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This booklet was prepared in an effort to make submissions easier for authors. Please read this entire booklet, as it contains a number of helpful formatting tips, formatting samples and much more. If you have any questions after reviewing this booklet, please browse our Frequently Asked Question Database at: www.virtualbookworm.com/faqs.html.

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PREPARING YOUR SUBMISSION

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LAYOUT ETC.

In an effort to give our clients more input into the design of the interior of their book, we have now started offering some optional templates. We have always designed the interior based on the subject matter, size of the book and projected demographics of the intended audience. So please keep your reader in mind as you go through this booklet and try to determine the “look” that’s best for your book.

There are, however, some other things to keep in mind. As you know, the retail price of your book is based on the number of pages of the finished product (not the submitted manuscript). If you have a rather large book, it’s a good idea to consider a 10- or 11-point font. If your book is shorter, then a 12-point font may be your best choice. A 12-point or larger font should also be used if your audience may be older and require larger type (no offense intended).

You can use this booklet to help mark your requests on the publishing information forms, or you can even attempt to layout your manuscript to these guidelines. It’s really up to you.

CHOOSING THE TRIM SIZE OF YOUR BOOK

Virtualbookworm.com Publishing offers softbound books in 5X8”, 5.5X8.5”, 6X9” and 8.25X11” formats. These are the most popular sizes of paperback books (though not the “pocket-size” books you pick up in the supermarket). Again, consider your manuscript and your audience when choosing the trim size. Fiction books are best at either 5X8”, 5.5X8.5” or 6X9”. The 8.25X11” size is best for textbooks and workbooks. If a book is very lengthy, it’s a good idea to choose the 6X9” size. This gives the layout artist more “real estate” to work with and helps reduce the page length. When a 6X9” book is combined with 10-point type, the length of a manuscript is reduced considerably. If the book is shorter, a 5X8” trim size may be preferred since it will lengthen

the book (especially when used in conjunction with an 11- or 12-point font).

Hardcover books are available in either 5.5X8.5" or 6X9" trim sizes only. The same guidelines apply when choosing your size.

HARDCOVER BOOKS

If you are considering a hardcover package, please note that the retail price of the book will be considerably more (we're not trying to deter you from the hardcover option by any means, we just don't want you to suffer from "sticker shock"). Our hardcover books come with a blue or grey cloth cover with foil stamping on the spine. The foil stamping consists of the book's title and the author's name. The only drawback to this option is that there isn't a cover design.

Casebound hardcover books are basically four-color covers laminated into the casebinding. These books are less expensive than hardcover books with a dustjacket and tend to look very impressive. Every author who has chosen the casebound option has been extremely pleased. Another "plus" of the casebound book is the fact that it is extremely durable (most college textbooks are casebound).

But, of course, there are some authors who just prefer hardcover books with dustjackets. That's fine, but remember that they have the highest retail price. Also, many customers take the dustjacket off immediately so it doesn't get ripped. And what's under the dustjacket? The cloth cover, foilstamped hardback that would have been less expensive! Also, be sure to have a longer author bio and book description ready to fill the front and back flaps.

CHOOSING YOUR FONT

The font you choose really does make a difference to the overall "feel" of your book. It is best to use only serif fonts for the body text. Sans serif fonts should be regulated to headings, headers and footers. For example, the text you are reading now is done in an 11 pt. Times font (serif font), while the heading font is either an 11 pt. or 18 pt. Helvetica font (sans serif font).

So what is the difference between a serif and sans serif font? The text you are reading now is in Goudy, a serif font. Basically, serifs have

“hooks” or “stands” while a sans serif (sans=without) does not. Good examples of sans serif are Arial and Helvetica. You may have written your manuscript in a sans serif, since they tend to look more contemporary or “slick,” but they tend to get rather tough on the eyes after lengthy periods — especially while reading a novel.

We suggest using either Times, Times New Roman, Goudy, Baskerville Old Face, New Century Schoolbook, Book Antiqua, Georgia, Garamond or Bookman Old Style.

GOUDY: The red fox jumped over the blue dog.

TIMES: The red fox jumped over the blue dog.

TIMES NEW ROMAN: The red fox jumped over the blue dog.

BASKERVILLE OLD FACE The red fox jumped over the blue dog.

NEW CENTURY SCHOOLBOOK: The red fox jumped over the blue dog.

BOOKMAN OLD STYLE: The red fox jumped over the blue dog.

All of the fonts above are in 11 point. As you can see, some of the fonts are also more compressed than others. So the length of your book is again a factor. If you have a longer book, 10-point Times New Roman combined with a 6X9” trim size will help trim the page length. If you have a shorter book, then 11- or 12-point New Century Schoolbook or Bookman Old Style used with a 5.5X8.5” trim size will help “beef up” the finished product.

BASIC FORMATTING

We use a combination of Microsoft Word or WordPerfect and Adobe PageMaker or InDesign. The page layout programs make adjustments of type, leading, etc. much more precise. However, most authors are satisfied with the layout job of Microsoft Word or WordPerfect. If you want to layout your manuscript on your own, or just want a good idea of how long the finished product will be, set your page size to your trim size. Using Microsoft Word, for instance, you would go to FILEPAGESETUP and set the paper size to either 5.5X8.5” or 6X9” (or 8.25X11” if this is your preferred softcover size) in a portrait setting (sorry, we can’t bind landscaped books).

Almost all publishers use different settings, but we have found the following to work best. Set your left, right, top and bottom margins to 0.8

and your headings and footers to 0.5. You can also set the headers and footers at “Different Odd and Even” and Different First Page” if preferred.

ADDITIONAL TIPS

This section is important even if you choose to have us layout your manuscript. So please read through these tips very carefully.

1. MAKE SURE the manuscript has been completely proofed and is ready to go! Nothing slows down production more than having to make numerous changes and proofs. If you need editing assistance, we do have such services available for modest fees. DON'T just rely on Spell-Check or Grammar Check. They can make many, many mistakes. Be sure you (or someone else) read(s) over the entire manuscript.

2. Manuscripts should be formatted in Microsoft Word if at all possible. If you are using other software, please save your manuscript in Rich Text Format (can be achieved by going to FILE-SAVE AS in most packages). We will accept manuscripts in Works, WordPerfect or StarOffice, but there will be a \$5 for conversion services. Most of the instructions below are for Microsoft Word.

3. First set your page size to the desired trim size (5X8”, 5.5X8.5”, 6X9” or 8.5X11”). In most versions of Word, you can do so by going to FILE-PAGE SETUP.

4. Margins should be set at TOP: .8; BOTTOM: .8; LEFT: .8; RIGHT: .8.

5. Set your manuscript to single spacing. This can be found in most versions of Word under FORMATPARAGRAPH.

6. Make sure there is only ONE space after punctuation marks. Forget the old rules of typing – books look best with only one space after periods, etc. If you have two spaces, you can go to EDIT-FIND and under FIND you can type two spaces and under REPLACE WITH type one space. The only time this may be a problem is if you hand-spaced your tabs (which is a no-no anyway... see below).

7. Make sure you EITHER use the First Line Indent on the tool bar OR your Tab key ... NOT both. And never, ever hand-space for your tabs. Most books look best when the tab is set at .3, not the standard .5. You can change all of your tabs at once (as long as you used the Tab key) by going to FORMAT-TABS.

8. BE SURE to use italics where you want them, so you don't have to ask us to add them later. If a character is thinking to himself/herself, it's a good idea to use italics rather than quotes.

9. Clearly mark your Chapters. If you want a section or thought break within a chapter, please center asterisks (***) with a blank line before and after.

10. If you would like a dedication, please include it after your title page.

11. If you would like a Table of Contents, try to create one using the tool in Word (INSERT-REFERENCEINDEXAND TABLES). This will allow the Table of Contents to automatically update when the document is changed.

12. If you'd like to include an INDEX at the back of the book, please tag the text as explained in Word. If you don't wish to use this procedure, or have already created it by hand, then we will have you renumber it based on the final manuscript. This will avoid any additional charges.

13. Be sure to submit your manuscript in ONE FILE, including the cover sheet, introduction, dedication, main body, etc.

That about does it! If you have additional questions, please first consult our Frequently Asked Questions section at:
www.virtualbookworm.com/faqs.html

Now go get your manuscript ready and let's have some fun getting your book into production!