

Writing Checklist No. 7
Book Covers
(Indie & Self-Publishing Authors)

 Name: _____

 Date: _____

You have written, reviewed and edited your book. You the writer now have content. Now you need a bookcover. A bookcover is a way to engage readers by imagery before they decide they will read your book. The first factor an author should consider is your theme. This is the broad perspective from which you can tailor your final bookcover. My book falls within the general genre of:

Science-fiction/Fantasy. Some themes you may consider to choose are: spacecraft, mythological creatures, space portals, sun, moon, darkness. I have decided on a theme. I choose to have these elements in my sci-fi/fantasy novel:

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 3. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 4. _____ |

Magical Realism. You may notice that these books revolve around younger generations in a contemporary setting. Thus, you may consider a teenager or two (taking note of who your protagonist is), light or light spectrum in the background, a school building such (I have seen "academies"), and altered eyes (glowing, flashing, closed, etc.). I know which elements I want to include in my bookcover:

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 3. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 4. _____ |

Historical Romance. This inevitably involves a duke and a maiden. A handsome man in period uniform. If American historical romance this is often captured with the male lead wearing a Civil War uniform. Other periods often included in this genre are British Victorian and Georgian eras. Style of clothing usually entails mantuas, ballgowns, britches, tailcoats and white shirts. I have envisioned the characters and how they dress. This is a close portrayal of the characters in my novel. I wish to include the following in my bookcover:

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 3. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 4. _____ |

Mystery/Detective (may overlap with romance). Some suggestions to include in your bookcover are magnifying glass, footprints, creeping shadow non-descript buildings and one or two figures in the foreground. I have decided what elements I want to include in my mystery/detective novel:

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 3. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 4. _____ |

Contemporary Romance. A few themes that may help you in your decision for a bookcover in this genre are adult couples embracing one another, about to steal a kiss, a

handsome man cupping his love interest's face, a couple in a car, driving away from the reader and towards the book in a sense. My characters are important to me. I can imagine how they would appear on the cover by including the following:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Young Adult. This as well as contemporary romance genre can crossover with a few others. For instance, you may have a high schooler who decides to be the neighbourhood's unofficial detective at their school. This would crossover to mystery/detective. Thus, you could incorporate some of those elements, while keeping note of the tone of your primary genre. One example is a teenage boy holding a magnifying glass discovering that someone stows a rotten egg at the bottom of his locker. This demonstrates a high school prank, while the main character takes his work as an unofficial detective seriously. My character(s) are somewhat young. I know I need to incorporate a background which reflects this. I will include the following in my bookcover:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Now that you have a general idea of the images of your bookcover, you must decide on the title's appearance. Keeping in mind the general genres listed above. Here are a few suggestions for the author to consider:

Science-fiction/Fantasy. Block fonts and plainer fonts may suit this genre best. The one font which is likely the least appropriate for this genre is a font with excessive cursive lettering. You can research fonts online such as Adobe which will provide subcategories of the main option. I have narrowed my title fonts to:

1. _____
2. _____

Magical Realism. Some cursive or wider fonts may be best appropriate. Decide which lettering corresponds to the images depicted on the cover and the content of your novel. I have decided that my title font will be either:

1. _____
2. _____

Historical Romance. The fancier the font the more appropriate it seems for this genre. Contemporary writers of historical romance often depict romantic scenes notifying the reader straightaway that it is the author's intent for them to escape to another time and witness a whirlwind romance where etiquette and fanciful dress is the norm. I have decided to use either of these to fonts for the title of my historical romance novel:

1. _____
2. _____

Mystery/Detective (may overlap with romance). The font of this title can vary depending on whether it is a contemporary mystery/detective novel or one set decades or centuries ago. These are the factors to consider when finalizing your bookcover. I understand what elements I would like to portray my book's storyline. I have narrowed my font options for my book title to these:

1. _____

2. _____

Contemporary Romance. Just as in the mystery/detective genre, the font can vary, but not too extreme in one sort or another. Also the smaller typeset will allow for readers to focus on the facial expressions and the gestures of the characters depicted on the image. It is a matter of style and aesthetic with consideration of what is the genre's industry standard while incorporating your own iteration of it. I have decided that my top two font choices for my contemporary romance novel are:

1. _____

2. _____

Young Adult. You may want to do some extra research for this genre. Your novel may not only crossover with another, but your first choice of font lettering may be too outmoded or too trendy. An archaic style which depicts what you have seen when you were a young adult may not fit current contemporary style. I have researched various fonts and compared different styles. I am ready to choose between these two fonts for my bookcover title:

1. _____

2. _____

The final aspect of the front of your bookcover is your name. There are a few things you may consider: a. The size ratio between your name and the book title b. placement of your name (usually on the outer perimeter of any of the four sides of the front cover) c. Whether you will have a consistent style of your name depicted on each book you published. Established authors do this to reinforce their brand. If you decide that this is what you want to do, ensure you have chosen a font for your name that you will be satisfied with long-term. I have decided that I will use either of these two fonts for my name on the cover(s) of my book(s):

1. _____

2. _____

Unless you are a graphic designer you will inevitably need to address the overall cost of designing your bookcover. You can choose bookcover designers from reputable companies or freelance bookcover designers. It is helpful that you research their work with most providing an online portfolio to exhibit their design skills. Some have premade covers and a graduated pricing scale for tailored bookcovers. Decide first what your budget is. Strike a balance between cost and your aesthetic.

1. My budget for my bookcover is: \$ _____.
2. I prefer: premade bookcover custom bookcover
3. After some research, I have decided to reduce or increase my bookcover design budget to: \$ _____.