

## **How to Increase Your Chance of Publication**

You've emerged from solitary confinement after completing your epic novel and you believe this profound piece of prose is worthy of publication. Publishers release thousands of new titles, and this reinforces your belief that, with the unity in your writing, you too can be a published author. Surely the odds can't be stacked that high against you. Well, that really depends on two things: how good your novel really is and how persistent you are in seeing it through to publication.

This article can't help you with the quality of your novel. And it can't pick you up off the floor with each rejection letter. But it can help you increase your chances of publication slightly by helping you get the submission part right. Before we go into the submission guide, it would be wise to get ourselves on the same page with regards to the reality of what you are about to embark upon.

First, publishers receive thousands of unsolicited manuscripts every year and publish very few of them. The reality is that most are unpublishable and come from writers who are sparse on talent. Those rare gems probably need a major rewrite before they are up to publishable standards. Do bear in mind that publishers desperately want to find good writers and novels. After all, it's how they make money. But in truth, good writers and novels are extraordinarily hard to find. So if you still think that your novel is that exquisite diamond in the rough that will sparkle in the right publisher's care, by all means go ahead and submit your work--but submit it correctly.

Print your manuscript on good quality white paper in a sensible font such as Times New Roman, double spaced with adequate margins on all four sides. Don't use miniature or oversized fonts. A 12-point font is standard. Make sure your name and contact details appear on the header of each page just in case the pages become separated, and number the pages.

Also, don't bind your pages. Send them loose, held together with a rubber band. Include a stamped, self-addressed envelope so that you will get your manuscript back. Don't feel that this is unnecessary or it is beneath you. It is simply good manners.

### **Where to Send Your Manuscript**

The majority of manuscripts that end up in the rejected pile are sent to the wrong type of publishing house. If you are a horror writer, there is no point sending your story to a company that publishes only romance novels. The fact that you are the next Stephen King is arbitrary. This publishing house isn't going to publish your novel.

### **Don't Give Up**

Be realistic about your talent and keep going if you know your novels should be shared. Heed the advice publishers give you, keep writing new works and submitting them, and eventually if you are as good as they think you are, you will be published.