

Name  
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## HOW TO FORMAT A MANUSCRIPT

By Author's Name

The first page should start about halfway down the first page, although you should also have a cover page, giving name, address, title, author's name (which might be different, if you're using a pen-name), and word count. Calculate word-counts to the nearest 100. Either use your word-processor's wordcounter, or multiply the number of pages by 300 (the average number of words per page, for 12-point Courier).

Use A4 page-size, with one-inch (2.54 centimetres) margins to left, right, top and bottom.

Use 12-point Courier New, or any equivalent non-proportional font. Use double-spacing. Don't use italics. Signal it instead using underlines. Never use bold.

Personally, I think "smart" quotes look daft in Courier New, so I search & replace them with "non-smart" quotes.

Never justify paragraphs.

Indent new paragraphs. Don't put a blank line between them.

"Dialogue," he said, "should also be indented, and without blank lines above and below.

"It's also usual," he added, "to use double quotes for dialogue, not single; even though you'll see single quotes used in UK-published novels. And if the dialogue breaks into a new paragraph, as this one has done, you don't close the preceding paragraph with quotes."

If you need to use a dash (not a hyphen), what you want is an em-dash -- usually signalled using two dashes.

Spell out numbers.

Two or three blank lines between sections usually suffice. If the section break falls at the bottom or top of a page, signal it with asterisks or hash marks.

Don't use a header on the first page (or the cover sheet). The header should include title, author's name and page number.

THE MOST IMPORTANT RULE OF MANUSCRIPT FORMATTING IS: CHECK THE MAGAZINE'S GUIDELINES, AND FORMAT YOUR MS EXACTLY HOW THEY TELL YOU TO.