



Indie Publishing Checklist

Congratulations on making the choice to publish your book on your own! As you move through the process, you'll find there are a lot of things you'll need in order to have your book meet the industry standards required by most bookstores.

Below is a checklist that will help you gather what you need for the design, marketing, and sales processes. If you are working with Indigo to edit your book, the ideal time to start on this checklist is while your manuscript is in your editor's hands for line editing. The items are listed in general order of when you'll need them.

Don't let the length of this list overwhelm you. It's divided by stages in the publishing process, and some of the items are needed in multiple stages, so you'll see them repeated simply so you know to turn them in to the appropriate person at the appropriate time. And if you need assistance on any of the items, such as registering your ISBN or securing permissions, we're here to help!

Of note, some of these stages happen concurrently. Publicity and marketing is especially important to think about early, starting during line editing, to ensure you have enough time to build buzz before your book launches.

What you'll need for editing (add-on pieces due to your editor by the end of line editing):

- Full manuscript in one Word document
- All front matter and back matter you wish to include in the book. The following are all optional (please see *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 16th edition, chapter 1 for descriptions on these), though a table of contents and author bio are strongly recommended for nearly all books:

Front matter:

- Dedication
- Epigraph
- Table of contents (recommended unless your chapters are untitled)
- List of illustrations
- List of tables
- Foreword (for prescriptive nonfiction, written by another expert in your field)
- Preface (for prescriptive nonfiction, written by you, covering necessary details about nonfiction topic such as method of research)
- Acknowledgments
- Introduction (for prescriptive nonfiction, written by you, introducing the premise for the work)
- Prologue (for fiction or memoir)

Back matter:

- Epilogue (for fiction or memoir)
- Appendix
- End notes
- Glossary

- Bibliography or references
- List of contributors (for anthologies)
- About the author (strongly recommended)
- Book description for back cover (see note below)
- Author bio for back cover (see note below)

Note: As a general rule, all text on the back cover (blurbs, description, bio) should not exceed 225 words for most books under 6" x 9".

What you'll need for your book's cover (due to your cover designer by the end of the first round of cover concepts):

- Your official title and subtitle (recommended that you have this finalized before cover design begins)
- Your author name as you would like it to appear
- Edited book description
- Edited author bio
- Author photo (optional)
- A logo for your publishing company (optional, though strongly recommended)
- A barcode
- Retail price
- ISBN
- Any blurbs or text that are in addition to your book description and author bio you would like to include on the back cover (send them to your proofreader first)
- Any other text you would like to appear on the front cover (like an "author of..." line)

What you'll need for your book's interior and ebook (due to your interior designer at time of handoff for final layout):

- Secured permissions for the use of all quotes and images in your book
- A fully edited manuscript that contains the following:
 - all front matter and back matter you wish to include in the book
 - codes indicating when typographic elements that differ from the main text start and stop, such as [block] [/block] around a block quote (this is included in Indigo's proofreading service)
- For books containing images, you'll also need:
 - a separate folder from the manuscript containing all the images to be used in your book
 - a Word document listing all the image file names or numbers and their corresponding captions (e.g., Image 15: Fred and Wilma by the rock quarry)
 - coded markers in the manuscript that indicate where images should be placed (e.g. [Image 15 here]; this is included in proofreading)

What you'll need for your publishing company (due to your publications consultant before any registration services can begin):

- A legal business name, registered with your state (you can do business using your own name, though it's generally best to conduct business under the umbrella of a publishing company whose name you've created)
- A tax ID (SSN or EIN)
- A business checking account and a debit or credit card (check with your bank about setting up a separate business account for your publishing company)
- A logo for your publishing company (optional, though strongly recommended)

What you'll need for print-on-demand services, book wholesalers, and bookstores (due to your publications consultant when final design is approved for upload):

- An ISBN (International Standard Book Number) for each version of your book (paperback, ebook, etc.)
- An LCCN (Library of Congress Control Number) (recommended, but not required)
- Your book's suggested retail price
- Edited short (about 150 words) and long (about 350 words) descriptions of your book
- Your complete book title
- Your complete subtitle
- Your author name as you would like it to appear
- Edited author bio
- Your author photo

What you'll need for publicity and marketing services (due to your publicist by first strategy consultation for platform building and pre-release planning)*:

- A completed Marketing and Publicity Questionnaire
- A description of your book
- An author bio
- Add-on pieces due before further publicity services:
 - Edited author bio
 - Edited back cover copy and book descriptions
 - An ISBN
 - Your complete title and subtitle
 - Your book's suggested retail price
 - Your author name as you would like it to appear
 - Your publishing company's logo (if applicable)
 - Your book's front cover
 - Any edited blurbs or endorsements you would like to use in publicity outreach

Note: We recommend scheduling your first strategy consultation during line editing.