



Cornell University Press

The In-House Process from Manuscript to Bound Book

After you submit your manuscript in complete, final, and acceptable form, you should not make any further changes—the version you submitted is the one that will be copyedited. The complete manuscript is sent to our Editorial Department and assigned to a production editor. The production editor will be your main contact throughout the process of turning your manuscript into a bound book. The following is a brief description of the editorial and production process, and your responsibilities along the way.

The production schedule and deadlines

The length of time it takes to see your book in published form varies with the complexity of the editorial and production work. The schedule for a straightforward, lightly illustrated book is ten months. Long or heavily illustrated books can take much longer.

Early in the process your production editor will discuss the schedule with you and let you know what to expect. While we will try to accommodate your schedule, it is important that you meet the deadlines your editor sets. Because the copyeditor, designer, typesetter, and printer must accommodate a number of projects, even a short delay returning manuscript or proof can lead to much longer delays in publication.

1. Copyediting

When your manuscript arrives on the production editor's desk, it will be prepared for editing by a freelance copyeditor. The copyeditor will read the manuscript for clarity and consistency in style and presentation, querying any points that seem unclear. Your manuscript will most likely be edited electronically, using the “track changes” feature. The copyediting stage takes about four weeks.

2. Reviewing the copyedited manuscript

After the production editor reviews the editing the manuscript will be sent to you. You will have three or four weeks to review all the editing and queries. Be sure to make any necessary changes, answer all queries, and supply all requested information—major revisions will be impossible after this stage, and missing information can seriously delay the production schedule. You can review the editing and make changes electronically or on paper.

Make minimal changes at the proof stage

Changes at the proof stage should be confined to correction of typographical or compositor's errors. All other changes are charged as author's alterations. The Press absorbs some of this cost, as provided in our Memorandum of Agreement, but charges can mount up quickly. Review the edited manuscript carefully and try to make all changes and corrections at that stage.

3. Proofreading and indexing

After you review the editing, your production editor will "clean up" the manuscript and prepare it for composition. The compositor will create page proofs, which are a draft version of how your book will look in print, with art and tables in place. The page proofs are used for correcting any final errors and creating an index. You will be the *sole proofreader* for your book, although your production editor will review the proofs carefully for design issues and any obvious errors. You'll have three or four weeks for this stage of the process.

Preparing or paying for an index

If you would like to hire a professional indexer, your production editor can help you find one. A typical index costs around \$4 per indexable page, usually \$800-\$1000 per book. You might be able to get funds from your department to cover the cost of indexing. If you choose to do your own index, the production editor will send you some basic guidelines.

4. Final steps

After you submit your corrected proof and the index, your part in the editorial and production process is done. Your production editor will review the marked changes and ensure that all revisions are input correctly. Cover copy will be handled by the marketing department. At long last, the book-to-be is sent to the printer. As soon as the printed and bound copies of the books are completed you will be sent an advance copy.

Congratulations! It's a book!