

# Import a manuscript

If you've already written some (or all) of a book somewhere else, you don't have to retype it or paste it in a scene at a time. Write can read the whole file, split it into chapters and scenes for you, and show you what it found before anything is saved.

## What you can bring in

- **Word files (.docx).** This includes Word files saved out of Scrivener, Vellum, Google Docs and Pages—if your writing app can export to Word, Write can read it. If you have an older .doc file, open it in Word and save it as .docx first.
- **Markdown (.md)** and **plain text (.txt).**

## Where to start

There are three ways in, and they all open the same window.

- **A new book, from the Library.** In the bar near the bottom of the Library, under **Bring in**, click **Manuscript**. Give the book a title, choose the pen name it's published under, and Write makes the book and opens the import window.
- **A new book in a series.** On the series' row in the Library, choose **Import....** The new book joins that series.
- **A book you've already made but haven't written in yet.** Open it, and in the middle of the page you'll see *Nothing written here yet* with an **Import a manuscript...** button. On a phone, it's in the **More** menu.

Screenshot: Bring in, in the Library's bottom bar *Screenshot: the Library with the bar near the bottom in view, showing Manuscript under Bring in.*

A book that already has chapters can't take an import—Write won't mix an imported manuscript into chapters you've started. Import into a new book instead; you can always move scenes across afterward.

## Choose your file and look it over

Click **Choose a file** and pick your manuscript. Write reads it straight away and fills in **What it found** on the right:

Screenshot: the Import a manuscript window *Screenshot: the Import a manuscript window after choosing a file, with How it splits on the left and What it found on the right.*

- every chapter it found, with its number, its title, how many scenes and words it has, and the first line of its first scene, so you can tell at a glance whether the split is right;
- any **front and back matter** it recognized—a dedication, an acknowledgments page, an afterword—each with a checkbox, ticked to bring it in;
- anything it's set aside, crossed out, with the reason beside it;
- a note if your chapters have lines under their titles (a date, a place, whose point of view), which Write turns into your chapter header fields.

Nothing has been saved yet. Take as long as you like.

## If the chapters or scenes look wrong

Write makes a sensible guess, but every manuscript is formatted a little differently. Under **How it splits** you can tell it what to look for, and the preview updates as soon as you change it.

### Chapters

- **Auto** tries, in order: a Word style you've named for chapters, then **Heading 1**, then lines that read like "Chapter 12" or "CHAPTER TWELVE," and finally page breaks. It's usually right.
- **Heading 1** if your chapter titles use Word's Heading 1 style.
- **Chapter lines** if each chapter starts with a line like "Chapter 3."
- **Page breaks** if all you did was start each chapter on a new page.

### Scenes

- **\* \* \* lines** splits wherever there's a line with nothing on it but asterisks, pound signs, tildes or similar marks—the usual scene break.
- **Blank lines** splits wherever there are two or more empty lines in a row.
- **One scene** keeps each chapter whole, if you'd rather divide scenes yourself later.

**Chapter numbers** sets how your chapter numbers will print—*4 · Title, Chapter Four* over the title, roman numerals, or none. Write suggests the style your file already uses. You can change it later from the chapter header setup, so don't worry about getting it perfect here.

If you have more than one page setup, there's also a **Page setup** choice, so the book opens at the right trim size and fonts the first time. That can be changed later too.

## Bring it in

When the preview looks right, click **Import** (the button tells you how many chapters it will bring in). Write saves everything exactly as the preview showed it and opens the book at the first scene.

## What comes through, and what doesn't

Write keeps the writing and lets go of the old formatting, since your page setup decides how the book looks from here on.

**Kept:** paragraphs, *italics*, **bold**, line breaks within a paragraph, scene breaks, links, and centered lines (like *THE END*).

**Left behind:** fonts, type sizes, indents and colors. **Tables and pictures** are left out too, with a warning in the preview so you know where they were; you can add pictures back from the media library afterward.

**Set aside on purpose:** a title page, a copyright page, a table of contents and an "Also by" list. Write makes these for you from your book's details, so they stay up to date—you'll find them under front and back matter once the book is in.

## If something goes wrong

- **The preview shows one giant chapter.** Write couldn't find chapter breaks with the current setting. Try **Chapter lines** or **Page breaks** under **How it splits**.
- **Every paragraph became its own scene.** Your file probably has blank lines between paragraphs. Switch **Scenes** to **\* \* \* lines**.
- **It says the book already has chapters.** Import into a new book instead (see *Where to start*, above).

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