



# Editing Essentials



Abigail Turner  
PIPSTONES PUBLISHING

# Editing Essentials

Welcome to your easy-to-follow guide to help make your book a success! Thank you for embarking on this journey with us and for seeing the importance of your manuscript being flawless. A well-edited manuscript will make your book stand out from the rest!

I'm Abby, a co-owner of PipStones Publishing, and an author like you. PipStones provides specialized author services in editing, book design, publishing, distribution, local marketing, and social marketing.

For more information about our company, or to schedule a complimentary consultation, [Click Here!](#)

In this booklet, I will walk you through the essentials of understanding the editing process. Editing can be a manageable and pleasant experience, and I'm here to help make that happen! Pay close attention to "Words to the Wise" towards the end.

Happy Writing!

Abigail Turner  
PipStones Publishing  
©2024, PipStones, LLC.

## **What can I expect?**

Welcome to the editing process! While it can be a challenging journey, proper editing is essential for the success of your book. In this guide, I walk you through how to find the best editor, outline the dos and don'ts to hiring an editor, and provide valuable resources to help you start editing your manuscript. By the end of this handbook, you'll be equipped with the knowledge and confidence to navigate your editing journey successfully.

## **Why is editing important?**

Just as you apply your expertise in another job to enhance the efficiency of your company, an editor brings the same level of professionalism to your book. An editor not only refines your manuscript to improve its quality but also plays a crucial role in boosting your sales and minimizing the risk of negative reviews. By ensuring that your book is polished and error-free, an editor helps streamline your path to success as an author. If you can afford it, investing in an editor is highly recommended. Consider saving for this essential service and prioritizing it in your budget—a valuable investment in your writing career.

I can't express how frequently I encounter authors who have had their books edited by another company, only to feel that the final product no longer captures their original vision. This can happen, but it doesn't have to. Drawing from my experience editing numerous successful books, I'm here to provide the essential steps that will help make your editing choices clearer and equip you with the knowledge to enhance and refine your manuscript.

**Let's dive in!**

# **Essential #1:** **Who are you hiring?**

## **Do your research!**

1. When an editor is recommended to you, take the time to research them online. Check out their social media profiles, website, business reviews, and ask other clients for feedback.
2. In your search for an editor, try Googling your genre followed by “editors.” The most reputable ones are usually on the first page of the search results. However, exploring other pages can also help you find good editors.
3. Many writing Facebook groups offer recommendations for editors. You can also create a post inquiring about editors for a specific genre and page count, and you’ll likely receive multiple responses. Be sure to thoroughly research them before responding.
4. It’s advisable to avoid hiring anyone you can’t communicate with via phone or direct email. If you can’t hear their voice, don’t hire them.

## **Do ask questions!**

1. What is your pricing? Editing can be costly, so be prepared to tell them what your budget may be (see Essential #2).
2. How long is the process?
3. What type of editing will I receive for that price point?
4. Can you send me a short sample of a “before and after” from a book you edited?
5. How many rounds of editing will we be doing together?
6. Will you edit all the extra material for my manuscript? Is that included in the price?
7. What are your methods of payment, and how frequently do I pay?
8. When can I receive a contract to sign?
9. What is the general timeline for this process?

10. If I hire you, when can we begin?

### **Don't hire the editor if...**

1. You haven't worked on editing your book first. When I give estimates for editing, I weigh them depending on how much work I feel the book will need. The less editing, the better the price (see Essential #2 and #4).
2. They tell you how many rounds of editing you will receive. Their answer should be, "Until it is complete, and you are satisfied."
3. They tell you to pay in total upfront. There should be a split payment: one to get started and one upon finishing. A middle payment can even be included.
4. You cannot speak to them on the phone. You should have regular meetings or the option to set up a call when necessary.
5. They don't respond to your original call for services promptly. I wouldn't even consider hiring them.
6. They are unclear on the process or type of editing or don't provide a reasonable timeline.
7. They don't provide you with a contract.
8. Their prices seem unreasonable. But, yes, editing can be expensive. Don't think that you're not getting a bang for your buck because it's out of your price range. They also should provide you with an editing quote (an estimate). You can sometimes negotiate the price, but I wouldn't "low-ball" them. If they are a good editor, they probably have other clients that will pay them full price. So, having a conversation with them and telling them about your budget would be wise. Feel out the response they give you. Weigh the waters.
9. They aren't willing to send you a short sample of their editing beforehand.
10. They won't send you a quote. Don't be impulsive on the phone. Wait to hear from them again with a quote. The timeliness of their quote says a lot, too. Does it seem like they have time for you? Then, decide after that point.
11. They only use programs or AI (Artificial Intelligence) for editing. There is nothing like a human to allow your tone, feeling, and your voice to be heard throughout your book. After all, you want it to sound like you and not a computer, right? In self-publishing, AI is considered a "no, no."

## Essential #2

### What does editing cost?

Pricing for editing services may vary. Some editors charge per word, page, or based on the number of chapters in the book. Others determine the price according to the specific type of editing required. Some editors may assess the price based on their perception of the book's needs or the author's requested process. It's important to carefully consider and compare these different pricing structures.

As a freelance editor, I determine my prices based on each job. I estimate the time and effort the book will require, and then provide the author with an initial estimate. In certain scenarios, an author may request a reduction in the estimated price due to their current situation. I may consider accepting the change if it's a reasonable circumstance and the difference is not too significant.

### **Pricing for Editing:**

Priced per word

Priced by the number of pages

Priced by the type of editing services needed

Minimum fee per genre (extra time calculated later)

Flat fee per genre (some children's book editors will do this)

Price evaluation based on estimated time for completion

Priced by the number of chapters and front and back matter

## Essential #3

# What are the editing processes?

### 1. **Manuscript Evaluation:**

A manuscript evaluation can be a valuable tool for amateur authors or writers new to the genre.

- a. Summary and Overview
- b. Content Structure
- c. Quality of Writing
- d. Originality and Contribution
- e. Technical and Ethical Considerations
- f. Recommendations for acceptance or rejection of changes
- g. Additional Comments- strengths & weaknesses, improvement suggestions

### 2. **Copy Editing:**

This is the most basic type of editing.

- a. Spelling
- b. Grammar
- c. Punctuation
- d. Word choice
- e. Syntax
- f. Improves terminology and technicalities

### 3. **Line Editing:**

This is a necessary step in the editing process.

- a. Looking at each line, evaluating, and refining
- b. Requires rearranging and redesigning sentences and paragraphs
- c. Clarifies the line and enhances readability
- d. Tone, voice, and style consistency

### 4. **Developmental Editing:**

This type of editing is more in-depth and requires additional time and effort from you and the editor.

- a. Improves overall structure and content

- b. Meets the intended purpose for the target audience
- c. Gets rid of any plot holes
- d. Shapes character development/argument structure

## 5. **Professional Editing:**

This is a complete edit for your book.

- a. All parts and pieces from numbers 1-4.

## 6. **Proofread:**

This is the final process before the design and formatting of the book.

- a. A separate person other than your general editor should proofread your book. It can be within the same company, but it's important to have a separate eye on it. After all, we are human and *do* make mistakes, no matter how often we have look at something.
- b. This person ensures that the book is format-ready. They use their “eagle eye” to find **anything** that was missed or appears inconsistent.
- c. They are basically preparing your manuscript for formatting. They ensure there is a cohesive standard.
  - 1. Do the subheadings look the same? Are they placed correctly? Are you using colons after each subheading or are they underlined?
  - 2. Are you using italics or a bold font for emphasized words?
  - 3. Is each chapter separated with a page break?
  - 4. Do you have each paragraph as justified text, indented or other? This can also be done in the formatting process, but a good proofreader will already have it completed.
  - 5. They double-check each type of editing (Copy, Line, and Developmental).
  - 6. They check for types of dashes (hyphens, endashes, or emdashes). Are they the correct ones?
  - 7. Do you have outlines in your book? Does it have roman numerals or letters or bullets? Are these consistent throughout?

\*There are even more items a proofreader searches for before formatting.\*



## Essential #4

### Who's the editor in you?

On the other hand, you also have the option to edit your book yourself, at least before handing it to a professional (which is necessary).

Here's how to edit your book yourself. Even with the resources below, you need to be choosy about accepting all edits from these programs. You still want your manuscript to sound like your voice and that is primary.

### What are your tools?

1. In Word, you can click on the editor, which will guide you through the basics of copy editing and even some line editing. You should complete this process for each part of your book first.
2. Go to [www.grammarly.com](http://www.grammarly.com). You can use their free Grammarly to improve the files you edit.
3. If you want to go a step further, you can purchase their monthly or yearly Grammarly program. It is a more extended version that allows you to dive a bit deeper into the editing process. I highly suggest this.
4. Other valuable editing programs are Prowriting Aid, Autocrit, Scrivener, and Hemingway App. Each one has different subscriptions and pricing. Some even include free trials.
5. Get a thesaurus!!! This is a must, or at least use your search engine to look up alternate words and phrases.
6. Research any other available editing programs that suit your needs.
7. Use these tools for ALL parts of your book.
8. KEEP GOING, as this can be a tedious process. You've come so far!

## Tips and Tricks!

1. Set editing goals.
2. Watch out for homonyms.
3. Be consistent in deciding if you write time as numbers or words.
4. Research any words or phrases that don't "look right" or may "sound strange."
5. My rule of thumb is any descriptor word should never be duplicated within twenty lines of the first word. This can be acceptable if it is there to emphasize the word.
6. Each editing program is different, so they will make suggestions as needed throughout. Follow their guidelines but be choosy.
7. Reading out loud can help you hear things you would've rarely noticed with your eyes.
8. Listen to someone else reading passages.
9. Put your Word program on the read-aloud option.
10. Choose a style and stick with it. Time period speech matters (use language that aligns with the genre/time period).
11. Create a checklist.
12. Print your manuscript. Often, viewing it on paper will help you catch mistakes.
13. Highlight or write down key issues and rework them later.
14. Review one element at a time. If you're looking for correct capitalization, do that first, then move onto another element.
15. Try to detach from your manuscript and be as objective as you can.
16. Take breaks when needed. Possibly even break for a day or two at a time.
17. Keep tense and POV (point of view) consistent and accurate.
18. Identify the passive and active voices in your writing. Are they accurate to the context?

## Essential #5 Is it finished?

Stand your ground on the edits you want and don't want. If your book begins to sound less like your voice, then state your concerns.

Trust your editor. Be prepared for your book to exceed your expectations. Most editors have extensive experiences and past book successes.

I highly recommend hiring a professional editor once you have thoroughly edited the manuscript. It is important to find a good editor who will work with you and consider your input. Avoid editors who make all the edits without involving you, as this could result in your book losing your "character." Establish a collaborative editing relationship with your chosen editor, and remember to follow the tips provided in this guide.

After completing the editing process, it is also beneficial to have beta readers review your manuscript. Their feedback can offer valuable insights into how your target audience perceives your work and identify any areas requiring further refinement.

### Words to the Wise

**Conduct as many edits as necessary for your book to be the perfect version of your writing. However, at some point, you have to say, "Consummatum est—It is finished."**

**Please avoid relying on a friend's approval to determine whether your book is fully edited. It's essential to trust a professional editor to ensure your manuscript is thoroughly polished and error-free.**



**For more information on navigating self-publishing,  
check out my new book:**



**For a complimentary consultation, scan the code here!  
OR go to [www.pipstones.com/contact](http://www.pipstones.com/contact)**

