

The Busy Writer's Book of Checklists

Bonus Checklist 01 – Publishing Productivity Checklist

Aspect of Productivity	Your Assessment		
	Done	To Do	N/A
It's hard to over-emphasize the importance of productivity in a writer's life. You can sit in a chair for six hours and have very little to show for it, or you can do a 30-minute writing sprint and produce quality work. To ensure that you keep producing enough words to reach your goals, you need to do three things: (1) plan your project, (2) track your progress and (3) analyze results.			
Estimate how many words per hour you can produce under each of the following circumstances: 1. When you plan a scene ahead of time 2. When you 'go with the flow' (i.e. if you haven't planned the events you're writing about) 3. When you dictate a scene. (You can try this first with basic dictation software on your computer, or use any dictation device then transcribe it yourself.)			
Decide whether you want to keep writing via the keyboard, or whether you want to boost productivity by dictating your book. (Most writers find that they can write a lot more when they master dictation software like Dragon Naturally Speaking.) If necessary, download Dragon NaturallySpeaking and spend time on training and drills before you start to write.			
Plan your project. (If you are Indie publishing, keep in mind that readers often buy other books in a series. Many writers opt to write the first two or three books in a series and release them at the same time to get the sell-through. Some write as many as six books ahead of time, and release them at short intervals—e.g. weekly, every 10 days, every 2-3 weeks.) * Know your genre and readership (crime? mystery? romance? thriller?) * Decide on your book length (Short story? novella? Full-length novel?) * Build in time to have your book edited and proofread, and to format your book if you are uploading to e-publishing platforms. When you have all of this information, you will be able to work out your production schedule (put simply, how many words per day/per week do you have to produce to finish your book(s)?)			
Track your daily quota of words to ensure that you are not falling behind schedule. If you fall short one day, make it up the next. If you go over, don't take the next day off — keep the extra words up your sleeve in case you lose a day.			
Try different methods of achieving your daily word count. (One 4-5 hour session might work for some, while others do better if they get their daily words written in 4 45-minute 'sprints' with breaks in between.)			
Be accountable. Team up with a writing buddy and report on your progress.			
Build on success. Increase your daily output by 10% each week. If you can write 2,000 words a day, you can spend a little extra time and get it up to 2200 words. The week after that it's 2,420 words per day. Do this for a month and then hold your production level steady for a while.			
Consider investing in apps and timers that help you keep track. Two popular apps for writers are Pomodoro and 5,000 Words Per Hour. Do a Google search for "apps for writers".			
~ When you reach the end of your project (whether it's one book or a 6-book series) analyze your progress and tweak where necessary to either (a) boost productivity or (b) revise your publishing goals. * What worked? * What didn't work? * What can you do to (a) make writing easier and (b) ensure that your desired publication schedule fits in with your lifestyle?			
Any other aspects of dialogue that need consideration:			