

Hard Copy and eBook: The different stages of publishing

	Hard copy (paperback/hardback)	eBook	Time*
Content	Manuscript assessment <i>A report on the 'big picture': an assessment of overall plot, story arc, pacing, characterisation, narrative points of view (POV) and structure. No amendments are made to the manuscript.</i>	Manuscript assessment	2 weeks
	Developmental edit[†] <i>A thorough and in-depth process during which all aspects of the writing – plot, story arc, pacing, consistency, structure, characterisation, narrative POVs – are examined to help the author resolve any issues.</i>	Developmental edit	4 weeks
	Copy-edit <i>A line-by-line look at the manuscript, focusing on grammar, spelling, style, consistency and punctuation issues at sentence level.</i>	Copy-edit	4 weeks
Design/formatting	Typesetting <i>Most writers produce manuscripts in a 'raw' format – using Word, Google Docs or OpenOffice, for instance – but to produce a document that is suitable for print, this text (and any accompanying images) needs to be typeset: laid out in a print- or eBook-friendly format using specialised design software.</i>	[If the plan is to release only as an eBook, this stage can be skipped. If the plan is to release as hard copy AND eBook, then the conversion into eBook format can happen from the typeset files.]	2 weeks
Content	Proofreading <i>A proofreader will check the typeset body text, running heads, display quotations, captions, footnotes, appendices, page numbers, etc. and mark up any errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation, or layout.</i>	Proofreading <i>A proofreader will check the raw text, display quotations, captions, footnotes, appendices, etc. and mark up any errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation, or layout.</i>	1 week
Cover	Design of front and back cover (and spine) <i>When the book length is determined, the spine width is finalised, and the complete cover artwork can be generated.</i>	Design of front cover <i>Artwork is only required for the front cover.</i>	ongoing
Print/eBook Conversion	Print <i>The corrected files are converted to PDF and sent to print</i>	N/A	4–6 weeks [‡]
		eBook Conversion <i>The corrected files are converted – either from raw format or typeset design – to EPUB, MOBI and PDF formats for eBook distribution</i>	2–3 weeks

* Turnaround times are based on a straightforward, text-led book of approximately 80,000 words.

[†] In some cases – particularly in non-fiction, or if the writing is strong – a publisher may opt for a simultaneous/hybrid developmental and copy-edit.

[‡] This is based on a b&w paperback book, printed locally.