

# Ready to Upload: A Self-Publisher's Layout Checklist

Compatible with Amazon KDP and IngramSpark

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## 1. Page Setup & Margins

- Trim Size matches your selected format (e.g., 6"x9", 5.5"x8.5", etc.)
- Mirror pages are enabled so inner and outer margins flip correctly
- Safe Zone Margins (My preferences for for 6"x9" book. You can Google margin recommendations for X"xX" book, for more suggestions):
  - o Outer: 0.75"
  - o Top: 0.75" (1" to fit headers like the title or author name, 0.5" from page edge)
  - o Bottom: 0.75" (you can use 1" if using footer page numbers, 0.5" from page edge)
- Gutter (Inner Margin): Adequate space is added for binding – see below

Page Count	KDP & Ingram Minimum	Professional Recommendation
Up to 150 pages	0.375"	0.5"
151–300 pages	0.5"–0.625"	0.625"–0.75"
301–500 pages	0.625"–0.75"	0.75" or more
500+ pages	0.75"+	0.875"–1.0"

*Tip: Always round up. Too much gutter is better than too little, especially with thicker paper or higher page counts.*

## 2. Bleed Guidelines (Only When Needed)

- Bleed is only added if images, lines, or backgrounds extend to the page edge
- If using bleed:
  - o Add 0.125" to the top, bottom, and outer edge only
  - o Do not add bleed to the gutter
  - o Adjust page size, not margins (e.g., 6x9" becomes 6.125"x9.25")
- Keep all important text inside the safe margins, not the bleed zone



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### 3. PDF Export Settings

- File exported as PDF/X-1a:2001 (required by IngramSpark; accepted by KDP)
- Fonts embedded (no substitution or missing font errors)
- Transparency flattened to avoid print issues
- Color Mode:
  - Text and B&W graphics = 100% Black (K) only
  - Images = Grayscale or CMYK (no RGB)
- No crop marks or printer marks unless required by IngramSpark

### 4. Content Structure & Pagination

- Chapter titles and spacing are consistent throughout
- All chapters start on the right-hand (recto) page
- Page numbers are:
  - Sequential, readable, and correctly placed
  - Omitted on blank or title pages
- Headers (author name, book title, or chapter title) consistently placed at top, 0.75" margin
- No headers/footers on chapter openings or front matter

### 5. Typography & Style Consistency

- Body font is consistent throughout (family, size, and weight)
- Paragraph structure is uniform (indents vs. block – no mixing)
- Proper punctuation:
  - “Smart quotes” and ‘apostrophes’
  - En dashes (–), em dashes (—), hyphens (-)
  - Ellipses: ... (not . . .)
- No widows, orphans, or hyphenated words at the top of a page
- Scene breaks are clean and consistently styled

## 6. Images & Visual Elements (If Any)

- All images are at least 300 DPI
  - No pixelation, stretching, or artifacts
  - Images and visual elements are CMYK or grayscale, not RGB
  - Visuals do not interfere with text or bleed into margin zones
  - All captions styled and placed consistently

## 7. Platform-Specific Upload Checks

- Amazon KDP:
  - Interior PDF file size is under 650 MB
  - Bleed setting during upload matches the file setup (the 0.125" extra margin space for images to the edge of paper)
  - Cover uploaded separately (meets KDP's cover template requirements)
  - Preview your book using KDP Print Previewer
- IngramSpark:
  - File exported as PDF/X-1a:2001
  - Bleed and crop marks present if needed
  - Cover and interior uploaded separately, with matching trim and spine specs
  - Black text uses 100% K (not rich black)