

PRE-PRODUCTION QUALITY CHECKLIST

Make Your Book Publishing-Ready



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BOOK PUBLISHING Tip Sheet

Pre-Production Quality Checklist

How to Make Your Book Publishing-Ready

Before you finalize your manuscript for publication, taking a little extra time to get it polished and professionally prepared can make a *big difference* in how smoothly your publishing journey goes — and how successful your book can be once it's out in the world.

The tips below will help you avoid common pitfalls, streamline production and make your book look professional inside and out.

Polish Your Manuscript Like a Pro

Small mistakes can become big distractions for readers — and reviewers. Before submitting:

- **Run spelling and grammar checks** using tools like Microsoft Word, Grammarly, or ProWritingAid.
- **Watch out for formatting errors** like extra spaces, hard returns and manual hyphens — these can slow production and cause layout issues.
- **Avoid using ALL CAPS** or multiple fonts and colors. Consistency is key to a clean, professional look.
- **Read your manuscript aloud** — it's one of the fastest ways to catch awkward phrasing or errors you've missed.

If you'd like a professional eye on your manuscript, Outskirts Press offers a range of [editing services](#) to ensure your text is polished and publication-ready.

Match Your Manuscript to Your Format

The trim size and format you choose directly affect your page count, retail price, and royalty earnings.

- Standard fiction and non-fiction often fit best in **black & white, 5x8 to 6x9 trim sizes**.
- Books with heavy illustrations or photography may benefit from **premium color** or larger sizes.
- If your manuscript has design complexity (poetry, cookbooks, illustrated works), consider your formatting needs early.

Your Publishing Consultant can help you choose the best combination of paperback, hardback, eBook, or audiobook formats for your goals.

Prepare Your Images Properly

If your book includes images (even just an author photo), make sure:

- Each image is high resolution (300 dpi).
- You have permission to use any image you didn't create yourself.
- You track credit or attribution info carefully.

Need help enhancing your visuals? Outskirts Press offers [custom illustrations](#) and [stock images](#) to give your book a polished, professional look.

Think About Pricing Early

Pricing isn't an afterthought — it affects your royalties, your positioning and your market reach.

- Trim size and page count affect your base printing cost, which affects your retail price.
- Adding full-color interiors or hardback bindings can increase production cost, which may require a higher retail price.
- At Outskirts Press, you control your retail price and royalty, giving you flexibility to position your book smartly.

Your Publishing Consultant can guide you through pricing strategy to balance profit and sales potential.

Plan Your Marketing Elements Ahead

Many authors wait until after their book is published to think about marketing — but the smartest authors build marketing right into their book:

- Add a clear back cover pitch that sells the book in seconds.
- Include a professional author bio with contact or website details.
- Reserve space for a review page with a [QR code](#) linking to Amazon.
- Consider including "Other Books By" or a call to action to help readers stay connected.

Outskirts Press offers services like [Cover Pitch Enhancement](#), professionally designed [custom covers](#) and [pre-launch marketing plans](#) to help you make the most of these features.

Choose the Right Interior Formatting Level

- Standard Formatting — clean and professional; included with every package.
- Enhanced Formatting — subtle design touches to help your book stand out.
- Custom Formatting — fully tailored layouts for complex or illustrated works.

A great interior layout ensures your book looks as professional as it reads.

Do a Final Review Before Submission

Before you submit your final manuscript to production:

- Double-check for typos and formatting issues.
- Make sure images are labeled and credited correctly.
- Confirm your desired trim size, binding and pricing strategy.
- Review your marketing elements (bio, cover pitch, review page, back matter).

The Bottom Line

A little pre-production preparation goes a long way. By polishing your manuscript, preparing your assets and thinking strategically, you'll reduce delays, avoid costly revisions and give your book the professional edge it deserves.

Need help making sure everything's in place? Our Publishing Consultants and production team are here to support you every step of the way.

Schedule a quick consultation to review your manuscript and pre-production plan.