

Self-Publishing Books Guide

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Writing a book is an enjoyable part of being an author. Once the book is written, publishing is the next step, which is the worst thing about being an author. You could submit manuscripts to different publishers or a book agent, but the chances of getting picked up are low. Self-publishing is the best alternative, but there are costs to the self-publishing process. To be clear, the total out-of-pocket cost can be \$700 to \$800 to self-publish, and you will have to do some of the work. Self-publishing gets around the creative and financial restrictions major publishers impose. In the end, your work will be publicly available, and you can claim to be a book author. For technical writers, books are an extension of your resume, which lets the world know that you have experience in a specific field.

Self-publishing takes a little work, but once you go through this a few times, the process gets easier. There are many individuals and self-publishing companies that can help with the process. The goal of this paper is to discuss some of the key aspects of self-publishing.

Key Websites

Before we get into the details, there are some very important sites that will be referred to:

- IngramSpark - <https://www.ingramspark.com/> - This is the recommended site to help self-publish the book and get the book into retailers. The site has many resources to help create the book, i.e., a list of cover artists, book sizes, print calculators, tutorials on self-publishing, etc. You can buy printed books directly and/or have the books made available to book retailers.
- 99Designs - <https://99designs.com/> - A link from IngramSpark to help find a cover artist.
- Bowker - [Bowker Home Page](#) – Primary site for getting ISBN numbers and bar codes for the book. They also have information about self-publishing books.
- U.S. Copyright Office: <https://www.copyright.gov/registration/> (Best used with Firefox browser) – the last step will be to send the book in for copyright.

Besides IngramSpark, there are a couple of other companies to consider if you prefer to handle the book sales and shipping yourself:

- InstantPublisher (<https://www.instantpublisher.com/>), which also specializes in self-publishing, but they help with book production.
- Alexanders Print Advantage (<https://alexanders.com/>). They are a large print house that can print everything from posters, and family albums, to corporate catalogs, etc.. They can get the book printed, but not much else.

Both of these printers are excellent, and a great option if you want to sell your book directly, rather than go through a retailer. Alternatively, you can sell books as an Amazon Seller (<https://sell.amazon.com/>). In either case, you will have to handle all the shipping. You will want a box for shipping the book. Uline has boxes designed for shipping books: [Deluxe Easy-Fold Mailers in Stock - ULINE](#).

For this paper, we are focusing on IngramSpark.

Writing Approaches

Everyone has a different writing approach:

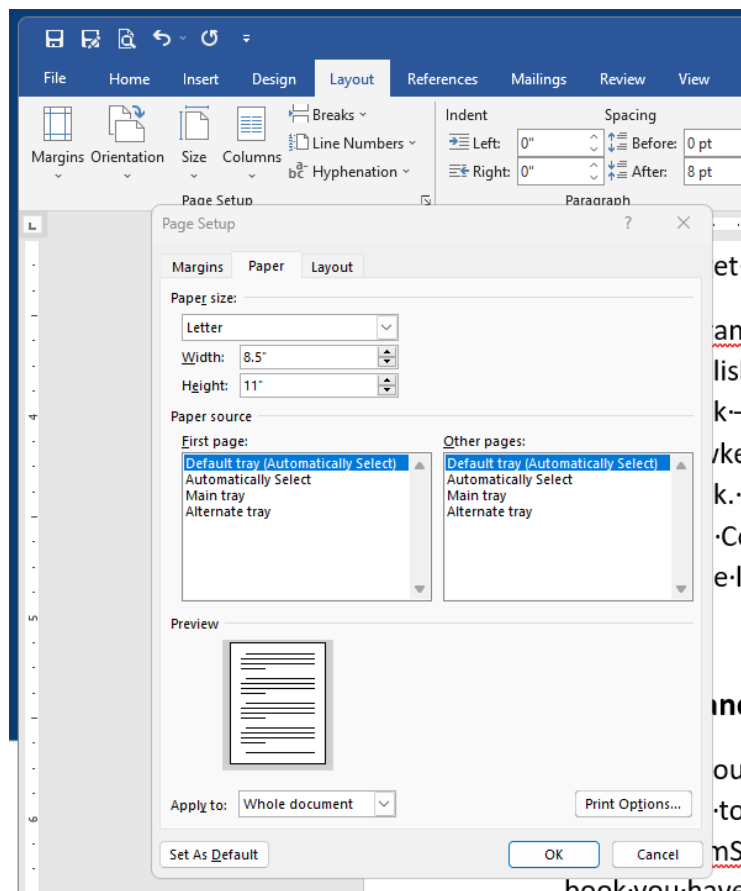
- Labs First - For technical books, focus on the labs, exercises, or data first. Once those items have been determined, write the information or story around the result.
- Presentation First - If you are going to teach or present from the book, you might want to use PowerPoint® to create slides first, which then can be used and expanded in the book text.
- Outline – Gathering your thoughts into an outline is good for any of the above approaches. An outline helps to guide your thoughts on the story you want to tell.

Book Size and Layout

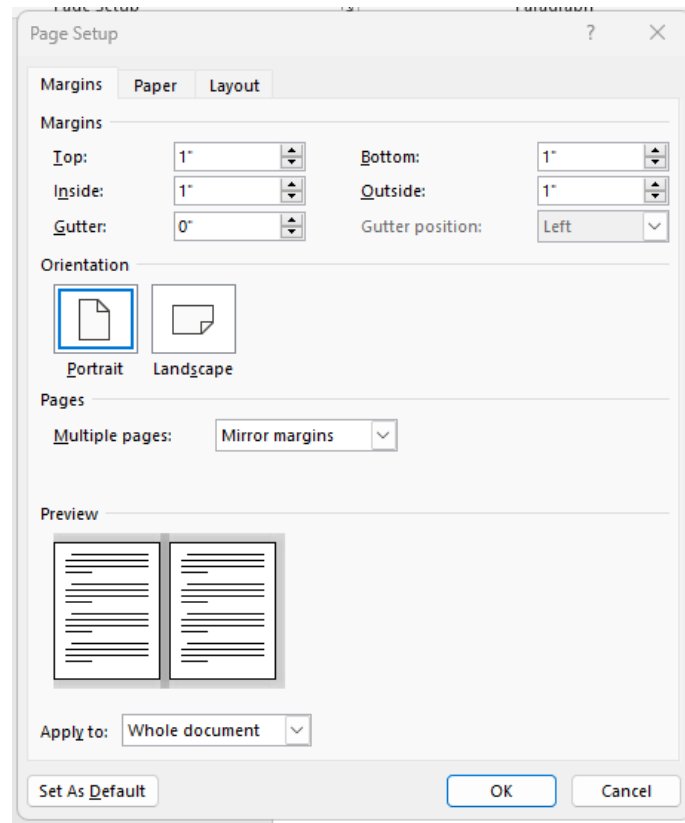
Hopefully, you have written the book in Microsoft Word. The formatting tools in Word are going to be very helpful in getting the book laid out correctly. The first thing to do is to determine the size of the book. IngramSpark lists the book sizes they support. You will want to choose a size that fits the type of book you have written.

Once you have determined the size, you want to change the layout of the manuscript in Word.

1. Select Layout->Size->More-Paper-Sizes
2. Adjust the Width and height to match the target size of the book.



3. You will want the gutter position set to left, Multiple pages set to Mirror margins, and set to the whole document.
4. Click OK when finished.
5. Save the book.



6. If you have not done so, there are two critical pages to add to the front of the manuscript. The first is the title page, with the title of the work and you as the author. The next page will be the copyright page. Here is a sample copyright page.

Your Title

Copyright © 2021, You the author. All Rights Reserved

A Recipe for Love is a work of fiction. Names, places, and incidents either are products of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events, locals, or persons, living, or dead, is entirely coincidental.

Published in the Country of publication by **You**

City state size

Your website

No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, mechanical or electronic, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system without the written permission from the publisher.

Manufactured in the Country

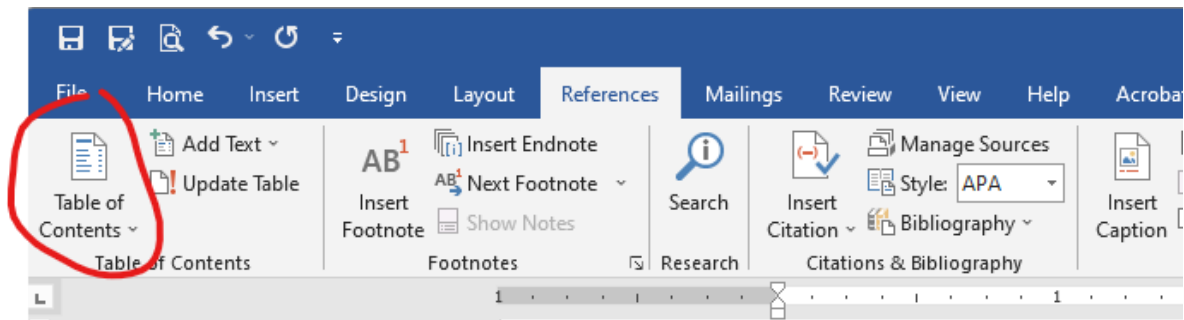
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data is available:

ISBN-13: <ISBN number from Bowker>

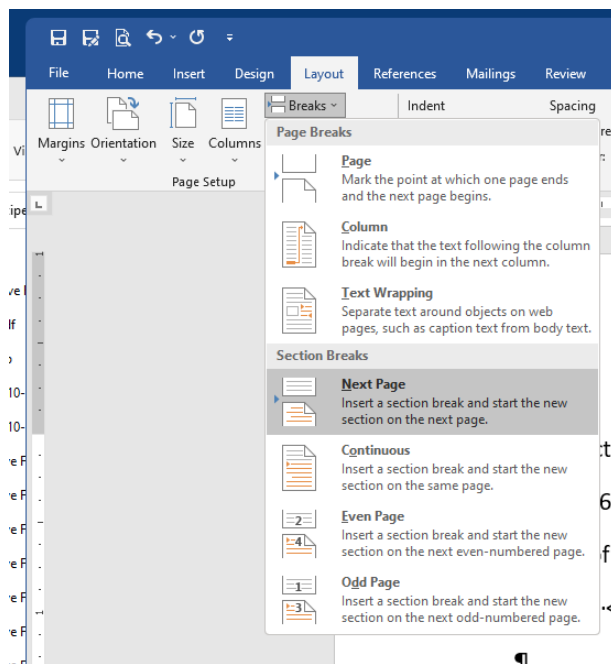
XYZ is a register trademark or trademark of abc company.

7. For the copyright page and to submit to the Library of Congress, you will need an ISBN number. Bowker is the main company to get the ISBN number and the barcode image. The barcode will go on the back cover of the book. You should also know the prices of the book at this point in time:
 - a. ISBN – Bowker \$125 ([ISBN US \(bowker.com\)](#))
 - b. Barcode – Bowker \$25 ([ISBN US \(bowker.com\)](#))
8. You may add other pages after the copyright pages such as a forward, acknowledgments, and other books you have authored.
9. You can also add a table of contents, if your book needs it. You must have already used the Headings style to set the style for each chapter heading; otherwise, the table of contents will not be generated. You can always perform this step later, but leave a page to store the table of contents.

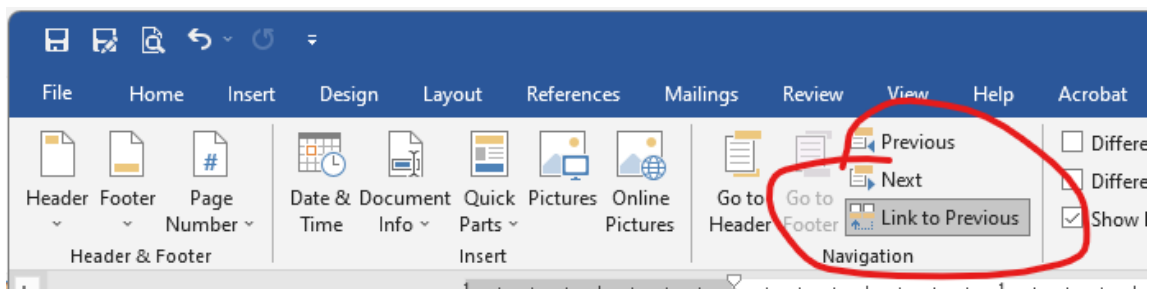


10. Save the work as always.

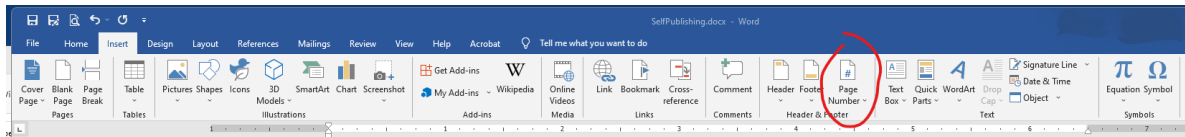
Now we need to get to the real work of the layout process. You need to go through the whole book and add page numbers to the bottom of the pages. If you don't want page numbers in the first few pages of the book, such as the title page and copyright page, you will want to add a section break after the last introduction page and before the body of the work.



You will then need to double-click on the very bottom of the first page of the body for the work to open the footer section. Then uncheck Link to Previous

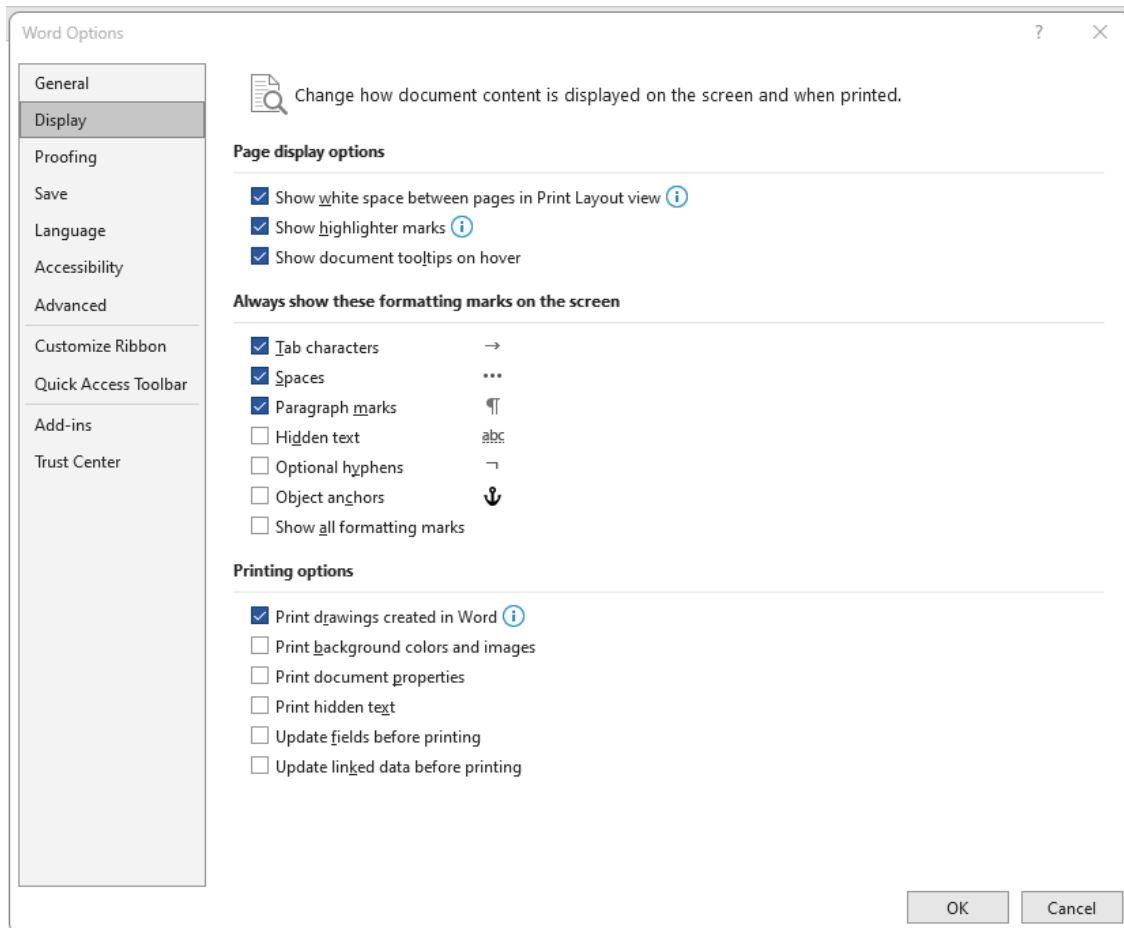


Then you can add the page numbering



In order to go through the rest of the book and clean up the manuscript, you will need to review the different formatting marks in Word. Click on File->Options, then click on Display.

Make sure the Tab characters, Spaces, and Paragraph marks are selected, and click OK.



You will have to go through the whole book a few times to clean things up so that it looks like the book you want others to see.

If you include pictures in the book, these may have to be set to a higher resolution for the printing process. The book should be saved in PDF format, which will give you another opportunity to review the book without all the Microsoft Word marks.

Reference all Copyrighted and Trademarked Material

If you plan to include materials from another source, it is important that you apply trademark credit to the original owner. You can also have a bibliography if ideas or concepts from other articles or books are included. For any graphics or pictures, make sure you have permission from the copyright holder.

Some companies have a site that lists all their trademark products. Here is the site for Microsoft: [Trademark and Brand Guidelines | Microsoft Legal](#). Most companies have a legal person you can contact to get permission or guidance.

Note: We are not legal experts so we strongly recommend contacting a copyright legal expert if there are any questions.

Back Cover

Before we get to the cover, you will have to write something to be printed on the back cover of the book that describes the book. This is a separate Word document. You will also want an author bio and maybe a picture. You will give all these items to the cover artist.

Editors and Reviewers

As a writer, cognitive blindness can set in so you will be missing something that will be obvious for other readers. Having another set of eyes to review the book for typos and mistakes is a final step in the production process. There are reviewers available that can be hired to review the work. The costs will vary.

Cover Artist

Unless you are a great graphical designer, you will need to hire someone to create the cover of the book. IngramSpark has links to different sites for cover artists (i.e. 99Designs is one). The typical cost for a book cover is \$300- to \$400. You can select and reach out to an artist about the book. Be sure to tell them that you are publishing through IngramSpark, and they may use the IngramSpark book cover template to assist in generating the cover.

The reason we went through the whole process to do the layout first is that the cover artist needs to know the size of the book (LxW) and the total page count. The total page count will determine the spine size. They will also need the bar code you purchased from Bowker.

Most importantly you will need to have some idea of what you want on the cover of the book, and you will need patience with artists as they work with you to get the cover the way you want it.

Descriptions

You need to write two descriptions for websites and advertising. One long and one short for publication with IngramSpark and other websites.

IngramSpark Setup and Proof

You will want to sign up for an account: <https://myaccount.ingramspark.com/Account/Signup>. From there, IngramSpark has tutorials on how to upload the book. The wizard walks you through the process to fill in all the information – Title, descriptions long and short, prices, ISBN, etc. The book text and cover are uploaded separately. The system will check both files to make sure they are acceptable. Once they are accepted, you will get an electronic proof within a day or two. Once you have approved the proof, order 1 or 2 copies to see how the actual book looks in print. If the printed copies turned out perfect, then enable distribution for print. WE STRONGLY DON'T RECOMMEND ENABLING EBOOKS.

Ingram Spark – Setup \$49.00

Ingram Spark Ad in Catalog - \$100

Ingram Spark print \$30-\$70

Send to the Library of Congress for Copyright (United States)

Once you have a copy of the book, the next step is to send one (1) copy to the Library of Congress and file a copyright claim. The website is <https://www.copyright.gov/registration/>.

Library of Congress registration fee: \$65.00

USPS approximate shipping cost to the Library of Congress is \$9.00 for one copy of the book.

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www.annabooks.com

02/03/25

Advertisement

Advertising is one cost left out of the actual production cost. IngramSpark has an option to put the book into their quarterly catalog.

Website - Having a website beyond the bookstore website is an important aspect of the advertising process. It helps readers find you and other books, articles, or works that you have done. If the book is part of your business, posting the book on your website is strongly advisable. If you don't have a website for your book, you can create one. There are several website builders like Wex.com, Web.com, Squarespace, WordPress, etc. that can help get you up and running.

Book Clubs – there are many book clubs and author forums available that can help you with advertising or even general author issues.

Press Release – If the book targets a specific industry, a PR that targets that industry can get the word out.

Linkedin – Promote your book on social media sites like LinkedIn, so your contacts can help “like” the book.

Summary

This paper highlighted the key websites and processes to self-publish a book. There is some work and cost with self-publishing, but self-publishing provides you with more control of the work and the message you want to communicate.