

# DIY Self-Publishing

Emily Buehler

<http://emilybuehler.com>

Email: [emily@twobluebooks.com](mailto:emily@twobluebooks.com)

Twitter: [@ephemerily](https://twitter.com/ephemerily)

Today's slides are posted at <http://emilybuehler.com/wp-content/uploads/SelfPublishing2018.pdf>  
and <http://emilybuehler.com/wp-content/uploads/SelfPublishing2018-part2.pdf>

# Emily's History with Self-Publishing

## *Bread Science, 2006*

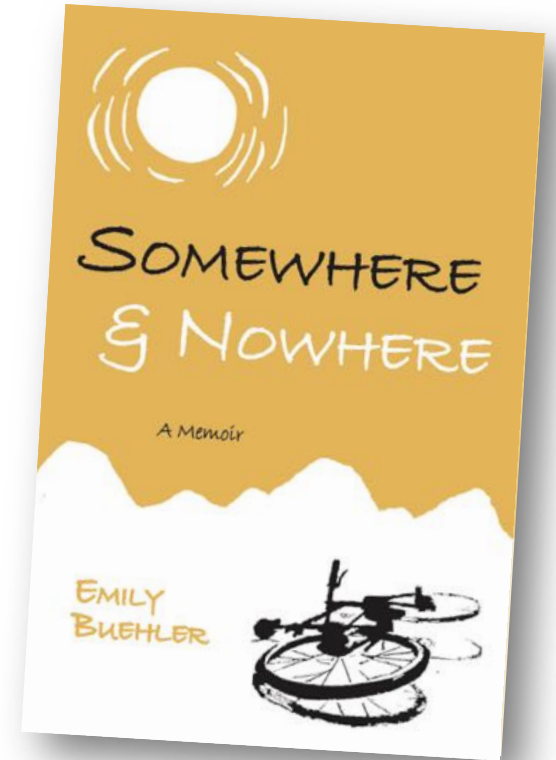
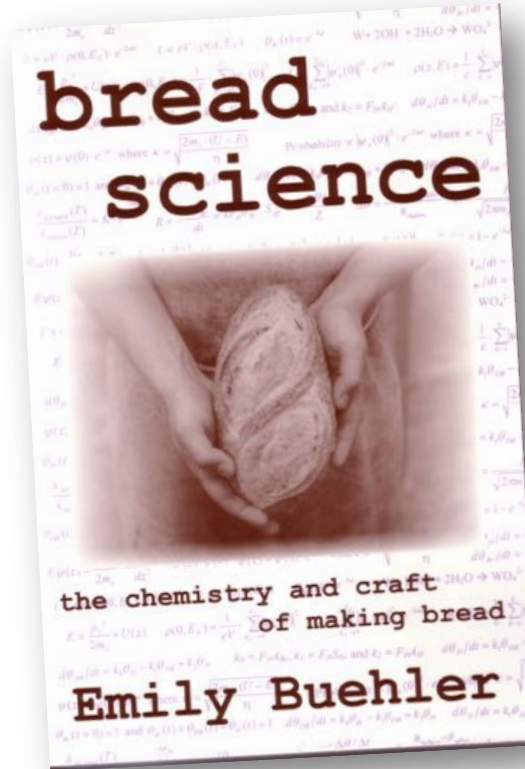
- Very “DIY” method
- Could have used an overview

## *Somewhere and Nowhere, 2017*

- Repeated 2006 process
- Missed opportunities

## Today's talk

- Overview of entire process
- Includes new developments
- Clarification of tricky parts



# Outline of Presentation

- Is Self-Publishing Right for You?
- Research the Market
- Write the Book
- Find a Printer (or Not): Print Books (for Ebooks, see below)
- Take Care of Miscellaneous Tasks
- Design the Book: Interior Design and Cover Design
- Proofread and Publish
- Set Up Your Office: Website, Credit Card Processor, Order Fulfillment Plan
- Print Distribution
- Ebooks and Ebook Distribution
- Marketing
- Final Tasks

# Is Self-Publishing Right for You?

## Reasons to self-publish:

- You cannot find an agent or traditional publisher
- You want to prove your book can be successful to attract an agent or traditional publisher
- You don't want to sell the rights to your work
- You want control over your book (e.g., its appearance, its contents, its price)
- You've heard that traditional publishing is not that great of a deal financially, or that traditional publishers are cutting corners
- Other

# Is Self-Publishing Right for You?

## What are your goals?

- Having the thrill of a publisher accepting your work
- Becoming famous or mildly famous
- Going on the book tour you've always daydreamed about
- Making money
- Having your work in the form of a finished book
- Recording your knowledge
- Sharing a story or information, perhaps to encourage others
- Other

Whichever way your goals lead you, have realistic expectations

# Research the Market

## Why?

- To know about books similar to yours
- To speak knowledgably to potential retailers and customers
- To be able to compare your book and discuss why it's different
- To understand the categories where your book fits
- To make adjustments if needed: alter your book to provide something new

## How?

- Read or skim books in your category in the library, at a bookstore, or online
- Consider which are the best sellers
- Talk to people in the industry about the category and how it sells, if you can

# Write the Book

- Get inspired (e.g., Natalie Goldberg, *Writing Down the Bones*)
- But, balance reading about writing with *actually* writing

## My top suggestions for making yourself write:

- Participate in NaNoWriMo
- Start a writing group
- Make writing your #1 priority

## Expect to have many drafts; read about self-editing

- Noah Lukeman, *The First Five Pages*
- Renni Browne and Dave King, *Self-Editing for Fiction Writers*
- Angela Ackerman and Becca Puglisi, *The Emotion Thesaurus*
- Take a break from the manuscript, edit on paper, read out loud
- Get feedback from beta readers

# Work with an Editor

**Developmental editing:** a detailed assessment of the manuscript with specific suggestions and recommendations about improving it (\$\$\$\$)

**Manuscript critique:** an overall assessment of the manuscript (\$\$)

**Professional beta read:** get feedback from a reader point of view

**Heavy copy editing,** aka line editing: an edit that corrects errors, rewrites awkward or overlong sentences, and generally improves readability

**Light copy editing:** an edit that only corrects grammatical errors

**Proofreading:** a final error check of ready-to-print page proofs

An editor can assess your manuscript and suggest the level that's needed

Different editors use different terms; be clear about the services to be performed



# Secure Permissions

- **Copyrighted material:** quotes of copyrighted works (which includes almost all written material, even a letter), photos by others, photos of artwork
- Personal material that infringes on the **right of privacy** of another person
- Personal material that infringes on the **right of publicity** of another person

## This is tricky!

- There are a lot of little things you might not think of
- Laws such as “fair use” are vague
- Avoid committing libel
- Even if you’re right, **you don’t want to go to court (\$\$)**
- Best practice is to secure permission

# Permissions and Libel: Resources

- Permissions editors
- Educate yourself
  - Books
    - *The Writer's Legal Guide* by Murray and Crawford
    - *Self-publisher's Legal Handbook* by Sedwick
    - *Copyright and Permissions* by Peterson
    - *The Copyright, Permission, and Libel Handbook* by Jassin and Schechter
  - Online articles
  - Webinars, classes, conference sessions
- DIY: Make a spreadsheet with every possible problem, then solve each one
- Options: keep, remove, revise, get permission
- Don't put your head in the sand!

# Writing: Don't Waste Time

Don't get ahead of yourself in the publishing process

- Don't apply styles to the text
- Don't insert images (but do gather images and get permissions)
- Don't start laying out the book in a page design program

Write until you have a final copy

# Writing: Material to Consider

- Copyright page
- Table of contents
- Acknowledgments
- Figure captions
- Footnotes/Endnotes
- Bibliography
- Glossary
- Index
- About the author page

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# Find a Printer: Print Books

## Offset printing

- Traditional method, cheaper for large number of books
- Printer prints, binds, ships books to storage spot

## Digital printing

- Newer method, cheaper for small number of books
- Printer prints, binds, ships books to storage spot

## Digital, print on demand (POD)\*

- Printer prints and ships books as they are ordered (by you, retailer, customer)
- No large printing bill or storage needed, but per-book cost is more
- Requires long-term use of an intermediary

\*Some people assume that self-publishers will use POD

# Find a Printer (Offset or Digital, not POD)

- Get quotes (via online form)
  - You'll need information like book size and page count
  - Make up numbers if needed, use only to compare printer costs
  - You can get an updated quote when you are ready to print
- Make sure company is a real book printer making quality books
- Consider non-cost factors
  - Quality
  - Good customer service
  - Environmentally friendly and fair
  - Location of actual printing
- Get recommendations from other self-publishers (mine: Thomson-Shore)
- Ask questions!

# Find a Printer: Questions to Ask

- Can I see book and paper samples?
- Can I see samples of both offset and digital printing?
- What are your standard page sizes?
- How many pages are in each section/signature (8, 16, etc.)?
- Do you have a guide for creating and converting files? Which programs can I use? (Free PDFs vs Adobe PDFs)
- What are your company's environmental practices? Do you offer recycled paper? Are the books printed at your facility or elsewhere?
- Do you work with self-publishers? (You want to work with someone who answers questions and will notice major production errors.)



# Find a Printer: Keeping Cost Down

- Use one of the printer's standard page sizes (cheaper than custom sizes)
- Understand the paper's "pages per inch" (ppi) specification
  - Larger ppi: cheaper paper, thinner book
  - Smaller ppi: more costly paper, might look nicer
  - Paper needs to be thick enough that images won't show through
  - Book thickness affects postage for customers
- Get multiple quotes, for offset versus digital and various print runs
- Compare costs for varying number of colors on cover (might not be best place to cut costs)
- Understand the policy on "overs" and "unders"
- Consider costs of shipping books to you (might be extra)

# Find a Printer (POD)

## POD service scenarios

- You sell to customers, then buy POD books to fill orders
- You direct customers to the POD printer's website; POD printer = retailer
- The POD printer acts as a distributor, sells your book through a retail partner

## Types of companies

- Traditional printers who've added POD services (e.g., Thomson-Shore)
- Printers who only offer POD, display books in their online store (e.g., Lulu)
- Distributors that arrange the POD printing as well (CreateSpace and IngramSpark, discussed in the Print Distribution section)

# Find a Printer (POD)

## Things to keep in mind

- Quality issues
  - Process might be done automatically
  - Are samples available?
  - Read independent reviews
- Printing costs
- Additional fees for shipping books to customers or displaying books in an online store
- Scams: read all agreements and **do not transfer your copyright**

# Misc. Tasks: Create Publishing Company

- Use a publishing company name to make your book look professional; see the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) website for naming advice
- Create a company logo or hire a professional designer
- Get a PO box to accept checks without listing your address online
- Register your website domain name; possibly build the website now\*
- Use a professional-looking email address (comes with website hosting)
- Look into state and local requirements (e.g., license, filing name, sales tax ID\*\*)
- Consider opening a business bank account
- Free help: SCORE, <https://www.score.org>

\*Beware of domain name stealers! Once you search for a name (to check availability), someone else might buy it to try to sell to you for more; plan ahead, then search and buy right away; if you are not building your site now, GoDaddy is a popular place to register domain names

\*\*Sales tax ID enables you to avoid paying sales tax on book printing

# Miscellaneous Tasks: ISBN

- A universal book identifier
- Required by bookstores but not Amazon
- There is only one place to buy an ISBN in the United States (<http://www.isbn.org>), and buying only one is expensive
- Each “version” requires a different ISBN (version = open for interpretation)
- Buying an ISBN from a reseller means the ISBN is registered in the reseller’s name
- After you publish your book with the ISBN in it, you’ll need to assign the ISBN to the book at the ISBN company’s website.

# Miscellaneous Tasks: Other Numbers

## Barcode

- Needed to sell in bookstores
- Makes book look “normal”
- Available from the ISBN company or elsewhere
- Comes as an image file that you place on cover
- Optional: put price on barcode (flexibility vs. looking “normal”)

## Library of Congress catalog control number (LCCN)

- Used by libraries
- Free (you must send a copy of your book)
- Two types; Preassigned Control Number (PCN) for self-published books

# Miscellaneous Tasks: Testimonials

- For the back cover
- Makes book look “normal”
- Can come from many types of people
  - Famous person
  - Another author in the genre
  - An expert in the subject matter
  - A local celebrity
  - Anyone with a relevant credential: “founder of,” “winner of,” etc.
- Ask in person, if possible
- Give reader excerpt, and/or suggest language for testimonial (????)

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# Design the Book

Book design includes...

- Book cover
- Book interior pages

How to do either the cover or interior:

- Do it all yourself
- Do it yourself with a template
- Hire a designer

# Book Design: Interior DIY

## Many aspects to consider

- Fonts of text, headings, running heads, chapter titles
  - Easy to read
  - Font width (affects page count of book)
- Margins
- Images: positioning and style (border, drop shadow, etc.)
- Title page, table of contents, and other special pages
- Position and font of page numbers
- Details (drop caps, small caps at start of chapter, section breaks, etc.)
- More

Use IBPA checklist (see Resources)

# Book Design: Interior DIY

Look at other books:

- Book size
- Fonts (use “What the Font” app to identify)
- Images
- Details like drop caps



Left header is title of book

meant to laugh. I'd just been so scared of falling, then it happened to Mary, and

First five words of a section are small caps (the style is applied to the first paragraph)

wed and extracted herself. She stood, staring, as heaved her like upright, silent, arms hanging in a power walk.

"How do you have you come?" one asked as they drove, eyes wide.

"One block." We laughed.

They smiled as they passed. "Good luck!"

Blank line between sections

For twenty months the house stayed peaceful. Then we turned onto Route 47, a four-lane lined with businesses. "It's just New Jersey," I reassured myself as I can whizzed past. "It won't be like this all summer." My thoughts flared from the busy road to my bakery job to my family. (Was Mom and Dad back on Interstate 69? Or had they stayed in Cape May for the day?) My left knee trembled. I had knee exercises to do each morning to strengthen the muscle that caused the discomfort, but its appearance made me feel clumsy.

In spite of the scenery, my spirit stayed up. "The trip has started," I kept reminding myself. "We're actually doing it." I was twenty-seven years old, and at last I'd made something happen in my life.

"Let's take a rest stop!" Mary called. I scanned the roadside. Would these businesses let us use the restroom? But then a nondescript building appeared with signs reading "Men" and "Women": public restrooms.

After that first restroom, we stopped at gas stations. Each time, I felt compelled to buy something. This posed two problems: snacks were pricey, and I didn't want to eat the junk sold in gas stations: colorful cubes of gum, blue-orange oven chips, cinnamon rolls with artificial icing stuck to redophone wrappers. But I felt uncomfortable using the restroom for free.

At our fourth rest stop, I settled on honey-coated peanuts. Outside, Mary sat on the curb and snatched on almonds from a baggie she'd parked at home. She hadn't felt obliged to buy something. I wished I hadn't. I pulled out the map and joined her.

Our destination, Paria State Park, beckoned as a green block amid the clustering woods of New Jersey, fifty miles from Cape May. We hadn't calculated how far we had to go each day; we didn't even have a set end date, although Mary had a new job in a field supervisor with an activist group that started in four months. I'd made a rule estimate (three thousand miles in three months was about thirty-three miles a day) and felt sure we'd travel faster than that.

But the fifty miles to Paria that had seemed so easy were taking longer than expected. Was it because of our heavy loads? I couldn't wait to return at the park, to set up camp in the quiet woods.

I only included part titles for most of the book, and I used heading style capitalization, because I thought it looked best

Chapter title style applied here

## Contents

Prologue.....	5
The Beginning, in Which We Start Hike, Run, Cold, Wind, and More.....	13
The Midwest, in Which the Road Flattens and We Fly Connect the Dots.....	75
South Dakota, the Spectacular Morning Part of the Trip.....	109
Wyoming, the Most Fun Part of the Trip.....	153
Minnesota, Where All Traces of Shade Disappear and the Sun Beats Down.....	209
The Northwest, Where Temperatures Drop to One Hundred and Ten.....	238
The End of the Road.....	271
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I chose to line up the right side of the page numbers because I think it looks nice

# Book Design: Interior DIY

## Page layout program (e.g., InDesign)

- Printer may specify which program(s) you can use
- Page layout programs produce higher quality PDFs than word processors
- Can do much automatically/easily (if you know how to use it)
- Expensive (there are free alternatives), but monthly subscription possible
- Steep learning curve

## Examples of using the program properly:

- Use styles, so if you decide to change the font of the chapter title, you can change the style, not the formatting at each chapter
- Place text so it flows automatically from one page to the next, so it adjusts if needed

There may be workarounds, but I don't feel confident recommending any

# Book Design: Interior DIY Tips

- Practice with a small test file
- Ask printer to look at test file PDF
- Then once you have the process down, go through it with your manuscript

## Images

- Scan photos or drawings
- Process digital images
- Use specifications from printer (image size, resolution, file format)
- Use image in test file for printer before processing all images

InDesign steps on my website: <http://emilybuehler.com/miscellany/how-to-guides/>

# Book Design: Interior w/ Template

- Templates available online for free and for purchase
- Purchased templates may include more features
- You can try some free ones and see if you're happy with the results
- You download a file that includes a title page and sample chapters with the fonts and section breaks in place, then paste your material in
- POD and self-publishing companies might offer templates
- Joel Friedlander's Book Design Templates: get good reviews, look good, easy to use, less than \$100 <https://www.bookdesigntemplates.com/>

# Book Design: Interior by Designer

Get recommendations from other self-publishers

View samples of work

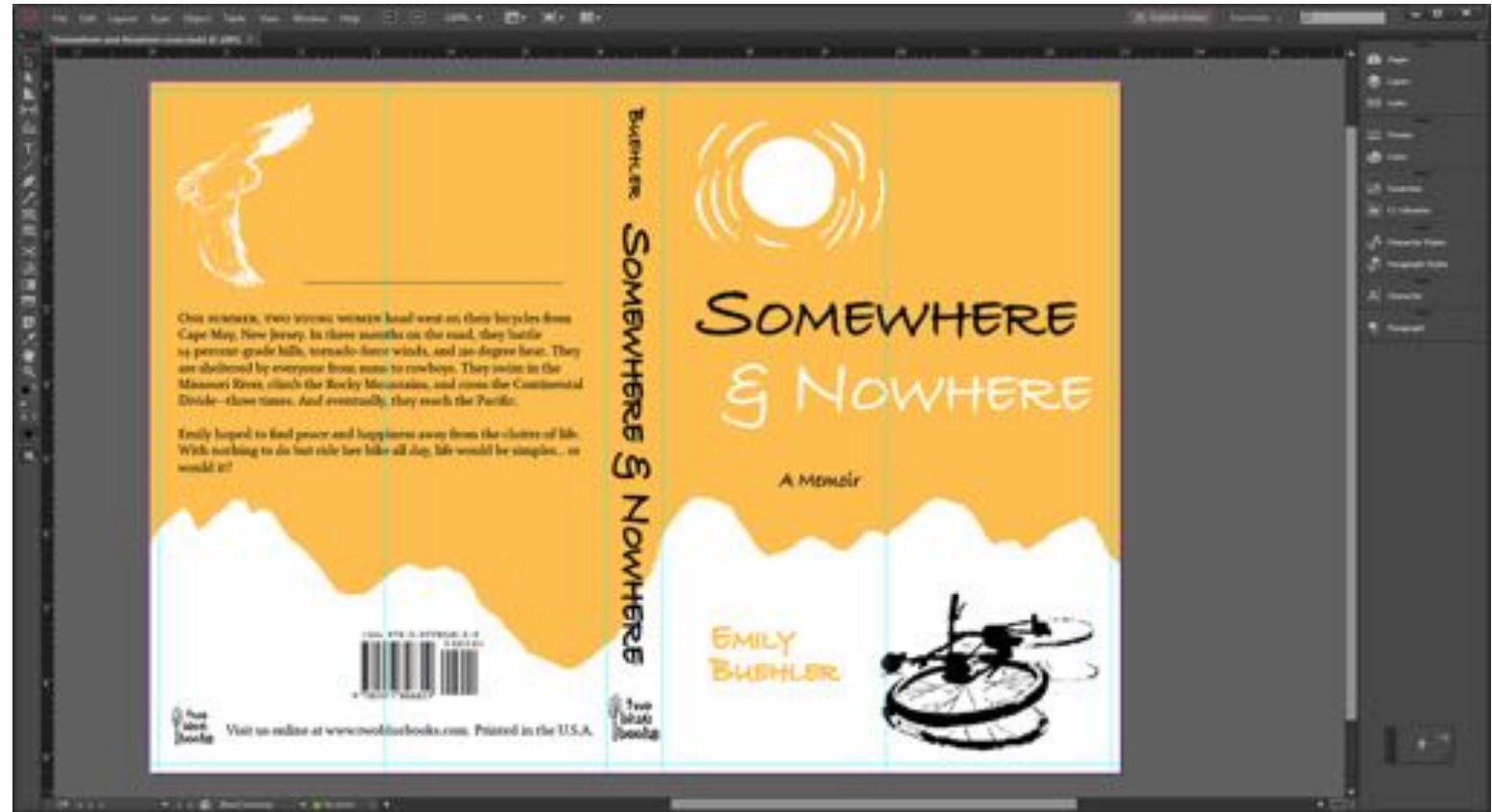
Ask questions

- What is the cost?
- When will it be ready?
- Who owns the file?
- What type of file (native/InDesign vs. final/PDF) will they send?  
(You want the native files to use in the future)
- Are they using a template or creating a custom design?



# Book Design: Cover

- Should look professional and fit genre! Will help (or hurt) sales!
- Sent to printer as PDF of **entire cover**, including back, spine, bleed
- Calculate spine width using page count and ppi value of paper
- Follow printer guidelines (programs to use, bleed settings, color modes)



# Book Design: Cover DIY

- Look at other books in your genre to get ideas
  - Image on the front
  - How the spine is handled
  - Elements and their positioning on the back (enticing synopsis, testimonial quotes, barcode, publishing company logo, website)
- Must look good as a thumbnail (e.g., when sold on Amazon)
- Once you have a design, get feedback
- You must own or have permission to use any images (more below) or fonts
- Use IBPA checklist (see Resources)

# Book Design: Cover Images

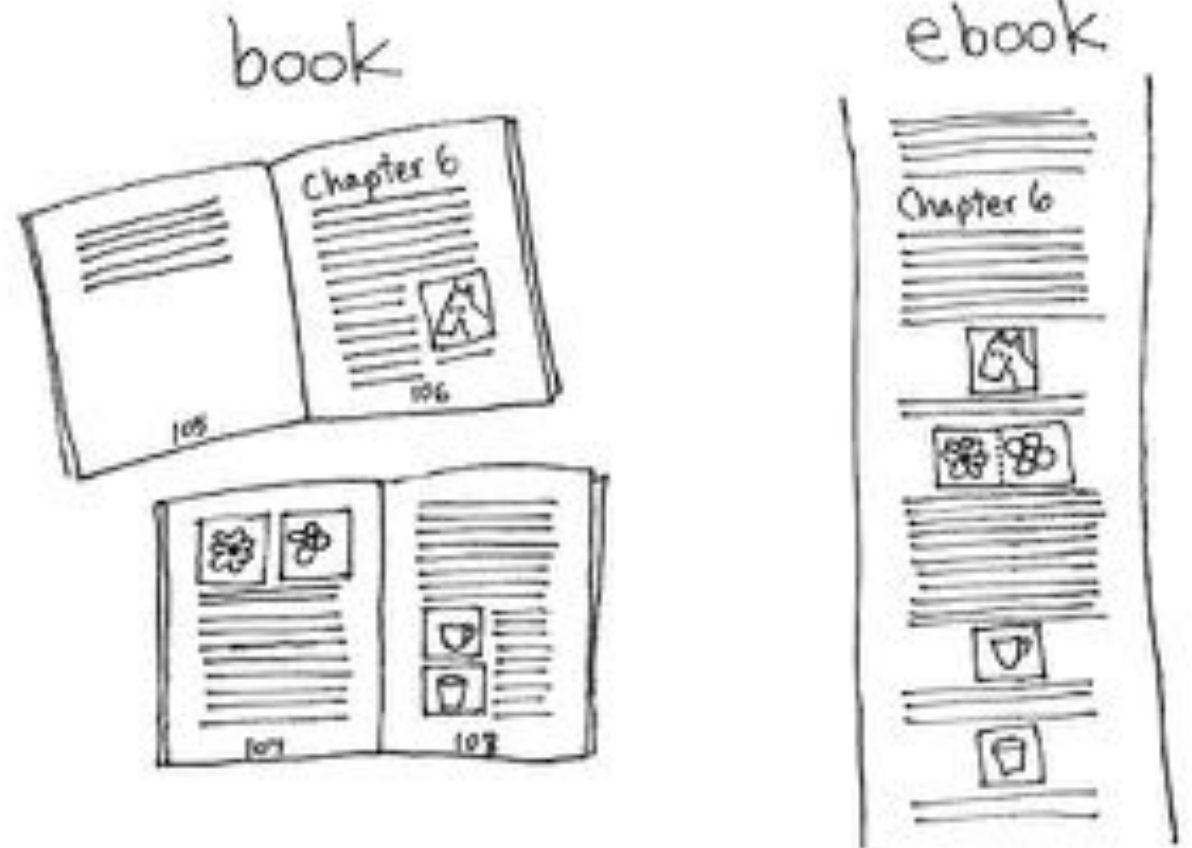
- You must own or have permission to use any images
  - Your own photos; no copyrighted work or people in them (this requires permission)
  - Your own drawings
  - Public domain images
  - Images you have purchased the rights to (from a website or photographer/artist)
- If you use a photographer/artist, be clear on what you are buying
  - Ideal: photo is work for hire; you become owner of photo's copyright
  - If photo is only licensed, you may need new license to use it on future editions of the book or in other contexts
- Can other people use the same image?

# Book Design: Cover w/ Help

- Cover templates (similar considerations to interior templates)
- Cover created via a self-publishing company
  - Templates to use
  - Make sure you know who owns what
- Graphic designer
  - All considerations from interior templates (recommendations, samples, etc.)
  - Clarify who owns what: can you reuse the cover on subsequent editions?
  - Do you have the native files so you can make changes yourself for future editions?
  - Ask where images come from, what license agreements are in place
  - Fonts are also copyrighted; are they buying fonts or using free ones?

# Book Design: Ebooks

- Understand positioning of text and images
- Apply styles to indicate function of text
- Follow a guide to properly format your document
- Use a template (included with some ebook publishing services)
- Create cover: image file
- Ebooks are ever-changing! Search online for the latest guides and trends



Part 2 of the slides is posted here:

<http://emilybuehler.com/wp-content/uploads/SelfPublishing2018-part2.pdf>