

How to Find an Editor You Love

by Chazda Albright -

<http://greatstorybook.com/how-to-find-an-editor-you-love/>

This entry is part 1 of 2 in the series [Editing Refined](#)

[Editing Refined](#)

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Finding an editor you can really get to know well and work with from project to project is just highly coveted amongst serious writers. If you're not sure how to find an editor - and maybe not sure what it is they do exactly (or for how much), this is where to find out.

If you think your manuscript is ready to show an agent or publisher, terrific. To be absolutely sure your work is polished, you should hire an editor.

You don't need to slug through the snow, uphill in both directions. I promise.

To be clear: only hire an editor *after* you've had others you know help you with drafting and redrafting your manuscript. **Don't ever send an editor the third draft; send them the 23rd draft.** Send the draft you think is ready for publication.

Why? You'll get a lot more bang for your buck. You really will. If your manuscript is a hot mess, then there's just too much superficial garbage for the editor to sift through and for you to fix. If your manuscript is more polished, then both you and your editor will be able to seriously dig down to core issues.

What You'll Get Here:

- 4 ways to find an editor
- 4 levels of editing & how much they cost

4 Ways to Find an Editor

1. Personal Touch

Ideally, you'll meet someone super cool at a book event, find out they're an independent editor, and ask if they're accepting new clients right now. With luck, they are and you'll be well on your way to developing a new working relationship.

2. Way of Referral

If you know a writer who is happy with their editor, you probably have a good egg there. Just be sure that the editor works on the kind of manuscript you need edited. There's a big difference between a true crime novel and a MG mystery novel.

Make sure the editor is savvy to those differences – if they're doing more than proofreading, it's essential information. If you write more than one kind of book, let's say a children's storybook, a romance for women and a YA sci-fi thriller, you might need more than one editor for those three different projects.

Some editors though are incredibly smart and experienced. You may get lucky and find an editor with years of knowledge tucked into their belt. If that should happen, just know you scored big time. Treasure your editor.

3. Browse Options

Another option is to simply cruise the Internet. Don't be random about it though. What I recommend is taking a closer look at those websites for writers you really like. If there's an interview with an editor or an advertisement for editorial services, click-through to the editor's website and see what's what.

4. Editorial Services & Portals

Thanks to the Internet, finding an independent editor today is easier than ever. There are editorial services and editorial portals now. I encourage you to use editorial portals, but I'm not so sure about most of the editorial services - let me explain the difference and what I mean here.

Editorial Service. The problem I have with online editorial services is that they are deeply impersonal, and oftentimes you must pay into a bucket, to maintain a certain level of payment to that service provider. This seems a very strange payment method for editing.

Editorial Portal. Editorial Portals are an online directory where professionals are listed. Those professionals must apply to be accepted onto that directory, and they typically give a percentage of their earnings to that directory.

Reedsy.com

If you have a fiction manuscript of a novel, a YA novel or a children's book, this is the best online portal. You can actually check-out the editors available and cherry pick the one that best suits your project. You

can even present your project to more than one editor and see what their responses are before picking the right one for you.

[Reedsy](#) isn't an editing service. It's a portal for freelance editors who are good enough to make it onto their list. So this is where you can find quality editors - quickly and easily. The editor's referral is that they are listed on Reedsy.

[300editors.com](#)

[300editors](#) is for the straight-shooting proofreading stuff. This is a service and not a portal, but it's good stuff. What I love about this service is that you can witness the editing live, as it's happening. That means too that you can actually communicate with your editor. You can leave comments or ask questions – anything you need. This is a great feature that makes the process more hands-on and personal.

4 levels of edits (and how much they cost)

1. Beta Reading

If you have a creative writing group (a really excellent one) together, this is essentially the type of feedback you should be providing each other. [[Note: for the low down on how to get a group together, go HERE.](#)]

Teachers (like myself) are also great Beta Readers – but you must be clear that it's a Beta Reader you want and not a proofreader. These are very different editorial tasks. [[Note: Go HERE for more on how to give and get helpful critiques on your manuscript.](#)]

If you don't have a group or someone you know personally, you can hire a professional editor to be your Beta Reader.

Beta Readers look specifically at pacing, plot and character development. Narrative flow is also a concern, to check for readability. There are NO editing marks made on the manuscript, not with this kind of feedback. What you do get are detailed notes about what works and what doesn't – in terms of story mechanics. A Beta Reader might also give suggestions on how to fix problems, but not necessarily.

A professional Beta Reader will charge between \$50-\$400 depending on the length of your manuscript.

2. Proofreading

[Proofreading](#) is about the nuts and bolts of your writing, things like spelling, [punctuation](#) and grammar – so it's the absolute *last type of editing* your manuscript should see. In proofreading, no attention is given to [pacing](#), character development or any other important aspect of storytelling.

A professional Proofreader will charge \$50-\$800 depending on the length of your manuscript.

3. Content Editing

Your manuscript is evaluated and then carefully nitpicked for smaller mistakes. This is about the characters, story arch, narrative flow, and all the spelling and grammar particulars. *This is essential editing, but only something you should do once you're sure the manuscript is ready for this level of work.*

The cost for a comprehensive editing job like this can run \$400-\$1600 depending on the length and complexity of your manuscript.

4. “Complete” Editing

I put the term “complete” in quotes because it isn't a technical term, it's mine. Different editors use different terms for this level of editing, but you'll know it when you see it because they'll explain what you're getting for your money. (And you'll be paying a lot.)

This is essentially your all inclusive job, comprehensive and extremely thorough. Absolutely everything from the character development and arch to particulars like em-dashes and en-dashes will be captured and corrected here. *Everything.*

The cost for a complete editing job can run \$2,000-\$4,000 depending on the length and complexity of your manuscript, and also the reputation/experience of your editor.

What's Your Experience?

Have you hired a professional editor to do any kind of editing on a manuscript? What was your experience? Would you recommend them – and if not, what did you learn?

Keep creating, no matter what.

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