

Publishing Options: Traditional Publishing, Print on Demand, and Ebook

See also “Notes on Self-Publishing” and [Step-by-Step Kindle Publishing](#)

	Traditional publisher	Print on Demand (Amazon CreateSpace)	Ebook (Amazon Kindle)
<i>Editing MS before setting text</i>	Editor paid to do it, no cost to you	You find and pay editor(s)	You find and pay editor(s)
<i>Control of text</i>	Between you and publisher: they can refuse to print what they disapprove of or think won't sell	You, although Amazon will reject plagiarism or pornography	You, although Amazon will reject plagiarism or pornography
<i>Illustrations</i>	Number and quality limited due to cost of printing and cost of high-res images	Can't print high-quality images via print on demand; requires ordering a couple thousand copies from an offset printer, probably at a cost of several thousand dollars	As many as will fit in a 50MB file; however, Amazon reduces resolution during conversion to ebook format, and the quality the reader sees will be limited by his screen or monitor
<i>Permissions for photos and text</i>	Author usually pays	Author pays	Author pays
<i>Time for laying out book</i>	Weeks or months: usually a joint effort among author, editor, designer	A few days	A few hours
<i>Time from manuscript to bookstore</i>	Typically 1 year	Typically 1 week, if you want to proof a hard copy	1 day
<i>Marketing</i>	Publisher will probably send out review copies; unless you're famous, publisher won't sponsor book tours, full-page ads, etc.	Your responsibility	Your responsibility
<i>Royalties</i>	5-10%	Profit depends on price you set vs. production cost	70% less delivery cost, or 35% without deductions
<i>Profit on a \$20 book</i>	\$1-\$2, less 15% commission if an agent found the traditional publisher for you	\$5 or so (depending on production cost)	\$7 (royalty is 35% because Amazon Kindle only allows 70% royalty if the book is priced at \$2.99-\$9.99)
<i>Who collects payments</i>	Publisher	Amazon	Amazon
<i>When you get paid</i>	Often annually	Monthly (with a lag of 1-2 months)	Monthly (with a lag of 1-2 months)
<i>Revisions</i>	In next print edition, if book sells well enough	Revisions reviewed within a day; will apply to all copies printed from that point on	Within a day; purchasers can upgrade to revised text

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