

Formatting Your Manuscript

Here you will learn the proper way to format your manuscript for submission to a publisher. On the third page you'll see how the first page of a manuscript should appear. You'll receive instructions on each page on formatting your manuscript properly. You'll also see how each additional chapter should be formatted.

You should never save chapters as separate documents or files. Each chapter should be started on a new page within the same document by inserting a page break. If you are not sure how to do this you should look at the top of your screen on the tools menu. You'll see: File, Edit, View, Insert, etc.

Choose: Insert...Break...then click OK. This will insert a new page where you should begin your new chapter.

To format your manuscript so that it is properly spaced between lines you should go to Format, and choose Paragraph. You will get a window. In the General section, your alignment should be set to left. In the Indentation section, both left and right should be set to zero, and the section labeled Special has a drop-down menu: click on the arrow and choose First Line and in the By: section, choose 0.5" to set your indentation. In the spacing section, the Before and After boxes should be set to 0 pt and in the Line Spacing, click the down arrow and choose Double. Then click OK.

Do not choose justified, centered, or right alignment for your margins. Do not use extra spacing between paragraphs; simply hit the enter key and it will drop to the next line for you at the end of the paragraph and it will automatically be indented the right amount of space. By hitting the enter key at the end of each line to get to a new line, it will throw off the formatting of your manuscript for you as well as your publisher. Don't do it.

Even when writing your first draft, you should get into the habit of doing this each and every time. That way you do it right from the start and you don't have to go back and wonder what you did wrong or try to set things the right way later and throw off your formatting. Doing it right the first time simply makes sense.

Study the next few pages carefully and get into the habit of doing it right from the beginning. If you have a critique group, you should prepare your manuscript for them just as if you were submitting it to a publisher. Not only does double spacing between lines make for easier reading, but it also allows editorial remarks between lines so that a typesetter will make those changes easier than trying to read a lot of scribble in the margins.

If you'll notice at the top of each page, there is a section with a page number and some information about who prepared these documents. This is called headers. To insert text into the header, in the toolbar choose View, then choose Header and Footer. This will open the headers first and give you small toolbar that will appear on screen. You do not necessarily have to use his toolbar. You will see your cursor blinking in a box at the top of your screen. On the left side should be the title of your book and nothing more. On the right side you should insert page numbers by going to the toolbar to Insert, Page Numbers, and make sure it says on the Right Side of the page. Next to the title of your book, type in your last name only. Put the cursor next to your to your name, then use the spacebar to move it toward the page number. Do not get too close to the page number because as you type it pages, the number will automatically be placed on the page and you will need room for higher page numbers as they increase. Do not use the footers for any reason. Only your publisher will use footers.

Please go to the next page and get started on learning to format your manuscript the correct way.

Your Real Name Goes Here
Your Street Address
City, State, Zip
Phone Number
e-mail address

© Copyright & Year
Approx. Word Count
Genre (Category)

First North American Serial Rights
(This tells the publisher what rights you are offering.)

TITLE OF BOOK

By
Your Name or Pen Name Goes Here

Chapter One

Start your story here. The required word processing program for online submissions is Microsoft Word2000 because it is currently the tools of the trade in publishing. Do not submit your work as an Adobe Acrobat file or as a read only file. Do not submit your work in rich text format. Do not use the return (enter key) except for a new paragraph. The lines will automatically move to the next line. Do not use justified margins. Use double spacing between lines in your formatting tools. This allows editing of your manuscript between the lines so that you can see what needs to be done and where. Do not use any special fonts or type styles. Anything special is decided by the editor and publisher at

the time of publication. Except for dates, spell out numbers, including time – six o'clock, seven-thirty, etc. For emphasis on words, use italics, not underlined or bold. Use bold ONLY for your chapters and title as shown above. Use Arial 12 for best reading ease for your editor. They go through thousands of manuscripts and have tremendous eye-strain. Don't make it worse by using fancy or small print. Always use your grammar and spell checker, and pay close attention to the suggestions your computer makes, because 95% of the time is it correct. There are instances that it isn't, so use your best judgment. If in doubt, ignore the rule and let your editor make that decision of correctness.

Start each chapter on a new page, but NOT in a new file. If you chose to create them as a separate file, which is easier when trying to change or edit something, you MUST combine the files into ONE before submitting it. You can insert a page break by going to Insert...Break...and chose Page Break and click OK.

Do not submit anything until your manuscript is complete. Publishers who want to see a finished manuscript won't wait a year for you to finish it. They publish only so many titles per year, and want to consider it for their upcoming schedule. Always get submission guidelines and send a query letter first. Otherwise, it goes into a slush pile that may take a year to get to, or may get it returned without even being looked at, which is what happens 99% of the time.

If you would like to join a work group online that will answer questions and help you polish your writing skills, please feel free to go to:

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/eteasures_publishing1/

Chapter Two

You begin your second chapter here, and all subsequent chapters in the same manner by inserting a page break as instructed. Do not create a new file for each chapter unless you merge them later for submission.

You should use the headers to insert your book's title, your last name, and page numbers. To do this, click View...Headers and footers...and it will open up the area of your headers and footers. On the left side of the Header type in the title of your book. Move over several spaces and type your LAST name. Then go to Insert....Page Numbers. The position should be already stated as Top of Page (Header). Alignment should be Right. Uncheck the box that says Show Number on First page. Then click OK. You're all set for the header to be automatically set to be inserted on every new page of your story. By inserting a page break at the end of each chapter, your header is going to work automatically. If you create separate files for each chapter, this will throw off the page count, and will not work. It's best to use the page break.