

# Creating and Formatting e-Books

## Lesson 8

### Publishing

(*Note: Amazon now offers a process to create a paperback book through Kindle Direct Publishing. It is now a beta feature and beyond the scope of these classes to give instructions for that process. Watch *Practical Inspiration News* for updates.*)

The manuscript, cover, and graphics (if any) are now ready for conversion. We'll use the Amazon Kindle system (Kindle Digital Publishing or KDP) to convert the documents. Don't worry; we are only going to practice the upload process. Unless the "Publish" button is clicked, it won't go into the Amazon system. (Even if "Publish" is accidentally hit during this exercise, the book can easily be removed.)

#### File Type

By far the best file type for any e-book conversion is HTML, a programming code for websites. In a sense, an e-book is like one long web page. So an HTML file is the purest format for any e-book. For those who are comfortable with HTML code, KDP has a tool, KindleGen, to help with the process. Never fear. It isn't necessary to learn HTML programming.

Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP) now accepts files in a variety of formats, except MOBI files created with MobiPocket Creator. You can use KindleGen to create MOBI files, if you would like. There are so many other options, however, I see no reason to use a MOBI file.

PDF files are accepted. But even KDP warns that these files don't convert well and have "a large margin for error."

KDP also accepts EPUB files. These may be created several ways, including with Apple's Pages word processor or through Adobe's InDesign. The KDP Support Community reports some problems with EPUB files not converting well for the newer color e-readers. I have successfully used an EPUB file. However, for most writers, it is an unnecessary step in the process. (A later lesson will have steps to convert your Word DOC to other formats.)

KDP accepts DOC/DOCX files without any intermediate conversion step. This method should be used only for manuscripts without complex formatting or graphics. Yes, I know I said don't use DOCX. As I said before I have found that it doesn't convert as well as a DOC file. The last time I tried to use a DOCX file, it failed completely. If a DOCS file was created to use some of Word 2016 features, convert it back to DOC before uploading.

#### File Preparation

Before the book is uploaded, the manuscript file format will need to be changed. As stated above, the Kindle system works best with an HTML file format. Don't worry; in this case, this is only a matter of how the document is saved. Word does a fair job of converting to HTML.

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To begin, put all of the e-book files in a new folder: cover file, manuscript file, and graphics files. All the needed files are now in one handy location.

### **Conversion Step One-HTML**

- Open the final edited and formatted document.
- Use “Save As” under the File menu.
  - In the dialog box that opens, you will see a drop-down menu in the center of the box. A menu item that most of us overlook when we are saving files is the “Save as type” drop-down menu.
  - Using the instructions below, save your new file in the folder you just created.

For Windows and Mac Word 2016: In the drop-down menu, select “Web Page, Filtered.”

- Click “Save.” If prompted with a warning “removing office tags,” click “yes.”

For Mac (older versions of Word): In the drop-down, select “Web Page (htm).”

- In the bottom half of the dialog box, there is an option to “Save only display information into HTML.”
- Chose that option by selecting the button next to it. Click “Save.”

Note: Some versions of Word for Mac have a “Save as Web Page” option in the File menu. The same instructions apply.

Viola! The HTML file is created.

### **Conversion Step Two -- Graphic files.**

If the manuscript has no photos or graphics, the ZIP files described below aren’t needed. I recommend practicing the methods below for a possible future project.

Manuscripts with graphics need to be saved as a ZIP file of the files and folders, which have been created. The details of compressing the files is a little different for Windows and Mac OS.

- Navigate to the new folder containing all the files. An HTML file (or it may be labeled HTM) and a folder with the same name should be in that folder. This folder was created when the original file was converted to HTML.

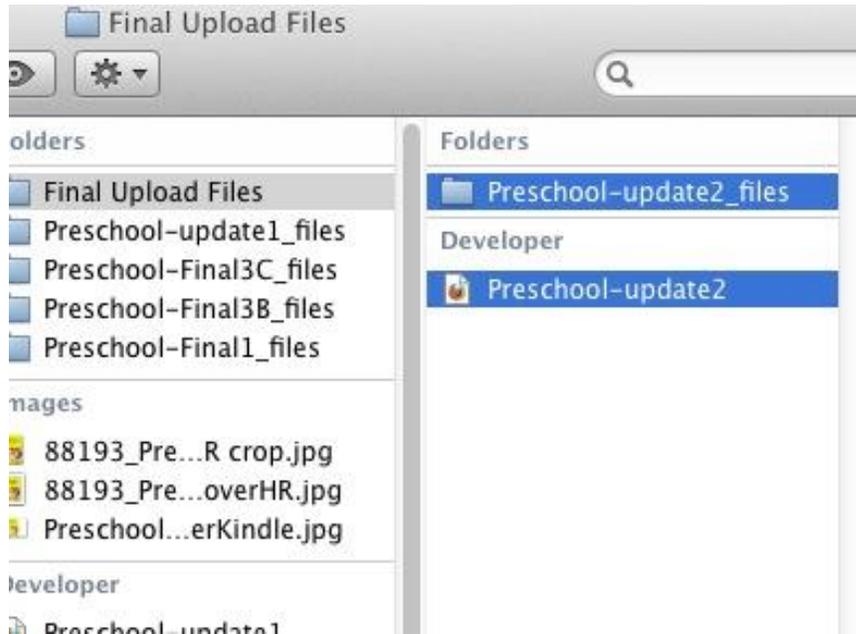
For Windows: In Explorer, right click on the HTML file.

- Scroll over to “Send to” and on the menu that appears, click “Compressed (zipped) folder.” A new folder with a zipper on it will appear.
- Drag the images folder onto the new zipped file.
- To avoid confusion, I recommend changing the name of the new zipped folder.

For Mac: In Finder, click on the manuscript file to highlight it.

- Hold down the “Command” key and click on the folder that has the same name as your manuscript file. Both the file and the folder should be highlighted now.

It should look something like this:



- Right click on one of the highlighted names.
- Select “Compress 2 items” from the drop-down menu.

This will create a folder named “Archive.zip.” Change the name of the folder to something more recognizable.

## File Upload

The book files are now ready to upload for conversion to a Kindle product — cover, manuscript in HTML, or a zip folder.

As I said before, we’re going to upload your files to Kindle Direct Publishing for practice using the system to create a Kindle product. This will not actually publish the book, until the “Publish” button is hit. This practice lesson gives a feel for the publishing process and some of the details required for the KDP/Amazon system.

### Set Up Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP) Account

In case a KDP account wasn’t set up in Lesson 2, here are the instructions again.

Setting up a KDP account is not difficult; it’s a matter of answering questions.

- Go to [kdp.amazon.com](http://kdp.amazon.com). Sign-in using your Amazon account. If you don’t have an Amazon account (and what writer doesn’t?), create one. Some writers

create another Amazon account for KDP to keep business separated from personal. I used my personal account so I won't have to keep track of which account I'm logged into.

- Once signed into your account, there will be a page for publisher information, tax details, and royalty payments. (When I tested this step for this class, I was taken to the page to begin the upload process. It had a notice in the upper right corner to complete the publisher information.)
- *Publisher Details* – You may choose to select a company name or use your own name. It's beyond the scope of this class to discuss legal or tax information about setting up a publishing imprint and a company.\*
- *Tax Details* – This is self-explanatory.
- *Royalty Payments* – The first item is where royalty payments will be sent. It isn't necessary to put in the information for direct deposit. Amazon will send a check, but it will take longer to get paid.

This is also the section to set up where the Kindle book will be sold. There are options for English-speaking countries only or a variety of other countries. I list my books in all the available countries and do sell to Germany, Japan, and India

- After all the information is completed, click Save in the bottom right corner.

## Uploading the Book

Once the publishing account is set up, the Bookshelf will begin with a selection of titles and a "Create a New Title" section at the top. Select "Kindle eBook." This will open to a page with three tabs: Kindle eBook Details, Kindle eBook Content, Kindle eBook Pricing. The first tab, Kindle eBook Details, opens automatically.

### 1. *Language*

Select the language of the e-book.

### 2. *Book Title*

Enter the book title. A subtitle is optional.

### 3. *Series (optional)*

### 4. *Edition Number (optional)*

This can be used when a book has had a significant update.

### 5. *Author*

The primary author is listed here.

### 6. *Contributors (optional)*

Editors, illustrators, and other contributors to the publication can be added here. There is a drop-down list to choose from.

### 7. *Description*

This is the book description, which is seen on the Amazon product detail page. It can be up to 4,000 characters.

I recommend writing this in advance and having it edited. This can be key to selling an e-book.

#### 8. *Publishing Rights*

We are the copyright holders of most the books being published. If you are published works in public domain, please check KDP support files for Amazon's rules concerning publi domain.

If you wish to allow your material to be freely distributed. I recommend using Creative Commons. While you will still hold the copyright, the e-book can be distributed freely.

#### 9. *Keywords*

These are the words used by readers to find a book. Check similar books to see what keywords the publisher is using. A "keyword" can actually be more than one word, such as "ebook formatting." Up to seven keywords can be added.

#### 10. *Categories*

KDP allows two categories. Make a selection from the list offered.

#### 11. *Age and Grade Range (optional)*

Used for children's books.

#### 12. *Publishing Options*

KDP now allows a book to be offered for pre-release ordering. To take advantage of this option, a draft manuscript must be uploaded. KDP penalizes the publisher if the pre-release date is missed. I recommend having the draft file as complete as possible to avoid possible delays in the release.

Whew. Now those little details are out of the way. We can move on to what we really want to do: publish a Kindle book.

At the end of this page, select "Save as Draft" to return to the publishing process later, or select "Save and Continue." (For the purpose of this class, select "Save and Continue.")

The next tab, Kindle eBook Content, is used to upload the manuscript file for conversion.

#### 1. *Manuscript*

Digital Rights Management (DRM) – Select "Yes" to enable DRM or "No" to refuse DRM.

After the DRM selection, click the "Browse" button to locate the necessary files on your computer and begin uploading. When the

upload is complete, a notice will be given if it is successful or not. KDP also notes any possible spelling errors. This can be checked when the converted file is previewed a little later in the process.

## 2. *Kindle eBook Cover*

Select the Cover Creator or Upload a cover file. (You may wish to review Lesson 7 about covers.)

## 3. *Kindle eBook Preview*

Now it's time to preview the converted book. This is when little glitches may be found. Sometimes the hiccups may be a simple formatting problem or they may be more serious, like a graphic showing up in the wrong place. When I published my first Kindle book, I had thirteen versions before I liked what I produced. Most of these changes were my own preferences; such as I didn't like the way the subheads looked.

There are several ways to preview your book.

### Online Previewer

This is a quick and easy way to see how your book will look on various devices.

### Download Book Preview File

I recommend downloading this file, even if not previewing on a computer or e-reading device. This download is a MOBI file that can be sent to reviewers or sold from a website. If the file is downloaded, it can be transferred to an e-reader or viewed on a computer. If you are doing the conversion for a client, the MOBI file can be provided as part of your service.

### Download Previewer

This is simply a way to view the book, as it will look on a Kindle. I didn't like using it and opted to use my downloaded file with the Kindle app on my computer. [Get a reading app here.](#)

Aaron Shepard has a complete article on various ways to [preview and test the Kindle book](#). Although an older article, it has some valuable tips.

## 4. *Kindle eBook ISBN (optional)*

### ISBN (optional)

A Kindle book is not required to have an ISBN. If one is desired, the publisher/writer needs to purchase it.

### Publisher's Name (optional)

Many writers choosing to self-publish will create an imprint.

Again, the option to “Save as Draft” or “Save and Continue” is at the bottom of the page. (For the purpose of this class, select “Save and Continue.”)

The next tab, Kindle eBook Pricing, is the last page before publishing. (Although we will go through the steps, the document will not be published.)

1. *KDP Select Enrollment (optional)*

Review Lesson 2 for the pros and cons of this selection.

2. *Territories*

Territories for which the writer holds distribution rights are selected. For most self-published books, that is All Territories or worldwide rights.

3. *Royalty and Pricing*

KDP Pricing Support

This is a new feature for KDP to help publishers determine optimal price for the e-book. [Here's more information.](#)

Select a royalty plan

E-books priced between 99 cents and \$9.99 are eligible for 70% royalty. All others are eligible for 35% royalty. KDP sets a minimum price based on the size of the file. Books with many photos will have a higher minimum than one that is text only.

Primary Marketplace

Amazon.com is generally the primary marketplace. Other marketplaces will be included. The price in the other marketplaces will be calculated automatically based on the Amazon.com price. Some international markets have only a 35% royalty.

4. *Matchbook (optional)*

This option is only available for Kindle books that are also sold as print books.

5. *Book Lending (optional)*

This option allows book purchasers to lend the e-book for up to fourteen days. Although listed as optional, e-books in the 70% royalty program may not opt out. Review “Learn more about Kindle Book Lending” for more details.

6. *Terms & Conditions*

KDP's terms and conditions can be found by clicking the link.

When this page is finished, the option is to “Save as Draft” or “Publish Your Kindle eBook.” (For purposes of the class, select “Save as Draft.” If you accidentally, click “Publish Your Kindle eBook” it can be “unpublished” from the Bookshelf.)

## Correcting Problems

If there's a problem, large or small, it can be corrected in the HTML file and uploaded again. I don't recommend doing this unless you are familiar with basic HTML program language. It's easy to mess up a programming instruction without even trying.

I recommend making changes in the Word document and saving again as a new HTML file. This does take a little longer, but I think it creates fewer problems. I always save as version 2, version 3, and so on. This way if I need to go back to review what I've done, it's easy to find the changes.

After corrections are made, go back to the "Bookshelf." Here are the steps:

1. On the right side of the box for the book needing correction, click on the box with three dots. This will open a drop-down menu.
2. Select "Edit eBook Contents." This opens to the "Kindle eBook Content" tab.
3. Upload the corrected file in the Manuscript box by selecting the Browse button.
4. After uploading the new file, scroll to the bottom of the page and select "Save and Continue."

I recommend previewing the new file before proceeding.

5. If there are no changes on the "Kindle eBook Pricing" page, scroll to the bottom of the page and click "Publish Your Kindle eBook."

This can be done as many times as necessary to get the product just right.

If you uploaded a file as a practice exercise, sign out now. I recommend signing in again, go to the bookshelf, and delete the practice file if it isn't to be published at a later date.

If a file to be published is uploaded, click "Save As Draft." I recommend this so the converted file can simmer a day, then go back and thoroughly go through the preview for any problems. It's easy to return to the bookshelf and complete the publishing process later.

## Problems After Publishing

After I published my Kindle book, I realized I had somehow left out the title page. Problems can be corrected, or content added or removed by uploading a new file. Go to the Bookshelf and follow the steps above.

When a change is made in a Kindle book, all readers who have purchased it will automatically get the new version.

Congratulations! You've converted and uploaded an e-book!

With a few minor changes, other distributors use similar procedures for converting an e-book to the proper format for other companies. Check with the distributor being used for their specific instructions.

### Assignments

- Go through the KDP publishing process as described in the lesson. What part of the process was the most difficult for you?
- Write some keywords for your manuscript.  
    [“How to Choose Keywords and Categories for Your Kindle eBook”](#)
- [Read about Kindle Select.](#)  
    Under what circumstances would you recommend this service? Or not recommend this service?

### Resources

\*For tax information, see Carol Topp’s website [Taxes for Writers.](#)

More information about Kindle [pre-order option.](#)