



SELF-PUBLISHING SUPPORT

A guide from **JustWriteRight.co.uk**



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to this guide to self-publishing.

A lot of people believe that self-publishing is, in some way, inferior to traditional publishing.

Well, they're wrong!

Some of the biggest books of recent times began life as self-published titles. Famously, the *Fifty Shades* series began life as self-published fan fiction. Equally *The Martian* was a self-published book that became a Hollywood blockbuster.

But not every self-published book becomes as successful. Because it is now so easy to publish, you need to make sure your book stands out from the crowd.

How?

Learn something from traditional publishing and apply the same level of professionalism to your manuscript.

No one said it would be easy! Hopefully, this guide will give you an idea about the process of getting your book published.

Best of luck! Nick

YOUR PUBLISHING JOURNEY





INITIAL STAGES

Concept.

Every book starts with the author's initial idea. What do you want to write about? What is the story or message that needs to be told?

Planning.

When you are planning your self-publishing project, consider the following questions:

- What is the purpose of the text?
- Who is the audience?
- What format do you want to produce?
- What is your budget?

First draft.

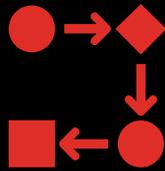
After all that thinking, now's the time to get writing! At this stage, it is important to get all your ideas down in writing. Don't worry about edits or changes just yet, get your first draft finished and written.



INITIAL STAGES CHECKLIST

Things to consider at the initial stages

- I have an idea for a story or a message that needs telling
- I know the purpose of my text
- I have considered who my audience will be
- I know what format I want to produce my work in
- I have set a budget for my project
- I have set realistic goals for my writing
- I have made a note of all my ideas in my first draft



DEVELOPMENT

Welcome to editing.

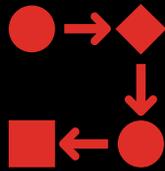
This is the first stage where an editor might get involved.

A developmental edit will help you to structure your piece, helping you to consider things like:

- Pace
- Structure and flow
- Clarity
- Point of view

It might be that you don't give your first draft over to an editor at this point. You could give it to a friend or family member you trust to be a critical friend.

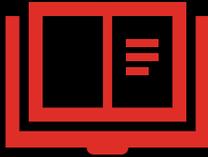
It is important to remember that your piece is as strong as it could be if you want it to stand out from the crowd. Your content needs to be engaging.



DEVELOPMENT CHECKLIST

Things to consider at the developmental stage

- I have approached an editor or someone I trust to give me meaningful feedback on my work
- I have checked my draft for content and I am happy I have written all of my ideas
- I have checked my draft for a consistent point of view
- I have checked my draft for structure and flow
- I have checked my draft for pace
- I have kept a note of all the feedback I have received



FINAL DRAFT

The end is nigh.

After you've received feedback on your first draft and developed it further, you're on your way to writing the final draft.

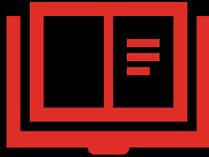
This version of the manuscript should consider any developmental feedback you've received and should be in a more finished form.

Hopefully, by now, you're happy with:

- The content (the story or information)
- The structure (what happens first, next and last)
- The pace (how quickly the story or information is given to the reader)

Aim for this draft to be as error free as it can be. Check it for spelling, punctuation and grammar, as well as consistency. The more you do yourself, the less your editor has to work on.

Put the final draft aside for a while before returning it and having another read.



FINAL DRAFT CHECKLIST

Things to consider at the final draft stage

- I have edited my first draft, taking into account feedback I've received
- I am happy with the content of my manuscript
- I am happy with the structure of my manuscript
- I am happy with the pace and flow of my writing
- I have checked the spelling, punctuation and grammar of my manuscript
- My writing is consistent throughout the entire piece



COPYEDITING

A fine toothcomb.

Now that you're as happy as you can be with your manuscript, it's time for professional help.

Copyediting is a technical skill that really should be done by someone who is trained and experienced.

That is because a copyeditor will help you get your manuscript ready for publication, however you are choosing to publish your manuscript.

They will check for:

- Spelling, punctuation and grammar errors
- Sense, conciseness and readability
- Consistency
- Points to improve the text's flow and tone

They may also check for legal issues, bias, libel, references, accuracy and other technical details depending on your project.

You will need to review the copyeditors work and accept their changes before you move on to the next stage.



COPYEDITING CHECKLIST

Things to consider at the copyediting stage

- I am completely happy with my final draft
- I have spoken to several different editors who I would be happy to work with
- I have selected a trained and experienced copyeditor who will help me with the following:
 - Spelling
 - Punctuation
 - Grammar
 - Sense, conciseness and readability
 - Consistency
 - Flow and tone
 - Bias, legal issues and other technical points
- I have reviewed their changes to my manuscript and am happy to proceed



LAYOUT AND DESIGN

Making it look pretty.

Once your manuscript has been copyedited and you are happy with all the changes it is time to get ready to publish.

At the moment, however, your file will not be ready for publication. It needs to be formatted so that the text reads right, chapters and other heads are appropriately sized and placed, page numbers and running heads added.

And, of course, there's the all-important cover. People do judge a book by its cover so it's well worth getting a professional cover designer involved.

Don't forget the back cover too. It's here that a good blurb will really sell your book. Get your editor to look over that and make sure it's error free.

Depending on your self-publication method, you will need to work with specific design formats. Make sure you understand the requirements before you begin to avoid doubling up any workload.



LAYOUT AND DESIGN CHECKLIST

Things to consider at the layout and design stage

- My text is typeset (laid out) how I want the page to look
- My chapter headings and other headings are formatted correctly
- The running heads and footers are all correctly positioned and pages numbers are correct
- The contents page is inserted correctly
- I have designed a cover
- I have written the blurb and checked it with my editor



PROOFREADING

A final chance.

You've written, edited, redrafted, designed and laid everything out. So that's it, right?

No! It's time for one last check.

This is the proofreading stage where everything is checked and confirmed and a last readthrough confirms all the necessary changes have been made.

During the typesetting, designing and formatting stage, things can go wrong: headers in the wrong font, bullet points in the wrong size, text in the wrong colour.

A proofreader will check that:

- Your style is correct and consistent
- Everything is laid out and formatted correctly
- There are no glaringly obvious errors
- All words are spelt correctly and there's no missing punctuation

Like at the copyediting stage, it is important that this is carried out by a trained professional. They follow a specific set of guidelines and, as this is the last opportunity to spot errors, a fresh pair of eyes is crucial.



PROOFREADING CHECKLIST

Things to consider at the proofreading stage

- I am happy that my manuscript has been formatted correctly and I have reviewed the proofs myself
- I have found a trained proofreader who will help me to identify:
 - Any issues with spelling and punctuation
 - Any major errors within the text
 - The formatting is correct
 - The styles have been applied correctly
- I am confident that everything is ready for publication



PUBLICATION

All that hard work!

So, you think that was hard! Now that everything has been written, edited, redrafted, formatted and proofread, it's time to produce your masterpiece!

However, you are publishing, either electronically or in print, it's time to release your work into the world.

If you are selling your work, the hardest part is about to begin! A traditional publisher will get your book listed in bookshops and online, but when you're self-publishing, this is something that you must consider.

Amazon, of course, is an important market place, but you'll also need to consider where else your book can be made available.

Think, too, about how you will market your book. Friends and family, of course, will want copies. Make sure their friends want a copy too! Try local bookshops and other independent retailers.

And there's the power of social media. Spread the word of your new book as widely as you can.



PUBLICATION CHECKLIST

Things to consider at the publication stage

- I have considered how I will market my book
- I have posted about my book on social media
- I have told friends and family about my book
- I have approached local, independent bookshops
- I have kept in touch with my editor, so that any ongoing changes can be made
- I am excited about releasing my words into the world and I cannot wait to write another one!



THAT'S NOT ALL

There's so much more.

This short guide could not possibly hope to cover everything about self-publishing.

As you progress through the process, you will come across many challenges and you will overcome them in your own way. You may even decide to write a book about it!

You will also find a range of professional, trained and experienced people who are more than willing to help you. There are:

- Editors
- Proofreaders
- Designers
- Typesetters
- Publicists and promoters

who all work with independent, self-publishing authors to help make their works a success! Make sure you take advantage of their expertise.

Just Write Right offer editorial support and proofreading services to help you on your publishing journey.



GETTING IT CONSISTENT

Styling it out.

The easiest way to make sure your writing is consistent is to use a style sheet. This is especially helpful if you're writing a series of books, as you can keep track of characters and locations across the whole series.

Use your style sheet to record all your editorial decisions, such as:

- Spellings and punctuation
- Use of hyphens, dashes, ellipses
- Names of characters, locations and their details
- Key events in the story that might be useful later

An example of a style sheet can be found on the **Just Write Right** website, under the **Resources for writers' section**.

www.JustWriteRight.co.uk/resources-for-writers



WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING

“I came across a last minute opening with the company and it did not disappoint. They were able to work with my budget which was my biggest concern going into the request. The communication from the start was superb and the feedback most valuable for me. I will definitely return. If you're looking for someone to give you a hand this is one place I highly recommend.”

“Great editing service, picked up on things I wouldn't have noticed even after several drafts. Will definitely consider again in the future.”

“I was delighted with the work! The stylistic feedback was very helpful, and the edits caught all the details I'd missed.”

“I wanted to thank you for the insightful edits I received on my chapter critique. Your comments were helpful, thorough and I was surprised at how quickly you returned them to me. It was clear from your notes that you enjoyed editing my story almost as much as I enjoyed writing it and I would love to have you look over the rest once I complete it!”



Just Write Right

Editing | Proofreading

JustWriteRight.co.uk

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