



# Summertime Publishing

## Springtime Books

### Preparing Your Manuscript for Submission, Editing and Design

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What follows are our recommendations for preparing a clear and well-presented manuscript. We love to see simple ideas stated simply. Be lean in your prose. Read your text aloud. If you run out of breath or trip over your words as you read, the sentence probably needs to be simplified. Avoid using a long word where a short one will do.

#### In General

Keep it simple:

- Use **Times New Roman 12-point** for all body text (but see below for headings). All text should be in black (not grey or colour).
- Use **single line spacing** throughout your manuscript.
- Text should be **left justified** only ('align left' in Word). If text is to be fully justified your designer will do this during the design phase.
- Set your **margins and tabs** once for the whole document.
- Create your manuscript as a **single document**. Combining separate documents may introduce formatting issues.
- **Don't try to design your book in Word**. Please don't use built-in Word features such as templates, footnotes, endnotes, table of contents generator, section breaks or macros. All formatting, styling and layout for your book will be done in consultation with your designer once you have a final, production-ready manuscript.
- **Please number your pages**. It makes it easier for everyone to follow and annotate your manuscript.

#### British v US English

There are some important differences when it comes to British and American spelling, punctuation and grammar. Neither is right or wrong, but it is important to be consistent and to think about your likely audience. If you are unclear about the differences, please discuss with your editor. As a guide, for US English we use the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* and refer to *The Chicago Manual of Style* for grammar and style. For UK English, it's the *Oxford English Dictionary (OED)* and *New Hart's Rules*.

## Headings

The final size, format and layout of headings will be agreed upon with your designer during the design phase. For your manuscript, please use these settings:

Chapter Headings	<b>Times Roman 18 Bold</b>	
Main Headings	<b>Times Roman 14 Bold</b>	Line space before and after
Sub-headings	<b>Times Roman 12 Bold</b>	Line space before and after
Other (minor) sub-headings	<b>Times Roman 12 Bold</b>	Line space before but <i>not</i> after

Be consistent when capitalising headings. We prefer 'Title Case'.

## Paragraphs and Indents

**Memoir and fiction.** Text should be continuous, with new paragraphs and new dialogue lines beginning with an indent. However, the first line of a new chapter or text that follows a 'time break' should not be indented. For example:

The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog. The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog. The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

“Watch out!” said the lazy dog.

“I’m a good jumper. Don’t worry,” replied the quick brown fox, laughing.

The next day another brown fox jumped over the lazy dog. The next day another brown fox jumped over the lazy dog. The next day another brown fox jumped over the lazy dog. The next day another brown fox jumped over the lazy dog. The next day another brown fox jumped over the lazy dog.

“Ouch!” said the lazy dog.

**Factual book (or non-fiction).** Text should have paragraphs separated by a line space, with no indent to the first line. For example:

The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog. The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog. The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

The next day another brown fox jumped over the lazy dog. The next day another brown fox jumped over the lazy dog. The next day another brown fox jumped over the lazy dog.

## Italics

Use italics to stress a particular word or phrase like *this* (don't underline or use bold). Also use italics for a foreign word or phrase and for the title of a book, film, play, TV/radio programme or magazine.

## Bullet Points

Please use **basic bullets** in your manuscript. If you want something unique this will be done in consultation with your designer. Please follow this style:

Bullets are a great way to break up the text:

- Such as this point
  - this subpoint
    - and this one
- Next bullet point

## Quotation Marks

In **British English** it is more usual to use single quotes for direct speech, 'scare' quotes and 'air' quotes. Use double quotation marks for quotes within quotes. For example:

'I like the sound of that,' said John.

I sometimes wonder where 'experts' get their information from.

'I sometimes wonder,' he said, 'where "experts" get their information from.'

In **US English** the reverse is the case:

"I like the sound of that," said John.

I sometimes wonder where "experts" get their information from.

"I sometimes wonder," he said, "where 'experts' get their information from."

For **direct quotations** we like single quotation marks and italicised text, with the author's name in regular font and bold, like this:

*'Without conflict there is no growth or progress.'*

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Always attribute direct quotations, preferably in a bibliography or resources section at the end of the book.

## Case Studies

Where case studies/stories are used, please shade the text so the designer can spot them easily and apply a style to them.

## Specifics

We have some in-house preferences at Summertime Publishing and Springtime Books. Being consistent will give your writing a professional polish:

- **One space not two after a full stop.** Same applies to an exclamation mark or question mark.
- **No space before or after a forward slash ('solidus'):** References/Resources.
- **Use of hyphens and en dashes:**
  - Use a *hyphen* to join words: life-long.
  - Use an *en dash* (with a space before and after) in place of brackets or commas to add supplementary information – like this – to a sentence.
  - Use a longer *em dash* to indicate an end of line dialogue interruption, 'like this—'
- **Colon and semi-colon use.** Language continues to evolve and 'rules' are changing all the time. We prefer colons and semi-colons to be used sparingly, replaced by using other punctuation where possible. Why? Because as a publisher we think about how your book will look in print. Too many colons and semi-colons can look 'busy' and distracting for the reader. This is particularly so in Kindle and e-book formats.
- **Ellipses** have three dots (no space, three dots, one space after)... like this.
- We prefer **for example** to e.g. If you do use the abbreviated form, we prefer not to follow it with a comma – this avoids double punctuation. Similarly, no comma after i.e.
- Use **exclamation marks** sparingly!
- **No dots with acronyms** – so USA and Mr, not U.S.A. and Mr.
- DVDs and 1950s, not DVD's and 1950's.
- Avoid using **superscript** (e.g. 19<sup>th</sup>). Change to normal font (19th) if Word defaults to superscript.
- **Capital letters.** Strike a good balance. Use capitals for the first letter of organisations and institutions but not for job titles. For example, John is a marketing director at Amazon.
- **Numbers.** In general, write one to nine as words and 10 and over in figures. At the start of a sentence, always use words. In fiction and memoir, it's common to spell all numbers in full.
- **Okay** not OK
- **And so on** not etc.
- **Expat** not ex-pat
- **No one** not no-one
- **Such as** not like
- **North, south, east, west.** Capital letter for recognised terms or place names, otherwise not. So, the sun sets in the east, he moved to North Dakota.

- **Temperatures** in figures: 25°C
- **Percentages.** In a factual book use figures and symbols (25%). In fiction or memoir write the number in full (twenty-five per cent).
- **Fractions.** In fiction or memoir, spell out fractions: two-thirds of the country. Reserve numerical fractions ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) for factual books.
- Use single quotation marks for the title of an **article**: ‘How to use quotation marks’ was the lead article in *The Guardian*.
- **Headers and Footers.** Apart from adding page numbers, do not use them. These will be added by your designer.
- Use a **page break** to force a new page (don’t use multiple returns).
- **Footnotes.** Please don’t use automated footnotes. Instead, add superscript numbers sequentially in the main text (manually) and list them with the corresponding text at the end of each chapter. Your designer will add to the final layout (either as footnotes or endnotes).
- **Websites and hyperlinks.** Please embed the link and check it works. These will show as underlined in print books and will link automatically in Kindle and e-books.
- **Whilst or While? Amongst or Among?** All are correct but Summertime Publishing and Springtime Books are plain-English publishers. Please use among rather than amongst and while rather than whilst.
- **Be consistent with your spelling.** For example, *goodbye*, not a mix of good bye, good-bye and goodbye.
- **Qualifiers.** Avoid overuse of qualifiers or supplementary words such as very, really, quite, just, so, then, simply, actually and even. They rarely add meaning or value and often reduce the impact of what you are trying to say.
- **Don’t overuse ‘that’.** Where a sentence flows naturally without a *that*, there’s no need to use it. For example, *that* can safely be deleted in the following sentence: Mary looked at her watch and realised *that* she had missed her train.

And some final words about your book layout...

### **Table of Contents**

If you are having a table of contents, it should not include anything that appears before it (e.g. dedication or preface). And remember to check that your table of contents matches your section/chapter titles (including capitalisation).

### **About the Author**

We like to include an **About the Author** page in your book. This should be personal information about you and your background, 150 to 200 words. We’d also like a hi-res (around 1MB) headshot photo.

If in doubt, please get in touch.

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