ABA Publishing
and the
ABA Section of Science & Technology Law

Tips and Guidelines for Book Manuscripts

Write for your audience

ABA books are written for busy, practicing lawyers. The most successful books have a practical, reader-friendly voice. If you can build in features like checklists, exhibits, sample contracts, flow charts, and tables of cases, please do so. For a basic tips on writing SciTech books, read through the FAQ for Books.

Getting started

Editorial Teams (contributors to a collected work):

1. The project editor (or editors) will be responsible for setting deadlines, receiving manuscripts from contributors, reviewing or arranging reviews of the chapters, and forwarding the completed manuscript to ABA Publishing.
2. The editor (or editors) of a collective work cannot be listed as the book’s author. In the case of a team-written work with 3 or fewer authors, however, the section book board may agree to list all of the contributors as the book’s authors.

Guidelines for the author, editor or project leader:

1. Stay true to the page count listed in the approved proposal. Work out in advance a minimum and maximum page count for each chapter/contributing author.
2. All final decisions for publishing, design, pricing, and marketing every book are made at the discretion of the Book Publishing Board (not the author or editor).
3. If you wish to work with an outside organization or with another ABA entity, you must include this in the project proposal for the board’s consideration.

Time guidelines:

1. Once your project has been approved, begin developing the book from the outline or chapter list presented in the project proposal. Here are some time guidelines:
   a. Upon approval, enlist contributors (for a co-authored book)
   b. Assign chapters (2 – 3 weeks)
   c. Refine chapter outlines with co-authors (2 - 3 weeks)
   d. Set deadline for first drafts of chapters (3 – 4 months)
e. Review chapter drafts, return to authors (3 – 4 weeks)
f. Receive final drafts from authors (2 months)
g. Review final drafts, write introduction, obtain all appendix material and front matter (1 month)
h. Submit to ABA Publishing

Standard book format

1. Title page
2. Copyright page
3. Table of Contents (can be followed by a Table of Illustrations, etc.)
4. Foreword
5. Preface
6. Introduction
7. (Arabic Pagination begins with Chapter 1)
8. Chapters (main text)
9. Selected bibliography
10. Table of cases/Table of authorities (ABA Publishing will develop)

Take care with style and language

Our standard reference books are:

Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary (for spelling and hyphenation), or use: www.m-w.com
The Chicago Manual of Style (for all style, punctuation, and capitalization matters in written text as well as general rules of book making)
A Uniform System of Citation (the Blue Book--for citation forms in endnotes)
The Elements of Style (by Strunk and White--the bible of the economical, careful writer)

Note that Blue Book rules apply only to citations. Specifically:

- Form in accordance with The Blue Book and style in accordance with The Chicago Manual of Style.
- Make sure to check the footnotes or endnotes for format and substance before submission.
- Case name only, not full cite, in text of article.
- Use italicized (not underlined) case names within the text.
- Case names should be in regular font in endnotes, not italics or underlined, unless a shortened version of the citation is used, in which case italics should be used.
- Do not use the shortened version of a citation unless the citation is within five endnotes of the previous citation.
- Use small caps for book and periodical names.
- Order of case citation within signal unless one case is more important than the others: Supreme Court by date, F2d. by date, F. Supp. by date, state cases alphabetically and by date for cites within the same state.
- Do not use supra in case citations.

Other recommendations and section guidelines
1. Make sure all contributors are using either endnotes or footnotes. (Most editors prefer footnotes. If you are working with a group of authors who vary in their use of endnotes and footnotes, we can rectify the problem in composition, but it is best to communicate these practices before writing begins.)

2. Do not bury information in the notes. Footnotes/endnotes should consist almost exclusively of citations.

3. Minimize spot citations. *id.* is not that important.

4. The "Blue Book" has never cited books properly: do it one better by including the author's full name, the book's full title, the publisher, and the year of publication. Your readers will thank you.

5. Maintain consistency of style from section to section of each chapter. At minimum you should be consistent in whatever style you decide to follow. For example, decide whether a word is to be in italics or roman face and present it that way throughout the book.

We will handle the Index and Table of Cases.

Don’t forget to include an acknowledgements page and updated biographies for all contributors.

**Grammar:**

1. Use a comma before “and” in a series of three or more words or phrases (serial comma).
2. No comma before “and” if only two words or phrases are in a series.
3. Use comma before “and” if two sentences are connected by the word and.
4. Use capitals sparingly. Court is capitalized only where citing to the Supreme Court. Board is not capitalized.
5. Omit useless words and phrases.
6. Spell out numbers one through ninety-nine.
7. Use should, would, could, and may sparingly.
8. Use active voice.
9. Do not write in the first person.
10. Short is better.
11. Do not provide exhaustive statement of facts of a case.

**Fact-checking and avoidance of plagiarism:**

3. Make sure that quotes, excerpts and passages from other works are cited.
4. Similarly, if using a passage that you have written, you must cite the source if it is drawn from a copyrighted work (even if you are the author).

**Manuscript preparation**

- If printing manuscript pages, print on one side only.
- Double-space everything. A font size of 10 or 11 pts is preferred.
- Keep all pages, chapters, exhibits, and appendixes in order.
- It is best to keep an individual file for each introductory element and chapter.
- Number your manuscript consecutively from start to finish, so that the digital files can be identified and/or sorted.
Always keep a copy of everything for yourself.

**Use your computer**

- Most lawyers use WordPerfect and Microsoft Word. We prefer MS Word.
- If you are dealing with a particularly large book, try to keep the computer files small. Divide your chapter or book into files of reasonably sized documents.
- Name files recognizably and keep them in order. For example, "Chap7_Pt1" is better than "Mybook_ch."
- Several common computer functions are unnecessary in manuscript:
  - Do not justify the copy.
  - Use hard returns only at the ends of paragraphs, not lines.
  - Do not add headers or footers.
  - Do not use end-line hyphenation.
  - Print it out in your default font.
  - Avoid page breaks or section breaks.

- On the other hand, traditional manuscript standards do still apply: set everything in the double-space or space-and-a-half setting. Set your margins for a least one inch all the way around.
- Keep a copy of the files on your hard drive for as long as possible. (Forever, if you have the memory to spare.) If your book goes into a new edition or if your chapter is revised, those original files will be useful.

If you have any concerns or questions, please give me a call at 312/988-5429.

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