



VIRTUALBOOKWORM.COM

FORMATTING TIPS

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This booklet was prepared for authors wanting to do some/most of the book formatting. Please read this entire booklet, as it contains a number of helpful formatting tips. If you have any questions after reviewing this booklet, please look over our FAQs (Frequently Asked Question) Database at: [www.virtualbookworm.com/faqs.html](http://www.virtualbookworm.com/faqs.html).

If you still can't find the answer to your question, please go to our Customer Support Center at: [www.virtualbookworm.com/supportcenter.html](http://www.virtualbookworm.com/supportcenter.html).

## PREPARING YOUR SUBMISSION

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Got everything together? Good. Then you should first submit your full manuscript for approval. You can either upload it online at [www.virtualbookworm.com/submissionform.html](http://www.virtualbookworm.com/submissionform.html), or you can snail mail it to Virtualbookworm.com Publishing, PO Box 9949, College Station, TX 77842. Please note that the submission/review process is free unless you decide to submit via snail mail. This takes additional processing and, therefore, you will need to submit payment of \$25 to cover this.

## LAYOUT ETC.

In an effort to give our clients more input into the design of the interior of their book, we now offer optional templates. We have always designed the interior based on the subject matter, size of the book and projected demographics of the intended audience. So please keep your reader in mind as you go through this booklet and try to determine the "look" that's best for your book.

There are, however, some other things to keep in mind. As you know, the retail price of your book is based on the number of pages of the finished product (not the submitted manuscript). If you have a rather large book, it's a good idea to consider a 10- or 11-point font. If your book is shorter, then a 12-point font may be your best choice. A 12- point or larger font should also be used if your audience may be older and require larger type (no offense intended).

You can use this booklet to help mark your requests on the publishing information forms, or you can even attempt to layout your manuscript to these guidelines. It's really up to you.

## CHOOSING THE TRIM SIZE OF YOUR BOOK

Virtualbookworm.com Publishing offers softbound books in 5X8", 5.25X8" 5.5X8.5", 6X9", 7X10", 8.25X11" and 8.5X11" formats. Again, consider your manuscript and your audience when choosing the trim size. Fiction books are best at either 5X8", 5.5X8.5" or 6X9". The 8.25X11" and 8.5X11" sizes are best for textbooks and workbooks. If a book is very lengthy, it's a good idea to choose the 6X9" size. This gives the layout artist more "real estate" to work with and helps reduce the page length. When a 6X9" book is combined with 10-point type, the length of a manuscript is reduced considerably. If the book is shorter, a 5X8" trim size may be preferred since it will lengthen the book (especially when used in conjunction with an 11- or 12-point font).

Cloth-bound hardcover books (with or without jackets) are available in either 5.5X8.5" or 6X9" trim sizes only. Casebound (case laminate) books are available at trim sizes of 5X8", 5.5X8.5", 6X9" 7X10" or 8.5X11". The same guidelines apply when choosing your size.

## HARDCOVER BOOKS

If you are considering a hardcover package, please note that the retail price of the book will be considerably more (we're not trying to deter you from the hardcover option by any means, we just don't want you to suffer from "sticker shock").Our hardcover books come with a blue or grey cloth cover with foil stamping on the spine. The foil stamping consists of the book's title and the author's name. The only drawback to this option is that there isn't a cover design (unless you choose to add a jacket).

If you do choose to publish your book as a cloth-bound hardcover with dustjacket, please note that they have the highest retail price. Also, many customers take the dustjacket off immediately so it doesn't get ripped. And what's under the dustjacket? The cloth cover, foil-stamped hardback that would have been less expensive! Also, be sure to have a longer author bio and book description ready to fill the front and back flaps.

Casebound hardcover books are basically four-color covers laminated into the casebinding. These books are less expensive than hardcover books with a dustjacket and tend to look very impressive. Every author who has chosen the casebound option has been extremely pleased. Another "plus" of the casebound book is the fact that it is extremely durable (most college textbooks are casebound).

## CHOOSING YOUR FONT

The font you choose really does make a difference to the overall “feel” of your book. It is best to use only serif fonts for the body text. Sans serif fonts should be regulated to headings, headers and footers. For example, the text you are reading now is a 12 pt. Goudy font (serif font), while the heading below is in bold, 14 pt. Helvetica (sans serif font).

### **Sans Serif Heading**

So what is the difference between a serif and sans serif font? The text you are reading now is in Goudy, a serif font. The above heading titled “Sans Serif Heading” is in Helvetica, a sans serif. Basically, serifs have “hooks” or “stands” while a sans serif (sans=without) does not. Good examples of sans serif are Arial and Helvetica. You may have written your manuscript in a sans serif, since they tend to look more contemporary or “slick,” but they tend to get rather tough on the eyes after lengthy periods – especially while reading a novel.

We suggest using either Times New Roman, Goudy, Baskerville Old Face, New Century Schoolbook, Book Antiqua, Georgia, Garamond or Bookman Old Style.

GOUDY:

The red fox jumped over the blue dog.

**GEORGIA:**

**The red fox jumped over the blue dog.**

BOOK ANTIQUA:

The red fox jumped over the blue dog.

TIMES NEW ROMAN:

The red fox jumped over the blue dog.

BASKERVILLE OLD FACE:

The red fox jumped over the blue dog.

NEW CENTURY SCHOOLBOOK:

The red fox jumped over the blue dog.

BOOKMAN OLD STYLE:

The red fox jumped over the blue dog.

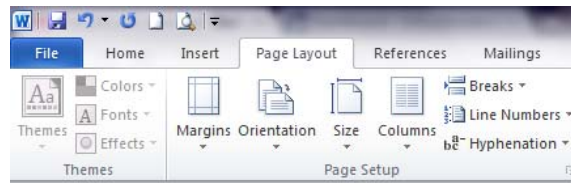
GARAMOND:

The red fox jumped over the blue dog.

All of the font samples above are in 11 point. As you can see, some of the fonts are also more compressed than others. So the length of your book is again a factor. If you have a longer book, 10-point Times New Roman combined with a 6X9” trim size will help trim the page length. If you have a shorter book, then 11- or 12-point New Century Schoolbook or Bookman Old Style used with a 5.5X8.5” trim size will help “beef up” the finished product.

## BASIC FORMATTING

We primarily work from Microsoft Word and InDesign files. We ask that manuscripts created in WordPerfect, LibreOffice, OpenOffice or other word processors be saved in either Word or Rich Text Format (rtf). The page layout programs make adjustments of type, leading, etc. much more precise. However, most authors are satisfied with the layout job of Microsoft Word. If you want to layout your manuscript on your own, or just want a good idea of how long the finished product will be, set your page size to your trim size. Using Microsoft Word 2007 or 2010, for instance, you would go to PAGE LAYOUT-SIZE and then select “More Sizes.” Now set the paper size to either 5.5X8.5” or 6X9” (or other chosen trim size) in a portrait setting (sorry, we can’t bind landscaped books).



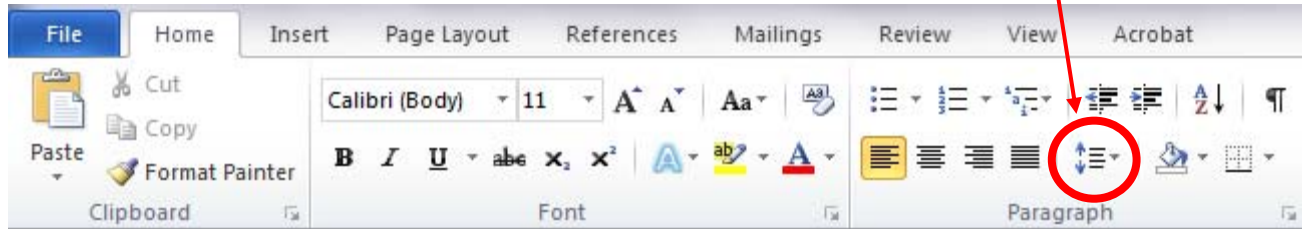
Almost all publishers use different settings, but we have found the following to work best. Set your left, right, top and bottom margins to 0.8 and your headings and footers to 0.5. You can also set the headers and footers at “Different Odd and Even” and “Different First Page” if preferred.

## ADDITIONAL TIPS

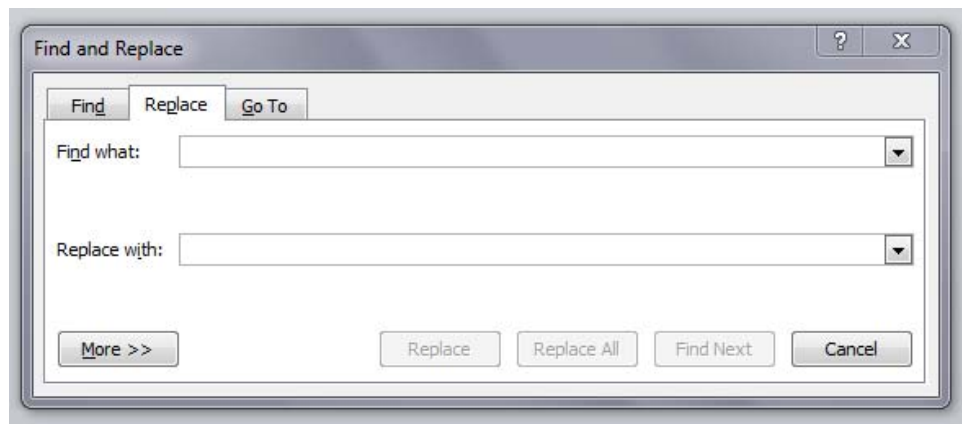
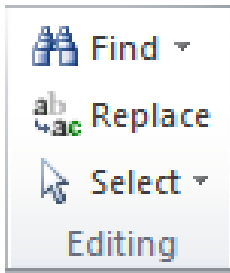
This section is important even if you choose to have us layout your manuscript. So please read through these tips very carefully.

1. **MAKE SURE** the manuscript has been completely proofed and is ready to go! Nothing slows down production more than having to make numerous changes and proofs. If you need editing assistance, we do have such services available for modest fees. **DON'T** just rely on Spell-Check or Grammar Check. They can make many, many mistakes. But it is recommended that you do run those checks to catch the “little things” that may otherwise be overlooked. Be sure you (or someone else) read(s) over the entire manuscript. It is always a good idea to have someone you trust proof your manuscript before you submit it for final publication; a pair of fresh, unbiased eyes are never a bad thing!
2. Manuscripts should be formatted in Microsoft Word if at all possible. If you are using other software, please save your manuscript in Rich Text Format. We will accept manuscripts in Works, WordPerfect, LibreOffice, OpenOffice or StarOffice, but there will be an added \$5 fee for conversion services.
3. First set your page size to the desired trim size (see “Basic Formatting” on the previous page). If you do not see your preferred page size in the list, click “MORE PAPER SIZES” at the bottom of the list. This will take you to a window where you can type in your desired page dimensions.

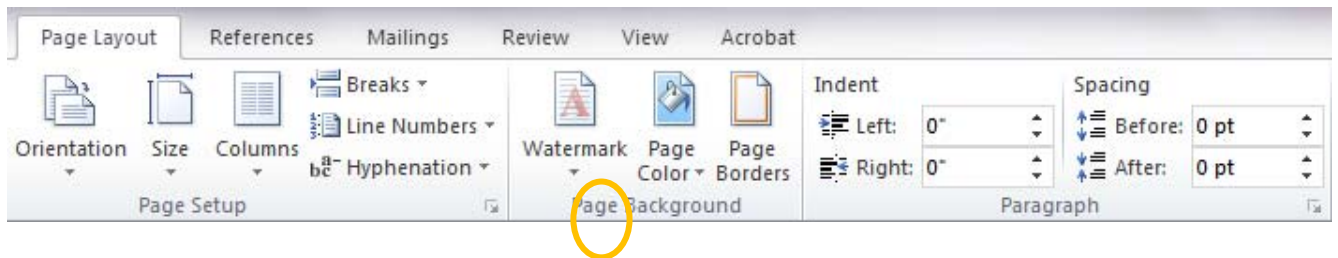
- Margins should be set at .8” on all four sides of the page; headers and footers at .5.
- Set your manuscript to single spacing. This can be found in Word 2007 and 2010, under HOME-PARAGRAPH).

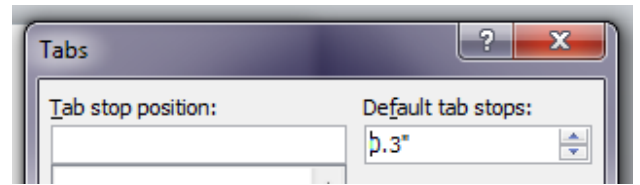
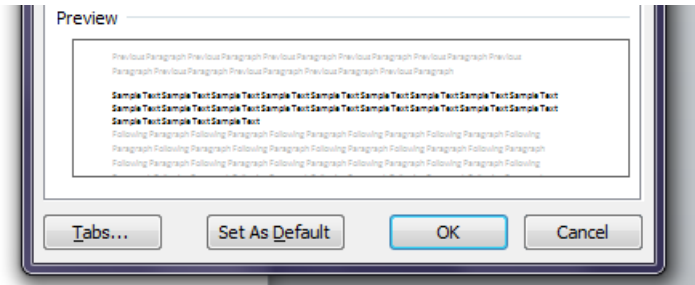


- Make sure there is only ONE space after punctuation marks. Forget the old rules of typing – books look best with only one space after periods, etc. If you have two spaces, you can go to EDIT-FIND and under FIND you can type two spaces and under REPLACE WITH type one space (In Word 2007 and 2010, select the HOME menu and go over to EDITING-REPLACE; see diagrams below). The only time this may be a problem is if you hand-spaced your tabs (which is a BIG no-no, by the way... see below).

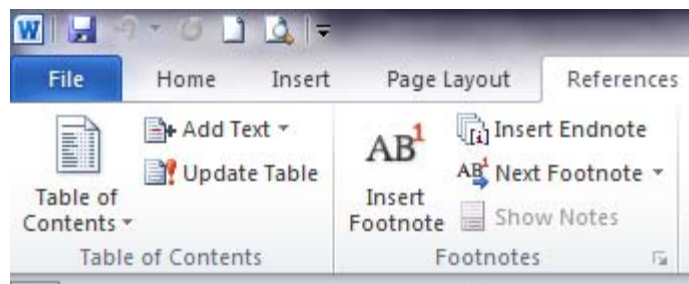


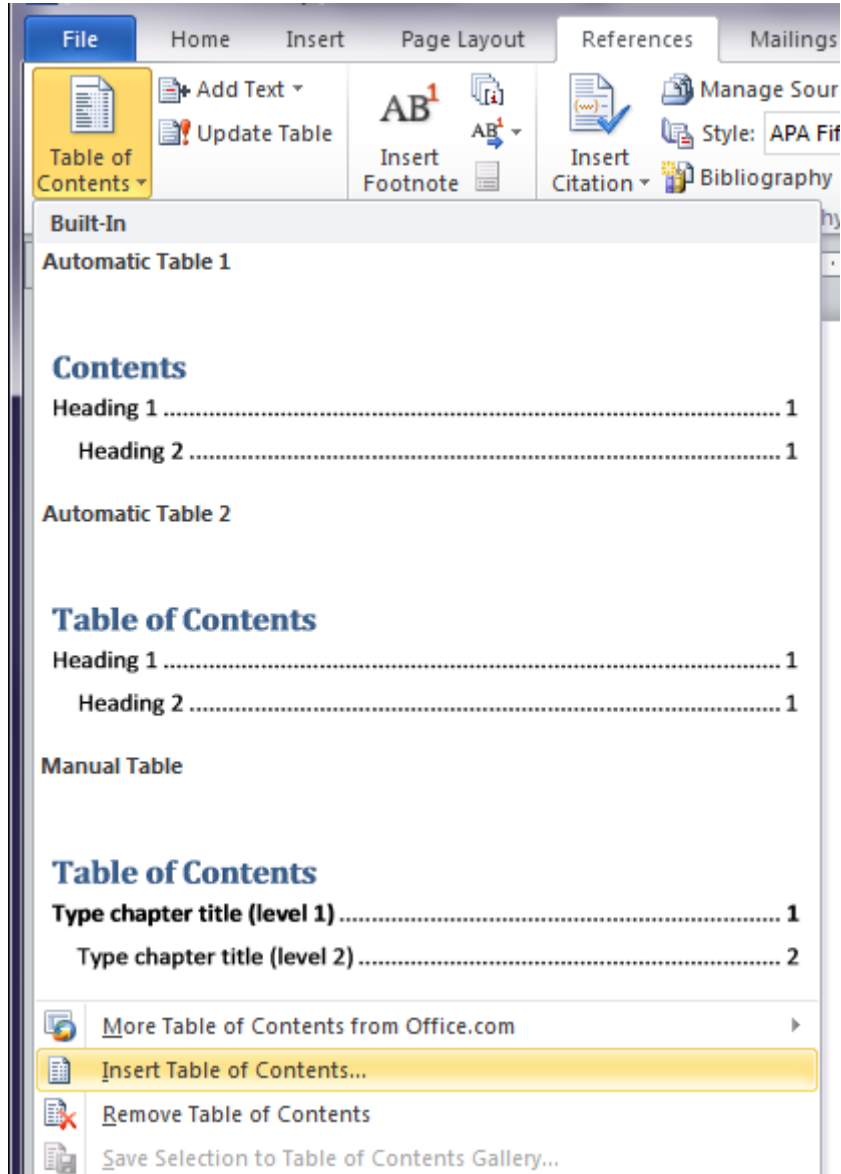
- Make sure you EITHER use the First Line Indent on the tool bar OR your Tab key ... NOT both. And never, ever hand-space for your tabs. Most books look best when the tab is set at .3, not the standard .5. You can change all of your tabs at once (as long as you used the Tab key). In Word 2007 or 2010, select the PAGE LAYOUT menu and go to PARAGRAPH-TABS and type .3 into the box labeled “Default Tab Stops”; see images below and on next page).



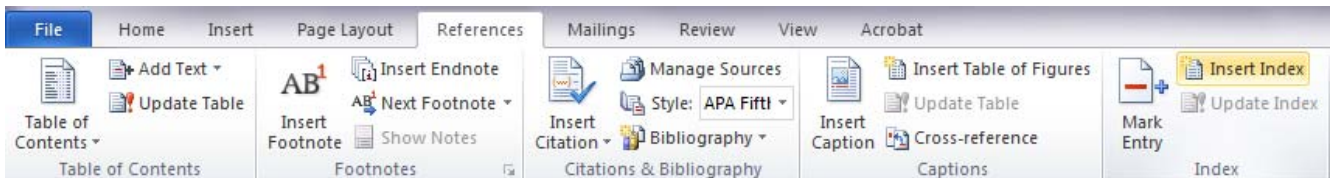


8. BE SURE to use italics where you want them, so you don't have to ask us to add them later. If a character is thinking to himself/herself, it's a good idea to use italics rather than quotes.
9. Clearly mark your Chapters and section/thought breaks. If you want a section or thought break within a chapter, please center asterisks (\*\*\*) with a blank line before and after. These will be replaced with some type of font ornament by a layout designer during the formatting process.
10. If you would like to include a dedication in your book, please include it after your title page.
11. If you would like a Table of Contents, try to create one using the tool in Word. In Word 2007 or 2010, go to REFERENCES-TABLE OF CONTENTS-INSERT TABLE OF CONTENTS. This will allow the Table of Contents to automatically update when the document is changed. If you insert an updateable Table of Contents, there will be no charge for us to keep it updated. If we need to create the Table of Contents, there will be an additional charge.





12. If you'd like to include an INDEX at the back of the book, please tag the text as explained in the Help section of Word. If you don't wish to use this procedure, or have already created it by hand, then we will have you renumber it based on the final manuscript. This will avoid any additional charges. You can insert an index yourself easily by following the following instructions: go to REFERENCES-INSERT INDEX.





13. Be sure to submit your manuscript in ONE FILE, including the cover sheet, introduction, dedication, main body, etc.
14. That about does it! If you have additional questions, please first consult our Frequently Asked Questions section at: [www.virtualbookworm.com/faqs.html](http://www.virtualbookworm.com/faqs.html). We will be happy to answer any questions or concerns you still have after touring our website.

Now go get your manuscript ready and let's have some fun getting your book into production!