

# The Book-Publishing Roadmap

*For nonfiction authors with material to turn into a book*

start here  
↓

## Completing the Book

Consider all of the content of the book (and it's not just the writing!):

- 📖 Are there illustrations? Photos or line art can add so much to the meaning of what you are saying.
- 📖 Any forms, questionnaires, checklists, charts, recipes, line drawings, and other materials that need special formatting to look their best and provide the most impact?
- 📖 What is the visual style of the book?
- 📖 Has it been copyedited? Has it been proofread several times?
- 📖 How is it best organized? Are there sections and chapters? Do they flow smoothly, summarizing what's been said and previewing what is to come?

Notes

## → Your Platform

Notes

Authors of nonfiction, whether published by a large house, a small press, or an independent imprint as an indie author, need to promote and publicize their work. Waiting until the book is done is not productive.

- 📖 Schedule time to tend and grow your platform now, even if it feels wrenching to shift away from writing.
- 📖 Draft a profile of your ideal reader. You're not writing your book for them, exactly, but you are keeping them in mind. Are they impatient? Hungry for what you've got? Do they need to be persuaded? In what part of the world are they located? Do they work in your field, or in something quite different? Be as precise as you can.
- 📖 Establish or grow your author-expert public persona in the social media sites and other places where those ideal readers congregate when they have time for news and ideas. Think of it as finding the right water cooler.
- 📖 Start giving talks and workshops, if you haven't already done so. Build your audiences and cultivate loyalty. Consider handouts with an identifiable logo that will carry through to your book or series.
- 📖 Do you have a newsletter? Grow it, and the email list associated with it.
- 📖 Consider adapting your existing website or starting a new one specifically for your book or series.
- 📖 Guest blog on related sites. Submit articles related to your topic to print and web publications. Review books in related fields on Amazon, Goodreads, and in the publications specific to your topic.
- 📖 Develop one or more very brief answers to the question, "What's new with you?" that engage people and tell them about your book project. Learn the answers and use them everywhere.

----- next...

## ► Which Format(s)?

Turning a word-processed manuscript into a camera-ready or e-publication-ready file involves several steps: deciding on format(s) and preparing the manuscript accordingly.

### Formats:

- 📖 For **print** books, the book's design – making the book look good and delivering its message powerfully – is a transformative process.
- 📖 For **ebooks** meant for a Kindle device, there aren't as many ways to change the look of your ebook. That's the way Kindle is, at present. The book's entire contents flows from one screen to the next and adjusts fluidly. In contrast...
- 📖 For **ebooks** meant for iPads, tablets, and devices other than Kindle, you have more freedom – with sufficient time and money – to design and create publications that look – and function – the way you want. The downside? Kindle has a much greater audience.
- 📖 If **layout** is really important, as it is for poetry, music notation, mathematical expressions, formulas, recipes, heavily illustrated photography projects, etc., the simplest method is to produce a PDF edition. This way, it is readable on almost any device, including a laptop and desktop computer, and looks right. The processes of PDF and print preparation are very similar (except with PDF you don't need to make paper choices, get bids from various printers, and find places to store inventory).

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## ► Are You an Indie Author?

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Here in the process your map branches depending on whether you want to self-publish as an indie author or send the book out for submission to agents and publishers in your genre.

If you are going the agent-publisher route, this is where you start querying agents and sending out an outline, sample chapters, a book proposal, or the entire book.

**Book Proposal:** A book proposal is what you'll need first, along with a brief and powerful query letter and an outline of the project. Some agents, if the query letter interests them, will jump straight to asking to see the entire manuscript, but others want a proposal and outline.

**Indie Author:** If you plan to self-publish, there are a few more steps to fast-track the book from a completed manuscript to a publication out in the world. First, recognize you'll now be running a publishing business. Next, keep reading for tips on indie publishing.

*next...*

## ► Pre-Production for Indie Authors

Once you decide what format or formats the book will be published in, the manuscript can be prepared. Publishing to Kindle is the most straightforward because there are so few choices to be made about appearance and layout.

Publishing to print and/or PDF involves the most detailed work – and results in a more visually compelling book.

Other steps include:

- 📌 **Cover Design.** Potential buyers really do tend to judge a book by its cover. They either pick it up – or click on it – or else they move on.
- 📌 **Front and Back Matter.** This includes all things that come before and after the main content of a book: copyright, dedication, contents, foreword, preface, acknowledgements, introduction, etc.; afterword, glossary, bibliography, index, etc.
- 📌 **ISBN.** Most books need one of these unique identifiers.
- 📌 **Print Books.** For print books you decide about type of binding, paper choices for cover and interior pages, obtaining competitive bids from printers for specified numbers of books for the initial print run, shipping, storage, etc. If you go with a print-on-demand service, you can omit concerns about where to store the inventory.
- 📌 **Ebooks.** For ebooks, you decide where you'll sell the book, and how it will be prepared.
- 📌 **Sales, Marketing, and Promotion.** It seems like a simple question: How much will your book sell for? Conduct market research and make an educated decision. This ties in with all your Platform development efforts. At this point, you're likely to be well-acquainted with your ideal reader.

*Notes*

## ► Production for Indie Authors

*Notes*

Print production includes selecting a printer or print-on-demand service, and coming to terms on price, timeline, deliverables, etc. You will need to work with the vendor, providing the book materials in the desired form, following the process and proofreading all the way, troubleshooting issues, etc.

Ebook production involves fewer steps, as there is no paper involved. If your manuscript has been completely prepared and proofread (and proofread and proofread, by different sets of eyes), publication can usually be done in a week or two.

Take any promises of “one-click” ebook conversion with a grain of salt. Manuscript conversion from word-processed documents to ebook files, or from documents created in InDesign or other layout software to ebook files, can be challenging.

*next...*

▶ **Before Launch**

If you're publishing under your own imprint, or with a small press, the next steps are, in many ways, the most significant to the whole project!

Know what you are getting into and pace yourself, leaving plenty of room for the unexpected, and for rest, relaxation, and re-generation.

Now you'll decide how to tell the world about your book, and make it easy for them to find and buy it. (You'll notice these steps benefit from the Platform and Pre-Production steps of this process.)

- 📍 **Your website.** You need your own place on the web where people can find you and learn about you and your book (not just Facebook). See if you can include a way to purchase the book directly from your site, via a link to a store, or through your own webstore.
- 📍 **Your social media presence.** If your personality can manage it, tweeting, facebooking, pinteresting, and the rest, can really multiply the people out there who know who you are and know about your book. Some of them may go from being curious about the book to wanting to buy it!
- 📍 **Events.** The more you can find ways to tie your book, and you, into things going on in your community, the better for your long-term prospects as an author and for book sales.
- 📍 **Press.** Get the newspaper, local TV and radio stations, bloggers in the same or related fields, journal editors, et al. – get them all to want to talk about you, interview you, and help you tell the world about your book.
- 📍 **Reviews.** Using every connection at your disposal, get the book reviewed. Use the local and global media (see Press above) and use online forums like Goodreads, reviews on Amazon and Apple, comments on your own blog, etc.
- 📍 **Sales.** Place your book with every bookseller you can. You're likely to have more luck online than with brick and mortar stores where shelf space is precious.
- 📍 **Taxes.** Consult the relevant authorities or an accountant, for pointers on sales tax regulations in your area.

One secret of publishing success is starting these Before Launch processes well in advance of publication. Building your author platform is all about establishing and communicating your standing as an expert with a voice. Developing a sales, marketing, and promotion plan recognizes that you're now a businessperson.

*Notes**next...*

► Publication and Launch – The End?

No, not really. The Book-Publishing road doesn't end.

**Congratulations, however, ARE in order!**

This roadmap is a quick look at the steps involved between completing the text of your book and having it published and out in the world.

It is a commitment of time, energy, and money, with the potential for lasting – and ongoing! – rewards.

The experience is unforgettable.

Chenille Books can help make the experience also a pleasure and an opportunity for growth.

*Notes*

Are You Ready?

Ask us!

Email [chenillebooks@gmail.com](mailto:chenillebooks@gmail.com)  
today to set up your complimentary  
strategy call. Let's get started!