

Formatting Your Manuscript for Submission

Bear in mind that rules change over time. Before you submit your manuscript to agents or editors, make sure that you are following their *current* guidelines. These will always trump the standard formatting rules below. If their guidelines are silent, follow this format:

Appearance

- Prepare your manuscript in 8 ½” x 11” (portrait) format, using either TimesNewRoman or Arial black font, 12-point size, on a plain white background.

Margins

- These are one inch minimum; 1.25 inches maximum (or use standard Microsoft Word presets).

Contact information

- Your name, address, phone number and e-mail address go in the upper-left corner of the title page, if any, or on page one, single spaced. If you choose to include your word count, either place it on the line directly below your e-mail address or at the right margin of the same line that contains your name.

Title and byline

- These should be centered on page one (or on the title page, if you are asked to provide one) and start halfway down the page.

Headers and page numbers

- Place headers on the upper right side of each page, on one line if possible, including your surname, manuscript title (abbreviate if long) and the page number separated by slashes.
- As the title and your name are already on page one, start your header on page two and on each page thereafter, numbered consecutively. However, if you are asked to include a title page, start your header on the first manuscript page.

Manuscript layout

- Double space the entire manuscript, including the title and your byline (name).
- Indent each new paragraph a half inch (.5).
- Separate sentences with one space, not two.
- Start new chapters on a new page, but continue numbering consecutively from the previous chapter.

Picture Book Text Format

- Follow the protocol above. Omit suggestions for artists or illustrations. These decisions are made by editors, not writers. If you feel your text can't be understood without illustration notes, provide those as briefly as possible in the text or, preferably, in your query letter.