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EDITING AND PROOFREADING



Formatting Your Manuscript

There are certain industry standards that you will want to follow to ensure your book has a professional finish. Agents and publishers receive large numbers of submissions and that first impression of your manuscript is vital. You have already put yourself at a disadvantage with an agent if the manuscript they receive is not correctly formatted, however good the content.

The font you use should be a standard font, such as Times New Roman or Garamond.

Double space your manuscript with no extra space between paragraphs.

Number your pages. Pages in the front matter (Table of Contents, Dedication, Copyright information, and so on) are in Roman numerals.

Leave a blank line to signify a chapter break and type three asterisks centred. The line following the chapter break should be full out to the margin and not indented.

Set out your title page correctly. The title should be centred and between a half and a third of the way down the page. Below the title on the next double spaced line should be the author's name, preceded by 'a novel by' or 'by'. Your contact information (name, address, telephone number, email) should be placed in the top left-hand corner of the title page. This information should be left-justified and single-spaced. The word count should be rounded to the nearest thousand and placed one double-spaced line below the author's name, in the centre of the document.

Each chapter's title should be centred halfway or a third of the way down the page. Chapters should be separated by page breaks. The first line of each chapter should be full out to the margin, not indented.

Never press Enter to create a space in the text (to start a new chapter, for example).

You may find it useful to create a Style Guide for yourself to help you to be consistent in the use of italics, spellings, use of capital letters, debatable or unusual spellings, whether to use words or figures for numbers.

Finish the book with the words The End at the end of the last chapter.

If you wish to include information about yourself, an About the Author section can follow the last chapter of the book.