Audiobooksnow.com, Lanternaudiobooks.com, and more.

Scribe - Distributes to Audible, Apple Books, iTunes, Audiobooks.com, Scribd, Nook Audio, Google Play, Playster, Odilo, DownPour, Kobo, Walmart, Libro.fm, Storytel, Audiobooksnow.com, Lanternaudiobooks.com, and more.

Author's Republic - Distributes to Audible, Apple Books, iTunes, Audiobooks.com, Scribd, Nook Audio, Google Play, Playster, Odilo, DownPour, Kobo, Walmart, Libro.fm, Storytel, Audiobooksnow.com, Lanternaudiobooks.com, and more.

Distribution Costs

ACX - No upfront costs.

Lantern Audio - For file preparation, Lantern Audio charges a one-time setup fee of \$199.

Findaway Voices - No upfront costs and a 20% royalty share.

Scribe - If you choose their production services package, the cost is included. For distribution services on an à la carte basis, they charge a fee of **\$1,500**.

Author's Republic - No upfront costs and a 30% royalty share.

Author Royalties

ACX - 40% for ACX-exclusive rights; 25% for sales/distribution only: ACX-controlled pricing.

Lantern - 80% of total sales: Author-controlled pricing. No payout until \$50 in sales met.

Findaway - 80% of total sales: Author-controlled pricing.

Scribe - 100% of total sales: Author-controlled pricing.

Author's Republic - 70% of total sales: Author-controlled pricing.

Production Services

Every company has its own menu of services and methods.

Some leave all decisions up to you, including choosing a narrator and creating/pitching an agreement with them: ACX and Author's Republic.

Others allow you to provide recordings by submitting files for review before distribution preparation: Findaway Voices, Scribe, Lantern Audio, and Author's Republic.

Looking to leave all decisions up to the industry pros? There are all-inclusive packages where you need only submit manuscript files and payment: Findaway Voices, Scribe, and Lantern Audio.

Production Cost

The cost of producing an audiobook varies by company/narrator/studio. There are several factors to consider, depending on whether you produce it yourself, hire a narrator, hire an experienced narrator with an extensive portfolio, hire multiple narrators for multiple points-of-view, and so on.

Some companies offer a reduced-cost, or no-cost-up-front option for sharing royalties with the narrator during a contracted period of time. The latter is a nice option if you are working with a tight budget for audiobook production services, however, this impacts the level of control and ownership you command for the duration of the royalty-sharing period.

Average Estimated Costs

ACX - Project dependent

Lantern Audio - Project dependent

Findaway Voices - \$1,650

Scribe - \$6,000

Author's Republic - \$2,000

Time Estimates:

The average duration of audiobook production is **six weeks** for recording, editing, mastering, and final review.

The time frame for your audiobook populating throughout all major distribution channels may take as few as five business days or as many as sixty days.

Building Your Author Business

Congratulations! You are officially a “published author.” Millions of people dream of this achievement, and few ever realize it. That’s worth celebrating.

Once you’ve launched your book, shared the news with family, friends, colleagues and clients, and enjoyed that first sales and marketing push, you may be asking yourself, “Now what?”

Promoting a book is a marathon, not a sprint. And if it’s something you want to build, we suggest adopting a long-term mindset around it. Being an author is much like running a small business, and lots of little steps over time can lead to continued success.

Think about how you found the last book, product or service that you purchased? Were you just sitting in your home and a vision of it magically appeared in your brain? Likely not. :) Most people make purchasing decisions because they learn about that book/product/service through an advertisement, a podcast, a friend, seeing it in a store, receiving a marketing email, etc.

We all expect to be marketed to, and selling books is no different!

Making a plan

As you think about your goals for your book over the next months and years, we suggest considering these questions:

1. WHAT GOALS FEEL MOST IMPORTANT TO ME AS I THINK ABOUT MY BOOK IN THE LONG TERM?

There's no right or wrong way to run your "book business."

Maybe just having your book in the world is enough.

Or perhaps you realize that selling a certain number of copies of your book feels truly meaningful to you right now.

Knowing your goals will help you devise a plan for how you move forward in promoting your book.

2. HOW MUCH TIME DO I HAVE TO DEVOTE TO BOOK PROMOTION?

When you think about your life and your current day-to-day bandwidth, how often does it feel reasonable to devote time to book-promotion activities?

Do you have half an hour each day you'd like to dedicate? Maybe one hour a week feels more reasonable? It could be that you realistically only have one day a month that you're able to focus on the book.

3. WHAT SMALL, MANAGEABLE STEPS CAN I TAKE DAILY, WEEKLY OR MONTHLY TO PROMOTE MY BOOK?

Perhaps you'd like to mention your book in your monthly newsletter over the next year, sharing a story about a certain chapter or some other relevant information from the book or the writing process.

Maybe you'd like to reach out to one new bookstore each week until you've covered all the stores in your area to see if they'd like to carry your book.

What if you spent an entire month doing one small book-promotion activity everyday for 30 days? Reaching out to friends, posting on social media, sending press releases to media outlets.

Make a loose plan of how you'd like to continue putting time, energy and attention toward your book over the next months and years, and then put it into action.

4. HOW WOULD I LIKE TO CHECK IN WITH MYSELF ABOUT MY PROGRESS?

Owning any business requires a certain amount of experimentation, reflection and adaptation. How often will you sit down and reflect on your book promotion activities and analyze what's working and what's not working?

Make a date in your calendar right now for what feels good for you. You can set monthly, quarterly or annual meetings with yourself to look at your activities around your book business and amend as needed.

Resource: the author one-sheet or "sell sheet"

When promoting your book, it's customary to have what's known as a "sell sheet" to let bookstores, media outlets, podcast hosts, etc. easily know the important information about you and your book

[This Canva template](#) will help you put together your own sell sheet.

Summary

Remember, selling and promoting your book is a marathon! Your book business has the potential to thrive for years to come.

We suggest devising a long term plan with lots of regular self-check-ins and plenty of room for grace and patience.

There are many stories of books that are written and don't experience the kind of success the author hoped for until many years later. One of our favorite stories is of the book *The Alchemist* and its twisty road to being one of the bestselling books of all time.

Keep going! Tiny steps, over time, can yield big results. Remember to nurture both your book and yourself.

Further Inspiration

20 Quick Book Ideas:

Is it possible to write a book...in just one day? Yes! Try one of these super-quick book ideas. Tiny projects. Quick wins. read or listen. This resource comes from our Write Your Book In One Day free community workshop.

The Tiny Book Course Graduate Gallery:

Take a look at a few beautiful books written by graduates of The Tiny Book Course. So inspiring!

Music for Writers:

Alex recommends the following music playlists if you like having calm, chill background music while you write: Peaceful Piano, Stones Start Spinning, Kora Chill, Lo-Fi Chill, Beautiful Chorus, Coffee Table Jazz, Hang Drum Meditation Music, Low and Slow, and Peaceful Writing Time.