

# Pre-Edit Workbook – 2022



## Do I Really Need an Editor?

Um...of course I'm going to say yes. But that doesn't make it any less true. If your goal is to put this book into the world, you need an objective and trained eye on it. Do you need an editor if you're planning to submit to publishing houses or agents? That depends on how confident you are in your own craft, and if you have an industry-experienced critique partner. While agents and publishers won't be expecting polished perfection, readability and capturing attention are important.

- An editor is trained to assess your work based on a holistic view of your plot, characters, pacing, tension, and language. They should provide teaching and suggestions to level up your story and polish your prose.
- Beta readers and critique partners may give you feedback on how they liked the book, but an editor is trained to read on behalf of the majority of readers, not just themselves. They will give you objective, market-specific feedback.
- The best kind of editor is one who will teach you as you go through the edits. You should learn more about how you write, what works, and how to fix what doesn't. The goal is not only to make your book stronger, but to make you a stronger writer as well.
- An editor is trained to view your work with an eye to genre expectations, marketability, and audience.
- An editor should be a great cheerleader and pump up your confidence in your own craft while maintaining YOUR author voice.
- It's also a great idea to have an editor who can assess your story for inclusivity, representation, and microaggressions (I do this regularly, but many editors will not).

## Is My Manuscript Ready for an Editor?

- ✓ Have you already completed a round or two of revisions on your own?
- ✓ Have you had any beta readers provide feedback and addressed that as well?
- ✓ Have you searched out and applied any craft learning to your work?
- ✓ If you're seeking a line edit, have you already had the content assessed?

Basically, you're paying for an editor. If you're handing in a first draft, you'll be getting back some BIG FIXES that will still only get you part of the way there because there's only so much an editor can do in one pass. Better to do those more obvious fixes yourself so the editor can bring you the rest of the way. Plus, handing in a first draft will just make your editor angry.

\*\*\*If you're truly stuck with your first draft and don't know where to go, I offer an Outline Assessment, which looks at those big problems, plus your first 10 pages of craft, to offer guidance on what to do with that first draft.

## **Formatting**

Okay, you're about to hit send on that manuscript to your editor! Well done! It's a lot of work to get to this point and you deserve a high five! Or fist bump, if you'd rather play it cool.

Before you send in your manuscript, there are a few things you can do to make your editor's job go smoothly. Having little issues out of the way means that they can focus their time (time that you've paid for) on getting straight into the meat of the project. These things just make the reading less distracting and helps the editor focus.

**Indents** - First, make sure the first lines of your paragraphs are all indented not tabbed. You can access indents in the Paragraph menu, setting it to 0.5" is usually good. If you need to remove tabs, you can do them all at once by opening Find/Replace and typing ^t in Find and nothing in Replace.

**Empty Lines** - Remove extra spaces between paragraphs. In the Paragraph menu there is a check box for "don't add spaces between paragraphs".

**Number Pages** - Page numbers are helpful, as your editor may refer to something on a specific page. So, if you haven't added them, throw them in now.

**Check Italics** - If you've transfer into word from another program, sometimes italics will switch to underline. (Why? Seriously, WHY?) So just do a quick glance through to make sure that things that are supposed to be italicized didn't get switched to underline. If this happened to a lot of text, you can fix it all at once by going to Find/Replace and using the Format drop down menu to select underline for Find and then italics for Replace.

**Font and Spacing** - I've never been picky about font, but your best bets are Times New Roman, Calibri, or Arial in 11 or 12pt. Do space your lines to 1.5 or double. Single spaces lines get rather cramped when the comments and fixes get inserted.

## **Resources**

Here are a few articles I've come across that can help you with your craft as you prepare your manuscript!

### **To prepare for content edits:**

[How \(& Why\) to Write Inclusive Fiction](#)

[Save the Cat Beat Sheet and Template](#) (This is the film version of Save the Cat, but the beats are the same for novels)

[Immersive Worldbuilding](#)

[How to Write a Sympathetic Villain](#)

[Tips on Crafting Character Arcs](#)

**To prepare for line edits:**

[How to Avoid Unnecessary Filter Words in your Writing](#)

[Tips for Dialogue Punctuation](#)

[Sentence Fragments Explained](#)

[Writing With More Emotion](#)

[Video Tutorial on Using Word Find/Replace Function](#)

[Video Tutorial on Using Word Read Aloud](#) (You should always do at least one pass of your manuscript using a read aloud software if you have one available. This will help you catch so much more than even just reading it aloud yourself.)

Thanks for reading along! You're welcome to share this publication with friends, I just ask that you use the branded pages.

Best wishes for your writing and publishing journey!

Dream on, Dreamers!

