

THE BOOK LAUNCH CHECKLIST

Book Idea Validation

Before you even write your book, you need to make sure that there is a market for it, and that you're aware of the competition you're facing. Follow these steps to ensure that, when you publish, you actually stand a chance to make sales.



Identify your target market

Define your target audience by crafting "proto-personas," i.e. ideal target readers for your book. If your book isn't aimed at a specific, existing market, it won't sell.

Learn more: ["Finding a Target Audience for Your Book in 3 Steps"](#)



Determine if your market is big enough

Research Amazon categories and keywords related to your book and make sure there is demand for your book idea. (Hint: check their rankings.)

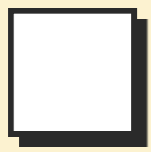
Learn more: [Reedsy Learning - "How to Validate Your Book Idea"](#)



Analyze the competition

Check which books are ranking #1, #2, and #3 on Amazon for your target keywords/categories. Determine whether you can realistically compete with them.

Learn more: [Reedsy Learning - "How to Validate Your Book Idea"](#)



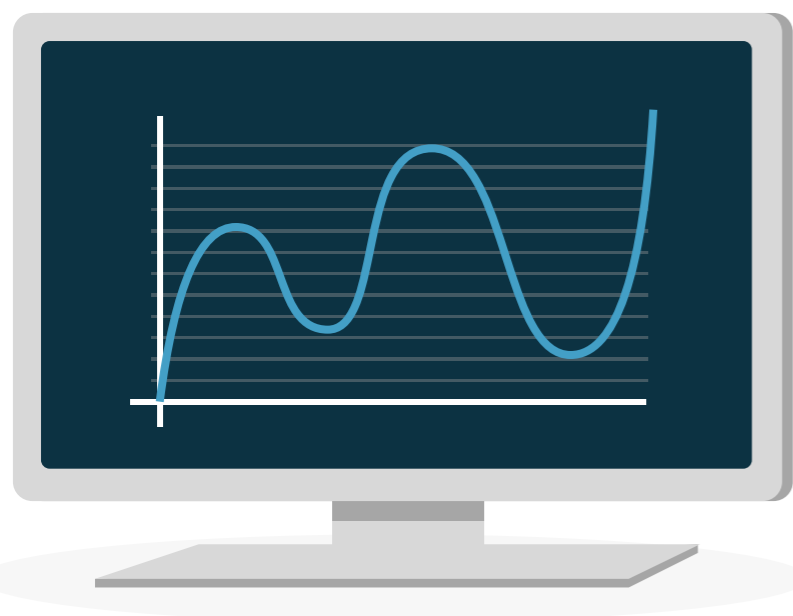
Write an awesome story

Once you have a clear idea of whom you're writing for, and what you want to write, it's time to sit down and put pen to paper! But we're not here to discuss that, so we'll skip straight to the next stage: editing.

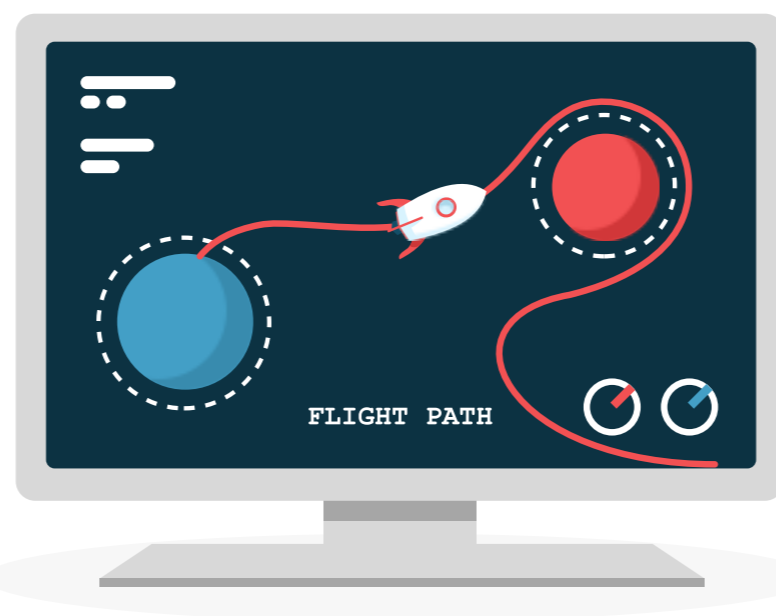
Editing

When you've produced a manuscript draft that you feel you can't take any further on your own, it's time to seek the help of professional editors. The editing process takes place in several stages, and the editors you work with will be in charge of keeping your ship on track, making any course adjustments where necessary.

PLOT



FLIGHT CONTROL



GUIDANCE



COURSE CORRECTION

Editorial Assessment

The editor reads through the entire manuscript and provides thoughtful, in-depth feedback concerning elements such as plot, characterization, structure, consistency, and style.

Developmental Editing

Once the story is well-defined, a developmental editor examines all the elements of your writing, from the structure to the content, and provides both line-level edits and feedback on overarching structure and style.

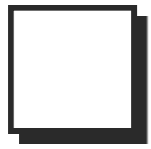
Copy Editing

Copy editors go through your manuscript word by word, focusing on all the little things we tend not to think about: quotes and numbers formatting, grammar, spelling mistakes, and glaring inconsistencies.

Proofreading

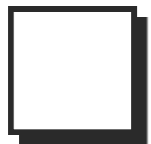
Proofreading is the ultimate polish on the manuscript before it goes to the printer or digital press. It's a last check to catch anything the copy editor may have missed.

You would like to have your book edited? You can [connect with some of the best editors](#) via the Reedsy marketplace.



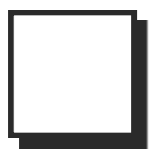
Editorial Assessment (optional)

Once you've taken your manuscript as far as you can on your own, seek quotes for an editorial assessment from experienced developmental editors in your genre. Editorial assessments are particularly crucial if you're a first-time author or if you're writing in a new genre.

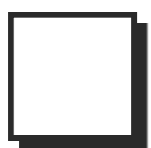


Developmental Editing

Depending on your experience in the previous stage, you can choose to enter the developmental editing phase with either your original editor or a different one.

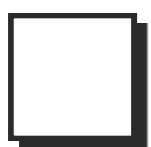


Revise your manuscript and seek copy editors



Copy Editing

Working with a copy editor will make sure your manuscript isn't riddled with bad grammar, spelling mistakes, or glaring inconsistencies. Copy editors won't enter into big-picture issues such as characterization, plot or pacing; instead they will go through the manuscript line by line and focus on all the little things you might not have thought about.



Proofreading

You can start seeking proofreaders halfway through the copy edit. Once you get the manuscript back from the copy editor, check the changes before sending it to the proofreader.

Note: You can often hire the same person to do both the copy-edit and the proofread. This generally helps reduce costs, but defeats the purpose of a proofread (having a separate pair of eyes on the manuscript).

If you go through these different stages of editing, we guarantee your writing will be as clean and powerful as it can get. Now, it's time to format your book for publication!

Book Cover Design

Your cover design will be your greatest sales tool, or your largest burden. With this in mind, consider the following before settling on a final design:

- Does your cover capture the tone and genre of your book?
- Does it differentiate your work from other books in the genre?
- Can you easily read the title on the cover, even as a thumbnail?
- Do you need a cover for a print book, an ebook, or both?
- Does it look amateurish, and will it stick out like a sore thumb in a bookstore?

A professional designer will check off all these questions for you. [Search Reedsy cover designers here.](#)



Research cover designers

Browse through hundreds of designer profiles on Reedsy and create a shortlist of portfolios with covers that match your genre.

Learn more: [“What to Expect from Your Book Cover Designer”](#)

Create your design brief

Fill out a form with your project’s relevant information, including timelines and any existing covers you wish to use as inspiration. Submit this brief to up to five designers.

Learn more: [“How to Submit a Brief to a Cover Designer”](#)

Review design concepts and refine your preferred version

Once you’ve selected a designer, they will design a few cover concepts. Pick the direction you prefer, then work with your designer to refine it until you’re happy with the final cover.

Learn more: [“Designing Matt Bieber’s Life in the Loop”](#)

Book Interior Design

Also called typesetting / book layout

The design of your book's interior will determine the way readers experience your content. Every small decision matters, from your choice of fonts and spacing to the styling of your chapter headings.

Formatting decisions will differ depending on your book:

1. If your book doesn't contain illustrations, you can format your book for free with the Reedsy Book Editor before export.
2. If you are working on an illustrated, technical, or children's book, a book interior designer will help you produce a beautiful and professionally formatted print.

Novels and non-illustrated content

Upload your manuscript to the Reedsy Book Editor

[Learn more about the Reedsy Book Editor](#)

Format

Update formatting with the Reedsy formatting toolbar.

Polish

Add images, endnotes, scene breaks, and your book cover.

Design your Front Matter

Configure your front matter (title, subtitle, edition number, etc).

Export your PDF and EPUB Files

Select the file you need: PDF (for print books) or EPUB (for ebooks)

Illustrated non-fiction or children's books

Create an Interior Design Brief

Include your cover design and any layout skeletons. Mention how many illustrations you will need and provide short statements explaining what's required for each illustration.

Research Interior Designers

Browse designers' portfolios on Reedsy and look for those that match your genre.

1st Layout Proposal

Proposal Review

2nd Layout Proposal

2nd Proposal Review

Review the second proposal and choose the final layout.

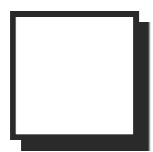
All that time and energy spent on refining your beloved manuscript will be for nothing if your book is impossible to read and badly formatted. Investing in your book interior will make your book look much more professional and present your masterpiece in its best light.

Marketing & Promotion

With so many books out there, one of the hardest parts of self-publishing is making your book stand out. There are plenty of strategies available for marketing your book and it's easy to get lost in a sea of tweeting, blogging, and emailing to no avail. Plus, marketing is an ongoing task and building an audience can take time. You want to have built up a readership by the time you launch your book, so you should begin marketing your book even while you're writing it.

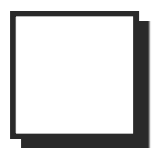
If you want help, some of the best book marketers and publicists are already on Reedsy. They will help define your marketing strategy, devise a course of action for your online and social media activity, and assist with your PR. [You can get in touch with them here.](#)

Pre-Launch Marketing Strategy

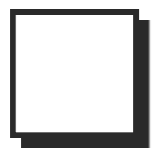


Networking

Interact with other authors, influencers, and journalists in your genre. Read and comment on their works, and let them know you're working on a book of your own as well!



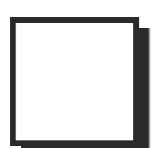
Create your social media accounts



Set up your mailing list

Use Mailchimp or Mailerlite and start growing your list through content (blog) or giveaways.

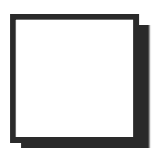
Learn More: ["6 Steps for Building your Author Mailing List through Giveaways"](#)



Build your street team and send ARCs

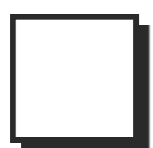
Put together a street team to "launch the book" and garner reviews. Send your street team ARCs (Advance Review Copies) so that they leave you reviews at launch.

Learn more: ["Build your Street Team in 4 Simple Steps"](#)



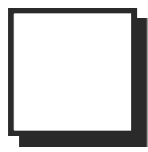
Build your author website

Set up your author website or [hire a web designer](#). Your website should include a book promotion page, a contact page, direct links to your social media, and a sign-up button to register for your mailing list.



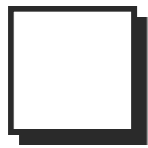
Get press coverage

Pitching to traditional media outlets requires both building relationships and experience promoting your story.



Newsletter

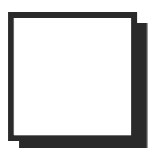
Define your newsletter strategy and content schedule. If you are considering a long-term author career, engaging in email marketing is essential for keeping your readers up-to-date.



Reader Magnets

Having your readers sign up to your newsletter or leave a review of your book is crucial. Once you have a book out there, an easy way to build a following is to create a “reader magnet” that you can advertise both on your website and in the front and back matter of your books.

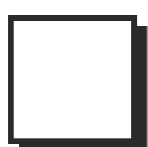
Learn More: [“What’s a Reader Magnet?” – Nick Stephenson on Author Marketing](#)



Price Promotions

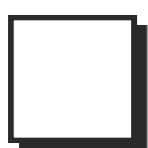
As soon as your book is published, plan a limited-time price promotion and advertise it both through your own channels and through price promotion sites: Bookbub, Bargainbooksy/Freebooksy, Kindle Nation Daily, The Fussy Librarian, BookGorilla, Booksends, etc.

Learn more: [“All You Need to Know About Amazon Algorithms”](#) and [“How to Run a Price Promotion”](#)



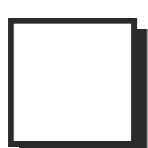
Cross-Promotion

Connect with other authors from your network and offer them newsletter swaps, bundles, or any other form of cross-promotion.



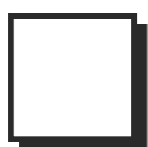
Amazon Optimization

Keep testing new blurbs, keywords, and categories. Link your different books together through their metadata.



Blogging and Social Media

Blogging tends to be more effective in the non-fiction realm. It's a good way to keep your readers engaged with new content even when you're not releasing a new book.



Advertising

Define a Facebook and Amazon advertising strategy and start testing with budgets as low as \$5/day. In parallel, build a spreadsheet to keep track of your key metrics and adjust your ads strategy accordingly.

Learn more: [Facebook Ads for Authors](#) and [Amazon Ads for Authors](#).

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THANKS FOR READING

You're good to go! If you enjoyed this checklist,
share it with your networks.



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