

Steps to Prepare Your Manuscript for a Professional Edit

This is an extra resource to go along with the original article:

[Tips for Preparing Your Book for an Edit](#)

After self-editing your manuscript, follow these practical steps to prepare your manuscript for a round of editing with a professional editor.

- ❑ Save your file as a .doc or .docx to make it easier to read and edit. Some editors prefer to work within Microsoft Word or Google Docs and use the “track changes” feature to edit and leave editorial comments.
- ❑ Use a standard serif font like Times New Roman. Serifs have little embellishments and flourishes that make the text easier to read.
- ❑ Use size 12 point type.
- ❑ Stick with the same font throughout your manuscript. Don't change the font for dialogue or different points of view because this will distract your reader.
- ❑ Make sure that your text is black.
- ❑ Use left align, not justify align and definitely not center align. Justify align may look neater because it removes the jagged edge of left align, but justify align is difficult to read because the spacing is uneven.
- ❑ Don't indent the first paragraph for a new scene.
- ❑ Don't use the tab key to create hard indents.

- ❑ Set up automatic indents for .50 (½ an inch). Here's how to set up indents in [Google Docs](#) and [Microsoft Word](#).
- ❑ Always indent dialogue and be sure to indent with each new speaker.
- ❑ Don't double-space after a sentence ends.
- ❑ Do double line space.
- ❑ Check your frequently used [words](#) and [phrases](#) and challenge yourself to come up with difficult words/ phrases as necessary.
- ❑ Include one-inch margins on all sides of the page.
- ❑ A new chapter belongs on a new page.
- ❑ Always center the chapter title (even if the chapter is untitled, i.e. "Chapter One").
- ❑ Use the page break function to create a new page, don't simply hit enter.
- ❑ Write "The End" or use a centered hashtag (#) to indicate that your manuscript has come to an end.