
How 2 Format your Ebook in Word & Convert to a PDF file (Part 1)

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Writing an e-book is not as difficult as it may sound - in fact, anyone can do it! Most people write Ebooks for marketing purposes, for example, to spread the news about their website or product promotion. Of course, Ebooks are also a great idea for any author who cannot get published the traditional way.

So how do you format an e-book yourself if you are not working with an online publisher that usually handles all the formatting issues for you? Luckily, it's very easy to prepare a manuscript for Ebook distribution. Most people use Microsoft Word and then convert the file to PDF format.

The Majority of e-books are sold in Adobe Acrobat's PDF file format, however, the designing of your Ebook will first be done in Word (some people may have to use Pagemaker or Quark for more complicated designs containing illustrations).

The good news is that you don't have to own a version of Adobe Acrobat to convert a Word file into a PDF format. At the same time, owning the Adobe Acrobat program will allow you to add neat features to your Ebook, such as hotlinked URLs, forms, and pages imported from other programs. This gives an ebook a higher quality appearance. Adobe costs about \$200.

The Design

A good Ebook has to be well designed and well organized - you don't want it to come off looking cheap and unprofessional. Fortunately, it's very easy to use the features available in Word for proper formatting.

Page size. Ebook pages are usually between 5x7 and 6x9 (5.5x8.5 is the typical format). Set the custom page size in the Page Setup menu of Word.

Margins. Use the Format: Document command and set margins to at least three quarters of an inch on all sides. If you want to include a header or footer in your Ebook, set the top and bottom margins a bit larger. Turn off the Mirror Margins option as well.

Headers and footers. Your Ebook should have a running header at the top of the page for most people this is the book's title and the page number. Input this information flush left, flush right, or center. There are a few different combinations, so choose something you like. It's recommended to use a smaller font for the header/footer and italic or bold to make it stand out a bit. Make use of the Border command to create a line between the header and text this comes out looking quite nice.

Font. Stick to standard fonts such as Times, Times New Roman, Century New Century Schoolbook, or Palatino. Arial or Helvetica are a good choice for chapter headings and subheads. As far as size goes, use 11 points for the main text, and 12-14 for subheads. Test the fonts you're considering before making a final choice to find a winning combination some fonts look better on the screen than when they are printed.

Formatting is rather easy, so don't let it intimidate you. Play around with Word and your Ebook will turn out great.

David O Connell: How to Write Publish and Market Your Own High Profit E-books

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