

Sunbelt Media, Inc.

GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORS

How to Contact Us

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Acceptance of Your Manuscript

After a contract has been signed between you and the publisher, a book will take a short while to be assimilated into the production schedule. Based on many variables, such as if you have given us all the materials needed to begin the process, you should receive proofs within a month or two.

While waiting for publication, please do not schedule book signings, promotions, etc., of any kind. The time to do that is when the finished product is in your hand, usually within six months.

Order of Book

The usual order of a book follows (not every book includes all elements).

TITLE PAGE (the first right-hand page in book)—should have correct title and author's name as it is to appear in print.

COPYRIGHT PAGE—The press takes care of obtaining the Library of Congress Catalog Number and the ISBN, if applicable.

DEDICATION—just a line or two of thanks/dedication from author.

CONTENTS—absolute must (except for children's picture books or some fiction books).

FOREWORD (written by someone else).

PREFACE—briefly explains background of subject, why you wrote it, whether it is based on fact, etc.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS—to thank people who helped you with research, ideas, photos, etc.

INTRODUCTION (written by author; usually for longer histories).

MAIN TEXT OF BOOK

EPILOGUE/AFTERWORD provides reader with a follow-up if necessary.

PHOTO SECTION (unless photos are placed throughout book)—sometimes photo section is placed in center of book.

APPENDIX

ENDNOTES are preferable to footnotes.

GLOSSARY (if applicable)—please use simple, direct definitions and check accuracy of foreign word spellings.

BIBLIOGRAPHY—see style sheet on next page for format.

INDEX—is prepared by author after final corrections are made. Not all books require indexes.

A Brief Style Sheet

Generally we use the *Chicago Manual of Style*. Style may vary a little from book to book, but the goal is to keep style consistent within a book. The following are ones which seem to be most often corrected.

COMMA

- before “and” in a series (apples, oranges, and bananas)
- in an introductory clause (When the cat reappeared, he . . .) but not in a brief intro (In 1943 the war was . . .)
- to separate two complete sentences joined by conjunction (He loved to sing, and she loved to dance.)

TITLES

Lowercase titles of people (governor, president, general) unless the title immediately precedes a name.

HYPHENATION

Generally is necessary when nouns are modified by a compound adjective (horse-drawn carriage; two-story house). Unnecessary with derivative adjective with suffix of “-ly” (fully loaded; happily married).

DATES

November 1845 (no comma), but as with November 12, 1845, there is always a comma before and after year in a complete date.

BIBLIOGRAPHY STYLE

Book: Brown, Jane. *The Brown Book*. New York: Jones and Co., 1986.

Article: Jones, John. “The Old West.” *Americana* 65, No. 4 (April 1990).

Newspaper: Martin, Mary. “Peter Pan Particulars.” *New York Times*, July 22, 1990.

A Few Words About Content

It is always better to *simplify*. Instead of a long, complicated thought, strive toward brevity and clarity. A hint at complication is the use of a semicolon.

Watch for *repetition and redundancy*. Be careful not to use certain words or phrases again and again. Especially notice beginning a sentence with the same word in several consecutive sentences.

In fiction, keep up with character names! Was Charlie spelled Charley in Chapter 6? Which do you wish to use? Is it Mary Ann or Maryann? In dialogue, be sure to keep each speaker separated by starting a new paragraph. If there is a pause in speech, indicate with an ellipsis (“I’m not sure . . .”). If there is an interruption, indicate with a dash (“I told her to watch out—” A loud crash sounded in the next room.)

As far as action goes, look at chapter breaks. Is it a logical place to break the action? Does it lead the reader into the next chapter? Is there a hint of some suspense? Also, are all the loose ends tied up? In Chapter 1, if you say John would soon discover why the book was missing, be sure to later explain why the book disappeared!

YOU are responsible for accuracy of names, dates, quotes, and facts. All quoted matter *must* be attributed to its original source. Permission may be required for longer passages, song titles, poems, etc. Check and recheck spellings *before* the manuscript gets to us. If your book is based on historical fact, it is usually desirable to have a preface. Include a paragraph or two about the real events and how they have been fictionalized. In all events, you must have permission to use excerpts, etc.

Legal Issues

It is the author's responsibility alone to request and pay for permission to reprint any copyrighted material. The press does not secure permissions. Nor does the press offer the author protection from legal action; the author is legally liable for copyright infringement or for libelous material. Although the press accepts no legal responsibility for a book's content, if the publisher believes that a forthcoming book contains material that might be legally actionable, he will suspend production until the issue is resolved by the author.

PERMISSIONS

In *The Copyeditor's Handbook* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), Amy Einsohn suggests that the following types of materials require permissions:

- Lengthy quotations from published nonfiction works that exceed fair use. There are no hard-and-fast rules about what constitutes fair use. Most publishers use the following rule of thumb: Fair use allows an author to quote up to about fifty words from a short nonfiction article and about four hundred words from a nonfiction book. Quotations for purposes other than presentation of evidence of examples for analysis, commentary, review, or evaluation may not be considered fair use. For this reason, publishers may require an author to obtain permission for epigraphs and other quotations that are not discussed by the author if the original work is still under copyright.
- Any quotation from a poem, novel, short story, play, or song that is still under copyright . . . Reprinting even one or two lines from a creative work usually requires permission.
- Any quotation from unpublished materials (correspondence, archives, private manuscripts). Quotations from unpublished materials are not covered by fair use, and the author or owner of the unpublished materials retains full rights in perpetuity.
- Any table, graph, chart, photograph, or illustration that is not the author's own work and is not from a U.S.

government publication. (All federal government publications are in the public domain and may be freely used.)

COPYRIGHT

Please note that as of January 1, 1978, all works are copyrighted as soon as they are in “fixed form.” The U.S. Copyright Office does not require that works be individually registered for copyright protection but advises to print the year of creation, together with the copyright symbol ©, on the work in question. Therefore, Sunbelt Media does not request copyrights for books. Any book that receives a Library of Congress (LOC) control number will, however, be registered with the Copyright Office, which is controlled by the LOC.

LIBEL, ETC.

Libelous statements are false, damaging statements, presented as fact, about an identifiable living person. This does not mean, though, that an author can write anything they wish about a living person, so long as it is true. Nor does it mean that merely changing or withholding a person’s name will prevent some readers from identifying the individual.

Please remember that everyone in the U.S. enjoys considerable right to privacy under the law. (Public officials and celebrities have less protection.) A private person may with good reason sue for damages if reputation-harming things are written about them. Even if those things are true.

Also, negative statements about other people can cast the author in a bad light. Watch not only for defamatory material but for language that is unintentionally derogatory toward groups of people (i.e., race, gender, nationality). The same goes for obscenity—it’s not good for the author.

RESOURCES

The foregoing is in no way a complete treatment of the legal issues that can arise in publishing. If you are unsure how to go about getting permissions, are worried whether you have libeled someone, or wonder if writing about an old friend will violate his or her privacy rights, first you might consult a reference such as *The Copyright, Permission, and Libel Handbook*, by Lloyd Jassin and Steven C. Schechter.

Manuscript and Disk Preparation

Every element of your book must be submitted at the same time in order for us to begin work. This includes

- a printout of the latest version of the entire manuscript, or an electronic file;
- photos, illustrations, captions, and credits;
- author and illustrator bios, and synopsis of book.

The printout is our working copy and will not be returned to you.

Retain the original manuscript in your computer. A copy of the complete *final* manuscript should be given to us on a CD using a word processing program such as Word Pad or Microsoft Word. We prefer that all chapters be in one file.

A second file should contain a list of the photos and illustrations with their assigned numbers and their captions and credits.

SAMPLE PHOTO AND CAPTION FILE:

001. L-R: Frank Jessup, Susie Canton, and Jeff Weintraub. (Courtesy of Illinois State Museum)

002. The second photo's caption and credit.

003. The third photo's caption and credit.

A third file is for brief biographies of the author and illustrator, synopsis of the book, and any ideas for the cover.

Additionally, it would be very helpful if you would keep the following in mind when preparing the manuscript:

- It is okay to type words in *italics* or in **bold**, but please do not type titles or words in text in ALL CAPS.
- Set no headers or footers, except the name of the book and page numbers on each page.
- Do not use tabs, except to begin a paragraph and to set tables and charts.
- Do not use a hard return (or "Enter") in text, except to begin a

new paragraph or a new chapter. Allow lines in a paragraph to “wrap” from line to line.

- Endnotes are typed at end of book, one set for each chapter. Each chapter begins with endnote 1. *Endnotes are preferable to footnotes positioned at the bottom of a page.*
- Footnotes are generally used only for technical books. *If your book is of a technical nature and requires footnotes, set footnotes at the end of the paragraph immediately following the in-text footnote number or asterisk. Separate from text with a number of consecutive hyphen keys above and below. For example: “This is a sentence in the text of your book. It has an in-text footnote number.”¹*

1 This is a footnote which you type at the end of the paragraph containing the in-text footnote number. When we page the book, we will move the footnote to the bottom of the page which contains the in-text footnote number.

- Do not index your manuscript until the book has completed the final correction stage. Some books do not require an index.

PHOTOS, ILLUSTRATIONS, CAPTIONS, AND CREDITS

- Photos may be in color or black and white, except color photos are required for cover design work or if your book is to be printed in color. Whether your book will have color is a contract decision between the publisher and you, but it must be made *before* the book is put in production.
- All photos and illustrations must be numbered consecutively beginning with #001. It helps if photos are numbered in approximately the same order in which they will appear in the book.
- Do not write directly on front or back of photo. Impressions written on the back of a photo always show through the picture when it is scanned. Also, pens leave ink residue that transfers from the back of one photo to the front of the next photo. Using a pencil, write the photo number on a small sticky dot (not Post-its) and then apply the dot to a back *corner* of the photo.
- Write the unique number given each photo or illustration in the left margin of the manuscript approximately where you would like the photo to be located in the book (if photo sections are not to be printed). The photo will be inserted as close to this location

as possible when paginating. If photo placement is not given, it makes paging the book much more difficult.

- When hand delivering or mailing us photos, sandwich photos between two pieces of cardboard and bind on the outside with rubber bands horizontally and vertically. Please do not use any kind of tape as it might stick to the pictures placed between the cardboard pieces.
- If there are more than 50 photos, organize them according to chapters and store in 8½ x 11" envelopes with the chapter number written on front of the envelope. For less than 50 photos, one envelope is sufficient.
- Each caption must be assigned the same number given to the photo. Except for picture books, all photos and illustrations must have captions. Each caption should be followed by its source or credit. It is your responsibility to acquire permission in writing for the use of each photo or illustration. We will not publish illustrations or portions of another copyrighted work without written authorization by that author. This includes postcards, pictures in magazines, newspapers, etc. If you did not take the picture, then it belongs to someone else.
- Your photos and illustrations will be returned to you within the month following the delivery of your book from the printer.
- The photos in your page proofs are low-resolution copies used as placement holders only.

We take pride in scanning and retouching all photos for our books. However, if you decide to scan in your own pictures, we accept CMYK (color), grayscale (B&W), or bitmap images. The resolution should be 300 ppi TIFFS. We also accept high-quality JPEG files. Each photo should be at least 5" wide.

To obtain the best scan, please keep in mind that the scanner bed should be kept clean of dust and fingerprints. Also be sure to clean the photos of dust and fingerprints with a soft lint-free cloth before scanning.

Unless you are a professional retoucher, please do not attempt to "fix" photos. When we retouch photos, we look for a wide variety of flaws, such as dust, tears, ink blotches, and mold spots. We can only scan in pictures and books with a maximum size of 8½ x 14".

Do not send us the only copy of an original photo. You should

have a reprint made at a photo lab to ensure a high-quality second generation picture. Prints from lasers or inkjet printers are unacceptable. Halftone reprints tend to create a moire (wavy pattern) when scanned in and are usually not acceptable. Most newspaper articles and pictures are of very low quality and do not reproduce well.

AUTHOR BIO, ILLUSTRATOR BIO, AND SYNOPSIS OF BOOK

We require photographs of the author and the illustrator, along with a brief biography of both (about 100-200 words each). A resume is not acceptable. We also require a brief synopsis of the book.

The Production Process

To take a book from raw manuscript to finished product requires the following steps:

- Scan photos and retouch for dust and scratches.
 - Book design, pagination, and photo placement (generally takes about 30 hours for 50 photos and 30 hours for pagination).
 - Send page proofs to author.
 - Corrections and proofing until all is suitable.
 - CIP applied for from Library of Congress.
 - Send book to printer and bindery.
-
- When the final check is being done on text, the cover copy work begins. If you supply us with your e-mail address, the cover proof can be sent to you to view with Adobe Acrobat Reader, or as a JPEG.

Author's Corrections

ONLY ONE VERSION OF CHANGES IS NEEDED

Please do not, for example, send an e-mail with corrections, then a fax, and then call to reiterate the changes you have sent. This approach opens up a wide margin for error and may even delay your book's publication date.

The appropriate method of indicating corrections is to mark them directly on galley pages. (See Proofreading Symbols.) Please do not also send an additional page-by-page listing of every change you made. If there is no room in the margin, you may attach typewritten material with, preferably, a staple. (Tape, paper clips, and sticky notes are undesirable.) You will then mail the set of proofs back to us. We do not accept changes by fax.

WHEN MARKING CHANGES, LESS IS BEST

If, for instance, you wish to change a word in a sentence, please do not rewrite the entire sentence in the margin. Simply cross out the word and write its replacement.

LAST-MINUTE DISCOVERIES

We understand that authors may discover crucial errors (such as misspelling of a name or other incorrect information) after sending corrections, and we will attempt to make such changes.

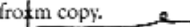


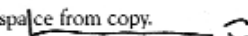
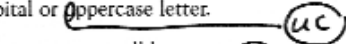
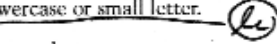

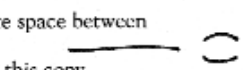

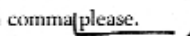
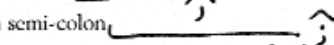
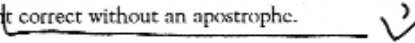
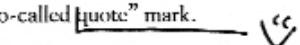
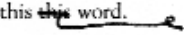

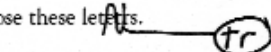
Proofreading Symbols

Please use these symbols when reading proof. Use a red pen. Do not use pencil. Do not make your marks between the lines. Always draw a line and make the marks in the margin. If a mark is small, such as a single period, circle it, and/or write the word "period" in the margin. The goal is to make your marks as obvious as possible.

EXAMPLE:

One of the first references to kites in Europe is found in the 1300s: a German book contains an illustration of soldiers using a kite to drop a bomb over the walls of an enemy castle. By the 1600s kites had lost their military overtones, growing popular as toys for children. During the nineteenth century, kites saved lives—shipwrecked boats would use them to carry lines to potential rescuers on shore.

THE SYMBOLS:

- Delete from copy. 
- Add to copy. 
- Add space to copy. 
- Delete space from copy. 
- Use capital or uppercase letter. 
- Use lowercase or small letter. 
- Add space between lines in this copy. 
- Delete space between lines in this copy. 
- Insert a period. 
- Insert a comma please. 
- Insert a semi-colon. 
- Insert a colon. 
- This isn't correct without an apostrophe. 
- Use a so-called "quote" mark. 
- Delete this ~~the~~ word. 
- Add a [to this line. 
- Transpose these letters. 

Printing, Binding, Delivery

It can take from four to twelve weeks to print, bind, and deliver your book to you, depending on the printer's schedule, complexity of the job, and delivery method. Obviously, a paperback novel is going to take less time than a hardback, dust-jacketed special edition with a case.

We must have your current address before shipping books.

Promotions and Book Signings

Of course, we all want the book printed as quickly as possible. While we are waiting, now is the time to establish some book signings. It is important to remember that just because your book is being published, it does not mean that it will be placed in bookstores. We cannot force Barnes and Noble or Borders or any other bookstore to buy your book. That is their decision. All we can do is offer it to them and hope that they buy it.

It is no secret that our authors sell the books. An active and enthusiastic author can sell more books than any expensive advertising campaign.

Most authors try to write for a unique pocket of people. Cookbooks are aimed at cooks, children's books for children, etc. And most authors have already talked up their books to their friends and neighbors—a ready-made market.

We can help with your sales by providing pre-publication flyers, posters, and postcards, if that is what has been agreed upon by you and the publisher.

For tips on selling/marketing your book, as well as understanding what the publisher expects from you during the publication process, we recommend that you read *Bestseller* by George Arnold (available from Eakin Press).