



# Resource Center: Writing and Publishing

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Many people have a desire to write, but they just don't know where to turn. I get countless emails from people who want advice, so I know that you're out there!

However, it seems that everyone wants a quick and easy answer to the question, "How do I publish a book?" Sorry, but the answer would take volumes, and can't possibly be answered in an email or in one quick summary. It's like asking, "How do you build a space shuttle?"

But the last thing I want to do is to discourage you. Instead, I'll point you in the right direction and give you a push to get you started on your way. The rest is up to you. Are you really serious about it? Then you've got some work to do!

Writing the book is the easy part. What to do with it after it's been written is the real work.



# Writing



**These are some of the best books about writing. Of course, you'll be able to find many others that are extremely helpful, and I encourage you to do your research and find them. In the meantime, try these.**

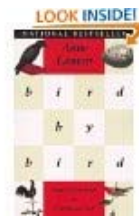
## *On Writing* by Stephen King

Whether you like his particular style or not, the man knows how to tell a tale, and he knows a thing or two about writing successful fiction. I truly enjoyed his thoughts on the subject. You'll soon come to understand that no two people write the same way, and that's just fine. This is a great book for inspiring you, packed with helpful tidbits and insight.



## *Bird by Bird* by Anne Lamott

A smart and poignant treatise on the art and science of writing. Lamott covers everything from the practical to the psychological, and she paints a vivid and realistic portrait of what it's like to be a writer. Her advice, like King's, is grounded in reality, which makes it more useful than much of the high-minded writing books on the market.



## *The First Five Pages* by Noah Lukeman

This book covers fiction, nonfiction, journalism, poetry... you name it. Lukeman positions this as a guide to staying out of the rejection pile, but whether you're a novice or seasoned writer you will find handy tips and exercises.



See also:

## *The Writer's Guide to Crafting Stories for Children* by Nancy Lamb

Format, content, setting and characterization are all covered, with examples pulled from some children's classics.

## *How to Write a Damn Good Novel* by James Frey

A veteran author and college instructor, Frey walks you through the fine art of crafting dramatic storytelling.

## *Writing for Dollars* by John McCollister

A no-nonsense guide for freelance writers. Includes tips on research, agents, networking and even taxes.

# Publishing



This is the big one, isn't it? By now you probably know that you have a knack for writing, but the question is, "How do I get it into print?"

Well, you have research to do and decisions to make. Are you going to go after a traditional publisher? Will it be one of the big publishing houses in New York or Los Angeles? Will it be a smaller press?

Or will you become an independent publisher?

There are pros and cons for both routes, and nobody can tell you which way will be best for you. Only you can decide that.

I started my own publishing company because I wanted to be in control of every aspect of my books, from the cover to the editor to the price and more. And though I've since been picked up by a major publisher, I don't regret going the independent publishing route at all. If you're up to the task, it can be both lucrative and fulfilling.

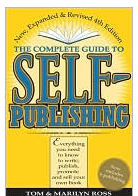
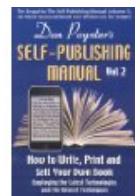
However, independent publishing is not for everyone. You'll spend more time running a business than writing. It all depends on your comfort level in the business world.

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Here are a couple of resources that are well worth your time:

*The Self-Publishing Manual* by Dan Poynter

*The Complete Guide to Self-Publishing* by Tom & Marilyn Ross



Both of these books are first-rate. They walk you through all of the steps necessary to start your own publishing business, and they don't pull any punches. They show you just how much work you'll be doing, and they spell out the benefits and the drawbacks.

I like the fact that both books include timelines and to-do lists. These are great reference books, and I highly recommend them both.

# Publishing



[WritersMarket.com](http://WritersMarket.com)

[WritersDigest.com](http://WritersDigest.com)

[PublishersWeekly.com](http://PublishersWeekly.com)

These three websites (and the accompanying magazines) are very helpful to both the beginner and the experienced writer/publisher. *Writer's Digest* offers not only tips and info, but there are multiple contests that you may enter. My first book, *The Comet's Curse*, won the Grand Prize in the *Writer's Digest* 'Best Self-Published Book' contest.

*Writer's Market* is a valuable reference source, helping you to find an agent, a publisher, or even a magazine that might want to print your work. One word of caution: Carefully read the specific requirements that each source lists. There's nothing that screams "amateur" more than sending your material to an agent or magazine that does not work with your genre. Pay attention to what they tell you they're looking for.

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## The Colorado Independent Publishers Association



Or, any association of independent publishers in your region. Do an online search to find the association nearest you. They will offer information, resources and (most importantly) encouragement. Take advantage of it! In Colorado, the website is [cipabooks.com](http://cipabooks.com).

## Print on Demand

These are small, independent publishers who can work with you to develop covers, interior layout, and sometimes editing services.



However, Print on Demand specializes in very small print runs. So if you're nervous about starting with several thousand copies, they can help. Do your homework to see if POD might (or might not) be right for you.



# Reference Materials

These four books are must-haves



## *The Elements of Style* by William Strunk and E.B. White

The classic little book of communicating with words. Simply put, it will make you a better writer.



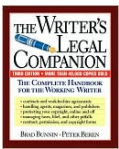
## *The Chicago Manual of Style*

A more thorough collection that answers every style question you could ever imagine. It should be on your bookshelf.



## *Self-Editing for Fiction Writers* by Renni Browne and Dave King

Two professional editors share their expertise for turning your manuscript into a published work of fiction. You'll learn techniques that editors use to polish and prepare a manuscript for publication. My copy of the book is filled with yellow highlighter marks. A good sign.



## *The Writer's Legal Companion* by Brad Bunnin and Peter Beren

Don't laugh. These are crucial pieces of information that you'll need to have handy. After all, you're not just a writer, you're a businessperson, too.

# Final Thoughts



Okay, so those are some suggestions to get you started. Let me just add a few final words of advice.

If you want to be a writer, then WRITE! Even if it's only a paragraph per day, sit your butt down and do it already.

Find your own style, not someone else's. It's okay to be inspired by another writer; it's not okay to copy them.

I think the number one mistake writers make is in waiting for the world to come to their door to get their book. It doesn't work that way. You'll have to work very hard to get the book out, then work even harder to get it noticed. If you don't know how to market and promote yourself, you'd better learn quickly. Being shy in this business will leave you with a ton of your books stored in your basement or garage, instead of on other people's shelves.

Be creative and aggressive in your self-promotion. The internet, in particular, has opened up a whole new world when it comes to marketing and promotion. I encourage you to visit my website (and to sign up for my free newsletter), to tap in to my social networks, and to do the same for other authors... even if only to see how others are doing it. Check out:

[DomTesta.com](http://DomTesta.com)

[Facebook.com/DomTesta](https://www.facebook.com/DomTesta)

[Twitter: @DomTesta](https://twitter.com/DomTesta)

And finally, by all means, help other writers. This is a competitive business, sure. But there's room for everyone, and helping another writer will often come back to benefit you. Whatever you learn, be willing to share.

Best of luck!

**Dom Testa**

Author/Speaker

Profound Impact Group, Inc.

