

# How to Format eBooks

(LIKE A BOSS)

# This workshop will cover:

- Brief overview of common places to publish as they relate to formatting.
- Discussion of useful software and recommendations.
- Overview of skills needed to use the eBook Formatting Checklist.

## **We will NOT cover:**

- How to add images other than cover art.
- How to publish your eBooks on each platform.

# The Big Publishers

# Amazon

## **Best format to upload:**

HTML or EPUB

## **Where to upload:**

<https://kdp.amazon.com/>

## **Should you upload the book yourself?**

Yes, unless you've sold more than \$2,000 through Smashwords

# Barnes & Noble

## **Best format to upload:**

HTML or EPUB

## **Where to upload:**

<https://www.nookpress.com>

## **Should you upload the book yourself?**

Not necessarily. Smashwords distributes to B&N, so you may find it easier to manage one account for multiple distributors.

# Smashwords

**Best format to upload:**

.DOC

**Where to upload:**

[https://www.smashwords.com/about/how\\_to\\_publish\\_on\\_smashwords](https://www.smashwords.com/about/how_to_publish_on_smashwords)

**Should you upload the book yourself?**

Definitely. Smashwords distributes to multiple small to medium sources as well as to Barnes & Noble.

# The Toolbox

# Essential Software

- Word Processor (Microsoft Word or [Open Office](#))
- Text Editor ([Sublime](#) or [Notepad++](#))
- eBook Manager ([Calibre](#))

```
AutumnsDaughterebook.html x
84 <mbp:pagebreak/>
85 <p class="chapter"><a id="pref">PREFACE</a></p>
86
87 <p>The following journal is a true account of a series of impossible events, written
going to be in two worlds of trouble by sharing this story of how I rescued my siste
need to know. We are not alone. ~ N.B.</p>
88 <mbp:pagebreak/>
89 <p> </p>
90 <p class="chapter"><a id="ch1">Chapter One</a></p>
91
92 <p>&ldquo;It's Niamh,&rdquo; I said patiently. &ldquo;It's not Nigh-am, not Knee-am,
with leave.&rdquo;</p>
93 <p>&ldquo;Ah, uh, thank you.&rdquo; My teacher responded awkwardly, making a pencil
list, Miles Cabot, who's been after me on the class lists since he moved to Little R
94 <p>I didn't mean to come across as snarky, but I've had to make this explanation at
I've ever had, from kindergarten to eighth-grade poetry camp to the math teacher I'v
the first month of school.</p>
95 <p>My name is no Sarah or Jane or Catherine, I'll grant you, but is it really that h
spelling system is still perfectly phonetic and strange spellings are unusual. My ho
name rhymes with rooster? No, but it does. We live in diverse America and speak a la
sense at all. How hard is it for a teacher to see a name and remember that it's one
96 <p>I was just about steaming, mentally delivering this lecture stormily to a roomful
attendance. I was flicking my pencil against the desk almost hard enough to break it
the edge of the syllabus I was staring lasers at. I stifled a gasp and patted the ed
97 <p>A glance around told me no one had seen anything. I took a deep breath and remin
making mountains of molehills, or whatever weird metaphor you want to tag onto an ov
collection of sounds which identifies you to the rest of the world, but what does it
don't recognize it in writing? It's just a name, after all.</p>
98 <p>&ldquo;Niamh,&rdquo; someone whispered, and I felt a crumpled up piece of paper h
interrupted, to see Lance O'Ryan wave a few fingers at me. He smiled and pointed at
to the front before trying to pull the note out of my hair without attracting Ms. Si
99 <p>The paper just said, &ldquo;Fullers&rsquo; 3:30&rdquo; I rested my hand on the d
</p>
```



# Essential Materials

- Finished Manuscript
- Cover Art
- eBook Formatting Checklist
- Gumption



SCREENSHOT FROM DISNEY'S *SO DEAR TO MY HEART*

# The Process

# 1st Law of DIY

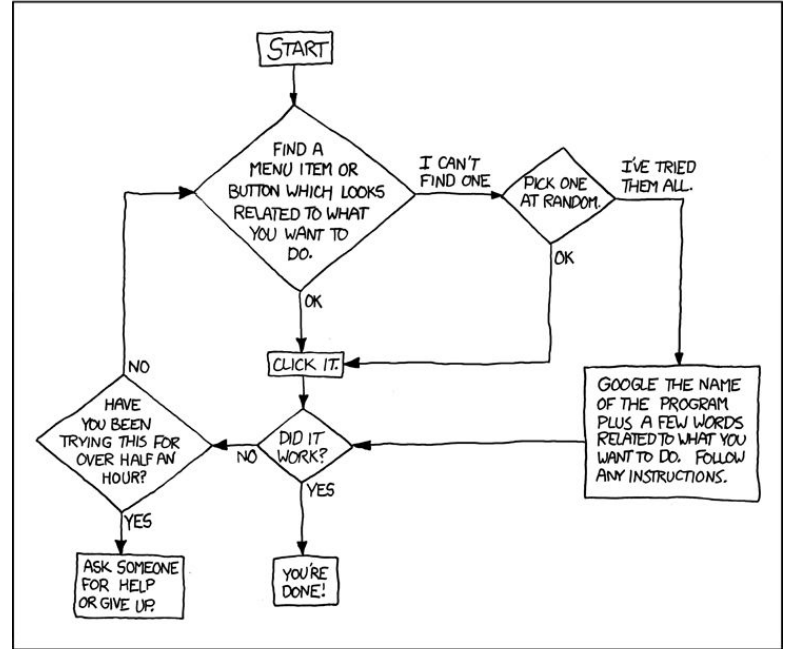
Google works.

If you get stuck at any point of the process, do what the pros do:

Flowchart it.

DEAR VARIOUS PARENTS, GRANDPARENTS, CO-WORKERS,  
AND OTHER "NOT COMPUTER PEOPLE."

WE DON'T MAGICALLY KNOW HOW TO DO EVERYTHING IN EVERY  
PROGRAM. WHEN WE HELP YOU, WE'RE USUALLY JUST DOING THIS:



[HTTP://XKCD.COM/627/](http://xkcd.com/627/)

PLEASE PRINT THIS FLOWCHART OUT AND TAPE IT NEAR YOUR SCREEN.  
CONGRATULATIONS; YOU'RE NOW THE LOCAL COMPUTER EXPERT!

# Step 1: Prepping for formatting.

- Do you have all of your content?
- Is it thoroughly edited?
- Really and truly?
- No, seriously, have you had other people look at this?
- I'm not kidding! It's going to be severely annoying to edit after this point.



**Back it up!**

## Step 2: Formatting in your word processor.

- Last chance to use those sophisticated spellchecks.
- Look at your formatting.
- Tabs, indents, paragraphs, and spaces for modern humans.
- Skill check: Find & Replace All
- RegEx for people who don't need to learn RegEx
- Special case characters to tackle in the processor.



Photo courtesy of National Nuclear Security Administration / Nevada Field Office

# Step 3-7: Working in the Text Editor

- The “Nuclear Option” for ditching weird formatting.
- HTML, RegEx, Find & Replace.
- CSS and Class
- Anchor links and general links.
  - Table of Contents
  - Footnotes
  - Promotional links
- Pagebreaks
- HTML header & body closing tag.



# HTML Crash Course

HTML formatting applies between opening and closing tags. Use Find & Replace to apply proper formatting.

## **Example:**

`<em>` This text will be in italics. `</em>`

`<em>` is an opening tag.

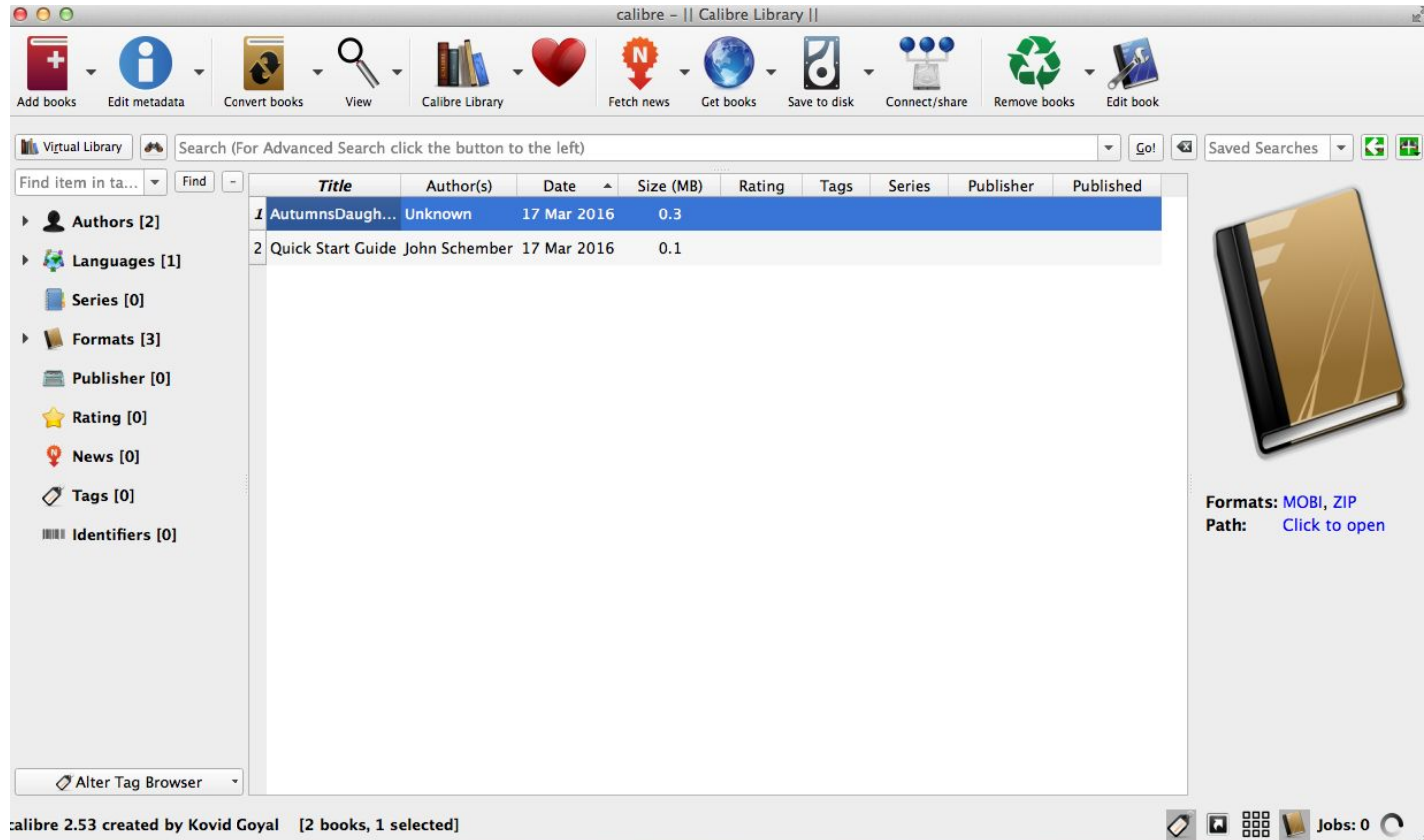
`</em>` is a closing tag.

**Refer to the handout for a list of common formatting issues to address.**

# Step 8: Test, Test, Test

- File should be saved as .html...
- ... Same file format as webpages!
- Open your file in a browser
  - Close the file.
  - Right click on the file and choose “Open with...”
  - Choose your web browser. (Chrome, Firefox, etc.)
  - You do not need to be online for this.
- Test according to the checklist. Thoroughly.
- Get a second pair of eyes if you can!

# Calibre Demonstration



The screenshot displays the Calibre 2.53 application window. The title bar reads "calibre - || Calibre Library ||". The interface includes a top toolbar with icons for "Add books", "Edit metadata", "Convert books", "View", "Calibre Library", "Fetch news", "Get books", "Save to disk", "Connect/share", "Remove books", and "Edit book". Below the toolbar is a search bar with the text "Search (For Advanced Search click the button to the left)" and a "Go!" button. A sidebar on the left lists categories: "Authors [2]", "Languages [1]", "Series [0]", "Formats [3]", "Publisher [0]", "Rating [0]", "News [0]", "Tags [0]", and "Identifiers [0]". The main area contains a table of books:

	Title	Author(s)	Date	Size (MB)	Rating	Tags	Series	Publisher	Published
1	AutumnsDaugh...	Unknown	17 Mar 2016	0.3					
2	Quick Start Guide	John Sember	17 Mar 2016	0.1					

On the right side, there is a book cover image and the text: "Formats: MOBI, ZIP" and "Path: [Click to open](#)". The bottom status bar shows "calibre 2.53 created by Kovid Goyal [2 books, 1 selected]" and "Jobs: 0".



Photo taken by Kabir Bakie at Blue Ash Community Fireworks July 2005.

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# Other Resources

## [Smashwords](#)

Formats your book for you automagically, but you can only use the formatted file through them, which excludes Amazon until you hit a \$2k sales threshold. Their [style guide](#) is extremely useful.

## [Zen of eBook Formatting - Guido Henkel](#)

Absolutely worth the six bucks if you have no idea what you're doing and are pretty sure you'll want more detailed advice.

## [HTML Characters](#)

A longer list of html codes for foreign language characters: worth looking through to jog your memory about characters you might use.

Questions?