

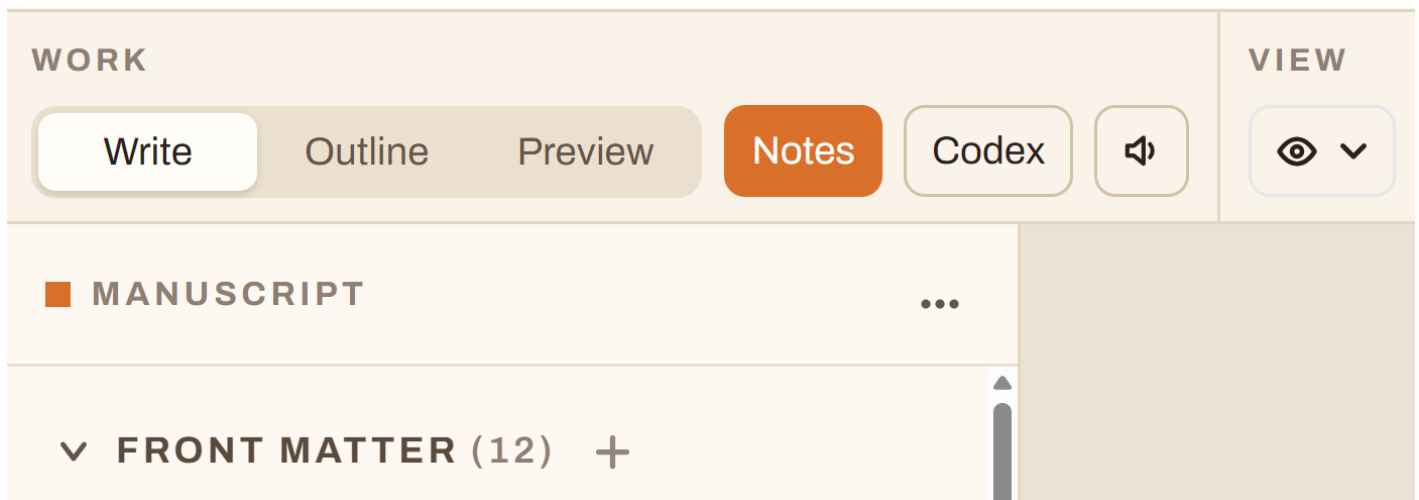
Writing

The editor and the manuscript: scenes, chapters and parts; notes; find and replace; formatting; comments and suggestions.

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Write, Outline and Preview

The editor has three ways of looking at your book, and you can flip between them at any time from the **Write · Outline · Preview** switch in the toolbar. This page explains what each is for.



Screenshot: the toolbar's Work group, with the Write · Outline · Preview switch and the Notes, Codex and Listen buttons beside it.

Write

Where you'll spend most of your time: one scene at a time, on the page, as it will print. Pick a scene in the manuscript list on the left and write.

Outline

The whole book on one screen, as a plan. Each chapter shows its title and a line for what happens in it; under it, each scene has a row with its title, point of view, when and where it happens, a status (**Draft**, **Revised** or **Final**), a short synopsis, and its word count.

Everything in the outline can be typed into directly, so it works however you plan:

- **If you outline chapter by chapter**, fill in each chapter's synopsis and leave the scenes to their titles.
- **If you outline scene by scene**, add empty scenes and write a synopsis for each. They sit in the outline, ready to be drafted later.

You can also rearrange the book here:

- **Drag a scene** to anywhere in the book, including into another chapter.

- **Drag a chapter** by its handle. It joins the part of whatever it lands beside.
- **Add a scene** puts an empty one at the end of a chapter. A thin line appears between any two chapters when you hover there; click it to add a chapter in between.

Click a scene's title to open it in **Write**. Nothing in the outline prints; it's yours.

Outline

What happens, chapter by chapter and scene by scene. Nothing here prints. Click a field to change it; drag a scene to move it.

37 chapters · 85,832 words Pin to the side

⋮ · PROLOGUE: ALL THE BOXES
 1 scene · 1,564 words

Athens, the Acropolis, an IRL day after the map room (it will take a few days to get to a waypoint and then to athens). Dreamcatcher meets his asset. Jean hands him a bronze key and says it's the questline's reward, then shows him: it opens a merchant's strongbox, a temple offering chest, a coffer no player has ever opened. On the channel in Marcus's ear, his analysts go quiet. They find something else within minutes—the key is also a datastore, dense and encrypted, exactly where the encryption keys Astra-Mir hired her for ought to be hiding. Every turn of the key rewrites what's inside. They want it intact. Then Jean tells him why she isn't calling the job finished: at the end of the trail she found an inscription like the second layer at Medinet Habu, pointing deeper, and she means to make sure there's nothing beyond it. Marcus weighs the key, the explanation, and a neural integration index of 91 that he'd just as soon see keep climbing. He gives her the time.

⋮	The Acropolis	Marcus	Sep 27, 69 CE	Athens, the Acropolis	Draft	▼	1,564	Write →
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Jean meets Dreamcatcher on the Acropolis, demonstrates the key on three boxes, hands it over, and tells him she's making sure there's no deeper layer. His analysts discover the datastore. Marcus gives her the time.

+ Add a scene

⋮ 1 WHAT'S NEXT
 3 scenes · 2,434 words

Screenshot: the Outline view with two chapters, their synopses, and the scene rows showing POV, When, Where, status and word counts.

The outline beside the page

If you'd like the outline in view while you write, turn on **Outline at the side** from the **Show** menu in the toolbar. A slimmer version sits in a rail beside the page.

Preview

Your pages exactly as they'll print, many at a time, like zooming out in a word processor to see the shape of things. It's the same typesetting the print PDF uses, so a chapter opening, a picture or a stray line at the end of a chapter looks here just as it will in the book.

- Preview opens on whatever you have open in **Write**: the front- or back-matter section you're looking at, otherwise your chapter. Pick a chapter, a section or the whole book to preview something else. An omnibus with nothing open asks first, since the whole omnibus is every page of every book in it.
- The size slider zooms the pages in and out.

- Click a page to open the scene that's on it in **Write**.

Preview takes a moment to set the pages, especially for the whole book. While it works, it tells you about how many pages there are and roughly how long they'll take, with a clock of the time so far. The time is a guess the first time, and learns from how fast your previews have actually set.

A line or two alone at the end of a chapter

When the whole book is previewed, a **Fit** bar lists any chapter that ends with a line or two alone on its last page, with a few paragraphs that could pull it back (**Tighten**) or push it on (**Loosen**). Click one and Write sets that paragraph a hair tighter or looser, sets that chapter again, and puts it back into the pages in front of you in a few seconds. The chapter's line in the Fit bar then says whether it worked.

- A nudge belongs to the page setup you made it in. Tightening a paragraph in your 6 × 9 omnibus leaves the same book's 5.25 × 8 paperback exactly as it was.
- If the chapter now runs a page shorter or longer, the pages after it move along but keep their old page numbers until you click **Set the whole book again**. A note above the pages says so.
- A nudge is one small step, so a paragraph you've tightened shows **Tightened** with **Undo** beside it instead of offering to tighten it again.
- If you've tried the tightenings and the line is still alone, click **Clear all tightenings** under the chapter to take them all off at once, then try loosening instead. The same works the other way round.
- You can also take a nudge off in **Write**: put the cursor in the paragraph and use the **Paragraph** menu.

Organize chapters and scenes

This page is about the shape of your book: adding chapters and scenes, moving them around, grouping chapters into parts, and putting aside the ones you're not sure about. All of it happens in the manuscript list down the left side of the editor.

Screenshot: The manuscript list *Screenshot: the manuscript list on the left, with a chapter open showing its scenes, and the gear menu beside a chapter.*

How the list works

Your book is a list of chapters, and each chapter holds one or more scenes. Click a chapter to open it and see its scenes; click a scene to write in it. The number at the right of each row is its word count.

Point at a row and a small menu appears beside it—a gear for a chapter, three dots for a scene. Almost everything on this page starts from one of those two menus. (On a phone or tablet the menus are always showing.)

Add chapters and scenes

To add a chapter, click the **+** beside **Manuscript**, or **+ Chapter** at the bottom of the list. A new chapter arrives with one empty scene, ready to write in. If the chapter before it has header fields (a date line or a point-of-view line, say), the new chapter gets the same fields, empty, so you don't have to add them again.

To add a scene, open the chapter's gear menu and choose **Add a scene**. The new scene goes at the end of the chapter.

Rename a chapter or scene

Choose **Rename chapter** or **Rename scene** from its menu. A chapter's title is the one that prints; a scene's title is for you—it shows in the list and the outline, but never in the book.

Move things around

Drag and drop

Drag a chapter up or down the list to move it. Drag a scene to move it within its chapter, or into a different chapter altogether—the space opens up where it will land.

Or use the menus

If dragging is fiddly, **Move chapter up** and **Move chapter down** (or **Move scene up** and **Move scene down**) do the same thing one step at a time.

Renumber your chapters

Moving a chapter doesn't change its number on its own—that way a chapter you're trying out in a new place keeps its name while you decide. When the numbers no longer run in order, a note appears at the top of the list: **Chapter numbers are out of order**. Click **Renumber** there, or choose **Renumber chapters** from the ... menu beside **Manuscript**. Chapters without a number, like a prologue or an interlude, stay unnumbered, and the count skips them.

Merge two scenes

Sometimes two scenes turn out to be one. From the scene's menu, choose **Merge into the scene above** or **Merge into the scene below**. The text joins its neighbor, with any comments and suggestions still attached where they were. The neighbor keeps its own title, point of view, date, place and status; the two synopses and sets of notes are joined together.

You won't lose anything. Before the merge, the neighbor's text is saved in its [history](#), and the scene you merged is archived rather than deleted. There isn't an "unmerge," though—restoring the archived scene brings back its text as a separate scene, alongside the merged copy. (Splitting the scene again, below, is usually the easier way back.)

Split a scene in two

Put your cursor where the new scene should begin, then choose **Split the scene here** from the **Paragraph** menu, or press **Ctrl+Shift+Enter** (Cmd+Shift+Enter on a Mac). Everything from the cursor on becomes a new scene right after this one, and it opens so you can carry on.

The new scene starts with the same point of view, date, place and status. Its title and synopsis are empty for you to fill in, and the scene's notes stay with the first half. Comments and suggestions go wherever their words went.

Nothing is lost here either: the scene as it was before the split is kept in its history, labelled **Before a split**.

Parts

Parts (or acts, if you prefer) group your chapters. Each part prints on its own page, with a number line over its title, and the list groups its chapters under it. Chapter numbers carry on from one part to the next.

Turn parts on

Parts are off until you want them. Open **Chapter header setup** (beside **Manuscript**) and find the **Parts** card. Set **Use parts** to **On**. While you're there, **Called** chooses between Part and Act, and **Number reads as** sets how the number prints.

If you turn parts off later, your parts are kept—they just stop showing and printing until you turn them back on.

Screenshot: The Parts card *Screenshot: the Parts card in Chapter header setup, with Use parts set to On.*

Add a part

With parts on, the **+** beside **Manuscript** asks whether you'd like a chapter or a part, and there's a **+ Part** button at the bottom of the list too. Give the part a number, a title, or both. The window shows you how the number line will print.

Put chapters into a part

Drag a chapter into a part, or out of it. To add a fresh chapter straight into a part, choose **Add a chapter here** from the part's menu. To move a chapter out without dragging, choose **Take out of its part** from its gear menu. Drag a part itself and its chapters come along with it.

Change or remove a part

From the part's menu, **Edit part** changes its number or title. **Remove part** takes away the part but not its chapters—they stay right where they are, no longer in any part. It asks before it does anything.

If your parts end up out of order, **Renumber parts** in the ... menu beside **Manuscript** puts their numbers back in sequence.

Archive a chapter or scene

Archiving puts a chapter or scene aside. It disappears from the list and from your book—it won't print, and its words don't count—but nothing is lost, and you can bring it back whenever you like.

Choose **Archive chapter** or **Archive scene** from its menu. To see what you've put aside, choose **Show archived** from the ... menu beside **Manuscript**; archived rows appear, dimmed. Choose **Restore chapter** or **Restore scene** to bring one back, and **Hide archived** when you're done.

Delete for good

Only something you've archived can be deleted. With archived rows showing, its menu offers **Delete chapter for good** or **Delete scene for good**. It asks first, because this one can't be undone. Archiving is usually the better choice—an archived scene costs you nothing.

Who can do this

Owners and co-authors can reorganize the manuscript. Editors can write and suggest but don't see these menus, and readers only read. For more, see [What each role can do](#).

Format your text

Write keeps formatting simple on purpose: you mark what the words mean—emphasis, a link, a line in another hand—and the page setup decides how it looks. This page covers the handful of things you'll use.

The selection bar

Select a few words and a small bar appears just above them.

Screenshot: the selection bar over some selected words *Screenshot: a few words selected in a scene, with the selection bar above them showing bold, italic, Aa, link and Comment.*

- **B** — bold (Ctrl+B).
- **I** — italic (Ctrl+I).
- **Aa** — the *alternate face*: a second font for a sign, a note, a letter, a line the story says is in someone else's hand (Ctrl+Shift+F). Which font it is lives in the page setup.
- **Link** — adds a web address to the words (Ctrl+K). Click a linked word later to change or remove the link.
- **Comment** — leaves a note on the words for yourself or a collaborator (Ctrl+M). See [Review suggestions and comments](#).

On a Mac, use Cmd wherever these say Ctrl.

Paragraph styles

Most paragraphs are ordinary body text, indented as your page setup says. For the others, put the cursor in the paragraph (or select several) and open the **Paragraph** menu in the toolbar:

- **Body text** — the usual.
- **Centered** — *THE END*, a closing note, a short line set apart. Ctrl+Shift+E switches centering on and off.
- **Indented from the left** — a letter, a sign, a quotation.
- **Indented both sides** — set in on both edges.
- **Hanging indent** — the first line flush and the rest indented, for a list of characters or an appendix entry.

The same menu inserts a [text-message exchange](#).

Line breaks

Enter starts a new paragraph. **Shift+Enter** breaks the line without starting a new paragraph—for a poem, an address, the lines of a song.

Scene breaks

You don't type these. Each scene is its own page in the editor, and the book prints your scene-break ornament between them. To break one scene in two, put the cursor where the second should begin and choose **Split the scene here** from the **Paragraph** menu (or press Ctrl+Shift+Enter); see [Organize chapters and scenes](#).

A stray line at the end of a chapter

Sometimes a chapter ends with one lonely line at the top of a page. The **Paragraph** menu has a fix under **Fit, for a stray line**: on a paragraph on the page before, choose **Tighten a line**, which sets its letters and spaces a hair closer so it may run one line shorter. Check in **Preview**; if it didn't quite do it, try another paragraph. **Loosen a line** does the opposite. The nudge is marked faintly in the margin of the editor and is invisible in the book.

What about fonts and sizes?

There are none in the editor, and that's deliberate. The font, size, spacing and indents of the whole book are set once, in **Page setup**, so every chapter matches. See [Page setup: the basics](#).

Put a text-message exchange in a scene

What this is for

Characters text each other, and a page of *"Where are you?" she typed* gets old fast. Write can set an exchange the way readers see it on their own phones—bubbles, yours on the right and theirs on the left—and print it that way in the paperback and the ebook, on the same line grid as the prose, so nothing drifts. There are four looks to choose from, and the exchange is still words: it's searched and counted like any paragraph, and in Suggesting a changed bubble is proposed whole (see *Suggest changes instead of making them*).

Adding one

1. Put the cursor in the paragraph the messages should follow.
2. Open the **Paragraph style** menu in the toolbar and, under *Insert*, choose **Text messages**.
3. An exchange appears with one empty bubble on the right—that's you, or rather the character whose phone the reader is looking at. Type the first message.
4. Press **Enter** for the next message. It goes to the other person, and Enter again comes back to you, so a back-and-forth is just typing and Enter. To leave the exchange and get back to prose, press Enter on an empty bubble.

Above the first bubble is a field for **who the messages are with**—a name, or leave it empty for no header—and beside it the style. The **x** on the right takes the whole exchange out. If that was a slip, **Ctrl+Z** (**Cmd+Z** on a Mac) brings it straight back.

Screenshot: a text-message exchange in the editor

Screenshot: a text-message exchange in the editor, with a few bubbles on each side, the field for who the messages are with and the style menu above the first bubble, and the x on the right.

Who's talking

Hover a bubble, or put the cursor in it, and a small tag appears at its shoulder saying who sent it. Click the tag to change the sender: the people already in the exchange are listed, and there's a box at the bottom for someone new. More than one other person makes it a group chat, and their names print above their bubbles the way a phone does.

Screenshot: the sender tag's menu

Screenshot: the sender tag's menu open on a bubble, listing the people in the exchange with the pencil and colour swatch beside each name, the box for someone new at the bottom, and Pause before it.

The pencil beside a name in that menu **renames the person throughout the exchange**—handy when you started with a placeholder. A name you no longer use disappears on its own once no message is from them.

Taking a message out

Open the sender tag on the message and choose **Delete this message**. The cursor moves to the message before it. If it's the only message, the whole exchange goes with it, and the menu says so before you click. An empty bubble goes with **Backspace**, too.

A pause

When time passes between two messages—she doesn't answer for an hour—open the sender tag on the later message and tick **Pause before it**. The bubble sets a line apart from the one above, which is how readers see a gap on a phone.

The four styles

- **Phone** — rounded bubbles, yours filled and theirs outlined. The usual choice for contemporary books.
- **Holo** — squared panels with an accent bar and a ruled, letterspaced header. For science fiction.
- **Terminal** — a block of prompt lines in a typewriter face, like a console. For hackers, ships' logs and AIs.
- **Torn paper** — each message a scrap of parchment with torn top and bottom edges, in the book's own serif, under a small filigree. For fantasy: sending stones, enchanted notes, letters.

Each exchange can choose its own style from the little menu beside its header, or follow the book's default. The default lives in **Chapter header setup**, under *Messages*, so a whole series of holo exchanges doesn't need telling one at a time.

Colours, for colour print and the ebook

By default everything is set in greys, which prints well in black and white. If you're printing in colour, or want the ebook to look like a real phone, give each person a colour: click the swatch beside a name in a sender tag's menu, or set them all at once under *Messages* in Chapter header setup ( is the reader's side). Phone uses the colour as the bubble's fill; Holo and Torn paper as the ground, with the bar and edges a few shades darker; Terminal as the ink. If a colour is dark, the type goes white on it by itself. Colours are per book, and names match in any case.

Your own line under the header

In the same *Messages* section you can choose a picture to print under the name the exchange is with—a line, a flourish, a small emblem—in place of the style's rule or filigree. It takes the same **Height**, **Width** and **Air** settings as the other decorations (see *Choose a scene-break ornament* in the decorations book), and the stock library has a few header lines drawn for the purpose.

In print and the ebook

The exchange prints on the grid: every bubble is a whole number of lines tall, so the prose after it lands where it should. A long exchange breaks across a page between messages, never through one. In the ebook the bubbles follow the reader's font size and go light-on-dark in night mode.

Find and replace

This page shows you how to find a word or phrase—in the scene you're in, the chapter, or the whole book—and how to change it everywhere at once when a name or a spelling changes.

Open the find bar

Press **Ctrl+F** (Cmd+F on a Mac). A small bar floats over the top of the page, the way a browser's find does, so your text doesn't jump around. Type what you're looking for in **Find**, and every match lights up.

- **Enter** goes to the next match; **Shift+Enter** goes back one. The up and down arrows in the bar do the same.
- **Esc** closes the bar. What you typed is still there next time you open it.

Screenshot: The find bar *Screenshot: the find bar over a scene, with a word typed, matches highlighted, and the Scene/Chapter/Book choice showing.*

Where it looks

Under the search box, choose how far to look:

- **Scene**—just the scene or section that's open.
- **Chapter**—every scene in this chapter.
- **Book**—every scene in the book, and the front and back matter you've written.

For **Chapter** and **Book**, the matches are listed down the side, grouped by scene, with a count of how many there are and in how many places. Click one to go straight there. If there are a great many, the list shows the first 500 and says so—search for something a little more specific to see the rest.

Narrow it down

Two small buttons beside the box make the search pickier:

- **Aa**—match case, so *Rose* doesn't find *rose*.
- **[ab]**—whole word, so *cat* doesn't find *catch*.

Replace

Press **Ctrl+H** to open the bar with a second row, **Replace with**, or click the small arrow at the left of the bar to show it.

- **Replace** changes the match you're on and moves to the next.
- **All** (or **All in chapter**, or **All in book**) changes every match in that scope.

Replacing in the open scene works like typing: **Ctrl+Z** undoes it.

Replacing across the chapter or book

A replace that reaches beyond the open scene always asks first. It tells you how many matches it found, what it will change them to, and how many scenes it will touch, so you can be sure before anything happens. When it's done, a note in the bar says how many it changed.

A couple of things it leaves alone on purpose:

- Words inside text that a suggestion is striking out—that text is on its way out already.
- Anything it couldn't safely change, which it lists by name so you can look at it yourself.

When someone else is searching

Everyone on the book can find. Co-authors can replace just as you can. When an editor uses replace, their changes arrive as suggestions for you to accept or reject, like the rest of their edits.

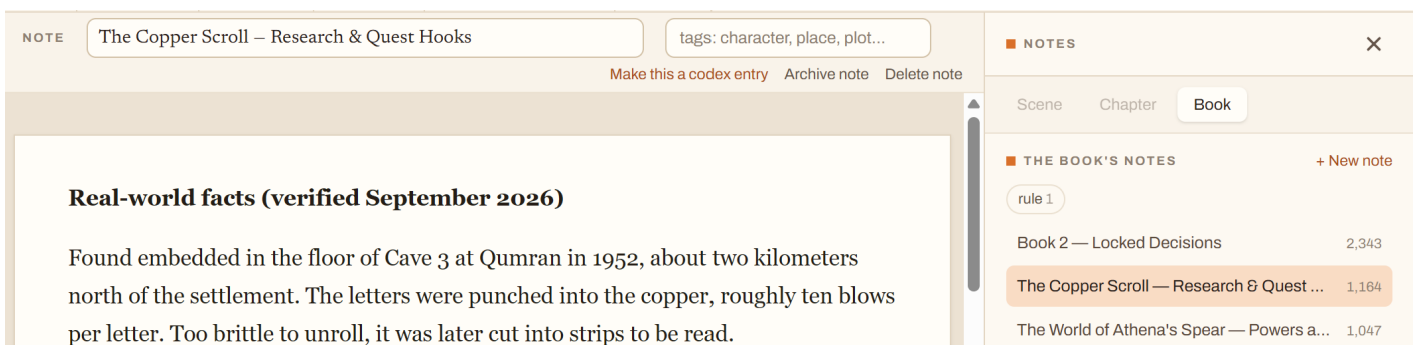
Readers see the find bar without the replace row. See [Review suggestions and comments](#).

Keep notes beside your book

This page is about notes: the reminders you leave on a scene or chapter, and the longer documents—research, a to-do list, a scrap of worldbuilding—you keep beside the book. None of it ever prints.

Open your notes

Click **Notes** at the top of the editor. A panel opens on the right with three tabs: **Scene**, **Chapter** and **Book**. Click **Notes** again to close it.



Screenshot: the notes panel open, on the Book tab, with a few lines of notes typed in.

Notes on a scene or chapter

The **Scene** tab is a scratch pad for the scene you have open—what still needs doing, what to check, what you were thinking when you stopped. The **Chapter** tab is the same for the whole chapter: "cut the second argument," "check the date against book 3." Type, and it saves as you go.

These notes travel with their scene or chapter, so when you open a different scene, the panel shows that scene's notes instead.

The book's notes

The **Book** tab holds whole documents. Click **+ New note** to start one; it opens in the middle of the screen, in a wide editor with all the usual formatting, and you can give it a title at the top. Click a note in the list to open it again, and drag the list into whatever order suits you.

Tags

Under the title, add a few tags—*character*, *place*, *plot*, or any word you like. Once your notes have tags, they appear as small buttons at the top of the list, each with a count. Click one to show only

those notes; click it again to see them all. Over time this becomes a small bible for the book that you can sort through.

Turn a note into a codex entry

If a note about a character or place deserves a proper home, click **Make this a codex entry** at the top of the note. It becomes an entry in your universe's codex, and the note is set aside, marked **codex**, with a link to the entry. See [Notes that become codex entries](#).

Archive or delete a note

Archive note sets a note aside without losing it. Archived notes gather under **Show archived** at the bottom of the list; click **Restore** beside one to bring it back.

Delete note removes it for good. It asks first, and suggests archiving instead if you'd like to keep the text.

Who sees your notes

Everyone you've invited to the book can read its notes, so they're a good place for things your co-author or editor should know. Owners and co-authors can write and change them.

If you've connected an AI assistant to Write, it can read your notes and add to them too—a handy place for it to leave research or a list of things it noticed. See [Working with an AI](#).

Suggest changes instead of making them

This page is about the **Writing** and **Suggesting** switch at the top of the editor. In Writing, what you type goes straight into the book. In Suggesting, every change you make is marked as a suggestion instead, to be accepted or rejected later—handy when you're revising a co-author's chapter, or you want to try a cut without committing to it.

Switch modes

At the top of the editor, click **Writing** or **Suggesting**. That's all it changes: what your next keystroke does. Nothing you've already written is touched.

On a phone, the choice sits in the header as **Write**, **Suggest** and **Outline**.

Screenshot: The Writing and Suggesting switch *Screenshot: the top of the editor with the Writing / Suggesting switch, Suggesting selected, and a suggested change in the text below.*

Write remembers your choice for each book, in this browser, so if you like to revise in Suggesting, it'll be waiting that way next time.

What a suggestion looks like

While you're suggesting, words you add are underlined and words you delete are struck through rather than removed, all in your color. Keep typing and your changes in one spot stay together as a single suggestion—backspacing over a sentence is one suggestion, not forty.

If you change your mind about something you suggested, delete it: removing your own suggested words takes them away for real.

In a text-message exchange

Inside an exchange, a suggestion is a whole bubble rather than single words. The moment you change a bubble—type in it, change who sent it, add or remove a pause—the bubble as it was stays put, faded and struck through, and your version appears just below it, ringed in your color. Keep typing and you're editing that same new bubble; there's only ever one copy.

- **A new message** (Enter) is ringed in your color too.
- **Deleting a message** leaves it in place, struck through, until the author decides.

- **Splitting or joining bubbles** strikes the old ones and suggests the new ones together, as one change.
- **Taking out the whole exchange** (the × above it) fades the exchange and strikes it out.
- **Changed your mind?** Undo takes it all back. If you type and then backspace until the bubble reads as it did, the suggestion disappears by itself.

A struck bubble can't be typed in—clicking one points the review rail at it instead. Who the exchange is with and its style still apply right away, like a paragraph style, so editors can't change those.

In the review rail, a changed bubble reads as the message with the words that changed marked, and accepting keeps your version while rejecting brings back the original.

Screenshot: a suggested change in a text-message exchange *Screenshot: an exchange in Suggesting with one bubble struck through and faded, the new version ringed in color below it, and the review rail showing "changed a message."*

What isn't tracked

Suggesting is about the words. A few things still happen right away, even in Suggesting:

- Starting a new paragraph, or joining two.
- Bold, italic and the other formatting in the selection bar.
- Paragraph styles, like centering a line or setting off a letter.

Your reviewer still sees every word that changed; it's only the shape around the words that goes in as you make it.

Editors always suggest

Someone you've invited as an editor works in Suggesting all the time; their **Writing** button is greyed out, with a note that editors suggest and the author accepts or rejects. That way their whole pass comes to you as changes you can review one by one. (Because paragraph styles aren't tracked, editors can't change those—they can leave a comment instead.)

Reviewing what's been suggested

Suggestions—yours, an editor's or an AI's—are listed in the review rail on the right, where you accept or reject each one. See [Review suggestions and comments](#).

Change how the editor looks

This page covers the ways you can make the editor comfortable to sit with for a long session: light or dark, the color of the room, a dark page to write on, and whether you see your words as the printed page or as one long column.

None of this changes your book. It's all about your screen.

Light, dark and the colors

Click the small half-filled circle in the toolbar to open **Appearance**.

- **Appearance—Auto** follows your computer's own light or dark setting; **Light** and **Dark** stay put whatever your computer does.
- **Light theme—Ivory** or **Fall**, the colors Write uses when it's light.
- **Dark theme—Plum** or **Slate**, the colors it uses when it's dark.

You can pick a light theme and a dark theme both, and Auto will switch between them as your computer does.

Screenshot: The Appearance menu *Screenshot: the Appearance menu open in the editor, showing Appearance, Light theme, Dark theme, Layout and Dark page.*

The same across Author Tools

Your appearance choices are saved for all of Author Tools, not only Write. Set Dark and Slate here, and the other Author Tools apps that offer these settings will open the same way. (The dark page and the layout are Write's own.)

A dark page

The colors of the screen and the color of the page you write on are separate choices. Someone who likes a light screen but finds a white page glaring after a few hours can have both. Turn on **Dark page**—it's at the bottom of the Appearance menu, and in the **Show** menu too—and your page goes dark with light text.

Until you choose, the page follows the rest of the screen: dark when Write is dark. Once you flip it yourself, it stays the way you set it. Your book still prints on white paper, of course; **Preview** always shows the real thing.

Print format or full width

Layout (in the Appearance menu, and in its own **Layout** menu in the toolbar) chooses how your manuscript sits on the screen:

- **Print format**—the page as it will print, at your trim size and in your book's type. Good for seeing how a chapter really falls.
- **Full width**—one wide column of text, no pages. Good for drafting.

Your words are the same either way; switch as often as you like.

Zoom

In print format, the - and + beside the percentage in the toolbar make the page smaller or larger. Holding **Alt** while you scroll does the same. (Full width doesn't zoom; it fills the space you give it.)

The Show menu

Show in the toolbar turns a few helpers on and off. Each one is remembered.

- **Guides**—faint lines marking the margins of the printed page. These only appear in print format.
- **Dark page**—the same switch as above.
- **Codex names**—underlines the names in your scene that have codex entries; point at one to see the entry. See [The codex while you write](#).
- **Outline at the side**—keeps the outline of your book open in a narrow column beside the page while you write. It shares that space with the review rail, so opening one closes the other. For the full outline, see [Write, Outline and Preview](#).

Listen to your book read aloud

This page is about **Listen**, which reads your book aloud a sentence at a time while you follow along. Hearing your words is one of the best ways to catch a clunky rhythm, a repeated word or a missing one—and as you listen, you can mark each spot that needs work without stopping.

Start listening

Put your cursor where you'd like to begin, then click **Listen** in the toolbar. A small bar appears at the top of the page and the reading starts from the cursor. The sentence being read is highlighted, so you can follow along.

It carries on from scene to scene to the end of the book, so you can sit back and listen to a whole chapter.

Screenshot: The listen bar *Screenshot: the listen bar at the top of a scene, with a sentence highlighted on the page and a note typed in the mark box.*

The controls

- **Play** and **Pause**—or press **Space**.
- **Back a sentence** and **Forward a sentence**—or the ← and → keys.
- **Back a paragraph**—or the ↑ key, to hear a passage again.
- **Speed**—from 0.8× to 2×.
- **Voice**—any of the voices your computer or browser offers.
- **Stop and close**—or press **Esc**.

The keys work while the listen bar is the thing you last clicked.

Mark a spot

When you hear something that needs another look, click **Mark** (or press **M**). Write leaves a comment on the sentence being read, and the reading carries on. If you'd like to say what bothered you, type a few words in the box beside **Mark** first; or just mark it and keep going.

Your marks collect in the review rail on the right, alongside any other comments, so when you're done listening you have a list of every place your ear caught. See [Review suggestions and comments](#).

What it reads

Listen reads your scene as it would print with every suggestion accepted: suggested new words are read, and words a suggestion is striking out are skipped.

About the voices

The voices come from your own browser and computer, so nothing you've written is sent anywhere to be read, and it costs nothing. It does mean the voices vary from one device to another—Edge, Chrome and Safari all have good ones. If your browser has no voices at all, the listen bar will say so.

Go back to an earlier version

This page is about **History**: the earlier versions of each scene that Write keeps for you, how to look at one and see what's changed since, how to put a scene back the way it was, and how to mark a milestone for the whole book.

You don't have to do anything to make versions. Write saves them as you go.

Open History

Open a scene, then click **History** in the toolbar. A panel opens on the right with two lists: **This scene**, the scene's versions with the newest at the top, and **Milestones** for the book.

Each version shows when it was made, its word count and who was writing. A few carry a small label: **Before a restore**, **Before a split** or **Before a merge** mark the moment just before one of those happened, and a milestone's name shows on the versions it kept.

Screenshot: The History panel *Screenshot: the History panel beside a scene, with a few versions listed, one carrying a milestone's name, and two milestones below.*

Look at an earlier version

Click a version. It takes the place of your page, and the bar above it says when it's from. Anything that has changed since is marked:

- Words **struck through** were in that version and have gone since.
- Words **underlined** weren't there yet; they've come in since.

So you can read it as it was and see at a glance what you've done to it. Click **Back to writing** (or **Now** at the top of the list) to return to your page. Nothing changes just from looking.

Screenshot: An earlier version *Screenshot: an earlier version open in the middle, with struck and underlined words, and the Back to writing and Restore this version buttons above it.*

Put a scene back

While you're looking at a version, click **Restore this version**. The scene goes back to exactly that text.

You can't lose anything this way. Before it restores, Write keeps the scene as it was a moment ago as a version of its own, labelled **Before a restore**, so if you change your mind, restore that one.

Just one passage

If you only want back a paragraph you cut, there's no need to restore the whole scene. Open the old version, copy the passage, click **Back to writing**, and paste it where it belongs.

Milestones

A milestone is a name for a moment in the whole book: "Sent to Jill," "Before the line edit," "Draft two." It keeps every scene just as it is right then, so later you can find that moment in any scene's history.

To make one, click **+ Save a milestone** under **Milestones**, give it a name (and a note, if you like), and click **Save milestone**. It's worth doing before you send the book out, or before a big round of changes.

To take a milestone away, point at it and click **Remove**. Your scenes don't change; the name just comes off their history.

What Write keeps

- **While you work**, a new version each time you stop for a few minutes. Saves close together become one version, so the list reads as your writing sessions rather than every keystroke.
- **After a week**, one version per scene for each week, the last of that week, so a scene you look at months from now still has a history to walk back through.
- **Always**: every milestone, and every version labelled before a restore, split or merge.

Who can do this

Everyone on the book can open History and look at earlier versions. Owners and co-authors can restore a version and save or remove milestones. History isn't on the phone layout yet; use a computer or tablet.

If you work with an AI assistant connected to Write, it can read a scene's history, mark a milestone, and (when you ask it to) restore a version. See [Working with an AI](#).

Put a full-page picture or a spread in a scene

This page is for giving a picture whole pages in the middle of a scene: a full-page illustration, or one wide picture across two facing pages. The words around it stay where they are. In print the text fills the page it's on, the picture comes next, and the text picks up again after it, the way an illustrated novel does it.

Add one

1. Click in the scene where the picture belongs, between two paragraphs.
2. Insert an image the usual way, and choose your picture.
3. Under **Placement**, choose **Full Page Next** or **Two-Page Spread**.
4. Click **Insert**.

Screenshot: the Insert an image window with Full Page Next and Two-Page Spread *Screenshot: the Placement card in the Insert an image window, with the second row (Full Page Next, Two-Page Spread) and the note under it.*

In the editor's page view the picture takes no room in your text, because in print it doesn't either. You'll see a small thumbnail in the margin beside the spot, tagged **Full page** or **Spread**. Click it to change or remove the picture. To see the pages as they'll print, open **Preview**.

A full page

The picture gets a page to itself: the next page after the one your text is on when it reaches that spot. The page has no running head or page number, like any illustration plate. Tick **Runs to the edge** for a picture that bleeds off the sheet; leave it off to keep it inside the margins.

A two-page spread

Upload the whole picture once, as wide as you like. Write cuts it down the middle, so the left half sits on a left-hand page and the right half on the right-hand page facing it. A spread always runs to the edges.

A spread has to start on a left-hand page, or the halves won't face each other. When the text reaches your picture with a right-hand page coming next, Write lets the text carry on through that page first, so the spread may sit a page later than the spot you chose. You'll never get a blank page out of it, except in the rare case of a single paragraph longer than a whole page.

Keep faces and words away from the middle of a spread picture. The binding swallows a little of it.

In the ebook

An ebook has no pages to give, so a full page or a spread shows where it sits, the whole picture at the width of the screen, with its caption if it has one. In print the caption isn't used.

If an AI is adding the picture

Through Write's connector, an AI writes the same thing as `![caption](image:<id> page)` or `![caption](image:<id> spread)`. See [How an AI writes formatting into your scenes](#).