

## How to make a character believable

There is a definite art to making a character believable and the key lies in you as an author really understanding your character's background, personality, appearance and motivation. Successful writers often spend a considerable amount of time building their characters and ensuring that they have a realistic depth to them before they even begin to write. Some steps that can be taken to create such depth could be to develop a family tree, visualise their appearance and mannerisms and develop a history for them that explains how and why they now exist in the state and time that they do within your story.

Having developed all of these factors and created a believable character within your own mind it is then vital that you are able to portray all of this information to the reader. This does not necessarily mean that you have to detail every moment of your character's life from birth until now, instead you should be able to describe your character with conviction and in such a way that the reader can imagine the same history and appearance etc. that you envisaged at the character's 'creative birth'.

Descriptive passages are essential to help readers associate with a character, even the simplest definition of how a character walks or nervously plays with their hair, for example, can say so much about the character and will quickly help the reader to get to know them and believe in them. Speech is another important factor in making a character believable, and as you write, you should be able to hear the character in your head and in doing so you should be able to portray the precise way in which they would speak, again adding to the believability.

In essence, the key to building a believable character is to ensure that you build them with depth and that you write in such a way that allows the reader to understand that depth.

### Top tips to create a believable character:

- Ensure your character has a purpose for existing within the story
- Know your character's motivation
- Know your character's background
- Know your character's appearance, mannerisms and voice
- Use narrative and descriptive passages to portray all of the above elements

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