

## Notes on Self-Publishing

The Writers and Poets Club has gained some experience in self-publishing fiction, humorous works, and personal experience stories. The following miscellaneous notes are presented for your consideration in your self-publishing endeavor. Please note that marketing your book is not covered in this piece. Marketing your work is a separate matter.

Writing is fun, but self-publishing your creation is work. It requires learning something new, perhaps foreign and scary to those not particularly blessed with computer skills.

**One of the most surprising and annoying glitches we have dealt with is** that everyone who writes on a computer generally uses an 8.5 X 11 page size and prints on 8.5 X 11 sheets of paper. That paper size is so universal and common that any other size sold for computer use is not even available, and most computer users don't ever think about this issue.

Unfortunately, books are typically printed in the following sizes, and 8.5 X 11 is found only in the textbook group.

Fiction: 4.25 x 6.87, 5 x 8, 5.25 x 8, 5.5 x 8.5, 6 x 9

Novella: 5 x 8

Children's: 7.5 x 7.5, 7 x 10, 10 x 8

Textbooks: 6 x 9, 7 x 10, 8.5 x 11

Non-fiction: 5.5 x 8.5, 6 x 9, 7 x 10"

Memoir: 5.25 x 8, 5.5 x 8.5

Photography: Whatever you see fit!

So before you begin the extensive work of laying out your pleasing, beautiful, organized pages, keep in mind that the paper size in which you publish will most likely be smaller. So, start working in the finished size early to avoid the extra, annoying work of reformatting your beautifully composed and perfectly edited piece just as it is about to be submitted for publication.

Great! So, what size should you pick? That depends on the subject matter, the number of words, the print size, the margins, and, of course, the number of pictures. Taking all of these factors into consideration, you should aim for a book that's between a half and one inch thick. Thick books generally turn casual readers off and cost more to print. The author's price for printed black-and-white books less than one inch thick will be under five dollars each, an important consideration when you plan to order some for family and friends.

Our members have found the following specifications work well. A 6 x 9-inch book with a 12-point font, about 60,000 words, and no pictures is about 3/4 of an inch thick.

Conduct practical research on size. Visit the library in the Madera Clubhouse and check out the book sizes, page counts, word counts, and font sizes other writers have used.

**The second major glitch The Writers and Poets Club has encountered in the publishing process is that authors don't always use the formatting tools available in their word processors.** Some authors rely solely on spaces and tabs to position items. When minor changes are needed, this approach often leads to time-consuming chasing of words around the page and pages around the book. So, learn to use extensive formatting tools like page breaks, section breaks, paragraph indentation, justification, and margins. Try working in a multiple-page layout so you can see how your book will actually appear on left and right pages.

One of the most popular self-publishing platforms is Amazon's Kindle Direct Publishing. According to Wikipedia, in 2016 Amazon released four million e-books, and 40% of those titles were self-published through KDP. Amazon offers extensive help on their easy-to-navigate publishing information page. They also offer marketing support if and when you reach that stage.

Your book can be printed in paperback or hardcover, and with a little extra effort, it can also be offered on Kindle for readers who prefer ebooks. It costs nothing to upload your work to the Kindle publishing service. You pay only when you order author copies.

If you choose to publish on Amazon Kindle, you will need to create a login and password. If you already have an Amazon login, you can use the same login to publish on Kindle. Click here to go to [Amazon](#) Kindle publishing information. The Amazon page will invite you to Sign in at the top of the page. You don't need to sign in just to access the help topics on the left. But if you want to explore the Bookshelf page, you must sign in. If you do not have an Amazon account, you can create one by clicking Sign in.

Before you can upload your book, the Kindle process will require you to submit personal information that will be used to inform the IRS of your intention to sell books and earn income. Yes, as you might expect, your government wants a cut of your grand scheme to make tons of money. Amazon will automatically provide a 1099 in time for taxes. Front Matter, Chapter Pages, and Back Matter from Amazon help

It's not required, but Amazon recommends the following standard pages to start your book and its chapters. Having worked on your book only on a computer screen, you may not have thought much about it until now, but your book will have left- and right-hand pages. In addition to your body matter, your book will likely include front and back matter, such as title pages, an index, and a prologue.

The following will help you understand that your book will have separate layout rules for left- and right-facing pages, most notably that the binding side of the pages must be larger than the outer side. Some left-facing pages may end up blank. Right-facing pages are never normally blank. This information was copied from Amazon Kindle help pages, which are readily available on the website.

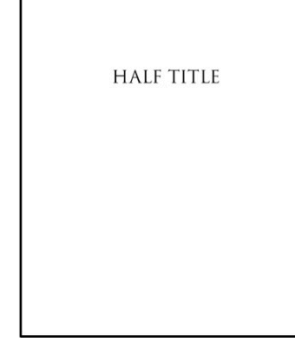
### Front Matter

Front matter includes all content that appears prior to chapter one or the main body text.

Front matter elements usually appear in this order:

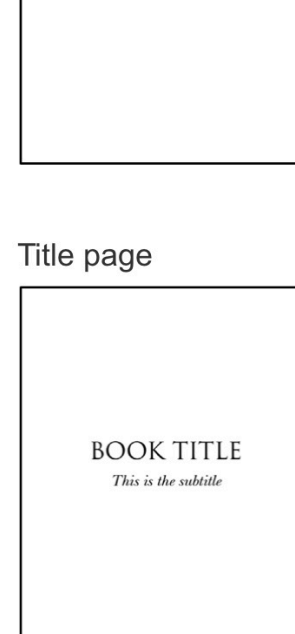
1. Half title
2. Title
3. Copyright
4. Reviews and praise
5. Dedication
6. Table of contents
7. Preface
8. Acknowledgments
9. Prologue
10. Introduction

#### Half-title page



- Always falls on a right-facing page
- Doesn't contain page numbers or page headers
- Contains the book title

#### Title page



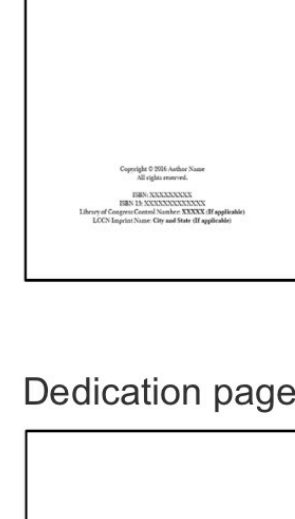
- Always falls on a right-facing page directly after the half title page
- Doesn't contain page numbers or page headers
- Typically contains the book title, subtitle, and author name
- Doesn't include "by" before author name, even if contained in manuscript

#### Copyright page



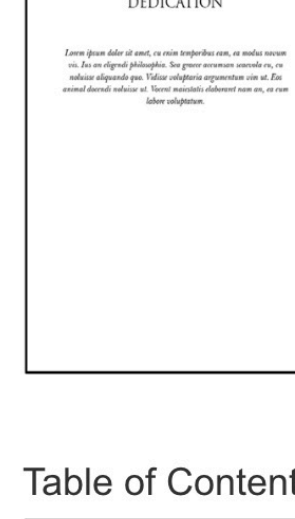
- Always falls on the first left-facing page after the title page
- Doesn't contain page numbers or page headers

#### Dedication page



- Always falls on a right-facing page, usually after the copyright page
- Only contains page numbers and page headers if it extends beyond one page

#### Table of Contents (TOC)



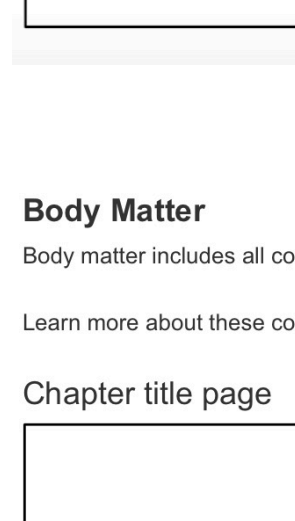
- Always falls on a right-facing page
- Doesn't contain page numbers or page headers
- TOC may spread over more than one page
- Includes chapters and section names as they appear in the body of the manuscript. For example, if the manuscript TOC reads, "Chapter 1: The Big Dog," but the body of the book reads, "Chapter 1: The Large Dog," the TOC in the formatted interior should read, "The Large Dog."

### Body Matter

Body matter includes all content between the front and back matter. Body matter typically contains all part pages and chapters.

Learn more about these common body matter elements:

#### Chapter title page



- Chapter one starts on a right-facing page
- All subsequent chapters start on the next available page
- Doesn't contain page headers
- Page number formatting follow the selected design numbers
- Capitalization and casing of the title, subtitle, and chapter numbers follow the selected design styles, not how it appears in the manuscript
- Starting paragraph doesn't have a first-line indent

#### Headings

- Left-page headers always show the author name; right-page headers always show the book title.

#### Body text

- Fully justified to create a smoother reading experience
- Sequential paragraphs are always indented with no spaces between paragraphs
- Spacing between paragraphs/sections should be uniform

#### Page numbers

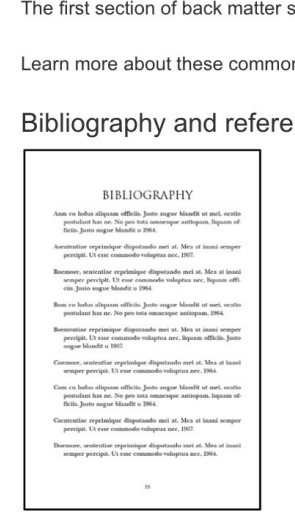
- These appear as Arabic numerals (for example, 1, 2, 3).

### Back Matter

Back matter includes all content that appears after the last chapter or end of the body matter. Back matter sections typically include references and the author bio. The first section of back matter starts on a right-facing page.

Learn more about these common back matter elements:

#### Bibliography and reference pages



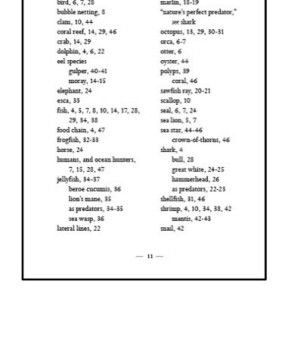
- These fall on a right-facing page.

#### Author bio page



- This falls on a right-facing page.

#### Index



- Always falls on a right-facing page
- Only contains page numbers or page headers if it extends to create consistent page numbering throughout the entire back matter section
- Flush-and-hang style
  - o In printed works, all indexes are set in flush-and-hang (or hanging) indentation style
  - o The first line of each entry—the main heading—is set flush left, and any following lines are indented