

What Does an Editor Do?

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Book Editing:

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This article is written by an editor who knows her business. If you're not using an editor for your book, you may be making a big mistake.

An editor's job can be large or small. You might simply want a pro to check your punctuation, or maybe you need someone to look over larger plot elements, like plot development. Editors generally correct a manuscript based first on the writer's goals, then on the shape or condition of the writing itself. An edit often includes the following: errors in syntax (spelling, punctuation & grammar—a line edit or a proofread, character development, plot structure and clarity, in addition to keeping an eye out for clichéd phrases, over-used words and the overall organization of the story.

When self-publishing a book, it is the author's responsibility to make sure the text is error-free. Most print on demand publishers will edit your book for a steep fee but do not require that manuscripts be edited before being printed. Therefore it is possible for a book to be published—with an author's name in big, proud letters—and tainted with grammatical errors, misspellings, mistakes in punctuation or poorly-organized material. (Traditional publishers have in-house editors who edit according to the house style, which is varied.)

If you get signed on by a major publishing house, your editor works for the publisher. If you hire an editor before submitting or self-publishing your book, your editor works for you. Get your money's worth. Do you know what you want? More importantly—do you know what you need? (Kind of like life, huh?) If you're interested in taking the next step, please visit my website, www.MightyPenEditing.com.