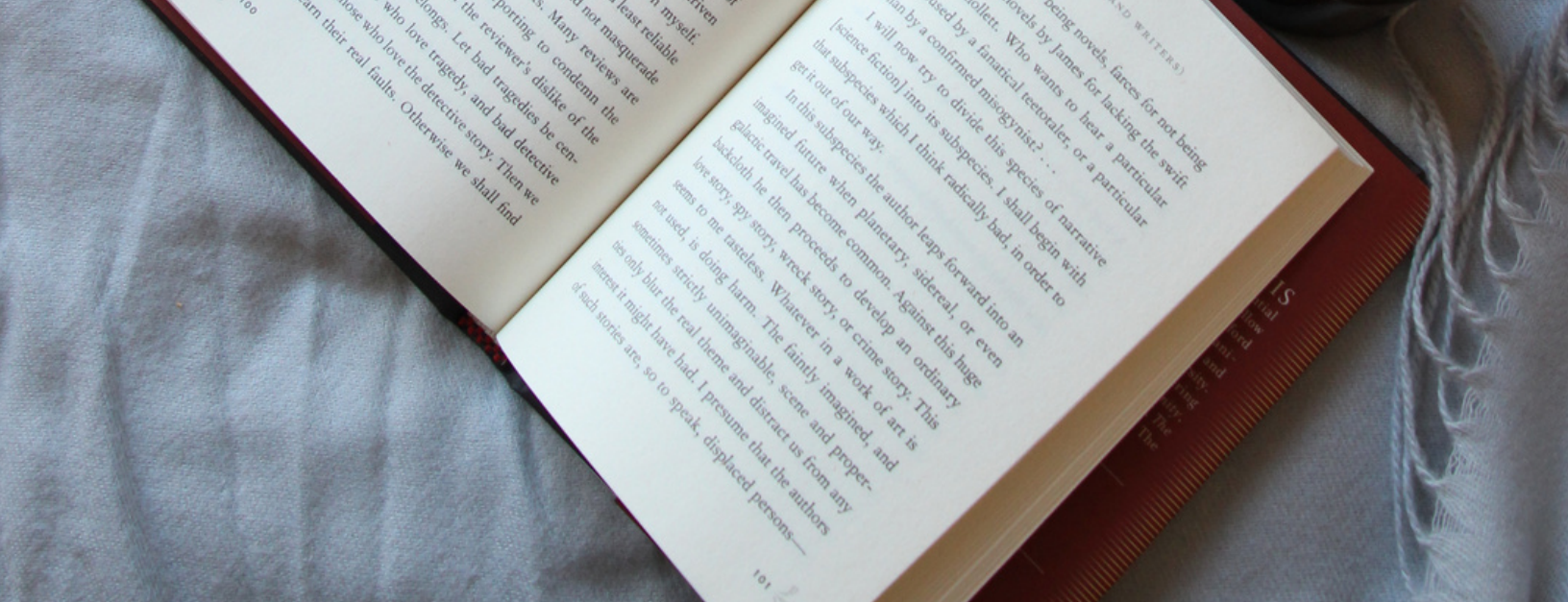


SKY'S THE LIMIT PRESS

HOW TO
submit your book



www.skysthelimitpress.com



HELLO, DEAR WRITER

You've finally made it. After months or even years of brainstorming, outlining, writing, editing, revising, polishing—the whole nine yards—you have at long last completed your book.

And now it's time to publish it.

We are SO honored that you're considering Sky's the Limit Press as the publisher of your book, and we want to make the submissions process as seamless as possible, which is why we've created this guide to walk you through every step: sending a query letter, formatting your manuscript, and creating a book proposal.

You've got this.

grace

founder & publisher, Sky's the Limit Press

STEP #1

pray

That probably wasn't what you were expecting, was it? Regardless, prayer is one of the most important aspects of our lives as Christians and one of our greatest gifts as humans—the ability to talk to, commune with, and seek guidance from the Creator of all things.

God is the One who came up with the idea for Sky's the Limit Press, turning my sad little digital magazine into a publishing company, and so I want to give this project back to Him as a ministry to serve Him and others. In doing that, we pray over every submission we receive, every story we publish, and pretty much everything we do here.

And I invite you to pray with us. Lift your doubts, fears, concerns, excitement, joy, and dreams up to God. Ask Him to help you do His will. Ask Him for the wisdom and courage to submit your story. Ask Him to be the One who makes your dreams come true.

Prayer is a vital role in how we operate our publishing company—so it should play a role in your publishing journey too! If you don't know how to start or want someone to pray with you, email us at skysthelimitpress@gmail.com to chat over email or get our phone number to talk with us voice-to-voice!

STEP #2

write a query letter

If you've never written a query letter before, it can seem like a daunting task (been there!), but it's actually easier than it looks once you know what goes into it!

Start with a respectful and personable opening. "Wassup, dawg" or "To Whom it May Concern" simply *will not do*. You'll be sending your query letter to our acquisitions editor (who also happens to be the publisher...and the person writing this guide), so address me personally *and* politely. "Dear Ms. Johnson" works perfectly!

Next, introduce the purpose of your email. Think of this as a thesis statement. Something along the lines of "I am in search of publication for *When the Tide Comes In*, a novel of love, redemption, and adventure on the WWII homefront," for example. Including a the genre and/or themes/setting of your book along with your title is an appreciated extra touch!

A query letter introduces you and your book to the acquisitions editor. If you can effectively interest the editor and clearly explain what your book is about and why it's perfect for the publishing company, you've succeeded and will likely get a response from the editor asking for a proposal!

QUERYING CONT.

Next, you provide a concise but thorough summary of your story—not an open-ended blurb like on the back cover of a book, but a two-to-three paragraph synopsis that covers the beginning, middle, and end of your book in a clear and objective manner. (*Bonus points if you begin your summary with an intriguing hook! For example, “A noblewoman was kidnapped at birth by her vengeful uncle in a Rapunzel reimagining with a pirate twist.”*)

Make sure you indicate the approximate word count of your book. We want to know if you’ve written a novella, novel, or even an epic!

Now this next bit may require a bit of research: comp titles. Sometimes, writers have specific books in mind that are similar to theirs from the beginning; other times, you have to do a bit of brainstorming. Either way, try to come up with two or three comp titles and list them (plus the reasons why they’re similar to your book) in your query letter!

Comp titles are books that can compare to yours! Maybe they have similar themes, settings, tropes, or premises. A book about teens starting a revolution could compare to *The Hunger Games*, or a book about dragon riders could compare to *Fourth Wing*. Just don’t copy other books!



QUERYING CONT.

Lastly, list some of your authorly credentials! Now, if you're like I was when I wrote my first query letter, you may not have a lot of publishing awards or already published books, but try and think of some things that are worth noting. Have you been writing for ten years? Did you publish a short story online? Do you have a large following on your author blog or Instagram? Anything that can help us gauge your experience and credibility as a writer works!

the final step

Close with a quick "Thank you for your time and consideration" and sign off with your name! Use the subject title "Query for [Book Title] by [Author Name]". Then...**hit send!**

You should hear back from us within 3-5 business days after you send your query email! If we're interested in learning more, we'll request a proposal!

WHAT IF YOU DON'T LIKE MY BOOK?

Unfortunately, there will be some cases where your book doesn't fit our criteria or we don't think we're the right fit for you and your work. In that case, you *will* hear back from us, but we don't "reject" you. We'll offer constructive feedback if necessary and encouragement. One "no, thank you" doesn't mean you're a bad writer or that you'll never be published; it may mean your book needs some improvement, it's not time for you to be published, or we're simply not the right publisher. It's *never* a personal slight!

STEP #3

create a proposal

If you thought a query letter was difficult, allow me to introduce the book proposal. A proposal is full of vital information regarding your book and its market potential, and at first it can seem overwhelming, but this guide is here to break it down into easy, manageable steps that make creating a proposal simple and maybe even fun!

Typically, book proposals aren't required by publishers for fiction books; however, they're an extremely useful tool for both publishers to get a better idea of the project *and* the author they'll be working with (should they accept the manuscript). It also helps writers get their material organized and prepare for the nitty-gritty of publishing!

Naturally, the very first step is to open a blank document. Set the margins to 1 inch and the font to a classic 12pt serif font (like Times New Roman or Garamond). Create a cover page with the title "Book Proposal," your book's title, your name, and the date, all centered in the middle of the page.

A book proposal is a document that thoroughly and succinctly introduces you and your book to a publisher and is intended to convince the publisher that your book is right for their publishing house. Not only does it attempt to pique the publisher's interest in the story (like your query letter), it also explains how your book is economically viable, sellable, and marketable. It's almost like a business plan, and the publisher is like an investor—so write your proposal accordingly!

WHAT TO INCLUDE

- 01 THE TITLE OF YOUR BOOK
That's pretty self-explanatory.
- 02 THE GENRE(S) OF YOUR BOOK
For example: Adult Historical Christian Romance. Make sure you indicate the age range (middle-grade, young adult, etc.) too!
- 03 THE TOTAL WORD COUNT
- 04 THE AUDIENCE
Your audience (or ideal readers) are the people who would most enjoy your book. For example, young women ages 16-30 who love clean romance. The more specific, the better!
- 05 SERIES INFORMATION
If your book is part of a series, make sure we know that! Let us know if this is book one in a trilogy, five-book series, duology, etc.! If your book is a standalone, don't worry about including this section.

PAGE 1

This first page (after your cover page, that is) covers all the technical details regarding your manuscript, from genre to word count!

For an example of what this page looks like, click [here](#)!



PAGE 2 | MARKETING

This page is where it gets tricky...it's all about *marketing*. But don't worry! It just takes a little bit of practice to get the hang of it! For our proposals, we like authors to include three simple sections on their marketing page so that we get all the information we need without stressing our authors out. If you need a visual example, click [here](#)!

SECTION #1 | COMP TITLES

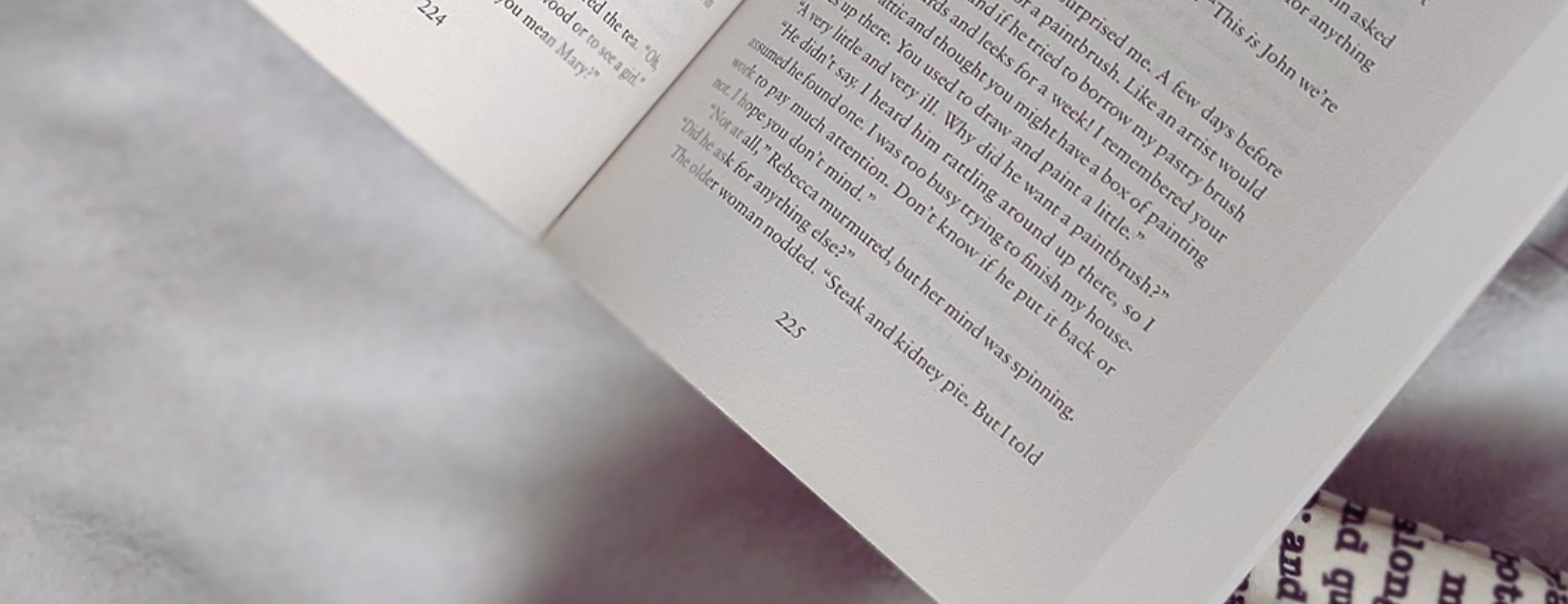
Remember the comp titles we talked about in our query letter? Yep, this is the same thing! This time, instead of just dropping the titles, expound a little on their similarities and how *your* book can appeal to readers of those comp books.

SECTION #2 | OPPORTUNITIES

Does your local library host book signings? Are you part of a community book club? Are you friends with an indie bookseller? These are the kind of opportunities we're looking for—ways our authors are willing to share about their book in their community (whether physically or online)!

SECTION #3 | PROMOTION & PLATFORM

No, we don't expect you to have a detailed marketing plan...but it doesn't hurt to have a few ideas! Here is where you can describe your author platform (blog, newsletter, Instagram, podcast, etc.), including follower count and engagement stats, and how you can use your tools to promote your book! If you have any other ideas for marketing, here's where to list them!



PAGE 3 | *you*

This page is a no-duh, isn't it? Here, we want to know about YOU! Who are you? Why do you write? What are your favorite authors? How long have you been writing? Have you won any awards, been published before, or attended any writers' conferences? (No shame if you haven't done any of those things!)

Anything you have to say about yourself *as a writer* (we don't want to know what kind of deodorant you use or if you picked your nose when you were five...let's keep this appropriate and focused on writing, please), share it here! We want to know why you are a great fit for our team of authors!

If you want to share a little bit of your testimony, how God has used your writing, or the importance of the Holy Spirit in your writing, please do! We'd love to hear about it!



PAGE 4 | THE STORY

The final page dives deep into your story on three different levels: a hook, a blurb, and a full summary.

[*view an example page*](#)

hook

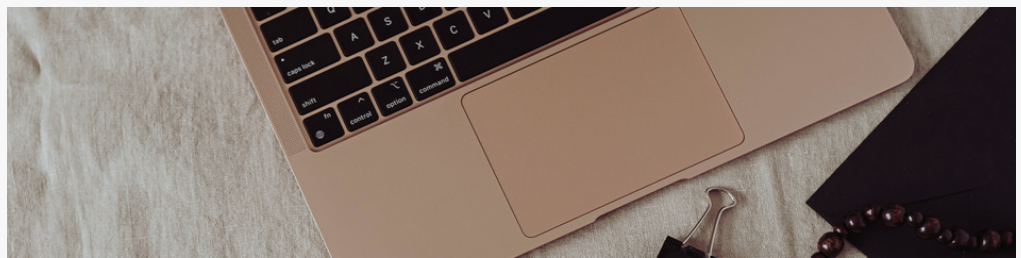
Your hook should pique our curiosity and engage us. Make us *need* to read your book in one to two sentences!

example hook

A young Irishman journeys to Lake Huron, Michigan to forge a new life for his impoverished family. Upon arriving at the lighthouse he's been hired to run, he discovers that his new home is already inhabited by an orphan girl who has no intention of letting him take over her home.

blurb

This brief, two-to-three paragraph synopsis should imitate the blurb on the back of a book. The blurb shouldn't cover the entire plot, but it should introduce us to the premise, characters, genre, setting, and themes in a concise way.





THE STORY CONT.

example blurb

His father in debtor's prison, his family's business ruined, and his mother and siblings starving, Kirk Darren leaves his shambled home in Ireland to keep a lighthouse on Lake Huron to provide for his family. However, upon arrival, he finds something far beyond his expectations—a forsaken lighthouse in utter disrepair...and the keeper's cottage crisp, clean, and very much lived-in.

Arielle Myers fled to the dilapidated old lighthouse the day her home and her parents, her only family, went up in smoke. For eight years now, she's remained secluded, private, almost a ghost among the neighboring towns. Until the arrival of Kirk Darren upends her quiet little world .

The strangest of circumstances have forced Kirk and Arielle to work together—and worse, live together until further arrangements can be made. But when a storm at sea brings danger to their shores and an urgent telegram calls Kirk away, their goals for new beginnings and quiet lives are put on hold. Will they ever be able to set their worlds aright? Or has all hope been forsaken?

full summary

This summary is less artistic than your blurb and follows the whole plot of the story so we know exactly what we're getting into. For an example of a full summary, click the button below!

[*view an example summary.*](#)

LAST BUT NOT LEAST...



The final thing you must include is the *first three chapters* (including the prologue, if applicable) of your manuscript! This gives us a true taste of your writing skill, the quality of your story, and the potential of your book!

PRO TIP

Make sure your chapters are formatted EXACTLY like the rest of your proposal! If you had any fancy fonts or images in your book, remove them when you copy your three chapters to the proposal document!

Although it may sound like a good idea to provide the chapters as a separate attachment, it's not. Please make sure you copy and paste them into your proposal document so we can easily access them by scrolling down to read!

GUESS WHAT!

That's it! You've just created a proposal! Make sure you save the document as a Word doc, Google Doc (with sharing enabled so we can see it!), or as a PDF.

Now, if we've requested a proposal from you and you've sent it in (don't email us a proposal *unless we specifically ask for one*), give us 5-7 business days to review it and make our final decision. If we don't think the book is the right fit for us at the moment, don't despair! Just like turning down queries, we'll be gracious and objective with you about your proposal. In some cases, it may be where you need to take a step back and revise your proposal or work on an issue we caught in your sample chapters before we can consider publishing you. If not, then we're simply not the publisher for you—but that doesn't mean the right publisher isn't out there!

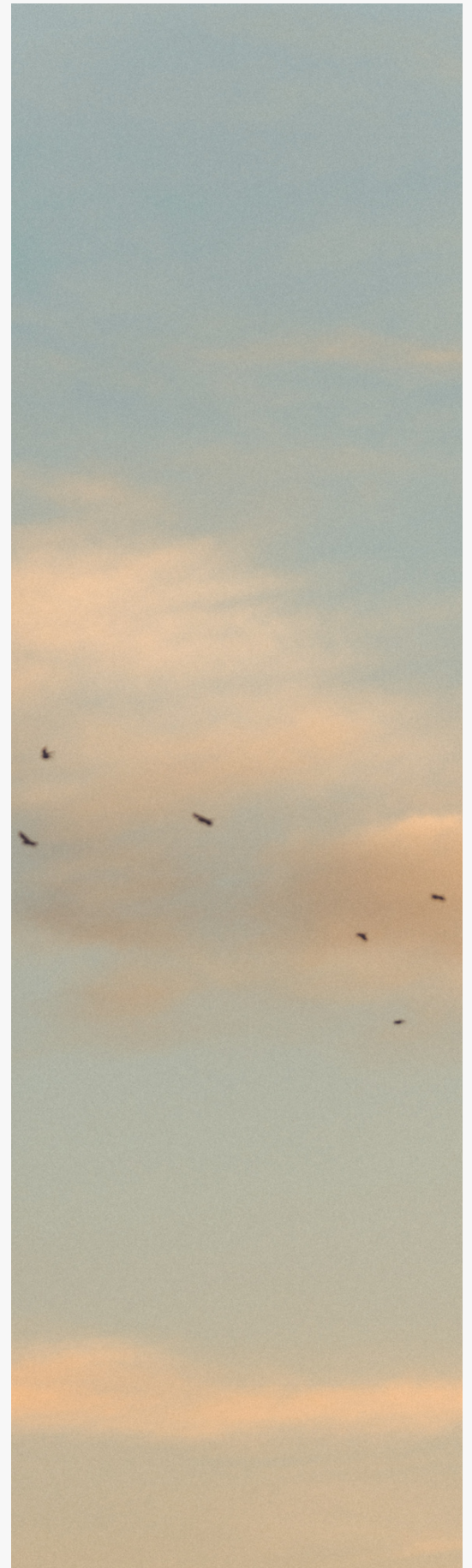
WHAT IF WE DO ACCEPT YOUR PROPOSAL?

Then it's on to the next step: sending in your manuscript! The actual process of sending it in is simple; you'll email it to us in a separate email under the subject title "Manuscript of [Book Title] by [Author Name]" in the form of a Word doc or Google Doc.

BUT, before you send your manuscript, there's one crucial step: the contract. We will send you the contract for the publishing agreement for you to print out and review (and your parents, if you're under 18). If you agree to the terms and are ready to pursue publication, you (and, if necessary, your parent(s)) will sign the contract with your legal name (*not* your pen name, if you have one) and email us a photo of the contract with your signature(s) on it. We don't require you to have to mail anything, because it can be a hassle and unreliable. (Well, so is the internet, but still.)

If you have any questions about the terms of the contract, you are more than welcome to discuss them with us!

Once we receive proof of your signature, you can send the manuscript and we'll move forward!



STEP #4

format your manuscript

BUT WAIT! There's more!! We have some very specific formatting guidelines we would *really* appreciate if you followed before sending us your manuscript!

As mentioned, use a .doc, .docx, or .odt document or a Google Doc. NO PDFS. PLEASE, DO NOT SEND YOUR MANUSCRIPT IN A PDF. I BEG OF YOU.

Ahem. Thank you.

Set the margins to 1 inch. Make sure there are no images anywhere *whatsoever* in your document. If you have a specific image you'd like included, send it to us as its own attachment and we'll discuss how it might be used. If there are any comments on the doc, resolve them all. If there is any highlight text or the page background is anything other than white, remove the highlights and set the page color to white.

Next, ensure every paragraph *except for the*

beginning paragraph of a chapter or scene is indented. Whether you use the tab key or the indent bar at the top of your document doesn't matter. Just indent them.

Ensure all body text is a serif font (Georgia, Garamond, Times New Roman, etc.) at 12pt. Headers must all be 16pt, and special text such as quotes, letters or text messages, etc., can be a different size, but same font.

If you'd like to include a dedication, epitaph, or any other matter, please do so before sending us your manuscript.

Otherwise, we have no other formatting requirements. You don't have to add a header or footer to your manuscript, or page numbers, or anything extra. We'll handle that later!

Failure to comply to our formatting guidelines can create a whole host of issues, folks! Thank you!



you made it

You read this *entire* submissions guide...which means you're now ready to send us your query email! Send your query to us at skysthelimitpress@gmail.com, or simply reach out to us with any questions you have if you're still not sure about submitting to us!

Either way, we can't wait to hear from you, and we are so excited to help you however we can in your pursuit of your dreams and calling from God!

You're about to embark on the journey of a lifetime, and we are so honored to be a part! I pray this guide helped take some of the stress of submitting off and gave you a place to start on this wonderful voyage!

grace

skysthelimitpress@gmail.com

www.skysthelimitpress.com

