

# PUBLISHING A BOOK

## STEP ONE

Finish your manuscript. Whether you have written a children's book, memoir, novel, book or poetry, or any other type of book, your first step toward publication is to actually write it. It is best to completely finish your book and then go back and revise it through vast editing and proofreading. Seeking the help of a quality editor is often a great idea.

## STEP TWO

Decide on a publishing route. There are really two ways to go - traditional publishing or self-publishing. Both of these are filled with pros and cons, so do some research to determine the best route for your manuscript. Be careful not to fall for scam publishers and avoid all of those publishers who ask you to pay for your book to be published. You should **get** paid, not pay.

### Traditional Publishing

- The publisher covers all of the costs (with various exceptions such as hiring an illustrator for a children's book).
- There are five big publishers (these include Penguin Random House, Hachette Book Group, HarperCollins, Macmillan, and Simon & Schuster). It is very difficult to get signed with the big publishers. If this is your goal, it is best to try to get signed with a literary agent.
- There are many smaller publishers. Some of these accept unsolicited manuscripts while others will only work with literary agents. Do your research.

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## STEP THREE

Sign a contract. If a publisher agrees to publish your book, they will offer you a contract that covers royalties, rights, distribution, and other terms. It's advisable to have a lawyer or agent review this.

## STEP FOUR

Editing and design (maybe illustrating). This is a lengthy process and can take months or even years to complete. If you have written a children's book and have not illustrated it, you might be required to hire an illustrator and draw up a contract between yourself and the illustrator. This can be expensive, but a children's book is not a children's book without the artwork. Design of the cover and interior of the book is a long and intricate process.

## STEP FIVE

Marketing and distribution. The publisher handles distribution to bookstores and online platforms. They will also work on promotional efforts, though you may still need to do some marketing yourself. If you have signed with an agent, the contract might include a clause about marketing and you might even be paid an advance on royalties with a clause stating that this advance will be used to market the book. Marketing is even more of a burden on the author than the publisher.

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## PROS for traditional publishing

- No upfront costs
- Professional editing, cover design, and marketing
- Wide distribution channels

## CONS for traditional publishing

- Competitive; rejection rates are high
- You may have limited creative control
- Takes longer to get published (often 1-2 years)

## PROS for self-publishing

- Full creative control
- Higher royalty percentage
- Faster publication process (often in weeks, not years)

## CONS for self-publishing

- You handle everything (editing, formatting, marketing)
- No guarantee of sales or success
- You may have to spend money upfront for services (editing, cover design, etc.)