

HOW PRODUCTION WORKS

Once your manuscript is written and edited, it goes to Production, to get turned into the finished book that will go to the printer. How does this work?

Overview

Basically, we take your manuscript, in its Word or OpenOffice document, and import it into a layout program like FrameMaker or InDesign. You have probably noticed that your manuscript has been marked with paragraph styles and character styles. These same styles exist in our layout template, so when the manuscript is imported into the layout program, it applies specific fonts, margins, and sometimes even color to your document and it starts to look more like a book. We then import the individual image files for your figures, make sure there is roughly the same amount of text on each side of a spread (a spread is a left- and right-hand page that you would see if you opened a book), and work out some other layout details. Once your whole book is laid out (imported into the layout program), proofread, and reviewed by you, we make a PDF from the layout program, and that is what goes to the printer.

Step 1: Styling Your Manuscript

While you're writing, we ask that you use our Word or OpenOffice style template (nsp_au_template.dot or .odt) to apply paragraph and character styles. See Figure 1 for an example.

HeadA	Step 1: Styling Your Manuscript
BodyFirst	While you're writing, we ask that you use our Word or <u>OpenOffice</u> style template (<u>nsp_au_template.dot</u> or <u>.odt</u>) to apply paragraph and character styles.
Body	A paragraph is any piece of text that ends in a hard return. Paragraph styles can specify all kinds of styling options, such as font family, font size, and font styles (boldface, italic, etc.), indentation, space above and below, rules, line spacing, and so on.
Body	Character styles are used to mark a word or a phrase that has a different font style from the rest of the paragraph. For instance, in a regular Body text paragraph, you would use a character style to mark italics (<u>EmphasisItalic</u>) or monospace/code font (<u>Literal</u>).
Body	By using paragraph and character styles, you indicate to us how you want to use headings, notes, lists, and so on. This will be important in editing and in production.

Figure 1: A section of a manuscript styled in Word

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By using paragraph and character styles, you indicate to us how you want to use headings, notes, lists, and so on. This will be important in editing and in production.

What Not to Do

When preparing your manuscript, do not “lay out” the pages. There is no need to use special margins, or columns, or fonts. The way your manuscript looks in Word or OpenOffice is not how it will look in layout. Rather, the layout program will interpret the styles in your manuscript to render them as they should look in the book.

If you have any questions about how to style your manuscript, or if there is a special style you think you'd like to use, please speak to your Production Editor or to the Compositor (riley@nostarch.com).

Step 2: Submitting Your Figures

Your figures should be submitted as individual files. Please see the Image Guidelines for more information about creating good images.

For each chapter, your figures should be numbered consecutively, and the files should be named to match so we know where to place them in the layout (i.e. the first figure in Chapter 1 would be called Fig1-1.tif).

Step 3: First Pages

Once your manuscript and art files are all ready for layout, we move the text into the layout program, and import the art.

When each chapter is finished, a PDF is made, and that goes to the proofreader and back to you for review.

The proofreader compares the laid out pages to the original manuscript to make sure everything was placed properly and nothing was lost or changed. She will also do one more check to make sure no misspellings or grammatical errors snuck in.

When the PDF goes to you for review (see Figure 2), your editor will give you some instructions about what to look for, and what types of changes and corrections are possible. Basically, you will double check to make sure the art matches its caption, give one last glance at the text, and review any of the proofreader's comments to make sure that the changes they suggest do not alter your meaning.

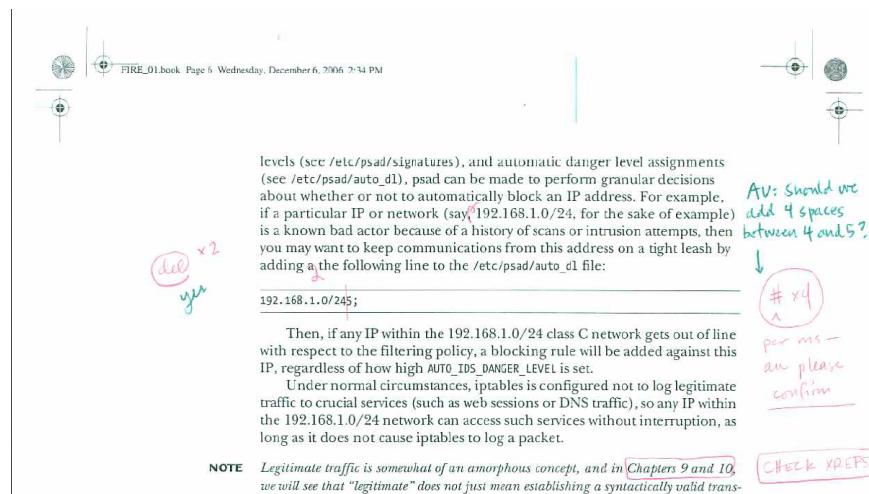


Figure 2: Part of a proofread page with editor's responses, ready for author review

Step 4: Corrections and Second Pages

When you and the proofreader return corrections, they will be reviewed by your editor and then updated in the layout files. Another set of PDFs are run at this point, and the editor will compare them to the first set of PDFs to make sure all the corrections have been made with no mistakes.

If there are any further corrections at this point, they are made, and then the pages are essentially final, and can go on to indexing.

Step 5: Indexing, Front Matter, and Back Matter

The book is almost finished! The indexer will take the laid out and corrected pages and create an index for the book (or you may be doing this yourself). Meanwhile, we will create tables of contents and make sure all the front and back matter pieces are ready. This will include pieces like the title and copyright pages, dedication and acknowledgments, an introduction, preface, and/or foreword, as well as catalog and updates pages, colophon, and so on.

Step 6: Printing

Once all the pieces that make up your book are finished, proofed, corrected, and gathered together, a final PDF is made, and that goes to the printer.