

Important Thoughts On How To Get Your Book Published

The most important part of getting a book into print is to first make it the best-written book it can possibly be. Take classes, join a critique group, read the kind of books you are interested in writing, and rewrite, rewrite, rewrite. Below I offer you advice I've culled from all of the sources above – maybe you'll find it useful.

1. **SHOW, don't tell.** Use all your senses to help place your reader in the scene – what would they see, hear, smell, touch, taste? Instead of telling us your character walked out into another miserable New England winter morning, show us how her cheeks stung, her eyes watered, the wind howled, cars skidded off the road.
2. **Kill your babies.** If you have written one phrase or line that you especially love, you probably need to take it out. The reader should see your characters and your plot, not be distracted by your fancy words.
3. **Avoid "adverbitis."** If you think you need an adverb to describe the action, your verb needs work. Instead of "she walked quickly," try "she hurried" or "she trotted."
4. Every line of dialogue should do **three things**: move the story forward, reveal character, and sound realistic.
5. **Read everything you write aloud** and listen for clumsy patches, unintended repetition and clichés. Find other words for the clichés. Look out for character clichés, too. (Ex.: A stepmother, instead of being wicked, might save the day.)
6. **Tell the story "in the moment."** Use specific details and simple language to help the reader feel he/she can understand exactly what your character is going through. (Ex.: "It was a small front room with a hard bed and a mattress slightly thicker than the cotton blanket that covered it. The broken spring underneath me stabbed my lower back.")