

Self-publishing with



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Welcome to self-publishing

This slideshow will:

- Introduce the concept of self-publishing
- Go over the steps for self-publishing an ebook with *Kindle Direct Publishing* (KDP)
- Provide a brief overview of print publishing with KDP
- Discuss issues surrounding self-publishing

Reasons to go with self-publishing?

- You have a specialized book that might not resonate with mainstream publishers
- Just want something for friends and family
- Increasingly, people selling online (especially ebooks) don't see the value of a publisher like they used to; this is a chance to cut out the middleman

Worth the investment?

- ebook creation has practically no upfront monetary cost (assuming you have access to a computer and necessary software)
- Print-on-demand became prevalent in the 1990s, allowing people to self-publish without having to commit to a minimum order
- Relatively low cost if you learn the process to self-publish with a service like KDP – about \$4 (plus shipping) cost to you for a print book around a hundred pages

Worth the investment?

- Your time writing the book (a lot!)
- Time it takes to format the book (depends on your familiarity with Word or other publishing software)
- Will you hire an editor? Maybe you can trust your friends/family for helpful feedback

What are your goals?

- Personal satisfaction
- Gifts for friends/family (document family history, a family reunion photobook, etc.)
- Being creative can provide you with pleasure that you can't get any other way
- If you never see your book on bookstore shelves will that be ok?

Self-Publishing Packages/Vanity Press

- Different from what we are talking about today (KDP and similar distributors are often referred to as self-service interfaces meaning you must do the work, but there are no setup fees/minimum orders)
- “Packages” can cost hundreds or even thousands of dollars
- May require a minimum number of copies per order and/or charge extra set-up fees for each new proof (individual demo copies of your book)
- Include editing and formatting services; designers can make a cover for you

Self-Publishing Packages/Vanity Press

- Some of these services can be helpful, but many places that offer them have predatory pricing and try to upsell you things that might not actually benefit you; they are trying to profit off the creation of your book, not the sales
- Wherever you go, make sure to read the fine print; some publishing services have exclusivity clauses in their terms (which means if your book does find success, you might not be able to sell that book where you want, when you want)

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Self-Publishing with KDP

- The following pages go over the step-by-step process used to self-publish with Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP)
- The screenshots will walk you through the process of uploading a completed manuscript and getting it ready for online publishing/printing
- Self-published titles can be in both eBook and physical book formats simultaneously



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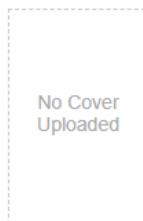
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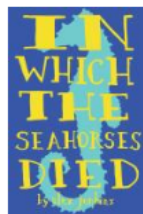
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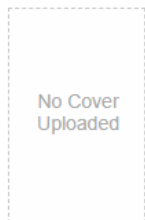
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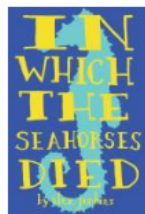
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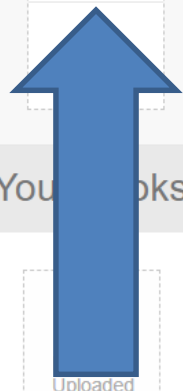
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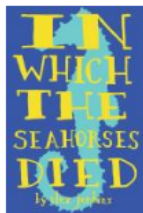
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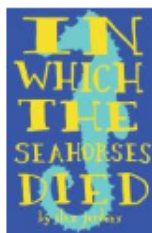


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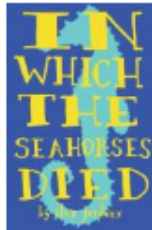
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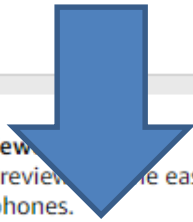
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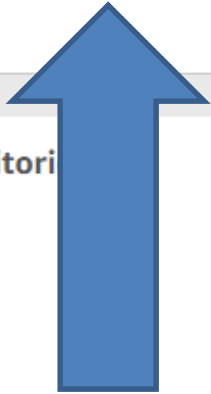
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	Must be \$2.99-\$9.99 ▾ All marketplaces are based on this price		70%	\$1.98	\$5.61
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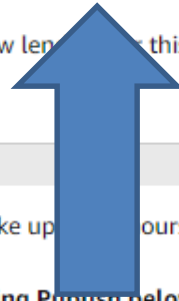
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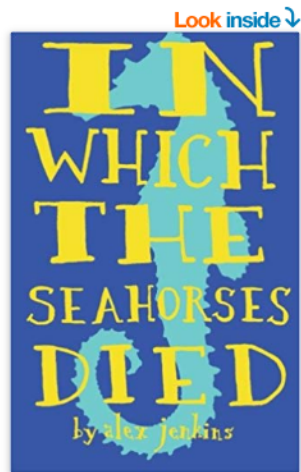


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Editorial Reviews

About the Author

Alex is a librarian and a curmudgeon trying to be friendly.

Product details

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Additional steps for print books

- The process for creating a print book using KDP is very similar to the process for creating an ebook
- You can create a print version and ebook version for the same title. Customers will have a choice of choosing between the two

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ISBNs are International Book Standard Numbers unique to each edition of a book. If you are selling a print book, you can either have a free ISBN assigned by KDP or purchase an ISBN from another website.

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The default options selected below are based on the most common selections. [How will printing cost be calculated?](#) ▼

Interior & paper type

[What ink and paper types does KDP support?](#) ▼

**Black & white interior
with cream paper**

Black & white interior
with white paper

Color interior
with white paper

Trim Size

[What is a trim size?](#) ▼

6 x 9 in
15.24 x 22.86 cm

Select a different size

Bleed Settings

[What are bleed settings?](#) ▼

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Bleed

Paperback cover finish

[What is a cover finish?](#) ▼

Matte

Glossy

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Paperback cover finish

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1

Choose a template

Decide what kind of template you want and find your trim size. You can download **blank templates** or **templates with sample content**. The blank templates have the page size and margins set. If you want help formatting the other parts, see our step-by-step guides for preparing your manuscript in Word for [Windows](#) and [Mac](#). The templates with sample content include formatted front matter (e.g., title page, table of contents) and chapters with placeholder text. You'll customize the parts you want to keep and delete the sections you don't.

The most common trim size for paperbacks in the U.S. is 6" x 9" (15.24 x 22.86 cm), but you have several [trim size options](#). If you're unsure which size to pick, find books with content similar to yours to get an idea of what readers expect.

To find your template, click **Download**, open the ZIP folder, choose your language and trim size.

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(Templates with sample content)

Does your manuscript contain images or graphics that [bleed](#) to the edge of the page? If so, you need to increase the trim size. Add 0.125" to the width and 0.25" to the height. For example, if your trim size is 6" x 9", set the page size to 6.125" x 9.25". To change the page size in Word:

1. In the "Page Setup" section of the **Layout** tab, click **Size**.
2. Select **More Paper Sizes**. This opens a dialog box.
3. Enter your book's trim size, including bleed, into the "Width" and "Height" fields.
4. In the "Preview" section, select **Whole document** from the "Apply to" drop-down menu.
5. Click **OK**. This will resize your pages and change your page count.

1

Choose a template

Decide what kind of template you want and find your trim size. You can download **blank templates** or **templates with sample content**. The blank templates have the page size and margins set. If you want help formatting the other parts, see our step-by-step guides for preparing your manuscript in Word for [Windows](#) and [Mac](#). The templates with sample content include formatted front matter (e.g., title page, table of contents) and chapters with placeholder text. You'll customize the parts you want to keep and delete the sections you don't.

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To find your template, click **Download**, open the ZIP folder, choose your language and trim size.

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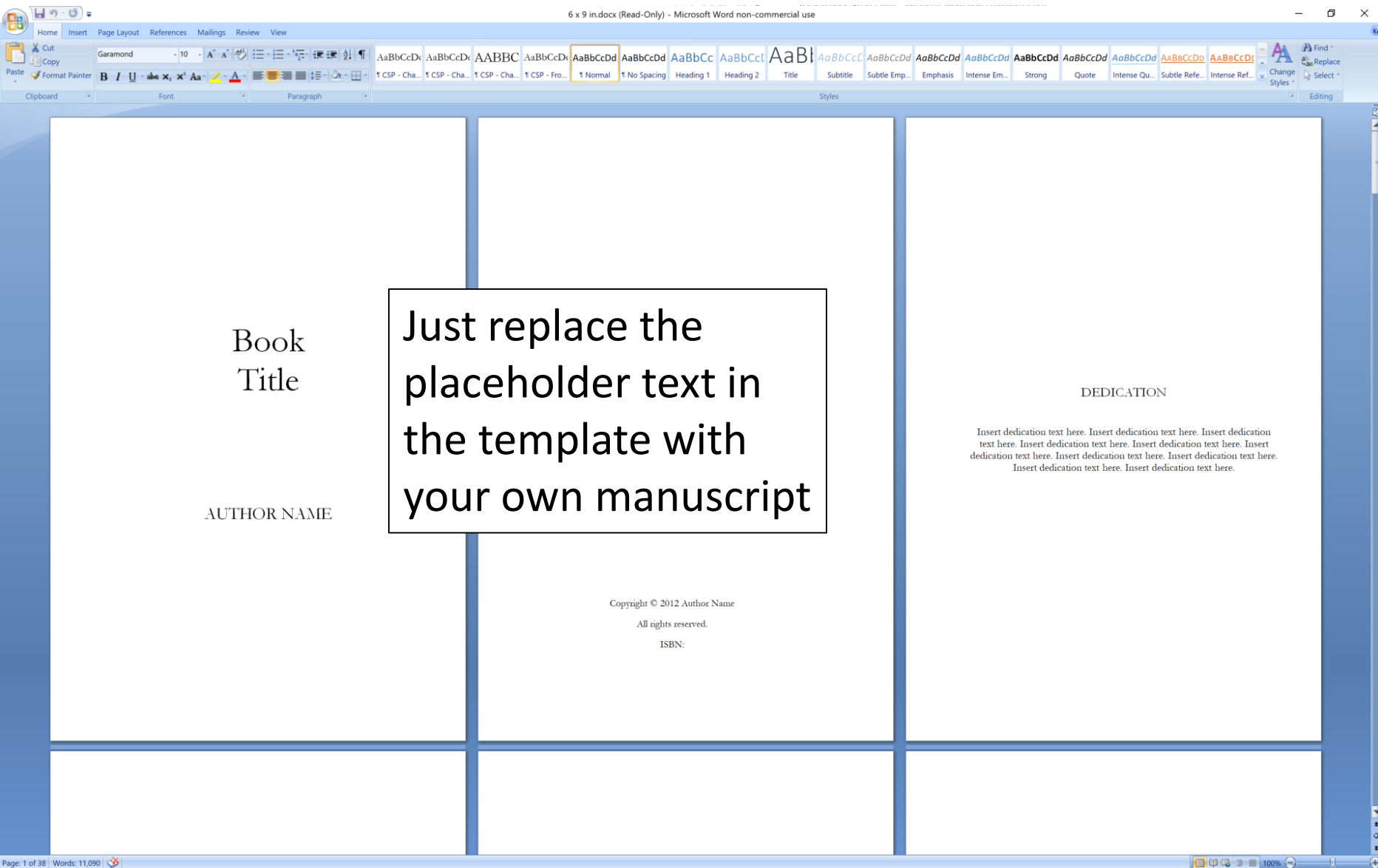
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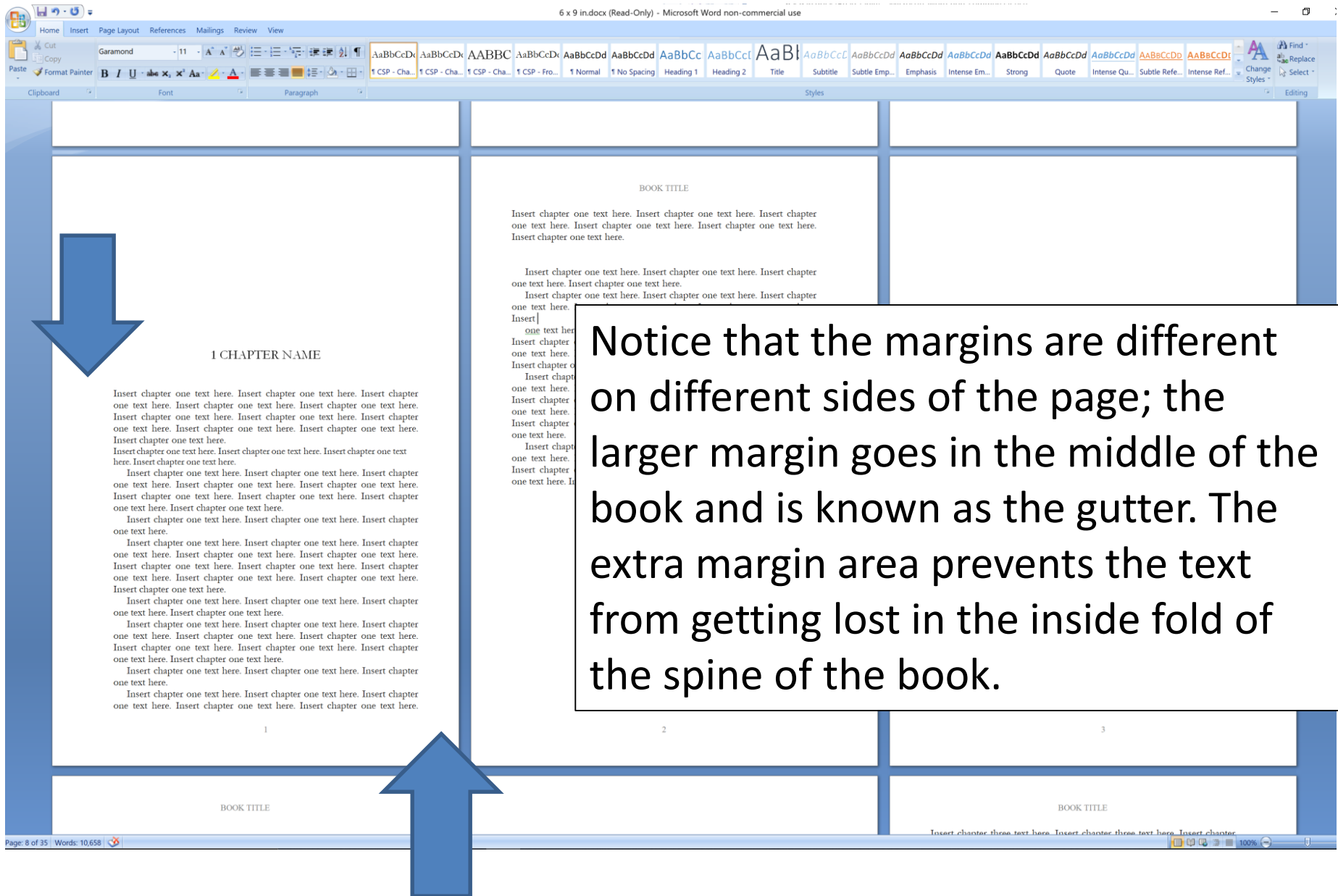
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2. Select **More Paper Sizes**. This opens a dialog box.
3. Enter your book's trim size, including bleed, into the "Width" and "Height" fields.
4. In the "Preview" section, select **Whole document** from the "Apply to" dropdown.
5. Click **OK**. This will resize your pages and change your page numbers.

Once you have decided on the size of your book, you can download a template that is already formatted for that size. That way you can just copy your manuscript and paste it into the formatted template (you will likely have to make some adjustments for things like chapter headings, but it is still much easier than starting from scratch)





Upload and continue the rest of the steps like you would an ebook and...

That's it!

(well at least the technical part is done,
selling and marketing is still something
you may choose to pursue)

More notes on Kindle Direct Publishing

- Terms of Service
- Kindle Book Lending
- Kindle Select

Terms of Service

- These set forth the framework for the contract between you, the author, and KDP/Amazon, the publisher/printer/seller
- They are long, written using legal language, and are updated often
- Worth reading all the way through at least once
- They are in Amazon's favor; from allowing them to change the terms at will to forced arbitration for disputes

Confidentiality

- Do not share communications between you and Amazon with other people
- Do not share sales data with anyone
- They have the right to withhold royalties if you breach the contract
- Share only publicly available information

Kindle Book Lending

- A vestige of the early days of ebook selling
- Allows users to share an ebook they purchased one time to another person for a limited amount of time
- KDP books are automatically enrolled in this, but you can opt out if you use the 35% royalty option
- No royalties from Kindle Book Lending

Kindle Select

- Optional program for authors using KDP
- Allows more control over pricing and marketing options using Amazon's services
- Requires that ebooks are sold and distributed exclusively through Amazon/Kindle
- Content must be created by you (no licensed or public domain works)
- ebook will be accessible through Amazon's *Kindle Unlimited* and *Kindle Owners Lending Library* services

Kindle Unlimited

- Subscription service offered by Amazon
- Readers can read an unlimited number of participating ebooks (and eAudiobooks) on their various devices
- Amazon determines payouts to authors based on how many pages of their books are read
- Payouts come from a pool of Amazon funds/money paid into the service and is divided by total pages read

Kindle Owners Lending Library

- Kindle owning Amazon Prime members can check out one participating title per month with no due date
- Can have only one title out at any given time
- KDP ebooks participating in Kindle Select can be checked out using this program
- Payout is the same as with Kindle Unlimited (on a per page basis)

Kindle Select Marketing Options

- Kindle Select titles receive 70% royalties (instead of 35%) in Brazil, Japan, Mexico, and India
- Optional promotional program allows you to lower the price of your eBook for up to 5 days every 90 day period while retaining the 70% royalty rate on titles even below the \$2.99 threshold
- Target campaigns at your fans, their purchase can help game the algorithm to help generate interest among others (maybe!)

Quick tips for self-publishing

- Build an audience by publishing multiple titles in the same genre
- Self-published ebooks generally sell better than self-published print books
- Study the techniques of other people who have had success in the area you're writing about (both self-published and indie/traditional publishing)

Quick tips for self-publishing

- Agents/Publicists – they'll see your titles' sales rankings online and come to you when you're at the level that one might be useful; and then you'll have to weigh whether they're worth it or not
- Traditional Publishers – same thing; after an ebook reaches a certain threshold on the bestseller charts, a traditional publisher may contact the author about making a physical version to sell in stores

Things to remember

- Bookstores generally do not carry self-published titles on their shelves
- Since anyone can make one, many people do
- There's just not enough time for brick and mortar booksellers to look through everything on offer (nor enough room on their shelves)

Things to remember

- KDP includes lot of resources on their website
- Take advantage of them, especially for technical advice, but be wary of things that seem too good to be true
- Self-service programs like KDP are considered distributors not publishers – they don't necessarily care about quality, and they don't control your property

More publishing information

- Launch sales are generally very slow for self-published titles
- Once you have a number of titles/sales/reviews, the algorithm can kick in and really help drive sales
- Don't be in a rush to publish your book – make sure it's good first; especially regarding editing and formatting

More publishing information

- The “algorithm” is the proprietary calculation that companies like Amazon and Google use to make some search results more visible than others
- Each company’s algorithms are secret, and they change often
- While sales data heavily influences how an algorithm ranks titles, metadata is also taken into account

More publishing information

- Metadata basically means data about data – so in the case of books, it is the description of the book, the subject matter, search terms used to look for the title, and so on
- The subject you choose to categorize your book should match the subject matter
- For example, don't categorize a sad book as humor; the average reader will likely be disappointed, and bad reviews could drive the algorithm to rank the title lower

More publishing information

- Keywords you use should be ones that your readers will use
- Test out search terms online, see what comes up and if you like the results
- Check at the bottom of a Google search page for other, similar terms that might also work
- Be specific; “historical fiction” is probably too broad, while “American Civil War novel” is more exact

More publishing information

- The book marketplace is changing all the time
- ebooks saw a steep increase in popularity for a while, then it tapered off for normal titles (major authors). However, there was another ebook boom after a major shift to online purchasing as a result of stay at home/social distancing orders
- Popular areas include genres like romance; specific niches are where self-published authors thrive
- Experiment with price; cheap books lower the barrier to purchase, but may devalue your work in the long run

More publishing information

- Some authors get followers by interacting with readers on social media; other authors avoid the public and let the books speak for themselves
- Email newsletters are a popular method of letting fans know you have a new title coming out
- Providing free copies of ebooks to your readers ahead of release can help generate buzz and get reviews on websites like Amazon and Goodreads

More publishing information

- The more reviews a book has (especially positive reviews) the more visible that title will be on online platforms
- However, services that offer bulk reviews for a fee should not be used; they go against the terms of service of online marketplaces like Amazon and can result in your book being down-ranked or delisted/removed

More publishing information

- Research shows that your time is usually better spent creating more books rather than spending lots of time and money on marketing
- If you have several titles in the same subject out there, people who browse that category are more likely to see at least some of them
- Books in a series have people coming back for more

The library is a great resource

- There is a 24 episode *Great Courses* series called [Publishing Your Book](#) on Kanopy
- This series can be streamed for free online using your library card
- Focuses primarily on traditional publishing methods, but does include [information on self-publishing](#)
- Use the computers at the library when available – they're free, have all the software you need to complete your book, and there might be fewer distractions there

The library is a great resource

- Also, take advantage of reference staff here at the library
- Unfortunately, we can't edit your book *or* review it *or* market it
- But! - hopefully we can answer some quick questions about formatting, help with setting up an account, or problem solve some other [small] technical issues

Lastly

- The first time you go through this process might be difficult, but if you make it through, the next time will be much easier
- And while coming up with more stories may take some work, the technical aspects of getting your self-published book ready for distribution will no longer hold you back

Thanks so much!



If you have questions or comments, feel free to reach out to librarian Alex Jenkins at ajenkins@newportbeachca.gov