

*Quick Guide to*

# Self-Publishing *and FAQs*



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Harvey Stanbrough

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To provide the reader with more of a sample from the actual story,  
most of the traditional front matter appears at the end.

## Quick Guide to Self-Publishing & FAQs

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**If you're reading this, congratulations!** That means you've decided NOT to give an agent 15% of your income for doing nothing but negotiating a contract (especially when the agent is much more cozy with the publisher than with the author). It also means you've chosen NOT to give the publisher over 80% of your income for the privilege of selling your books. ☺ Here are some FAQs that should greatly smooth the process for you. Let's get right to it!

### FIRST, TO SET YOURSELF UP AS A SELF-PUBLISHER

**If you're going to publish only your own work, you don't need to set up an LLC** or anything of the sort. Only you are involved. You may publish under only your own name or under your own name and any number of personas or pseudonyms. For example, at FrostProof808, I publish my own work under Harvey Stanbrough, Gervasio Arrancado, Nicolas Z Porter and Eric Stringer (so far).

**If you're publishing only ebooks, here's what you do:**

- a. **Have your banking information ready** (routing number, account number). You'll have to give them both your banking information so they can pay your royalties. You'll also have to give them your taxpayer ID number or Social Security number and answer some questions regarding how you want to pay taxes. This is America, after all.
- b. **If you have a regular Amazon account**, you can use the same login information, but you still have to **go to this specific URL** to set up your publisher account: <https://kdp.amazon.com/self-publishing/signin>. (If you don't have a regular Amazon account, go to that URL to set up a publisher account as well.)
- c. **Go to Smashwords and set up an account:** <http://smashwords.com>. Note: This does NOT have to be a "publisher" account unless you plan to use pen names for some of your titles.
- d. **I recommend you allow Smashwords to pay you through PayPal.** You can set up a PayPal account at <http://PayPal.com>. Again, have your banking account information handy first.

**If you want to publish print books via Print on Demand (POD)**, I strongly recommend CreateSpace. Go to <https://www.createspace.com/> and set up an account.

There is a learning curve involved with self-publishing. It isn't overly difficult, but it will require your full attention to format and submit your ebook manuscript to Smashwords and to Amazon and your print book to CreateSpace.

The layout process is different for ebooks than for print, of course.

**If you are not inclined toward doing your own eformatting or print layout**, I most strongly recommend you email Deb Lewis ([email deboraklewis@yahoo.com](mailto:email_deboraklewis@yahoo.com)) or visit <http://ArenaPublishing.org> and let Deb do the eformatting

and/or print layout for you. Her formatting, layout and cover design service is inexpensive and invaluable. Best of all, you are still a self-publisher and you receive 100% of all royalties from sales of your book

**NOTE: Especially with all that's available to self-publishers today, I recommend strongly against using AuthorHouse, Trafford, iUniverse, BookLocker or any other subsidy publishers.**

**Also, even if a publisher charges no up-front fees**, if their contract includes a “non-competition” clause or if the contract says they own the setup files, cover etc. for your book and you have to pay a fee (usually several hundred dollars or more) to break the contract, I recommend you **DO NOT SIGN**. Those companies exist only to prey on your ego as a writer. They will tell you whatever you want to hear whether or not it's the truth and charge several hundred to several thousand dollars to give you exactly the same thing you will receive from an honest formatter, layout artist and cover designer.

### **How Do I Get Paid?**

**Amazon and CreateSpace pay royalties monthly** via direct deposit to your bank account.

**Smashwords pays royalties quarterly** via direct deposit to PayPal or via mailed check. (I recommend going with PayPal.)

**Note: Whether you are publishing only under your own name or under several pseudonyms**, all royalties will come directly to you as the publisher per the tax and payment information you gave Amazon and Smashwords when you signed up.

**That's it! Welcome to the incredible world of self-publishing!**

### **OTHER IMPORTANT FAQs (YOU NEED THIS STUFF TOO!)**

**Do I have to purchase an ISBN for my book?** No. The cost is prohibitive. Let your publisher handle ISBNs. If you self-publish, both Smashwords (for ebooks) and CreateSpace (for print books) provide a free ISBN, and neither Amazon nor Barnes & Noble use one. They use their own stock numbers.

**Can I use the same ISBN for both my print and ebook?** No. Each edition (print and electronic) must have a different ISBN.

**Does an ebook even need an ISBN?** Yes, but Smashwords will provide a free ISBN for those vendors who require it.

**Do I have to register my copyright?** No. Your copyright belongs to you the moment your work is finished. Copyright registration is more a function of fear than of necessity. **If you insist on registering your copyright**, I suggest you register all your new works once a year under a single title (e.g., Works of Author Name, 2012) and a single fee. — Note: [Blog Post on Copyright and the Library of Congress Control Number \(LCCN\)](#).

**I've heard that if I want my book to get into libraries, I need an LCCN. Should I purchase an LCCN?** No. An LCCN (Library of Congress Control Number) ensures a listing in the Library of Congress database, but it does *not* ensure that your book (ebook or print) will be included in the actual Library of Congress itself. Having an LCCN number has absolutely no bearing on whether your book is listed or carried in any other libraries either. I recommend against purchasing an LCCN. It's neither required nor necessary. This is just one more way for scammers and near-scammers to make money from writers.

**Is prepping a manuscript for epublication difficult?** Not really. You'll need to find someone to eformat your file and design your ebook cover or learn to do it yourself. For eformatting and cover design services, I recommend checking <http://ArenaPublishing.org>.

If you'd like to eformat and submit your ebook yourself, I recommend my [The Essentials of Digital Publishing](#). (Purchase the PDF version so you'll have the benefit of the full-size screenshots.) You can also download the free

*Smashwords Style Guide*, but it's extremely convoluted and filled with extra, unnecessary information. It is why I took the time to write *The Essentials of Digital Publishing*.

I also recommend having either me or some other professional create your book cover. However, Dean Wesley Smith offers an online workshop on [Designing Professional E-Books](#) and another one titled Book Cover Design. After you click the link above, just scroll farther down the page to see that one.

**Does my work have to be professionally edited?** No. That being said, your manuscript should be in the best possible shape before you submit it to any publisher. Most publishers will provide a final proofread and polishing of any manuscript they accept for publication, but manuscripts rife with spelling, wrong-word or punctuation errors are often rejected out of hand. I do provide professional copyediting at <http://HarveyStanbrough.com>.

**Can I make changes in my book after it's been published?** Typos and other small errors are all but unavoidable. If you find an error after a work has been published—depending on the severity and location of the error—you'll have to decide whether to interrupt sales to correct it. If it's an egregious error (one that interrupts or overly disrupts the reading) or if it's a lighter error but occurs in the first several pages of your book, you might want to correct it and upload a revised version. However, if it isn't all that serious (teh instead of the or something) and it occurs after the reader's been hooked, I'd not worry about it.

**What is required for an ebook cover?** Different sales venues (Amazon, Apple, Barnes & Noble, et al) have different specifications. To meet or exceed them all, I recommend creating a cover that's 2000 x 3000 pixels at 300 dpi. Then you can upload the cover to both Amazon and Smashwords knowing it will be accepted.

**Do I have to provide my own cover?** In a word, yes. When you upload your manuscript to Smashwords or Amazon you should be prepared to upload your cover as well. If you're relatively expert at cover design, by all means do it yourself. To see what I can do for you, check [HarveyStanbrough.com/cover-design](http://HarveyStanbrough.com/cover-design).

**Who decides what the cover will look like?** If you hire me to design your cover, you have the final say, but you're hiring me for my expertise so you will save money and time if you grant me artistic control over the design. If I have artistic control, you tell me how you want the cover to look generally. Then I select a photo, fonts, font sizes, etc. and put the whole thing together. It costs you \$60 (or the current rate). If you retain artistic control, meaning you control every detail, you decide all aspects and it costs you \$40 per hour with a 4 hour minimum (or the current rate).

**Where can I get cover art?** If I design your cover, I provide the photo. If you'd rather do it yourself, you can purchase royalty-free stock photos at any of several online stock photo agencies, including iStockPhoto.com, BigStockPhoto.com, CanStockPhoto.com, and Shutterstock.com. Dreamstime is also good, but I find them a bit expensive. Getty Images is out of my price range.

**How long does it take to publish an ebook?** Once your accounts are set up at Smashwords, Amazon and/or Barnes and Noble, given a completed, correctly formatted manuscript and a completed cover it should take no more than ten minutes to upload the manuscript and cover to each venue.

**When will readers actually be able to purchase my book online?** *Every eformat version* of your book (Kindle, Nook/iPad, PDF, etc.) will be available through Smashwords on the publication date, often within an hour. Smashwords is also a distributor, and once your book is accepted into their premium catalogue (about a week) they distribute it to several other major sales venues, including Apple, B&N, Diesel, and Kobo. At Amazon it takes about 12 hours. The Kindle version of your book also will be available through Amazon.com in worldwide within several days of publication.

**Where will my book be available for purchase?** Specifically, the Kindle version of your book will be available through all Amazon.com markets: Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Monaco, San Marino, Spain, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, the USA and Vatican City (current on 8 February 2014). Of course, through Smashwords your book will also be available in

both Kindle and Epub formats worldwide through markets and subsidiaries established by Apple, Baker & Taylor Blio, Baker-Taylor Axis360, Barnes & Noble, Diesel, Flipkart, Kobo, Library Direct, Oyster, Page Foundry, Scribd, and anyplace where anyone has an Internet connection and can access any of these vendors.

**If my book is already published in paperback or hard back, can I still publish the e-version?** Yes, as long as you own the electronic (digital) rights and your work is not in the public domain.

**If I publish my book as an ebook, can I still submit the manuscript to agents and publishers in hopes of publishing a print version?** Absolutely. You retain full ownership of your copyright and can assign your print rights and other rights as you see fit.

**Can I download my own book?** Yes, through Smashwords.

**How should I price my work?** That has to be up to you, but there's some very good information at [DeanWesleySmith.com](http://DeanWesleySmith.com). Click on his **Think Like A Publisher** tab.

**Can I include footnotes in an ebook?** No. Footnotes are not possible in ebooks at all. There are no pages in ebooks so there are no "feet." You can include end notes in a self-published ebook, but it's a labor-intensive process. For information on the bookmarking-hyperlinking process you would have to use to create end notes or indices, see [The Essentials of Digital Publishing](#) or [The Smashwords Style Guide](#). (See next entry.)

**What do you mean when you say there are no pages in ebooks?** Just as print books come in various sizes, so do e-reading devices (laptops, tablets, Kindle, Nook, smart phones). In a print book, the viewing area (the printed area inside the margins) and the text that's printed on it remains constant. For example, in a trade paperback, the viewing area is about 4 x 6 inches and the font size is about 10 or 11 points. In an ebook, although the physical viewing area (screen) itself remains constant, the reader can manipulate the text size, line spacing, etc. to change the virtual viewing area. For that reason, the publisher can control only the most basic layout options (for example, the initial font size, font attributes like bold or italic, and text alignment). So if you would like to have something centered vertically on a page, you can't do that. If you want to use footnotes, you can't do that. If you'd like to wrap text around a photo and you want your ebook available in more than .pdf format, you can't do that. As with any technology (even print books) there are limitations.

**You talk about Smashwords a lot. What is Smashwords?** Smashwords is a conversion engine and distribution port. It converts your correctly formatted Microsoft Word document into several ebook formats. Smashwords also distributes to Apple, Baker & Taylor Blio, Baker-Taylor Axis360, Barnes & Noble, Diesel, Flipkart, Kobo, Library Direct, Oyster, Page Foundry and Scribd.

**What if I want you to publish my title only to Amazon and forget the others?** Up to you, of course, but you're cutting away a lot of major sales venues. I recommend using Amazon's KDP (Kindle Digital Publishing) as one sales venue for your ebooks, but I do NOT recommend using Amazon's KDP Select program (you would sell exclusively through Amazon).

**Do I have to upload a Word document or can I send some other form?** Smashwords prefers .doc, although you can upload a prepared, formatted .epub now if you want to. Amazon prefers .doc or .docx.

**Can I submit a hard copy (paper) manuscript?** Probably not to an epublisher.

**Can I send my manuscript on a thumb drive or flash drive?** If you're publishing yourself to Amazon and/or Smashwords and/or B&N, you have to upload your document online. If you're submitting to a print publisher or epublisher, check with the publisher.

**Do I have to sign up for an account with Smashwords or Amazon?** Yes, you have to sign up for an account with them if you want to publish your manuscript through them.

**Do I have to have a PayPal account?** No. Smashwords prefers to send royalties to a PayPal account but they will

send a check. Sign up for PayPal at <http://www.paypal.com>.

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#### **Credits**

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#### **About the Author**

I am a successful writer and writing instructor who also provides paid editing and cover-design services for other writers. To investigate those services, visit [HarveyStanbrough.com](http://HarveyStanbrough.com).

To see what I mean when I say I'm a successful writer, please visit [Harvey Stanbrough & Friends Writing in Public](#). From there you can find my books and stories on Amazon, Apple, Barnes & Noble and Smashwords.

I hope you've found this guide and these FAQs enjoyable and informative. Thanks for visiting, and if I can do anything for you, don't hesitate to email me at [Harvey@harveystanbrough.com](mailto:Harvey@harveystanbrough.com).