

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO BOOK PUBLISHING AND EDITING

Become a published author with ease

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INTRODUCTION

“To write is human, to edit is divine.”

—Stephen King

When you hold a bestseller book in your hand, do you wonder the amount of work that went into creating it? Or do you think it is only a matter of putting pen to paper? The truth is not everyone can be a writer or a successfully published one at that. After spending many months or even years on a particular book, so many writers end up giving copies of their book out for free. The reason is nobody is willing to buy them. Many writers are like Philip.

Philip is a chartered accountant with many years of experience under his belt. Getting close to his retirement, he decided to write a book on how people can manage their finances. The idea behind the book was great, the intentions of the writer pure. However, after putting the book together for eight months, he could hardly sell ten copies. He was sad because he wanted the book to be his legacy and at the same time bring profit for him. But none of this was happening.

The mistake Philip made was thinking writing is only a matter of putting pen to paper, and everyone will read it. He did not know that writing is a journey and a process. Philip did not learn the rules, tips, and tricks of book editing and publishing. If only He had access to the “A-Z of book editing and publishing”, his book would have most likely become a bestseller. The great news is you are reading this. Keep reading, and you’ll discover the solutions to becoming a successfully published author.

Before a copy of a book gets into the reader’s hands, there is a journey it goes through. The journey begins with the author’s thought process. The author has an idea about what they want to write. They might not know what the book’s title will be, but they have an idea of the book’s central message. After this, the writing begins. The author starts to use words to paint the intended picture, like oil on canvas. The writer arranges their thoughts till the book takes shape. The next ideal step is editing. ‘Ideal’ should be the following line of action,

but some writers skip it, to their detriment. The writer can edit their work themselves, or can by a second party, although the latter is preferable. Then comes the design phase, when you sort illustrations and cover designs. When you have the perfect book, you move on to publishing, marketing, and finally, sales. Now you see that writing a book doesn't entail only writing.

WHAT IS EDITING?

Editing is a stage It is the process of making your draft adhere to a style guide. The editing stage addresses minor issues like the correct placement of commas and large ones like the overall feel of the work. Some people prefer to edit their drafts themselves. But, it would be best if you contracted an editor to do your editing work. You do not want your reader to struggle with grammatical errors or misunderstand what you've written because of incorrect punctuation. The editing stage is one you cannot afford to skip.

Editing checklist

WHAT IS PUBLISHING?

Publishing is the process of making information, literature, music, software, and other content available for sale or for free. It deals with the distribution and sales of written materials. As a writer, your end goal is to get your books into as many hands as possible. Before now, people relied on physical bookshops for book sales. Currently, there are online platforms where writers can publish their books for sale. E-books are becoming more popular and accepted. Some of these E-publishing platforms are retailers, while others are aggregators. We'll discuss more on that later.

THE STARTING POINT

What inspires writers to write? Of all there is to do, why choose to write?

People write for different reasons. Some to leave a legacy, some for the financial advantages, and others write to because it is what they love to do. Regardless of the inspiration, one constant thing is the decision to write.

Writing might seem cumbersome at first thought. What you need to do is break down and outline your ideas. You'll see how easy it is. Follow these simple steps shared by [goinswriter](#).

- Decide what the book is about.
- Set a daily word count goal.
- Set a time to work on your book every day.
- Write in the same place every time.
- Set a total word count.
- Give yourself weekly deadlines.
- Get early feedback.
- Commit to shipping.
- Embrace failure.

- Write another book.

When broken down this way, you can see that writing isn't as hard as it seems. All you need to do is break the ice, and write the first word, then the first sentence, first paragraph, and Voila! You have written your first book. Do not allow the fear of writing to deter you from sharing your great ideas with the world. And most important, start that book today. There is no right time to write a book. Some say that "procrastination is the writer's best friend" Don't allow it. Start that book Now!

In addition to the simple steps listed above, these are five tips to help you be a super writer:

- Read. Reading is critical to you as a writer. You need to expose yourself to materials both within and outside your niche. It would help if you learned from others. Reading other writer's books can also give you a fresh perspective and inspire you.
- Write reader-first. At the forefront of your writing should be your reader. Always think about your audience. You should consider where they are in their journey of life, what they want, and how they want it. Your reader's needs come before yours. Your reader's desires should always come before yours in writing.
- Use writing software/apps. There are so many software and applications specially designed to help writers. [Find the perfect app or program](#) for you. Some of the more popular ones are Scrivener, Grammarly, and Focuswriter.
- Fight writer's block. Even the best writers experience writer's block. However, you need to find a way to get your writing 'mojo' back. Find that thing that inspires you. It could be listening to music or visiting places you like. Don't allow writer's block to slow you down.
- Don't rush the ending. You have made it to the end of your book, be calm, and finish well. I understand it's been quite a journey, and you can't wait to finish your book, but don't spoil your work by rushing the ending.

Try these tips out, and you'll be surprised at how much improvement there'll be in your writing. Your book can also be one of those Bestsellers with millions of copies sold. What you need to do is pay attention to every little detail.

Now you've written your first, second, maybe the third draft, it is time to edit your work. I understand that you took your precious time to write those words, but it's a process you cannot afford to skip.

[Editing](#) is a process that involves revising the content, organization, grammar, and presentation of a piece of writing. You can think of editing as the surgery phase of your work. Book editing takes out errors or elements that may make reading less enjoyable for your reader. After correcting all mistakes and tightening loose ends, your work becomes whole. Imagine if you were reading a book, then you encounter grammatical errors, disjointed thoughts, and problems with the book. Would you read that book till the end? I don't think so.

If you sign a contract with a publishing house, chances are they would have in-house editors to do the work for you. But if you are an independent writer, you have to search for an editing firm or a freelance editor who can do the job. There are different types of editors, and they have their roles in the publication process.

1. Editor-In-Chief: An editor-in-chief is the head of a [publication](#). They are the managers of any publication, whether print or digital. They also oversee a team of writers, editors, and other personnel that contribute to creating a publication. They are also called chief editor, lead editor, and executive editor.

Some of their duties are:

- Creating policies and publication guidelines.
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 - To hire a publishing team.
 - To review content.
 - They manage the publication's budget.
 - To represent the publication at social events.
 - They handle readers' complaints
 - To oversee the planning of the publication.
2. In-house editor: An in-house editor works solely for a publication company. They do all the editing work, polishing every draft before passing it on for publication.
 3. Freelance editor: Freelance editors do not work for a publication company. They work independently and could charge on an hourly basis or per word.
 4. Copy editor: A copy editor is mainly concerned with checking for grammatical errors, typos, misplaced punctuations, and fact-checking. A copy editor could be in-house or freelance.

Before you decide to hand your work over to an editor, you should know that there are different types of editing. It would help if you saw the editing your manuscript needs at various points. To help you make an informed decision, here are the types of editing and their importance.

1. Beta reading: After finishing your draft, you would need a fresh set of eyes to read your piece. Beta readers would read your finished draft and give their review- pointing out what they liked and disliked. Some beta readers can make minor grammatical and typo corrections. You can enlist the help of family, friends, or colleagues to do your beta reading for you.
2. Developmental edit: This kind of edit aims at the content and structure of a manuscript. It is concerned with topics such as pacing, characterization, and setting. It is the first kind of editing that your manuscript goes through. A developmental editor works with instincts and knowledge gained from reading. As a writer, you should prepare your mind for change. As a developmental editor, you can make some drastic and significant changes to your manuscript. It is not unusual to have entire plots overhauled by developmental editors. But it is for the betterment of the writer. Here are five tips for the developmental editing process from [Masterclass](#).

- Find a good editor. Your developmental editor should have a few years of experience in the book publishing industry and book editing experience with your writing genre. Whether it's historical nonfiction, young adult, romance, or science fiction, you must trust the editor's knowledge of the genre. The right editor should also be compatible with your personality, understand your writing style, and provide open and honest communication while respecting your vision. They should be knowledgeable about the entire publishing process to guide you properly.
 - Be open-minded. Although a necessary step, some authors find it difficult to receive critical feedback on their writing. Sometimes an editor's critique will involve cutting out particular moments within your story that you don't necessarily want to lose. While your editor isn't going to force you to take their advice, if you're paying a fee for their expertise, being open-minded to their ideas can be helpful. However, if you find yourself constantly at odds with your editor over your work, they might not be the right fit for you.
 - Be prepared to rewrite. A developmental editor may thoroughly shake up the foundation of your manuscript, resulting in a substantial rewrite. You may have to reconsider certain plot elements, characters, settings, or conversations that aren't telling your story the way you think.
 - Focus on the big picture. Developmental editing is comprehensive, and it's easy to get distracted by the endless small details you want to nitpick. Still, there's plenty of time to do that during the line editing phase. When it comes to developmental editing, the focus should be more about the bigger ideas, and how all the main pieces of the story work together first.
 - Practice patience. Addressing one round of notes from a developmental editor doesn't mean you're done, or even close to it. This editing process is the most involved, and oftentimes changing one part of a manuscript can result in a necessary change elsewhere—but be patient. It's worth the time to ensure your book is telling the story you want, and your editor will help you stay on track.
3. Structural edit: It is also called a substantive or developmental edit. A structural edit looks at the overall structure and content of your book. A structural editor will recommend what structure is best suited for your work. According to [Erudite pen](#), this level of editing involves a structural review of:
- Content
 - Language and style
 - Presentation clarity and document flow cohesion
 - Consistent Use of voice and tone throughout a document.

A structural edit considers your ideal readers. Issues like the length of your document, the flow, and tone are addressed during structural improvement. A developmental editor can also carry out a structural edit.

4. Copy edit: When you need someone to check out your spelling, grammar, punctuation, terminology, and semantics, you should seek a copy editor. Copy editing focuses on the technical quality of your document. It aims to increase and review the readability of a [copy](#). A copy editor will ensure that your work adheres to the right style formatting of the publishing firm you intend to use. Some of the [issues a copy editor would look out for](#) are:
- Correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
 - Remove wordiness.
 - Proper sentence structures.
 - Checking for word count and page count.
 - Checking for adherence to proper language use and formatting.
 - Ensuring the smooth flow of ideas.
 - Point of view
 - Capitalization
 - Word usage
 - Ensuring accuracy of facts.

Copy editors are becoming popular and accessible online.

5. Line edit: Line editing is usually confused with copy editing, but the two are different. As the name implies, line editing involves reviewing and editing a piece of writing line by line. Line editing is a type of copy editing that focuses on style, hence the name 'stylistics editing'. Line editing is often confused with copy editing because they both pay attention to a writer's Use of language in a manuscript. However, they are different. Line editing is more interested in improving the readability of your manuscript, tackling it at the sentence and paragraph level. The goal of a line editor is to make your writing concise. [NY Book Editors](#) shares some [issues a line editor](#) might draw a writer's attention to.
- Words or sentences that are extraneous or overused.
 - Run-on sentences.
 - Redundancies from repeating the same information in different ways.
 - Dialogue or paragraphs that can be tightened.
 - Scenes where the action is confusing or the author's meaning is unclear due to bad transitions.
 - Tonal shifts and unnatural phrasing.
 - Passages that don't read well due to bland language use.
 - Confusing narrative digressions.
 - Changes that can be made to improve the pacing of a passage.
 - Words or phrases that may clarify or enhance your meaning.
6. Proofreading: [Proofreading is the process](#) of reviewing the final draft of a piece of writing to ensure consistency and accuracy in grammar, spelling, punctuation, and formatting. Proofreading is not the same as editing. It does not involve fact-checking or in-depth correction, or structuring—a proofreader

checks for errors in the copy that came about during editing and printing. For instance, pointing out that extra space between words or using ‘am’ instead of ‘I’m’. Your [proofreader](#) will be looking for everything your copy editor was looking for, searching with a fine-toothed comb for any errors that might have gotten through on accident.

Each of the editors listed above is important to the process, but it might not be budget-friendly to hire the help of all these editors. Take a close look at your work, and decide what kind of editing would be most beneficial.

What happens if your budget is so tight you cannot afford an editor? You self-edit. Not being able to afford an editor is not an excuse to subject your readers to a book filled with errors. You won’t be the first writer to publish a book successfully without an editor, and I’m very confident you won’t be the last. So this raises the question, “how do you remain objective while editing your work?” It can indeed be painful when an editor cuts out words you took precious time to write, and even more so when it’s you that has to do the cutting. But you need to be as objective and detached as possible and have a guide to help you. The writing life provides [25 tips for tightening your copy](#).

- Cut long sentences into two
- Axe the adverbs (a.k.a. -ly words)
- Stick to one voice
- Remove extra punctuation
- Replace negative with positive
- Replace stuffy words with simple ones
- [Remove redundancies](#)
- Reduce prepositions
- Cut “in order to”
- Don’t use “start to”
- Nix “that”
- Replace “thing” with a better word
- Try hard to spot instances of “very” and “really.”
- Make your verbs stronger
- Ditch the [passive voice](#)
- Refer to people as “who” not “that”
- Avoid “currently.”
- Eliminate “there is” or “there are” at the beginning of sentences
- Match up your bullet points
- Use contractions
- Steer clear of the “ing” trap
- Check your [commas](#) with “that” and “which.”
- Replace “over” with “more than” for numbers
- Hyphenate modifiers

- Identify your tells

Try applying these tips to your writing. You'd be surprised at the amount of difference it will make in your copy. Another tip that is so simple yet efficient is reading your work aloud. I know it sounds ordinary, but reading out loud gives you a clear perspective. You'll find errors you would not have if you read silently. All that said, you know two eyes are still better than one. A budget-friendly way to get your work edited is peer editing.

PEER EDITING

As a writer, when writing on a particular topic or subject, it is expected that you'd have done your research. When you finish with the work, you would have gathered so much knowledge on the topic. The problem with this is that you would write from a knowledgeable standpoint and forget that your reader is not as versed on the subject. As a result, they are lost and can't connect to your work. A great way to have your work edited and do a sort of 'reader test-run is peer editing. Peer editing entails enlisting the help of your peers to read your work and point out areas for improvement. It takes vulnerability to have your work read and analyzed by another person. You are not obligated to take the corrections, but keep an open mind and see your peer editor as your intended reader. Peer editing is a two-way street in that as you give your work to others to read, you also get to read others' work. What better way to learn than from others?

Check out these peer editor's keys shared by [EnglishClub](#)

“PEER EDITOR'S KEY”

It is a good idea to create an editor's key with your writing peers. This way you can suggest changes instead of fixing the mistakes. An editor's key has symbols that everyone understands. If you mark your friend's paper by hand, use a different colour pen than the writing. If you mark it on the computer, use a different colour font.

C = Case F = Form P = Punctuation SP = Spelling T = Tense WC = Word Choice / = Not necessary ^ = Add a word ? = Unclear * = Other problem or concern

ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS EXPLAINED

C: Use this to show that a letter should be changed to lower (abc) or upper (ABC) case. F: Use this when the wrong word form (noun, verb, adjective) is used. For example, a writer might use the word “aboard” (adverb) instead of “board” (verb). P: Place a P where a punctuation error exists. Perhaps the sentence is missing a period. Maybe a comma is used incorrectly. T: Use if a verb is in the wrong tense. Place the T on top of the incorrect verb. Allow the writer to correct the tense. WC: Use this when the specific word or phrase does not make sense. Perhaps the writer doesn't understand the meaning of the word. Maybe there is a better word. /: Place this slash through a word that is not needed. For example, you could place it through the word to before a verb if only the base verb is needed. ?: Use this if you don't understand a sentence or phrase. Circle the section you don't understand and write a question mark above it. ^: Use this symbol to indicate that the writer needs to insert a word or phrase. Perhaps the writer forgot to include “to” before a base verb. *: For other errors, you can place a

star * beside the problem. At the end of the page or writing add a note with a star. You can use two stars ** for a second note, etc.”

You have edited your draft and now have a perfect book, the kind you are sure your reader will enjoy. The next thing to do is the book design, cover, and illustration. You know the famous saying “don’t judge a book by its cover?” does it always apply. I mean, you walk into a bookshop, and you see a book with a beautiful cover and another that is not as attractive, which would you pick? Regardless of the content, many people will prefer the text with a beautiful cover to the other one. In book publishing, the container is as important as the content. If you want your book to sell, you need to pay special attention to your [book cover](#).

- You need to make sure your [book cover art](#) is related to your story, related enough to give a potential reader an idea of what the book is about without giving everything away.
- The various elements on your cover must be well-coordinated and composed. It can be pretty technical, so you should consider hiring a cover designer.
- Your cover must have a focal point with an element on the outside that instantly attracts attention. This focal point could be the title of the book or an image.
- The title must be bold and properly placed. Your [book title](#) should be catchy and engaging. Deciding on the book title can be a challenge.

It is better that you hire a book cover designer to do your book cover art. Cover artists understand the technicalities and intricacies involved in cover art designing. But do not worry if you are a writer on a tight budget. You can [design your art](#) yourself, thanks to apps like [Canva](#) and many more like it. Your book cover has to be as unique as your story.

Finally, you have the masterpiece that is your work in your hands. The next step is to make it public and make money off of it (money is good, right?) Book publishing might look cumbersome and complicated, but it is simple. The word “publish” originates from the Latin word ‘publicare’ which means to make public. And that is basically what book publishing is about; creating awareness for your book and bringing in sales (don’t forget sales.) The next question is, how do you publish?

TYPES OF PUBLISHING

There are two types of publishing- traditional publishing, self-publishing, and hybrid publishing. Let us access both kinds so that you can make an informed decision.

- **Traditional publishing:** Traditional publishing is the process of submitting your work to a publishing house. The author signs a contract with the publisher, who prints, publishes, and sells the book. The author earns royalties from the book’s sales, but the publisher most times owns the rights to the book. The publisher is in charge of printing, marketing, and selling the book. If you prefer this type of publishing, you will need an agent who would represent you and negotiate with potential publishers. The author bears no financial burden in publishing and enjoys the prestige that comes with being

published. However, it would be best if you prepared your mind for disappointments, as you might find your work rejected, which can be bruising to the ego. There are certain [qualities publishers look out for](#), and if you don't have it, you might get a NO. In addition, the royalties paid to authors are not so significant. In the end, you have to decide what would work best for you.

- Self-publishing: Self-publishing is the process of publishing your book without the help of a publishing house. The book usually takes the form of an [e-book](#). Any writer who has an electronic device can self-publish. Many writers are beginning to favour self-publishing over traditional publishing. With self-publishing, the author maintains all rights to the book. They also make more profit and bypass the gatekeepers of traditional publishing. However, the author has more work to do with advertising and marketing, which can be time and resources consuming.

As you proceed in the publishing process, you will discover [secrets](#) that will help you in the future. Whichever way you decide to go, don't forget the goal is to sell your book.

One more thing the present-day writer needs to consider is the form their book will take. Gone are the days when the only way to get your book to people is to print out your work and sell the hard copies. Authors can now get their books across to a broader audience using electronic aids. These kinds of books are called E-books. Some seven years ago, E-books came into the publishing industry. The prediction was it would replace print books. However, According to a [survey conducted by the Pew Research Center](#) on book consumption and book formats, traditional print is still the most popular reading format for both adults and children. Both forms have their pros and cons. [Print books](#), for instance, are still a favourite due to the feel and smell that e-books do not have. [E-books](#), on the other hand, are easier to acquire and access. Some authors publish their work in both formats, while others choose one of the two. You decide which format you would prefer.

If you decide to go the print route, you have to sign a contract with a publishing house. But if you choose to publish electronically, you need to be acquainted with the E-publishing platforms. These platforms convert manuscripts into readable formats for the readers. They fall under two categories: retailers and aggregators.

A retailer is a publishing company that sells books through its retail outlet. The writer submits their work, and they help them sell it through their retail store. One such is Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP) by Amazon.

[An aggregator](#) bridges the gap between the writer and the sales outlet. Aggregators go a step further than publishing and retailing. These platforms also distribute your work to partnering outlets. Aggregators help your work to reach a larger audience. They charge a 10 to 20% commission on sales after the retailers cut. Check out [this list](#) of some publishing platforms, the benefits they offer, and what you might want to look out for.

MARKETING YOUR BOOK

Yes, you wrote that book because you want to share your knowledge with the world, there's no doubt about that. But, I believe you also want to make money from your book. But first, before sales come marketing. You need to bring your book to the consciousness of the public. So, how do you market your books?

- Donate your book to organizations. Giving out a few copies of your book to relevant organizations and establishments can go a long way in getting your book into the hands of potential readers. Think of a doctor's waiting room or hotel reception.
- Scatter excerpt of your book around. Imagine coming across different extracts from a particular book in conspicuous places; I'm sure it will pique your interest—a great place to do this is social media. Select a juicy part of your book and share, and you'd be surprised at the result.
- Have a quick summary of your book ready at hand. Let's call it your elevator speech. It would be best to tell a potential reader what the book is about and still keep them thirsty enough to want to read the book.
- Create a member's only group for your readers and send them newsletters. By doing this, you are building a relationship with them. It can go a long way in keeping them loyal to your work.

AUTHOR BRANDING

[Author branding](#) is your personal story, including why you write, what you write about, and who you are writing for (aside from yourself, of course). It conveys your values and beliefs, creating interest in you as an author. Your author brand familiarizes readers with your writing style and genre. If your author branding is effective, readers will recognize your brand the minute they see one of your books.

You need to present yourself in a way that makes you relatable to your book. I know I would instead buy from an author whose brand I am familiar with than one I don't know. Writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie is an excellent example of an author who has branded herself. You cannot take her name away from her work. Being an author does not mean you have to be a hermit. Your reader needs to be able to associate your brand with your work.

Book editing and publishing can be quite a journey, but you need to set your mind to complete what you've started as an author. I put this book together to help you have a seamless process, from writing to publishing. All you need to do is read to the end.

For further information on book writing, editing and publishing services , you can call +2347085310830 or send an email to thementormorphosisconsulting@gmail.com

