

Outline DIY

An author with an advance, an agent, and a regular editor will have a support team in place to guide the first draft. But by and large, the process of writing a manuscript is the same for any author: with a little planning and discipline, any author can learn [how to write a book](#) (or [how to write an ebook](#)).

The first thing you need to do is plan your first draft. However, this plan will depend on what kind of book you're writing:

1. For writers creating a Non-fiction book

When you're writing a non-fiction book that's either a how-to book, or a title that aims to solve a readers problem, the planning might include:

- Research and interviews to develop content, and
- The creation of a "book proposal."

A book proposal is a document that shows publishers what the end result of a book will be. Needless to say, they're very common in the traditional publishing industry. However, more independent non-fiction authors have recently found it useful to create one as well – to ensure that their book stays on message and delivers. To get a sample template, check out this [guide to writing a book proposal](#).

2. For writers creating a Memoir

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While also based on true events, memoirs require [a slightly different approach](#) than other non-fiction books. Unlike most other types of nonfiction, memoirs tend not to offer solutions to a reader's problems, but simply to tell a story. If you're writing about your own life, check out this [guide to outlining a memoir](#).

3. For writers creating a Fiction

In the prep phase, most fiction writers will lay some groundwork and develop the world of their novel, sketch out their characters, and map the plot. To learn more about planning a novel, check out these articles:

- [What is a Narrative Arc?](#) – A breakdown of your protagonist's journey, as influenced by the three-act structure.
- [Dynamic Characters: How to Write a Compelling Protagonist](#) – A look at how to write a compelling protagonist that is grounded in reality.
- [First, Second, and Third Person: Which Point of View is Right for Your Book?](#) – Find out how to choose which perspective might best serve your story.
- [Worldbuilding Tips from the UK Editor of The Martian](#) – Editor Michael Rowley breaks down the basic of worldbuilding, focusing not only on sci-fi and fantasy but in all commercial genres.

Create a routine

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Finding the time to write is an enormous challenge for authors — especially those who have to balance a full-time job and family obligations. To make sure you don't lose momentum and interest in writing, you need to establish a sustainable writing habit that works with your schedule.

- [How to Create a Regular Writing Habit](#) – Author and book coach Kevin Johns reveals his process for creating a writing schedule that will work around your life.
- [Stop Procrastinating! Build a Solid Writing Routine \(Free Course\)](#) – Using cutting-edge behavioral science, this course aims to help writers kill their procrastination gremlins.
- [How Long Does It Take to Write a Book?](#) – All about how long you can expect this process to take, and how to cut down your writing time as much as possible.

Whatever you need to get that routine started, make sure you do it. If it means not treating yourself to a muffin until you've written 3,000 words in a week — do it. If you need to [schedule every single hour of the day](#) to ensure you can steal enough time throughout the week to build momentum, then make it so.

Perfect your craft

Writing a book is like developing any other skill: it requires time, effort, and a willingness to learn. If your goal is to be a better writer, make sure you're always learning from your mistakes and building on them.

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- [How to Write a Novel](#) – A comprehensive course by indie novelist Ben Galley.
- [How to Write a Memoir](#) – Tips from best selling ghost writers on writing a life story.
- [Writing Dialogue](#) – Ideas and exercises to bring your story to life.
- [What is the Theme of Your Story?](#) – How to identify and include underlying meanings in your book.