

## Getting Published

Publishing is an extremely competitive business. There are three main ways to go about getting your manuscript published; through an agent, directly through a publishing company, or by taking the increasingly popular self-publishing option.

The best way to improve your chances of getting your book published by a traditional publisher is to find an agent who will 'take you under their wing' and add you to their list of clients. Publishing companies very rarely read or pay any attention to unsolicited manuscripts (i.e. a manuscript submitted by an author NOT by an agent). Therefore, you are in a much more likely to get your manuscript published if you have an agent.

Unfortunately, getting an agent to agree to take you on as a client is almost as hard as it is to get a publisher to read your work. Agents give your work approximately 20 seconds of time before making a decision to either pursue you or reject you.., and 90-99% get rejected. It is tough!

### So getting an agent...

- There are hundreds of Literary Agents in the UK. You need to target those agencies that handle the kind of writing that you do. So, get a copy of the 'Writers Market UK 2008', or the 'Writers and Artists Yearbook 2008'. These list literary agents, telling you what genre of writing each agency deals with.
- You can contact the Association of Author's Agents ([www.agentsassoc.co.uk](http://www.agentsassoc.co.uk)) or the Society of Authors ([www.societyofauthors.net](http://www.societyofauthors.net)) who should be able to point you in the right direction, and provide a list of suggested agencies that would suit your novel.
- Call or email the appropriate agencies to enquire about their procedure for submitting manuscripts. If you don't follow procedure you will automatically be rejected.
- Write a well-written, succinct letter, briefly outlining your work and include a synopsis, together with three polished chapters and a brief CV. Make sure each letter is tailored to each individual agency – do not send generic covering letters, and make sure you address them to an appropriate individual at the agency, not a 'Dear Sir / Madam'
- Submit and wait. If the agency is interested they will make contact with you and ask for more information. If they aren't interested you will either receive a rejection letter / email, or unfortunately you won't hear back from them.

### Getting a publisher without an agent...

If you are unsuccessful in securing an agent, or you want to try targeting the publishers direct, without using an agent, the process is basically exactly the same as it is for trying to ascertain an agent;

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It is really very hard to get published nowadays because agencies and publishers will only ever give your submission a 20 second read before making a decision on its worth. Furthermore, most agencies and publishers' client lists are already full, so they aren't looking to take on new writers. On the other hand, without writers, agencies and publishing companies wouldn't exist – so they do need fresh new talent to keep their businesses alive!

### **Self Publishing**

If you find that you aren't getting anywhere with securing an agent or a traditional publishing company, you can try 'Self-Publishing'. This is where you pay a publishing company to publish and print your book for you. They can register it for an ISBN and will often make it available for purchase over the internet.

Self publishing companies have a range of products, ranging from a single publish and print package, to a distribution, cover design and marketing packages. Different packages and different self-publishing agencies will have different pricing schemes; but as a guide price you can expect a standard, high quality self-publishing option to cost between £600 - £1000.

For a great [copy editing, proofreading and appraisal service](http://www.wordsworthreading.co.uk), visit Words Worth Reading at <http://www.wordsworthreading.co.uk>