

Helen Fazal

EDITING AND PROOFREADING



Writing to an Agent or Publisher

Approaching a literary agent can be a daunting prospect but there are a few things that you can do to ensure that you immediately make a good impression. Following these 10 steps is a great place to start.

1. Check the agent's website, carefully read their submission guidelines and follow them exactly.
2. Use the agent's first name only in your address. It's more personal.
3. Research the agent and explain why you're approaching them specifically. Do not send a blanket email or copy several agents into one email.
4. Include your elevator pitch/ hook/ brief overview. This might be phrased as a question and should pique the agent's interest. You can be brief here - the agent has your synopsis if they want to know more.
5. Include the genre(s) of your work.
6. If your novel is aimed at a particular age group, e.g. Young Adult, say that.
7. Include at least two comparative titles. You could, if appropriate, make a comparison to a film or television series. These should give the agent an idea of where your novel would fit in the current market.
8. Include relevant information about yourself.
9. Whilst showing who you are is important remember that this is a professional document and the tone of your cover letter should reflect that.
10. Sign off professionally.