

Your 2027 Publication Planner

Choose your publication date, work backwards and map out what needs to happen next.



The Rural Publishing Company

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Contents

Introduction	1
1. The Big Plan	3
2. Your One-Page 2027 Publication Plan	28
3. You Have A Plan. Now Start.	30
You've Completed Your Regional Author Starter Kit	32
Ready To Take The Next Step?	34

Introduction

So, you want to publish your book in 2027.

Excellent.

But there's a fairly big difference between:

'I'd love to publish my book next year.'

and:

'I'm publishing my book in September 2027, and I know what needs to happen between now and then.'

That's what this planner is designed to help you do.

You don't need to know every detail yet.

You don't need to have chosen your editor.

You don't need a cover.

You don't even necessarily need a completely finished

manuscript.

What you need is a **plan**.

Grab a pen, choose your target date and let's work backwards.

The Big Plan

STEP 1: Start With The Big Question

Why do you want to publish this book?

Before we start filling calendars with deadlines, think about why this book matters to you.

I want to publish this book because:

For me, publishing this book would mean:

And I'll consider this book successful if:

Success doesn't have to mean selling 10,000 copies.

Perhaps you want to:

- ☐ Sell books commercially
- ☐ Become a published novelist

- ☐ Share an important story
- ☐ Preserve family or community history
- ☐ Establish yourself as an expert
- ☐ Support your business
- ☐ Create speaking opportunities
- ☐ Educate or inspire people
- ☐ See your book in bookstores
- ☐ Reach a particular community
- ☐ Leave something behind for your family
- ☐ Finally achieve something you've dreamed about for years
- ☐ Something else:

Knowing **why** you're publishing will help you make better decisions about how you publish.

STEP 2: Define Your Book

Let's get the basics down on paper.

Working title:

Author name:

Book type:

☐ Fiction

☐ Memoir

☐ Non-fiction

☐ Children's picture book

☐ Middle grade

☐ Young adult

☐ Poetry

☐ Family/local history

☐ Business book

☐ Other: _____

Genre/category:

Intended reader:

Current approximate word count:

_____ words

Expected final word count:

_____ words

STEP 3: Where Are You Right Now?

Be realistic.

There's no prize for pretending you're further along than you are.

MY MANUSCRIPT IS:

- ☐ Still an idea
- ☐ Partially written
- ☐ First draft completed
- ☐ Being self-edited
- ☐ Ready for professional assessment
- ☐ Ready for professional editing
- ☐ Currently being edited
- ☐ Professionally edited
- ☐ Proofread
- ☐ Ready for design/production
- ☐ Already in production

If you're still writing, that's perfectly fine.

It simply means your publishing plan needs to include time to finish.

STEP 4: Choose Your 2027 Publication Window

You don't necessarily need an exact launch date yet.

Start with a month.

I WOULD IDEALLY LIKE MY BOOK PUBLISHED IN:

☐ January 2027

☐ February 2027

☐ March 2027

☐ April 2027

☐ May 2027

☐ June 2027

☐ July 2027

☐ August 2027

☐ September 2027

☐ October 2027

☐ November 2027

☐ December 2027

My target publication month:

_____ 2027

Now ask yourself:

Why this month?

Perhaps it connects with:

- a significant anniversary
- Mother's Day or Father's Day
- Christmas
- a conference
- an industry event
- a local festival
- school dates
- a speaking engagement

- an awareness month
- your business calendar
- a personal milestone.

If there's a genuine reason for the date, write it down.

If there isn't, that's also fine.

Your publication date doesn't have to be attached to an occasion.

STEP 5: Is Your Date Fixed or Flexible?

This matters.

My publication date is:

- ☐ **FIXED** – the book genuinely needs to be available by this date.
- ☐ **PREFERRED** – I'd like it published around this time, but I have some flexibility.
- ☐ **VERY FLEXIBLE** – sometime in 2027 would make me happy.

If your date is fixed, build in more buffer time.

Don't plan for the finished books to arrive the day before

your launch.

Ideally, you want the final book ready **well before you actually need it.**

STEP 6: Work Backwards

Here's where your publication wish becomes a publishing plan.

Start with your target publication month and work backwards.

PUBLICATION / LAUNCH

Target date:

____ / ____ / 2027

By this point:

- ☐ Book is published
- ☐ Distribution is active
- ☐ Author copies have arrived
- ☐ Website/purchase links are working
- ☐ Launch materials are ready

☐ Marketing campaign is underway

FINAL BOOK APPROVAL

Aim for:

____ / ____ / 2027

Before launch, you'll need time to check and approve the finished book.

Allow for:

- physical proof copies
- final corrections
- file updates
- another proof if necessary
- printing or author-copy delivery.

My deadline:

PUBLISHING & DISTRIBUTION SETUP

Aim for:

____ / ____ / 2027

This may include:

- ☐ ISBN allocation
- ☐ Barcode
- ☐ Metadata
- ☐ Book description
- ☐ Categories
- ☐ Keywords
- ☐ Retail pricing
- ☐ Print setup
- ☐ Print-on-demand
- ☐ eBook setup
- ☐ Distribution
- ☐ Retailer listings

My deadline:

COVER AND INTERNAL DESIGN

Aim for:

____ / ____ / 2027

Your book now needs to become an actual book.

This may include:

- ☐ Front cover
- ☐ Spine
- ☐ Back cover
- ☐ Internal typesetting
- ☐ Images
- ☐ Front matter
- ☐ Back matter
- ☐ eBook formatting

My deadline:

FINAL PROOFREADING

Aim for:

____ / ____ / 2027

By this stage, the major writing and editing should be finished.

This is about finding those last:

- typos

- punctuation errors
- inconsistencies
- missing words
- formatting problems.

My deadline:

PROFESSIONAL EDITING

Aim to start:

____ / ____ / ____

Depending on your manuscript, this could involve:

- ☐ Manuscript assessment
- ☐ Structural/developmental editing
- ☐ Line editing
- ☐ Copy editing
- ☐ Author revisions

My deadline to send the manuscript to an editor:

My deadline to complete my revisions:

MANUSCRIPT COMPLETION

My manuscript needs to be completed by:

____ / ____ / ____

This is one of the most important dates in your entire plan.

If you're still writing, work backwards again.

STEP 7: If You're Still Writing, Make A Writing Plan

Current word count:

Target word count:

Words remaining:

Manuscript completion date:

____ / ____ / ____

Now make the goal manageable.

I WILL AIM TO WRITE:

_____ words per week

or

_____ hours per week

My regular writing time will be:

My first-draft deadline is:

____ / ____ / _____

Don't worry if the date changes.

A realistic deadline you occasionally adjust is far more useful than no deadline at all.

STEP 8: Plan Your Marketing Before Launch

Don't wait until publication day to start telling people you've written a book.

Your marketing can begin while the book is being produced.

3 – 6 MONTHS BEFORE PUBLICATION

Consider:

- ☐ Establishing your author presence
- ☐ Creating or updating your author website
- ☐ Starting an email list
- ☐ Identifying your target readers

- ☐ Planning your launch strategy
- ☐ Identifying relevant media
- ☐ Researching bookstores and libraries
- ☐ Identifying relevant organisations or communities
- ☐ Planning advance review copies

2 – 3 MONTHS BEFORE PUBLICATION

Consider:

- ☐ Announcing the book
- ☐ Revealing the cover
- ☐ Sharing behind-the-scenes content
- ☐ Preparing your media kit
- ☐ Contacting potential advance readers
- ☐ Planning your launch event
- ☐ Creating promotional graphics
- ☐ Preparing your author bio
- ☐ Preparing book descriptions

4 – 8 WEEKS BEFORE PUBLICATION

Consider:

- ☐ Sending advance copies
- ☐ Seeking reviews
- ☐ Contacting relevant media
- ☐ Contacting local bookstores
- ☐ Contacting libraries
- ☐ Promoting your launch
- ☐ Sharing excerpts
- ☐ Starting pre-orders, if appropriate
- ☐ Increasing social media activity

LAUNCH PERIOD

Consider:

- ☐ Launch event
- ☐ Media coverage
- ☐ Email announcement
- ☐ Social media campaign
- ☐ Author interviews

☐ Bookstore appearances

☐ Community events

☐ Reader reviews

☐ Direct sales

And remember:

Marketing doesn't finish on launch day.

Your book could be available for years.

You don't need to squeeze every marketing opportunity into one frantic week.

STEP 9: What Professional Help Will You Need?

You don't necessarily need help with everything.

Tick the areas where you think you'll need professional support.

☐ Manuscript assessment

☐ Structural/developmental editing

☐ Line/copy editing

- ☐ Proofreading
- ☐ Cover design
- ☐ Internal design/typesetting
- ☐ Illustration
- ☐ ISBN/publishing administration
- ☐ Print setup
- ☐ eBook setup
- ☐ Distribution
- ☐ Author website
- ☐ Marketing strategy
- ☐ Media/publicity
- ☐ Launch planning
- ☐ I'm not sure yet

The three areas where I most want support are:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

STEP 10: Set Your Budget

From your **Publishing Budget Planner**, you should now have an idea of the areas you'll need to budget for.

My overall publishing budget is:

\$ _____

Already spent:

\$ _____

Remaining budget:

\$ _____

I still need quotes for:

My biggest budget priority is:

STEP 11: Create Your Master 2027 Publishing Plan

Now bring everything together.

MY BOOK

Title: _____

Target publication: _____ 2027

MY KEY DATES

Finish manuscript

____ / ____ / ____

↓

Manuscript assessment, if required

____ / ____ / ____

↓

Professional editing begins

____ / ____ / ____

↓

Author revisions completed

____ / ____ / ____

↓

Final proofreading

____ / ____ / ____



Cover design

____ / ____ / ____



Internal design/typesetting

____ / ____ / ____



Publishing/distribution setup

____ / ____ / ____



Physical proof ordered

____ / ____ / ____



Final book approved

____ / ____ / ____



Advance marketing

____ / ____ / ____



BOOK LAUNCH

____ / ____ / 2027

STEP 12: Build In Your Buffer

Now look at your beautiful plan.

And assume something won't go according to it.

Because something probably won't.

You might need longer to revise.

Your editor might be booked out.

The cover might take another round of changes.

You might discover an error in the physical proof.

An illustration might need to be redone.

Life might simply get in the way.

My target publication date is:

____ / ____ / 2027

My absolute latest acceptable date is:

____ / ____ / 2027

My built-in buffer is:

_____ weeks

If your book is connected to an important fixed event, give yourself as much breathing room as possible.

STEP 13: Your Next 90 Days

A year-long plan can feel enormous.

So, forget about the whole year for a moment.

What needs to happen **next**?

IN THE NEXT 30 DAYS I WILL:

☐ _____

☐ _____

☐ _____

IN DAYS 31 – 60 I WILL:

☐ _____

☐ _____

☐ _____

IN DAYS 61 – 90 I WILL:

☐ _____

☐ _____

☐ _____

STEP 14: Your Next Three Actions

Finally, make it ridiculously simple.

What are the next three things you need to do?

ACTION 1

I will:

By:

____ / ____ / ____

ACTION 2

I will:

By:

____ / ____ / ____

ACTION 3

I will:

By:

____ / ____ / ____

That's it.

You don't need to publish your whole book today.

You just need to take the **next step**.

Your 2027 Book Commitment

Complete this sentence:

In 2027, I am going to publish:

And the first thing I'm going to do to make that happen is:

Signed: _____

Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Put this somewhere you'll see it.

Because 'one day' has a nasty habit of becoming another year.

2

Your One-Page 2027 Publication Plan

MY BOOK

Title: _____

Genre: _____

Target reader: _____

MY GOAL

Target publication month: _____ 2027

Why this date matters: _____

MY DEADLINES

Manuscript complete: _____

Editing complete: _____

Proofreading complete: _____

Design complete: _____

Publishing setup complete: _____

Final proof approved: _____

Marketing begins: _____

Publication/launch: _____

MY BUDGET

\$ _____

MY TOP THREE PRIORITIES

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

THE VERY NEXT THING I'M GOING TO DO:

3

You Have A Plan. Now Start.

Publishing a book can feel enormous when you're looking at the whole process at once.

Writing.

Editing.

Proofreading.

Covers.

ISBNs.

Typesetting.

Distribution.

Marketing.

Printing.

Launches.

It's a lot.

But you don't have to do all of it today.

You simply need to know:

Where am I now?

Where do I want to get to?

What's the next step?

You've now answered all three.

And if 2027 is the year you want to hold your finished book in your hands, the best time to start isn't January.

It's now.

You've Completed Your Regional Author Starter Kit

You now have:

The Publishing Pathways Guide

Understand your options and choose the publishing pathway that suits you.

The Publishing Timeline Guide

Understand what happens between manuscript and publication.

The Publishing Budget Planner

Know what you may need to invest in and where the money goes.

The Manuscript Readiness Checklist

Work out whether your manuscript is ready for professional publishing.

Before You Pay a Publisher

Know the 17 questions to ask before signing or paying.

Your 2027 Publication Planner

Turn your publishing goal into an actionable plan.

You don't need to know everything about publishing.

You just need to know enough to make good decisions about your book.

And now you do.

Ready To Take The Next Step?

If you've worked through this Starter Kit and realised:

'I want to publish this book – but I don't want to manage all of this by myself,'

that's exactly where professional publishing support can help.

The Rural Publishing Company helps authors navigate the journey from manuscript to professionally published book, with editing, design, production, distribution and marketing support available along the way.

You can submit your manuscript here:

<https://theruralpublishingcompany.com.au/submissions/>

Or, email us with any questions:

hello@theruralpublishingcompany.com.au.

Your story deserves more than gathering dust or sitting in a Word document.

Maybe 2027 is the year you finally put it into readers' hands.

*The Regional Author Starter Kit is brought to you
by The Rural Publishing Company – helping regional
voices shine, one book at a time.*