

How to Write a Book

By D. A. Sharpe

There is not an absolute formula of creating sections to publish a book, but certain ones are common and have specific purposes. It is my advocacy that an author address each of these parts, to give a full-orbed value to the composition.

1. ***Title*** - Give lots of thought about the attractiveness and understanding of what people see in your title. Brevity is better than length. Simple one, two or three syllable words are best.
2. ***Foreword*** - This is a statement by someone other than the author, who commends the reader that the work this author did to produce this book is of value. Give serious thought to who you would ask. For his or her remarks to be commending you, there should be no financial incentive for the Foreword. So, you need to find a quality person willing to volunteer a positive expression. Also, spell it correctly. It is NOT Forward!
3. ***Preface*** - You talk about WHY you are writing this book and what were some of the motivations for you to do it.
4. ***Introduction*** - You summarize the arrangement of the elements of the book, and what the reader should expect. You could have two Introductions. One telling about the author, and the other telling about what to expect in the organization of the written work.
5. ***Acknowledgements*** - You should give laudable appreciation and credit to the various sources of help and information you received. Usually it mostly is a list of people, but you can cite some resources, such as Ancestry.com or various libraries from which you found help, such as Library of Congress, or some state archives you've used. A special touch can be presented using simple profile photographs of these people. Rather than attempting to list people in order of their importance to you in this project, it would be better to state that the list is in alphabetic order.

6. ***A Table of Contents*** - This is your planning guide of the Chapters you intend to create. As your project progresses, you may add chapters or even delete them.

7. ***Make use of plenty of photographs***, if you can. Describe briefly the subject or situation of a photograph.

9. ***Be alert to good grammar in your writing.*** Not using good grammar may not distract some readers, but those who know better are often lost in recognizing lazy grammar. You want to write in a way that everyone will want to continue reading your composition. I have a developed rule that is humorous, because citing it violates every rule it addresses! Here is a four-in-one English grammar rule that can help us be read with more integrity!

“Watch for four things in your writing: (1) I think the pronoun, “I” should be used sparingly; (2) I think I should always avoid splitting infinitives; (3) I think I should avoid using prepositions to end a sentence with; and (4) I think I should avoid run-on sentences, as they tend to lose the focus I originally intended, and I think that the reader could become bored with the writing I was offering!”



The Genealogical software I've used over the years (since the early 1990s) has been Family Tree Maker. As of the end of 2016, it has gone out of business, so can't be purchased, nor can company help be found. I plan to continue to using it, because my file has over 9,000 relatives recorded in it, and it's very usable for me. However, a professional genealogist friend of mine recommends Roots Magic. I've bought a copy of it, and plan to look over it.

It is hoped this was helpful to you as an aspiring author and writer!



A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a final flourish.

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[Biographical Sketch](#)

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