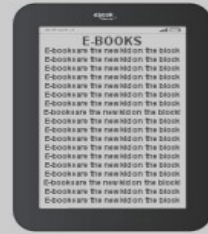


FORMAT

# Writers Guide to



# E-Books



*Billy Dean*  
*2108*

PREVIEW

PROMOTE

PUBLISH

COMPOSE

ILLUSTRATE

**« WRITERS GUIDE TO EBOOKS »**

Billy Dean



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## « TABLE OF CONTENTS »

**Intro** ▶ E-books are easier and less expensive to publish than printed books, but the process involves more than writing and uploading your book to a distributor.

**Step 1** ▶ Format a template for your source document so your styles are in place before you start typing.

**Step 2** ▶ Write a rough draft of your book, then edit it to produce a polished, publishable book.

**Step 3** ▶ Design and size your cover and illustrations to support the factual or fictional content of your book.

**Step 4** ▶ Bookmark your chapter or topic headings, then build a table of contents with hyperlinks to each chapter or topic.

**Step 5** ▶ Convert your Word DOC file to EPUB and KINDLE formats, then preview them for errors in appearance and formatting.

**Step 6** ▶ Upload your book to your distributor, and make pricing, point of sale, and front and back matter decisions.

**Step 7** ▶ Promote your book on social media, on your website and at the places where your book is offered for sale.

**Congratulations** ▶ You have published your first book—preparation has met opportunity!



## « INTRODUCTION »

*A good beginning is the heart of a great ending.*

E-books are revolutionizing the world of publishing. It's just easier and less expensive to get a digital version of your book on the market than to get a print version published. The process is, however, more involved than simply writing your book and uploading it to a distributor. As you work through the steps to prepare, publish and promote your book, keep in mind that...

- Preparation is about **quality**—doing things to give your readers your best writing in the best format. People won't buy your book if it's poorly written.
- Promotion is about **quantity**—doing things to compete with e-books like yours. People can't buy your book if they can't find it.



## « STEP 1 ► FORMAT YOUR BOOK »

*Format before you write, not after.*

Formatting is setting style parameters such as font, font size and alignment of the text and headings in your source document. These settings should be in place *before* you write to avoid having to set them manually after your typing is done. So in this step, you will create a template with your formatting choices in place.

If your book is mostly fiction or non-fiction narrative, you probably won't need much formatting to produce a good-looking, easy-to-read book. If it's a more complicated how-to guide like this one, the styles you choose should make it easy for readers to understand and apply your instructions.

In Step 2, you'll start typing your book into the template you've designed in this step. Your formatting choices are built into your template, but you'll occasionally need to apply a style to something you just typed. When that happens, highlight it, go to your style menu, select a style and click apply. Below are specific tips on how to apply your formatting choices for text, headings, poetry and lists.

The formatting you set in your source document can be altered by 1) Your distributor's converter, 2) Automatic features built into an e-book reader, and 3) User's choice of font and font size. But your default settings will maximize your control over the look and layout of your book. Just keep in mind that your word processor displays your text and headings in a window designed to show you how they will look in a *printed* document, not on the *screen* of an e-book reader.

In Step 5, you'll preview your book for all the commonly used e-book readers, then make the appropriate changes to styles you have set in this step. The formatting in this step applies to all three sections of your book.

- Front Matter—cover, title page, table of contents.
- Main Content—text and chapter/topic headings.
- Back Matter—author bio and published books.

### **Text**

Use the Normal or Default style of your word processor. If your book is fiction or narrative non-fiction, set your Default style to indent the first line of every paragraph so your readers know where one paragraph ends and the next begins:

*Mark watched Linda jump out of the airplane and fall toward the earth. He hoped she wouldn't be too frightened to remember to pull the rip cord on her chute.*

*Linda watched the ground below get closer and closer as she fell. When the altimeter read 5,000 feet, she pulled the rip cord and felt the tug on her arms and legs as the chute opened. She looked up and smiled. Her chute was floating above her like a huge mushroom in the sky.*

If your book is topical non-fiction, set your Default style so the first line of every paragraph is not indented. Then set "space before" and "space after" to some value other than zero so your readers can visually identify where one paragraph ends and the next begins:

*When you jump out of the airplane, throw your arms and legs apart and position your head so you can see the ground below.*

*The ground will look like it's coming up terrifyingly fast, but resist the urge to pull the cord before your altimeter reads 5,000 feet.*

It has become a standard practice in fiction and narrative non-fiction to begin the first paragraph of each chapter **without** indenting the first line. It has also become a standard practice to make the first letter and the first three or four words of that first line stand out from the rest of the text—drop caps or up caps for the first letter, and bold or all caps for the first few words. You can insert a drop cap with Microsoft Word, and increase the size of the first letter to make an up cap.

***Everyone was surprised** that Ginger came to the party. They all knew that Jennifer had told her Frank would be there with his new girl friend.*

*Ginger walked to the bar and asked Jimmy for a Bloody Mary. She had known him since high school but never noticed what a good-looking guy he was. Maybe...*

### **Font & Font Size**

The default font for most Kindles is [Bookerly](#). If you need a special font to distinguish some parts of your book from normal text—poetry, for example—you'll have to embed that special font in the EPUB version of your book, then upload your book to Kindle Direct in the EPUB or MOBI format. Microsoft Word has a feature to embed fonts, but Kindle Direct might override your embedded fonts when it converts your DOC file to MOBI.

If you embed a special font in your EPUB or DOC file—and the Kindle Direct converter doesn't override it—your readers will see the "Publisher Font" option on their Kindle. Keep in mind, however, that most users won't choose that option—even if it's available. You could, of course, call attention to that option in the introduction to your book, and explain why you are asking them to use it.

I'm asking you to do that right now so you can compare the difference between the fonts in the examples below. If your Kindle doesn't show that option, or all the fonts below look the same, use your word processor to evaluate which font to use as a special font. Note that serif fonts like Times New Roman are fainter than serif fonts like Georgia and Bookerly and non-serif fonts like Arial—especially if they are italicized.

Arial **Bold Italic**

Bookerly **Bold Italic**

Courier **Bold Italic**

Georgia **Bold Italic**

## **Justification**

Most e-book readers set justification to Left and Full so unless you want a style centered, such as headings or quotations, you can leave the alignment setting blank.

## **Spacing**

The small screens on e-readers and cell phones would make reading an e-book more difficult *if* the lines were as close together as they are on a computer or on a page in a printed book. So devices made to view digital books are designed to make the lines farther apart than they are on a computer or in a printed book.

Single (1.0) line spacing on my computer, for example, looks like 1.5 line spacing on my Kindle. And the spacing between lines looks the same whether I set line spacing to 1.0 or just leave it blank. So I leave the line-spacing setting blank.

You can set line spacing to something less than single, but keep in mind that spacing between lines is determined by the tallest character in the line, and that depends on font and font size. Since users can change font and font size, line space settings less than 1.0 might cause lines to overlap on some readers.

You should, however, set the spacing between paragraphs. In fiction and narrative non-fiction, readers know where one paragraph ends and the next begins because the first line of every paragraph is indented. That means you do *not* need any space between paragraphs. So set "space before" and "space after" to zero.

In topical non-fiction, the first line of each paragraph is *not* indented. That means you *do* need some space between paragraphs to visually identify where one paragraph ends and the next begins. So set "space before" and "space after" for your Default style to something *more* than zero. Since most reader



are already designed to set lines *farther* apart than 1.0 spacing, I recommend a maximum of 3 or 4 pixels.

## **Hyphens and Dashes**

Hyphens *join* two words to make one word, and dashes *divide* one sentence to make two sentences. "*Suzy took her yellow-feathered canary to school—it flew away.*"

Some writers use one minus sign for hyphens *and* dashes, and some use an EN dash (CtrlUnderline) for hyphens. But I use *two* minus signs (--) or an EM dash ((CtrlAltUnderline) to make it more obvious that there is a dash, not a hyphen between the two sentences.

Most style guides for *printed* books say that hyphens should join two words *without* spaces, and that dashes should divide sentences *with* spaces—unless an EM dash is used between the two parts of a sentence. In that case, there should be *no* space. Use the examples below to choose how you'd like your hyphens and dashes to appear in your e-book.

*Suzy took her canary to school-it flew away.*

*Suzy took her canary to school – it flew away.*

*Suzy took her canary to school -- it flew away.*

*Suzy took her canary to school—it flew away.*

The only caveat is that hyphens and dashes *without* a space might create an empty space on the right side of the screen if the user selects a font size that makes the words before and after the dash wrap to the next line.

**Suzie took her canary to school—it flew away. Suzie ran home with tears in her eyes but when she got there it was waiting on the porch.**

### **Ellipses...**

If your book is *topical* non-fiction, you probably won't need an ellipsis. If your book is fiction or *narrative* non-fiction, there will be times when you want your readers to know a character has paused... to sigh, drink, or stop what she was about to say.

When that occurs, use Alt and 0133 on your numeric pad to insert an ellipsis—not three periods. And put a space after your ellipsis between the words before and after the ellipsis.

Without that space, the Kindle will interpret the words before and after the ellipsis as "one" word. If those ellipsis-connected words are too long to fit on the screen, it will wrap them to the next line, leaving an empty space on the right side of the screen.

### **Headings**

You want your Chapter headings to be centered and bold. So don't base your headings on your default style for text.

Especially if the first line of your paragraphs are indented, because that will offset the centering of your headings by the indent of your normal text.

Select "page break before" for headings that start a new page. If you are using block paragraphs for your book, set "spacing before" and "spacing after" for all headings to zero. Yes, some e-book experts recommend something other than zero. My reasoning for zero spacing is that my spacing for block paragraphs makes spacing before and after a heading

unnecessary. Think about it. You start a chapter or a topic with zero pixels after the heading. But there are three or four pixels before the first line of text. Ditto for lists, second and third-level headings and the other styles in your book. Note that some word processors identify *before* and *after* as *above* and *below*. Graphics, quotations, down caps, up caps, all caps and bolded text will give your book that professional look, and make it more likely your readers will trust you with their **money** (buy your book) and their **time** (read it and be glad they did).

## *Fire and Lightning*

*Fire burns the cynic but purifies the realist.*

**Sharon was so angry** she could spit. She wanted to stomp into Bob's place and punch his lights out.

*Bob knew he was in trouble when Sharon came through the door. Her face looked like she was possessed by a demon, and her eyes looked like they could start a fire.*

\*\*\*

Creating an image for every chapter heading in your book, however, will take more time and effort than decorating your headings with special characters. And special characters are probably more appropriate for *topical* non-fiction than fancy graphics.

### « HOW TO START A FIRE »

**Lightning can start a fire** but you and I need matches or a cigarette lighter. If the sun is shining, you can get a fire going with a magnifying glass. If you're trained in survival techniques—or you're a mountain man like Jeremiah Johnson—you can make fire with pine cones and a piece of flint.

### Lists

Bulleted lists are seldom used in fiction or *narrative* non-fiction, but frequently used in *topical* non-fiction. Some converters ignore the bullets in lists. If you preview your book and notice your bullets are missing or mangled, create a style, **not** a list, then insert a greater-than caret from your keyboard or a solid caret using the ALT key and 16 on your numeric pad.

Whatever method you choose—list or style—use a ***hanging indent*** so text that wraps to the next line is indented directly under the first line to make it obvious that both lines belong to that item in the list.

- List styled with a bullet and a hanging indent to accommodate words that wrap to the next line.
- ▶ Style using a solid caret inserted with Alt and 16 and a hanging indent to accommodate words that wrap to the next line.
- > Style using a caret typed with greater-than key and a hanging indent to accommodate words that wrap to the next line.

### **Hanging Indents**

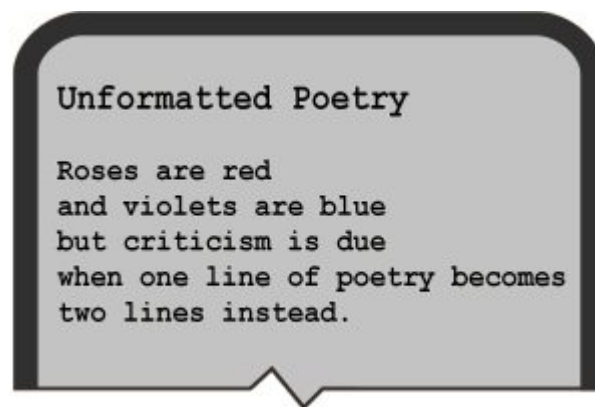
Microsoft Word's hanging indent is selectable. In Open Office, you can create a hanging indent style with a positive Before Text Indent and a negative First Line Indent. In Atlantis, you can create a hanging indent style with a zero Left Indent and a positive First Line Outdent.

### **Poetry**

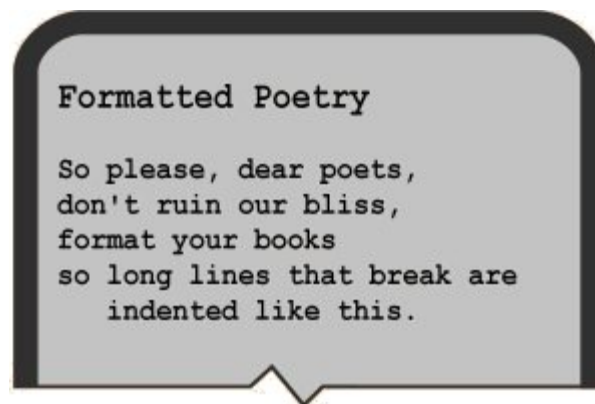
The layout of printed books is fixed, so the number of words and their arrangement on a page are the same for every reader: same font, same font size, same margins. But the layout of an e-book is fluid so that text and graphics can be adjusted to fit the available screen space and user preferences. The result is that the number of words and their arrangement on a screen might not be the same for each reader.

This fluid layout has little effect on prose, but can cause problems for poetry. The one poets are most concerned with is that some lines will wrap at the edge of a screen and continue to the next line, making a line you intended to be one line become two lines.

Where and how lines break matter less than where and how a poem touches the hearts and minds of your readers, but here is what they will see if your formatting does not accommodate lines that exceed the width of their screen.



And here's what your readers will see if your formatting *does* accommodate long lines that exceed the width of a reader's screen.



The example above was accomplished by a formatting technique called a *hanging indent*. It's special style that wraps long lines with an indent so readers know you intended those lines to be single lines on their screens. And it works regardless

of the font size your readers select, or whether their device is in portrait or landscape.

Microsoft Word's hanging indent is selectable. In Open Office, you can create a hanging indent style with a *positive* Before Text Indent and a *negative* First Line Indent. In Atlantis, you can create a hanging indent style with a *zero* Left Indent and a *positive* First Line Outdent.

After you've formatted your chapbook for long lines, put a note in the Introduction that asks readers to use the Landscape mode of their Kindle to make it more likely that a long line will fit their screen without wrapping.

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*Dear Reader, meter and line length are the music of poetry. Meter controls flow from syllable to syllable. Line breaks control flow from word to word. In structured poetry, rhyme ends a line. In free verse, lines can end before or after the meaning is complete.*

*The meaning of an **enjambéd** line straddles **two** lines.*

*The meaning of **end-stopped** lines sit on **one** line.*

*Lines that are too long to fit on one line of your screen will wrap with an indent to let you know it's an end-stopped line. You can make this less likely to happen by rotating your Kindle from Portrait to Landscape.*

**This is what you will see when an end-stopped line is too long to fit on one line of your screen.**

\*\*\*

### **Use Hard Returns**

When typing your poems into your word processor, use hard returns at the end of each line. Soft returns will indent every line after the first line, not just long lines. And that will confuse readers as to which lines you intended to be single lines. Below is the result of using soft returns with a hanging indent instead of hard returns:

### **Don't Use Soft Returns**

Roses are red and violets are blue  
but poems will confuse both me  
and you when soft returns indent  
every line instead.

\*\*\*

### **Poetry Tips**

- Don't assume that none of your lines will exceed the screen width of any device. Use a hanging indent style.
- Stanzas are units of meaningful imagery. So put a hard return at the end of each stanza so readers can see where one stanza ends and the next begins.
- But you want the lines of each stanza to be close together, so set the space before and space after of your hanging indent to zero.
- Position long lines in their own stanza and break them where it conveys your intentions rather than have them wrapped by the user's screen size.
- Stop writing poems with long lines—just kidding!

\*\*\*

### **Congratulations!**

You've got a formatted template and you know how to apply these settings as you type. So let's move on to the writing stage of the process.



## « STEP 2 ► WRITE YOUR BOOK »»

*Create stories more true than if they'd really happened!*

Launch your word processor and open the style template you created in Step 1. You don't want Auto Format to do your thinking for you, so turn it off and start typing. Keep in mind that even though your formatting choices are built into your template, you'll occasionally need to apply a style to something you just typed. When that happens, highlight it, go to your style menu, select a style and click apply.

### **Brainstorm**

Brainstorming is a tool to transform your imaginative idea into a rough outline, the bare bones or skeleton of your book. Find a quiet place where you'll won't be disturbed and let your imagination play with you. Chance are about 10 to 1 that your e-book is fiction, and that you know how to plot the dance of truth and make-believe. So think of the following as a basic checklist for your story.

#### **Beginning Grabs Attention**

- Ignites curiosity, hints at the theme
- Powerful image of main character;
- Sets stage for coming attractions;
- Fits time/place into larger context;
- Challenges main character faces;

#### **Middle Holds Attention**

- How/why problem escalates to conflict
- Conflict is inner and outer struggle;
- Portrays character as real, not flat;
- Unveils significance of events;
- No lengthy detours from core issues;
- Attitudes and actions are clear;
- Chronological & emotional flow clear;



- Enables figurative, sensory presence;
- Climax revealed as choices struggled with;
- Consequences come from choices made
- And actions taken, not luck or serendipity.

### **End Releases Readers**

- Conclusion ties up loose ends
- Conclusion foreshadows the future;
- Life-changing effect of character's struggle
- Gives readers something for their lives.

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### **Free Write**

Free-writing is a playful, creative process. So tell the left side of your brain to sit down and shut up. Write with your heart. Tap into the emotional aspects of your story by not editing as you compose. But don't mindlessly type words, sentences and paragraphs. Use your rough outline as a guide to add the muscle and blood to the bare-bones of your book. Plumb its emotional depths.

### **Edit**

Editing is removing the rough edges from your rough draft. So tell the right side of your brain to sit down and shut up. Rewrite with your head. Create a powerful, polished story with challenge, conflict, climax, choice, consequences and closure. The power came from your heart by plumbing the emotional depths of your story. The polish will come from your head by culling and clarifying every word, sentence and paragraph.

### **Congratulations!**

You've given your readers your best writing. In the next step, you'll explore ways to support your content with an eye-catching cover and illustrations.



## « STEP 3 ► PREPARE YOUR GRAPHICS »

*Pictures show what words can only tell.*

Size your cover and illustrations with a graphics programs, not with your word processor. Center your cover and illustrations with a centering style, and don't copy, paste or drag your cover or illustrations into your source document. Instead, use the Insert Picture feature of your word processor.

### **Covers**

All e-books should have a cover and Amazon requires one. But Amazon does not want you to include the cover in the source document because the Kindle processing software automatically adds your uploaded cover to your book when it converts it to the Kindle format. But you need to see what your cover looks like on the various readers before you upload it. Go to your title page and insert a page break, insert your cover graphic, preview it (Step 5), then remove it from your source document and upload your book and your cover separately.

### **Design Criteria**

- Genre or topic is visually obvious;
- Promises readers something you can deliver;
- Graphic & text stand alone without title;
- Colors help rather than hinder message;
- Size is 1600 pixels wide by 2400 pixels high.
- Text and graphic readable in thumbnail size;
- Title and author readable in thumbnail size;
- Looks good in black and white or gray scale.

### **Under Sized Covers**

Your cover is a stand-alone page in your book so it should occupy most if not of all of an e-reader's screen. If it's too small most e-book readers won't "stretch" it to fill the screen, but imagine a small cover, say 200 by 300 pixels on a Kindle Fire

with a 600 by 1024 pixel screen (614,400 pixels). That's too small to have any impact as a cover. The other side of that coin is trying to "stretch" a small graphic by sizing it up in your graphics program. Don't start with a small graphic, then try to enlarge it. The result will almost certainly produce a fuzzy, unprofessional-looking cover.

### **Over-Sized Covers**

If a cover graphic is too large, e-book readers will size it down but the result could be, once again, a fuzzy cover. Imagine what a 2400 by 3600 pixel cover (8,640,000 pixels) would look like on an iPhone with a 320 by 480 pixel screen (153,600 pixels). That's a big crunch! Just too many pixels in the original graphic to pack into a screen that size.

### **Line Drawing Covers**

Covers with a simple illustration and text don't have lots of fine details so resolution is not an issue. But that doesn't mean you can size them smaller than a cover with lots of fine detail. Size them to 1600 by 2400 pixels so they won't be undersized.

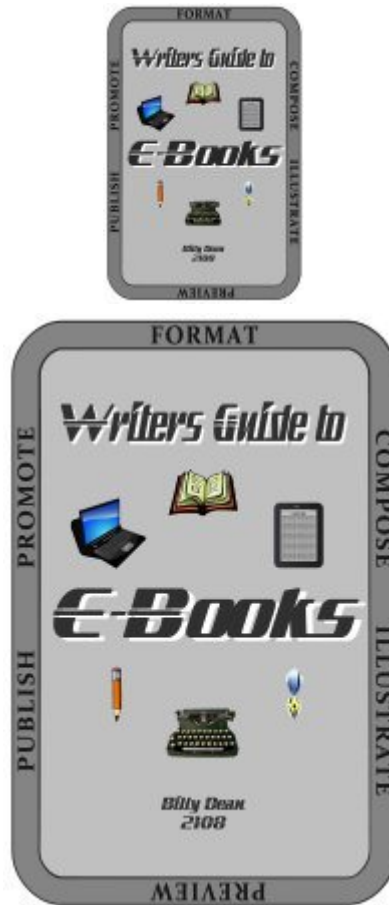
### **Photo-Quality Covers**

Covers with pictures and text have lots of fine details so resolution is an issue. But that doesn't mean you should size them larger than covers without lots of fine detail. Size them to 1600 by 2400 pixels so the fine detail is not lost and so they aren't fuzzy because you over-sized them.

### **Thumbnail Covers**

Your cover should get its message across in sizes much smaller than the one your readers see on their e-book reader. Why? Because they won't see your full-sized cover until they've bought your book. All they see is a thumbnail-sized *product image* in the list of books that appear when they search for a book by genre or by subject. The size varies from one point of sale to another but typically are either 100 by 150 pixels or 200

by 300 pixels. Below is my cover in both sizes to help you design your cover so it gets its message across in thumbnail-sized product images.



### **Width-to-Height Ratios**

E-readers do not scale covers to match the height-to-width ratio of their screens. If you have a cover with a 3-to-2 aspect ratio, it will retain those proportions on an e-book reader. A thin person on your cover will not become a fat one when you preview your book. So it's not necessary to accommodate the range of width-to-height ratios of e-book readers to avoid distortion—not even if your distributor creates a square product image from your rectangular cover because most distributors just add white space to left and right margins before sizing it down.

### **Illustrations**

If your book is a how-to guide, you might want to illustrate it with one or more pictures or drawings. A picture is worth a thousand words, because words are only handles to carry the idea of a thing to your reader—not the thing itself.

### **Meaningfulness**

In fiction or non-fiction narrative, illustrations can enhance your reader's journey through the story. In how-to books, an illustration might be *essential* to your reader's understanding. So give thought to whether a graphic would empower your reader's understanding or simply enhance your book's appearance.

### **Understanding**

Design a graphic that clearly *shows* what you are trying to *tell* your readers. Then write your text to the graphic. The process will improve *your* understanding and make it more likely your readers will be able to understand and apply your explanations to their projects.

### **Quality**

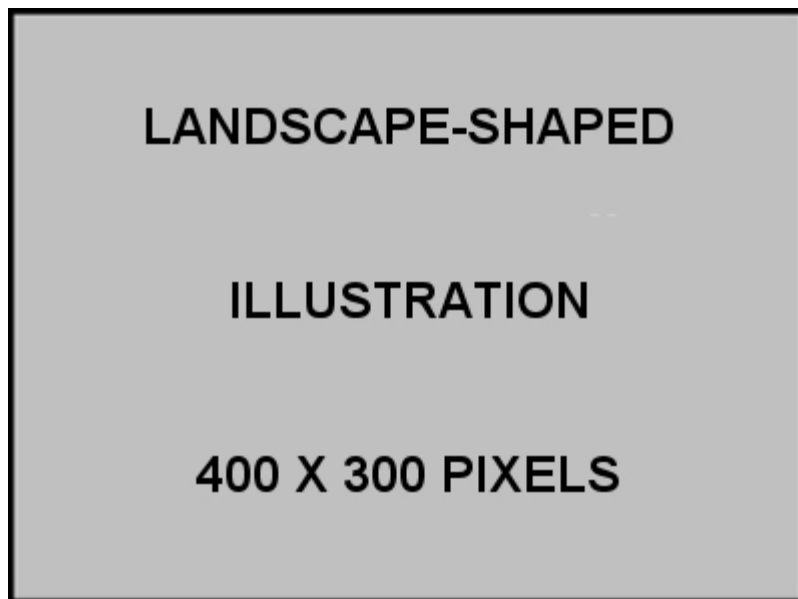
Higher resolution screens make text and images sharper. But it takes more power to display more pixels, and that can decrease battery life. One solution is to create illustrations with more *contrast* instead of increasing the resolution, and thereby make it less likely your readers will experience reduced battery life on their e-book reader. Most e-book readers have 300 pixels per inch (PPI) screens, and most phones have screens with over 500 ppi. On my Kindle, however, there is almost no difference in the clarity of a 200 versus a 300 ppi illustration. And there are still lots of e-book readers that do not display color, so more contrast can make a bigger difference in clarity than more resolution. If your illustrations are in color, try reducing the number of colors and increasing the contrast. Some graphics programs can increase the resolution of an image without changing its size.

## Proximity

You want your cover to fill an entire screen but not your illustrations because that would separate the illustration from the text it supports. Words and illustrations should be mutually supportive, so size your illustrations large enough for readers to see the details without having to page back and forth between the text and the illustration.

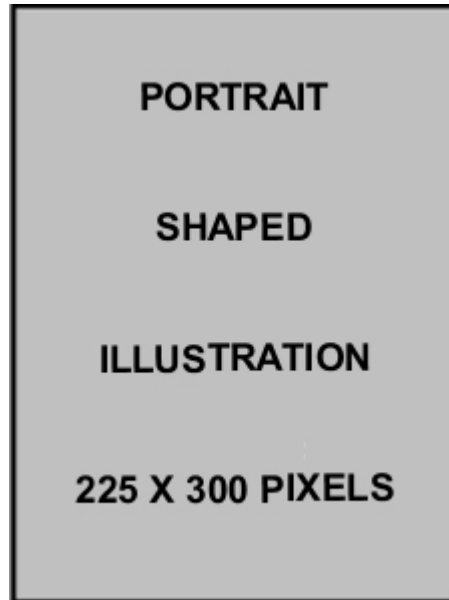
You don't know what font size your readers will choose, so you can't be certain what size and shape will keep an illustration on the same screen as the text it supports. But you *do* know that a portrait-shaped illustration is *more* likely to hinder proximity than a landscape-shaped illustration. Since most of your readers will view your book in the portrait mode, try to keep the width of your illustrations *greater* than the height.

Below are examples of how width-to-height relationships can help or hinder text and illustration proximity. The landscape example is 400 by 300 pixels, and the portrait example is 225 by 300 pixels.



Note that the portrait example is no taller than the landscape example, and that the text is smaller than the text in the

landscape-shaped example. If the height of one of your illustrations is *necessarily* greater than its width, test various aspect ratios to determine how small the height of the illustration can be without losing clarity.



**Congratulations!**

You've enhanced your book with an attention-getting cover and illustrations that aid understanding. In the next step, you'll learn how to construct an in-line table of contents.



## « STEP 4 ► INDEX YOUR CONTENTS »

*Any fool can navigate sober but a sailor can do it drunk.*

Your readers have two ways to navigate the contents of your book. One is the *internal* table of contents you see when you select the **Go To** menu on your reader. The other is the *linked* table of contents that typically follows the title page of an ebook.

### Go To Menu

Some authors claim the internal Go To menu is all their readers need to navigate the contents of an e-book. There are several reasons, however, why you should *manually* create a *linked* table of contents.

- Some distributors *require* a linked table of contents to build the internal Go To menu.
- Kindle Direct will create the internal TOC from the headings in your book, but it requires a linked TOC to thwart people who are *gaming* the *Look-Inside* samples to get the entire book without paying.
- Your linked TOC can be a selling point because readers can use it in the *Look-Inside* sample of your book to see what they're getting if they buy your book.
- If your book is *topical* non-fiction, a linked TOC can help you develop and keep track of its hierarchical relationships.
- Your linked TOC will ensure that the Go To menu your distributor develops will accurately reflect the hierarchy of your topics.
- On devices that do not display the internal TOC, your linked TOC is the only way the user can navigate the contents of your book.

### Linked Table of Contents

Some word processors can and some cannot automatically generate a linked table of contents from your headings. But



some DOC-to-EPUB converters don't work properly with an *automatically* generated table of contents. That means you'll have to *manually* build your linked TOC.

Since the internal Go To menu will show every heading and subheading in your book, you can limit your linked TOC to just the main topics. That will limit the number of headings and subheadings you have to bookmark and hyperlink. It will also keep the linked TOC from taking up too much space in the Look Inside sample of your book.

**Bookmark** every chapter/topic you want in your TOC and Go To menu. Make sure the chapters or topics you bookmark are styled as a heading. If I had bookmarked *Linked Table of Contents* above with my Normal style instead of a heading style, the topic would have appeared in my linked table of contents but **not** in the GO To menu.

**Type** an entry on your TOC page for each bookmarked topic. Then apply the TOC style you created in Step 2 so the hierarchical relationship of every entry in your table of contents is visually recognizable to your readers. Level 2 headings, for example, should appear indented from level 1 headings. Your TOC 1 style, for example, would have a 0.0 indent, and your TOC 2 style would have a 0.1 indent.

**Hyperlink** each entry to its corresponding bookmark. If you change the name of a heading or delete it, revise the bookmark of that heading accordingly, then go back to your TOC and revise the hyperlink to match the revised bookmark.

### **Congratulations!**

You have a formatted, illustrated and polished source document with a linked table of contents. In the next step, you'll learn how to preview your source document.



## « STEP 5 ► PREVIEW YOUR BOOK »

*Is the error big enough to see but small enough to fix?*

Before you can preview your book, you must convert it to the format used by the distributor where you plan to sell your book. Amazon developed the MOBI format for its Kindle readers. Most of the other readers use the EPUB format. And it's always a good idea to see what your book looks like in PDF. Microsoft Word, Open Office and Atlantis can all convert DOC or DOCX to PDF and EPUB, and Amazon's Kindle Previewer can convert EPUB to MOBI.

### EPUB Format

[Adobe Digital Editions](#) will help you identify and correct errors that could affect readers that use the EPUB format. Downloads are free.

- Convert your source document to EPUB
- Launch ADE, then click File and Add to Library
- Browse to your book and double click its filename.
- Preview it and note things you want to change.

### MOBI Format

[Kindle's Previewer](#) will help you identify and correct errors that could affect Amazon's Kindle readers. Downloads are free.

- Convert your source document to EPUB.
- Launch the Previewer and click Open Book.
- Browse to your book and double click its filename.
- Wait for conversion to MOBI, then preview it.
- Export it to a folder on your computer.
- Copy it to *your* Kindle and preview it again.

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### Start-Page Default

Most Kindles start a book at the first page of text when the user first *opens* the book or clicks **Beginning** in the **Go To** menu.

That's typically your title page. If your book is fiction or *narrative* non-fiction, you'll probably want your book to start with the **first chapter**. If your book is *topical* non-fiction, you'll probably want your book to begin with your **Introduction**. To override the Kindle's default start page, you must revise the HTML in the EPUB version of your book.

- Convert your book to EPUB with your word processor.
- Open the EPUB version of your book in [Calibre](#)
- Some authors use [Notepad++](#) (free) or [Textpad](#) (not free).
- In Calibre, right click your book title and click **Edit**
- In the left pane of the Edit window, go to the section marked **Text**
- Double click the html file for your Introduction or first Chapter—typically **003.html** if your title page is 001.html and your table of contents is 002.html.
- In the left pane of the Edit window, scroll down to **Miscellaneous**.
- Scroll down to **content.opf** and double click it.
- Scroll down to the bottom and add the following lines:  

```
<guide>  
  <reference href="003.html" type="text" title="Title of Your  
First Chapter" />  
  <reference href="003.html" type="text" title="Beginning" />  
</guide>
```
- Save the revised EPUB file with a new name to distinguish it from your original file.
- Open the revised EPUB file in the Kindle Previewer and verify that your book starts with your first chapter or your Introduction.
- Export the file (it will be in MOBI) to your upload folder.
- Launch Windows Explorer and connect your Kindle to a USB port on your computer.
- Copy the MOBI file to **your** Kindle and preview it again.

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## **Congratulations!**

You are one step closer to publishing your book. You now have a formatted, illustrated, converted and previewed book ready to be uploaded to your distributor. Let's do that now.



## « STEP 6 ► UPLOAD YOUR BOOK »

*Your book isn't public until it's published!*

You could upload your book in the format required for a specific point of sale, such as Apple (epub or pdf for iPads), Amazon (doc, docx, epub or mobi for Kindles) and Barnes & Noble (epub for Nooks). But distributors such as Draft to Digital and Smashwords can format your book for dozens of outlets on the Internet. Before you choose, ask yourself...

- Is conversion, ISBN numbers and distribution free?
- Is front and back matter automatically inserted?
- Is a linked TOC required to build your Go To menu?
- Is the Go To menu generated from your headings?
- Can it handle 2nd & 3rd level headings (topics)
- Or does it handle only 1st level headings (chapters)
- Is your Author Page updated with each new book?
- Is support team knowledgeable and responsive?

### **Kindle Direct**

More people have Kindles than any other reader. And Kindle Direct accepts uploads in MOBI, the same format used by Kindles. So the book I upload will look and function the same on a reader's Kindle as it looks on the Kindle Previewer and my Kindle.

## **E-Book Distributors**

Distributors convert your DOC formatted book to the formats required by the places where your book will be offered for sale. So you are not in direct control of how your book will look and function on the other types of readers.

### **Congratulations!**

You are now a self-published author. Your book is published and money will begin falling into your lap like leaves from a tree! Well, okay, maybe I've exaggerated that a bit. But if you're anything like me, you're more interested in entertaining, inspiring and informing people with your writing. And so much the better if that also results in a few more dollars in your pocket.



## « STEP 7 ► PROMOTE YOUR BOOK »

*People can't buy your book if they can't find it.*

It's easier to publish your book than it is to promote it—easier to make it *available* than to make people *aware* that it's available. And keep in mind that marketing can exist without promotion, but promotion cannot exist without marketing. Marketing is selling yourself, whereas promotion is selling your book.

### **Author Pages**

Some distributors create an author page for the books you've published with them. People can visit this page to preview, purchase and make comments on your books. Amazon generates the thumbnail-sized product image from the cover you uploaded at Kindle Direct and the description of your book from the book details you entered. If you allow Amazon to have exclusive rights to sell your book, they will promote it with tags like *More Items to Consider*, *Customers with Similar Searches Purchased*, and *Customers Who Bought This Item Also Bought*.

On your author page, Amazon creates thumbnail-sized product images from the cover you upload at Kindle Direct. In Step 3 you learned to design a cover that gets its message across in sizes much smaller than the one your readers see on their e-book reader. I mention this again here in Step 6 to remind you that these product images are more important than your full-sized cover because shoppers won't see your full-sized cover until they've bought your book.

Amazon inserts the description you entered at your bookshelf next to the product image. Make sure your description accurately but concisely describes your book, entices your reader to preview or purchase it, and promises readers what you have delivered.

Once you have an author's page at your distributor's website,

create an author's page at the back of each book you publish. This page gives you an opportunity to promote the other books you have published to your readers.

It's not necessary, however, to include a list of your other books on the Author Page at the back of your books. Amazon can create an Author Page URL that you can use to promote your books on Twitter, Facebook, in your e-mail signature, your blog or website—any place where readers are learning about you and shopping for your books.

### **Social Forums**

You're an author so you'd probably prefer to spend more time writing than promoting. But you can reach thousands of potential buyers on forums like Facebook and Twitter. Some claim that Twitter is better than Facebook for promoting your book.

### **Your Website**

Most social forums don't allow you to sell from their site—unless you are a click-through advertiser. Forums and distributors might give your book more exposure than a personal website. But unless you've given your distributor exclusive rights to sell your book, you should consider also selling your books from your website.





## « CONGRATULATIONS »

You've taken seven big steps toward becoming an independent author. So good luck. Not the kind of luck that's just a happy accident. The kind of luck where preparation has met opportunity. And I wish you serendipity too—finding something you weren't looking for while searching for something else. May your e-book become that something else. Something you didn't start with when you began putting sentences together. Something powerful, provocative and poignant. Something that blooms beyond a mere sum of its parts.



## « ABOUT THE AUTHOR »

Billy Dean is a free-lance writer with degrees in English and Engineering. He has written articles for trade journals, been a newspaper columnist, performed poetry at open mic events, and had his essays, memoirs, poems, stories and how-to guides published with on-line magazines and e-book distributors. You can find the other books he has published, and make comments about this one, on his [Author Page](#) at Amazon.

