
Kindle Formatting Checklist

25 things to fix in your Word manuscript before Kindle conversion. Tick each item as you go.

Section 1 — Paragraph and Text Formatting (Items 1–7)

- ☐ **1. Remove all tab characters from paragraph starts.**
Go to Find & Replace → find ^t (tab) → replace with nothing. Tab characters at the start of paragraphs create inconsistent indentation on Kindle devices. Use Word's paragraph indent settings instead.
- ☐ **2. Set paragraph indentation using Word Styles — not the spacebar or tab key.**
Open the Styles panel. Right-click Normal → Modify → Format → Paragraph → set First Line indent to 0.3 inches. Every paragraph in the book should use this style.
- ☐ **3. Remove double spaces between sentences.**
Find & Replace → find two spaces → replace with one space. Kindle's rendering engine handles sentence spacing automatically. Double spaces create visible gaps on e-ink screens.
- ☐ **4. Remove blank lines between paragraphs.**
Separate paragraphs with first-line indents (or paragraph spacing set in the style), not empty lines. Empty lines create uneven gaps on Kindle. Find & Replace → find ^p^p → replace with ^p, and repeat until none remain. For a deliberate scene break, use a centred symbol such as *** instead of blank lines.
- ☐ **5. Check all body text uses the Normal paragraph style.**
Click in a body paragraph → right-click its style in the Styles panel → Select All Instances, and make sure every body paragraph is included. Do not select the whole document and apply Normal — that also removes your heading styles. Text in Default, Body Text, or unnamed custom styles may not convert consistently.
- ☐ **6. Remove manual line breaks (Shift+Enter).**
Find & Replace → find ^l (manual line break) → replace with ^p (paragraph mark). Manual line breaks display incorrectly in reflowable eBooks.
- ☐ **7. Check text colour is set to Automatic — not black.**
Text set to a specific black (#000000) may appear differently on Kindle's light and dark reading modes. Set all body text colour to Automatic in Font settings.

Section 2 — Headings and Structure (Items 8–12)

- ☐ **8. Apply Heading 1 style to every chapter title.**
Select each chapter title → apply Heading 1 from the Styles panel. Do not use large bold text that looks like a heading — it will not generate a linked table of contents.
- ☐ **9. Apply Heading 2 style to every sub-chapter or section heading.**
Same principle — use Heading 2 style, not manual bold formatting. This creates the correct document hierarchy for the table of contents.
- ☐ **10. Insert a page break before every chapter — not blank lines.**
Place your cursor before each chapter title → Insert → Page Break. Never use 10–20 blank lines to push a chapter to a new page. Blank lines create unpredictable spacing in eBooks.

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- ☐ **11. Remove any headers and footers.**
eBooks do not use page headers or footers. Delete them entirely. KDP ignores them but they add unnecessary code to the file.
 - ☐ **12. Check your document has only one Normal style and one Heading 1 style.**
Open Styles panel → check for duplicate or modified Normal styles. Multiple Normal style variants cause inconsistent formatting throughout the converted file.
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Section 3 — Images (Items 13–16)

- ☐ **13. Embed all images — do not link to external files.**
Every image must be embedded in the Word document. Linked images will not appear in the converted file. Right-click each image → Format Picture → confirm it is embedded.
 - ☐ **14. Use high-resolution images.**
What matters on screen is pixel size: aim for at least 1,200px on the longest side for full-width images, at 300 DPI. Low-resolution images look pixelated on high-definition Kindle screens.
 - ☐ **15. Remove text wrapping from all images.**
Select each image → Layout Options → set to In Line With Text. Images with text wrapping do not convert correctly to eBook format.
 - ☐ **16. Compress images without visible quality loss.**
Large images inflate the final file size, and on KDP's 70% royalty option a bigger file means a higher delivery fee on every sale. Compress images with a tool such as Squoosh or TinyPNG before inserting them.
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Section 4 — Table of Contents (Items 17–19)

- ☐ **17. Use Word's automatic TOC — not a manually typed list.**
References → Table of Contents → Automatic Table 1. A manually typed TOC will not generate clickable links in the converted file.
 - ☐ **18. Confirm the TOC links to the correct headings.**
Click each TOC entry to verify it jumps to the correct chapter. Broken TOC links are one of the most common reader complaints in Kindle books.
 - ☐ **19. Keep an in-book table of contents.**
Kindle's Go To navigation menu is built from your heading styles during conversion, and most books also benefit from a clickable table of contents page near the front. If you include one, use Word's automatic version — never a manually typed list.
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Section 5 — Special Content (Items 20–22)

- ☐ **20. Convert all footnotes to Word endnotes or leave as Word footnotes.**
Word footnotes and endnotes both convert to Kindle pop-up notes. Check that each footnote number in the text has a corresponding note in the footnote panel — none should be missing.
 - ☐ **21. Check all tables are simple — no merged cells, no custom borders.**
Complex table formatting rarely survives eBook conversion. Simplify tables to basic rows and columns. Remove merged cells. Remove custom borders and shading.
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☐ **22. Remove any text boxes.**

Text boxes do not convert to eBook format. Move all text box content into the main document body using standard paragraph styles.

Section 6 — Final Checks (Items 23–25)

☐ **23. Run a final spelling and grammar check.**

Review → Spelling & Grammar, then proofread once more before sending. Errors in the source file carry straight into the converted book.

☐ **24. Save as .docx — not .doc.**

Always submit .docx format. The older .doc format can produce unexpected formatting issues during conversion. File → Save As → Word Document (.docx).

☐ **25. Send the Word file — not a PDF export of it.**

A PDF export strips the paragraph style information that converters rely on. If your original manuscript is a Word file, send that. If a PDF is genuinely all you have, send it — we can work from PDF too.

Want it done for you? Hand-coded Kindle conversion from \$30, checked in Kindle Previewer, delivered in 72 hours:
www.ebookifi.com/services/kindle-conversion/