

Book cover design brief template

Free editable version available in the author resource library.

1. BOOK DETAILS

Exact title: _____

Exact subtitle, if any: _____

Author name as it should appear: _____

Other approved cover credits: _____

Genre and subgenre: _____

Two-sentence synopsis or central argument: _____

2. READER AND POSITIONING

One intended reader: _____

Where they are likely to encounter the cover: _____

What the cover should communicate at first glance: _____

Three words for the intended mood: _____

Genre conventions the reader should recognize: _____

What should make this book's direction distinctive: _____

3. EDITIONS AND PRODUCTION DECISIONS

Planned formats: ☐ Paperback ☐ Hardcover ☐ Ebook ☐ Other

Chosen publishing destination or printer: _____

Print trim size and units, if confirmed: _____

Paper and interior printing option, if confirmed: _____

Final page count: _____ ☐ Confirmed ☐ Pending layout

Current platform specification/template URL: _____

Date checked: _____

Back-cover copy and author biography status: _____

Identifier/barcode responsibility to confirm: _____

Do not calculate a print spine from a draft word count. Confirm the final interior page count, paper, binding and selected platform options, then obtain that platform's current cover template. A print cover wrap and an ebook front cover are separate deliverables. This worksheet is a creative brief, not a technical cover-size calculator.

4. VISUAL DIRECTION

Reference cover 1 and what works (hierarchy, mood, composition): _____

Reference cover 2 and what works: _____

Elements to avoid: _____

Color or imagery preferences, with reasons: _____

Text that must remain legible as a small image: _____

5. IMAGES AND RIGHTS

Supplied image/illustration description: _____

Source and license or permission evidence: _____

Approved uses and any restrictions: _____

If imagery must be commissioned, what should be depicted? ____

Do not ask a designer to copy another cover or reuse an image without the appropriate rights. Share the relevant license documentation.

6. REVIEW AND HANDOFF

Person who consolidates feedback and approves the cover: ____

Concept and revision rounds to agree: _____

Required edition exports: _____

Editable source files and licensing limits to agree: _____

Target timing and dependencies: _____

Confirm spelling, subtitle, credits and approved back-cover copy before final exports. Inspect the print proof and the ebook thumbnail separately.

BUILD AND READ

Browser brief builder:

<https://greenfieldpublishers.com/tools/book-cover-brief-builder.html>

Cover brief guide:

<https://greenfieldpublishers.com/blog/book-cover-design-brief.html>

Current KDP print guidance, if KDP is your destination:

https://kdp.amazon.com/en_US/help/topic/G201857950

Check the actual requirements of every other selected destination.

Prepared with AI assistance. This original worksheet is a planning aid.

You may share an unmodified copy with the Greenfield name and resource link.