



Glossary of Publishing Terms



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Author Bio

A short paragraph about the author, usually included on the back cover, inside flap, or online retailer pages.

B&W (Black & White)

A term used to describe pages or images that are printed using only black ink, without colour.

Back Matter

The pages that appear at the end of a book after the main content. This may include acknowledgements, author notes, discussion questions, appendices, glossaries, and other supplementary material.

Barcode

A machine-readable code printed on the back cover of a book. It usually contains the ISBN and pricing information, allowing retailers to scan and track inventory.

Bleed

The area of a page that extends beyond the final trim size. Background colours and images that reach the edge of a page must extend into the bleed area to prevent unwanted white borders after trimming.

Blurb

A short promotional description of a book, usually found on the back cover or online product pages.

Dust Jacket

A removable paper cover that wraps around a hardback book, often printed with additional design and marketing information.

CMYK

The colour model used in commercial printing when printing a book in colour, consisting of Cyan, Magenta, Yellow, and Key (Black) inks. Files supplied for print should generally be created in CMYK colour mode for accurate colour reproduction.

Copyright Page

A page typically found near the front of a book containing legal and publishing information, including copyright notices, ISBNs, publisher details, edition information, and rights statements.



Debossing

A finishing technique that presses a design, logo, or text into a cover material, creating a recessed impression.

DPI/PPI

Dots Per Inch (DPI) and Pixels Per Inch (PPI) are measurements of image resolution. For professional print quality, images should typically be supplied at 300 DPI/PPI at their intended print size.

eBook

A digital version of a book designed to be read on devices such as Kindle e-readers, tablets, smartphones, and computers.

Embossing

A finishing technique that raises a design, logo, or text above the surface of the cover material, creating a tactile effect.

Endpapers

The sheets that connect the inside pages of a hardback book to the cover. Endpapers can be plain, coloured, or custom printed.

Foiling

A premium finishing process in which metallic or coloured foil is applied to specific areas of a cover using heat and pressure. Common foil colours include gold, silver, copper, and holographic finishes.

Front Matter

The pages that appear before the main text of a book. This may include the title page, copyright page, dedication, contents page, foreword, preface, and introduction.

Gloss Lamination

A protective plastic coating applied to a cover that creates a shiny, reflective finish and enhances colour vibrancy.

GSM (Grams per Square Metre)

A measurement used to describe paper weight and thickness. Higher GSM values generally indicate thicker, heavier paper.

Hardback

A book format with rigid board covers rather than flexible paper covers. Hardback editions are often more durable and may include features such as dust jackets, foiling, or ribbon markers.



Imprint

The trade name under which a book is published. Traditional publishers often operate multiple imprints that specialise in different genres or markets.

ISBN (International Standard Book Number)

A unique 13-digit identifier assigned to a specific book format and edition. Each format (e.g., paperback, hardback, e-book) requires its own ISBN.

KDP (Kindle Direct Publishing)

Amazon's self-publishing platform, which allows authors and publishers to distribute paperback, hardback, and e-book editions through Amazon.

Lamination

A thin protective coating applied to a book cover to improve durability and appearance. Common options include gloss and matte lamination.

Manuscript

The original written text of a book before design and typesetting.

Margin

The blank space between the text and the edge of the page. Margins improve readability and ensure text is not lost during printing and binding.

Matte Lamination

A protective plastic coating applied to a cover that creates a smooth, non-reflective finish. It provides a softer appearance than gloss lamination.

Metadata

Information about a book used for distribution and sales, including title, author, ISBN, keywords, and description.

Paperback

A softcover book format, typically more flexible and lower cost than hardback.

Perfect Binding

A common paperback binding method where pages are glued into a soft cover spine.



POD (Print on Demand)

A printing method where books are produced individually or in small quantities as orders are received, eliminating the need for large print runs and stock storage.

Print Proof

A final check copy produced by the printer before full production run.

Proof Copy

A sample copy produced before final publication to allow the author and publisher to check for errors in design, formatting, and print quality.

Retailer

A store or platform that sells books to customers (e.g., Amazon, Waterstones, independent bookshops).

Royalties

The payment an author receives based on book sales.

RRP (Recommended Retail Price)

The price a publisher recommends a book should be sold at to customers. Retailers (such as bookshops or online stores) may choose to sell the book at the RRP or at a discounted price depending on their own pricing strategy.

Running Head

A line of text that appears at the top of pages throughout a book, typically displaying the book title, chapter title, or author name.

Spine Width

The thickness of a book's spine. Spine width is determined by the page count and paper type and is an important measurement when designing a cover.

Spot UV

A finishing technique that applies a high-gloss coating to selected areas of a cover while leaving the rest of the surface unchanged. It is often used to highlight titles, logos, or design elements.



Stock

Physical copies of books held in storage and available for distribution.

Trim Size

The final dimensions of a book after it has been printed and cut to size.

Typesetting

The process of arranging text, images, headings, spacing, and page elements into a professional book layout that is suitable for publication. At Softwood, we typically refer to this as 'formatting'.

Wholesale Discount

The percentage discount given to retailers so they can resell the book at a profit.

Wibalin

A high-quality bookcloth-style covering material commonly used on hardback case covers. Wibalin is available in a range of colours and textures and is often used in premium book production.