

# How to write your first novel

Developing believable Characters

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# Note to the writer

This book is not an in-depth analysis of novel writing. Instead, it serves as a concise guide to help writers get started and continue their writing journey. While it may not dive deeply into the intricacies of writing, it does offer practical tips and inspiration for those seeking to improve their craft.

One of the strengths of this book is its focus on the writing process itself. Rather than overwhelming readers with theoretical concepts or technical jargon, it emphasizes the importance of establishing a writing routine, setting realistic goals, and staying motivated. The author's encouraging tone and straightforward approach make this book a valuable resource for anyone struggling to get their writing off the ground.

While this book may not be suitable for experienced writers looking for advanced techniques or detailed analysis, it is an excellent choice for beginners or anyone looking for a quick and easy introduction to novel writing. It covers all the basics, from developing characters and plot to creating vivid descriptions and dialogue. Overall, this book is a helpful tool for anyone looking to improve their writing skills and embark on the journey of writing a novel.



# How to

A character profile page is a useful tool for building characters in novels. Here are some elements to consider including:

1. Name: Choose a name that fits the character and the story
2. Appearance: Describe the character's physical appearance, including height, weight, hair color, eye color, and any distinguishing features.
3. Personality: Consider the character's personality traits, such as their strengths, weaknesses, likes, dislikes, and quirks.
4. Background: Include information about the character's background, such as their family, upbringing, and education.
5. Motivations: Think about what drives the character, what their goals are, and what they hope to achieve.
6. Conflict: Consider what conflicts the character may face in the story, both internal and external.
7. Relationships: Describe the character's relationships with other characters in the story.

8. Arc: Think about how the character will change and grow throughout the story.

**Remember, a good character is one that is complex, believable, and engaging. Use the profile to flesh out your characters and make them come to life on the page.**

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# Chapter 1

## Deciding your genre

Choosing the genre of your novel is one of the most important decisions you'll make as a writer. Your genre will dictate the tone, style, and themes of your book, and it will determine your audience. Before you start writing, take some time to think about what genre you want to write in and why.

First, consider your interests and passions. What kind of stories do you love to read? What movies and TV shows do you enjoy? If you're passionate about a particular genre, you'll be more motivated to write in that genre. Additionally, if you're knowledgeable about a genre, you'll be better equipped to write a compelling story that resonates with readers.

Second, think about the market. What genres are popular right now? What genres are oversaturated? Keep in mind that certain genres are more marketable than others. If you're hoping to get published, it's important to consider what publishers and agents are looking for.

Third, consider your strengths as a writer. Are you great at crafting suspenseful plots? Do you excel at writing witty dialogue? Different genres require different skills, so it's important to choose a genre that plays to your strengths.

Finally, think about the themes you want to explore in your writing. Different genres lend themselves to different themes. For example, science fiction is often used to explore themes of technology and the future, while romance is often used to explore themes of love and relationships.

In conclusion, choosing the right genre is essential to writing a successful novel. By considering your interests, the market, your strengths, and the themes you want to explore, you can make an informed decision about what genre is right for you. Remember, writing a novel is a journey, and choosing the right genre is just the first step.

**This space is provided to write down genre ideas:**

# Chapter 2

## Book title

Choosing the right title for your novel can be a challenging task, as it sets the tone for your entire story. A good title should be catchy, memorable, and reflect the theme of your book. One approach is to brainstorm a list of potential titles and then narrow it down based on relevance and uniqueness.

Consider the genre of your novel and what titles have been successful in that genre. You don't want to copy someone else's title, but you can use it as inspiration. Also, think about the main idea or conflict in your story and try to capture it in a few words.

Another option is to use a quote or phrase from your book that stands out. This can pique the interest of potential readers and give them a glimpse into your writing style.

Ultimately, your title should be something that you feel proud of and excited to share with others. Don't rush the process and take the time to find the perfect title that truly represents your story.

# Chapter 3

## Story arc

A story arc is a literary technique used to structure a narrative. It refers to the progression of a story from its beginning to its end. The arc is made up of various plot points that move the story forward and build suspense, leading to a climax and resolution.

The typical story arc consists of five parts: exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution. The exposition sets up the story and introduces the characters and setting. The rising action builds tension as the plot unfolds, leading up to the climax, the point of highest suspense. The falling action shows the consequences of the climax, and the resolution ties up loose ends and brings the story to a close.

While the story arc is commonly associated with novels and movies, it can be found in all forms of storytelling, including short stories, television shows, and even video games. A well-crafted story arc can keep readers or viewers engaged and invested in a narrative, making it a crucial tool for writers and storytellers of all kinds.

# Chapter 4

## How to choose your characters name

Choosing a character's name is an important decision for any writer. A character's name can convey personality, culture, and even the era in which they live. Here are some tips on how to choose a character's name that will enhance your story.

First, consider the character's background. If your character is from a specific culture or region, research common names from that area. This will not only add authenticity to your story but also give readers insight into your character's heritage.

Second, think about the character's personality. A strong name can convey strength and power, while a more gentle name can suggest a softer side. Consider the tone of your story and choose a name that fits the mood you want to create.

Third, avoid names that are too common or too similar to other characters in your story. This can lead to confusion for readers and

make it difficult to differentiate your characters. Instead, choose a name that is unique and memorable.

Finally, say the name out loud. This may seem simple, but it can make a big difference in how the name sounds and feels. A name that is difficult to pronounce or does not flow well can be distracting for readers.

In conclusion, choosing a character's name is an important aspect of writing. By considering the character's background, personality, avoiding common names, and saying the name out loud, you can choose a name that enhances your story and resonates with readers.

# Chapter 5

## Character appearance

**A**ppearance: Describe the character's physical appearance, including height, weight, hair color, eye color, and any distinguishing features.

1. Height
2. Weight
3. Hair Color
4. Eye Color
5. Distinguishing features

**Example:**

The character is of average height, standing at around 5'7". They have a slim build and weigh around 130 pounds. Their hair is a dark shade of brown, styled in a short, messy cut that falls just above their eyebrows. Their eyes are a vibrant green, with small, almost unnotice-

able specks of brown around the iris. One of their most distinguishing features is a small scar above their left eyebrow, which they acquired during a childhood accident.

Despite their average height and build, the character exudes a sense of confidence and strength. They carry themselves with a straight posture, and their movements are deliberate and purposeful. Their face is angular with high cheekbones, giving them a sharp, striking appearance. Overall, their physical appearance is both striking and unassuming, allowing them to blend in with a crowd while still standing out in their own unique way.

Finally, the character has a propensity for wearing dark, understated clothing that subtly accentuates their features. They tend to favor simple outfits with clean lines, opting for black or navy blue colors. However, they also have a few statement pieces, such as a leather jacket or a pair of bold shoes, that add a bit of personality to their wardrobe.

### **Ideas Page:**



# Chapter 6

# Personality

**P**ersonality: Consider the character's personality traits, such as their strengths, weaknesses, likes, dislikes, and quirks.

Personality plays a crucial role in any novel. It helps readers understand characters more deeply and empathize with them. When considering a character's personality, it's important to think about their strengths - what makes them unique and admirable. For example, a character may be brave, compassionate, or intelligent. These traits can help them overcome challenges and triumph in the face of adversity.

On the other hand, a character's weaknesses are equally important to consider. These flaws make them more relatable and human. A character may struggle with anger, insecurity, or addiction. These struggles can create tension and conflict in the story, driving the plot forward and keeping readers engaged.

Beyond strengths and weaknesses, a character's likes, dislikes, and quirks can also reveal a lot about their personality. For example, a character who enjoys reading books may be intellectual or introverted, while a character who loves partying may be outgoing or impulsive. These small details help readers understand a character's motivations and desires.

In conclusion, taking the time to consider a character's personality is essential for creating a compelling novel. By exploring their strengths, weaknesses, likes, dislikes, and quirks, writers can craft

complex and relatable characters that readers will care about. When done well, these characters can elevate a story from good to great, leaving a lasting impact on readers long after they've finished the book.

# Chapter 7

## Background

**B**ackground: Include information about the character's background, such as their family, upbringing, and education.

### **Why?**

Including information about a character's background can add depth and complexity to their personality and motivations, making them feel more real and relatable to readers. It can also help explain their behaviors, decisions, and relationships with other characters.

In novels, it is important to provide background information about characters to help readers understand their motivations and actions. This includes details about their family, upbringing, and education. For example, a character who grew up in a wealthy family with access to the best education might have a privileged outlook on life and act accordingly. Conversely, a character who grew up in poverty and had to work hard for everything they have might have a more practical and down-to-earth approach.

Family background can also play a significant role in shaping a character's personality and behavior. A character who grew up in a loving and supportive family might be more confident and trusting, while a character who experienced neglect or abuse might struggle with trust issues and have a harder time forming connections with others.

Finally, education can provide insight into a character's interests and abilities. A character who excelled academically might be more analytical and detail-oriented, while a character who struggled in school might be more creative and resourceful. Overall, providing background information about characters is crucial for creating a fully realized and believable fictional world.

**Thoughts and Ideas:**

# Chapter 8

## Motivations

**M**otivations: Think about what drives the character, what their goals are, and what they hope to achieve.

Understanding a character's motivations is crucial in crafting a compelling and believable story. By delving into what drives a character, we as readers can better understand their actions and decisions. Motivations can stem from a variety of sources - perhaps the character is seeking revenge, trying to prove themselves to others, or simply trying to survive in a harsh world. Whatever the reason, knowing a character's motivations helps to make them feel more real and relatable.

Along with motivations, it's important to consider a character's goals. What is it that they're trying to accomplish? Are they seeking a specific outcome, or are they simply trying to stay alive in a dangerous situation? Goals can help to give a character a sense of purpose and direction, and can also create tension and conflict within the story. By understanding a character's goals, we can better understand what they're willing to do - or not do - in order to achieve them.

Finally, we should consider what a character hopes to achieve. This is different from goals in that it's more about the character's long-term aspirations and dreams. What does the character want for themselves in the future? What do they hope to accomplish beyond the immediate situation they find themselves in? By understanding a character's

hopes and dreams, we can gain a deeper insight into their personality and motivations, and can also create a sense of anticipation and excitement for what may lie ahead in the story.

# Chapter 9

# Conflict

**C**onflict: Consider what conflicts the character may face in the story, both internal and external.

Conflict is an essential element of storytelling. It creates tension and drama, and it keeps the reader engaged. Without conflict, a story would be boring and uneventful. Conflict also allows for character development, as characters are forced to confront their beliefs and make difficult decisions. By considering what conflicts the character may face, both internal and external, we can gain a deeper understanding of their motivations and desires.

Internal conflicts are those that occur within a character's mind. These conflicts often involve a struggle between different beliefs or desires. For example, a character may be torn between their loyalty to their family and their desire for personal freedom. Internal conflicts can be just as impactful as external conflicts, as they reveal the inner workings of a character's mind.

External conflicts are those that occur between a character and an outside force. These conflicts can take many forms, such as a physical altercation or a struggle for power. External conflicts can also be a reflection of internal conflicts, as a character's external struggles often reveal their deepest desires and fears. By considering the external

conflicts a character may face, we can better understand the challenges they will need to overcome in order to achieve their goals.



# Chapter 10

## Relationships

**R**elationships: Describe the character's relationships with other characters in the story.

In the novel, the protagonist's relationship with their best friend is one of the most important and enduring relationships in the story. They have known each other since childhood and have always been there for each other through thick and thin. Despite their differences in personality and interests, they have a strong bond that withstands the challenges they face throughout the book.

On the other hand, the protagonist's relationship with their romantic partner is fraught with tension and conflict. Despite their initial attraction to each other, they struggle to communicate effectively and often misinterpret each other's intentions. As the story progresses, their relationship becomes increasingly strained, and they are forced to confront their differences and decide whether they are willing to work through them.

Finally, the protagonist's relationship with their estranged parent is a complicated and emotional one. They have a history of unresolved issues and painful memories that have led to a strained and distant relationship. Despite this, the protagonist still longs for a closer connection with their parent and struggles with feelings of guilt and regret over the past. Throughout the novel, they attempt to reconcile with

their parent and repair their relationship, but their efforts are met with mixed success.

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# Chapter 11

## Character Arc

A character arc refers to the transformation of a character throughout a story. It is a crucial element in storytelling because it allows readers to emotionally connect with the protagonist and understand their journey.

The first stage of a character arc is the introduction. In this stage, the reader is introduced to the character and learns about their personality, beliefs, and goals. This is a critical stage because it sets the foundation for the rest of the story. The reader may also be introduced to the character's flaws, which will be addressed later in the story.

The second stage of a character arc is the conflict. This is where the character faces challenges that force them to step out of their comfort zone and confront their flaws. This stage is essential because it creates tension and suspense, making the reader invested in the character's journey.

The third stage of a character arc is the transformation. This is where the character learns from their experiences and overcomes their flaws. This stage is critical because it shows the character's growth and development. The transformation may not always be positive, but it is always significant.

The fourth stage of a character arc is the resolution. This is where the character's journey comes to an end, and they have either achieved

their goals or failed. This stage is essential because it gives readers closure and allows them to reflect on the character's journey.

In conclusion, a character arc is a fundamental element in storytelling that allows readers to emotionally connect with the protagonist. It consists of four stages: introduction, conflict, transformation, and resolution. By understanding the character arc, writers can create compelling and memorable characters that will resonate with readers long after they finish the story.

**Notes:**

# Chapter 12

## Conclusion

Preparing to write is crucial for producing quality content. It allows you to organize your thoughts, research your topic, and develop a clear and concise message. Without preparation, your writing may lack coherence, have inaccuracies, and fail to engage your audience.

Alan C. Bruce is a successful author known for his "For the love of murder" book series. His books have been praised for their intricate plot lines, compelling characters, and unexpected twists. Alan credits much of his success to his preparation process, which involves extensive research and planning before he begins writing. By taking the time to prepare, Alan is able to create a captivating story that keeps readers on the edge of their seats.

In conclusion, preparation is essential for successful writing, whether it's for a novel, an academic paper, or a blog post. By putting in the effort to research, organize, and plan your content, you'll be able to produce high-quality writing that engages your audience and effectively communicates your message. And as demonstrated by Alan C. Bruce, taking the time to properly prepare can lead to great success in the world of writing.