



Guide to Publishing on RoyalRoad for Beginners

[Other Resources](#)

Disclaimers

- This guide is aimed at writers who have never published on RoyalRoad (RR) and/or have never written a story before for publication. If this doesn't describe you, there may still be something to learn from the guide, but your mileage may vary. Even if it does describe you, your mileage may vary.
- This guide might also be helpful for anyone looking to hit the Rising Stars list with their current story or their next story.
- Publishing on RR is a different experience for everyone, and there isn't any one-size-fits-all advice. You may follow a tip on this guide to zero results, and someone else may follow that same tip and blow up. That's just the nature of the beast.
- This guide will likely never be complete, as RR changes their algorithms and writers are always coming up with new strategies to catch reader attention. We'll try to update it when new strategies appear to work better than old ones.
- More specific disclaimers will appear throughout this guide.

Pre-Publishing

This section discusses what to do before you start publishing your story.

Tip 1: Write the first 10k words

Because of the way RR works, having a backlog of at least 10k words will help set you up for success. It's also important to figure out how much you can write per week sustainably, and so writing a backlog will give you the time you need to figure that out since you'll want a consistent posting schedule. General consensus is that the larger your backlog you have, the less stressed you'll be while publishing.

- *Disclaimer:* Depending on your goals and your project, you might want to write more than the first 10k words. For first-time writers, it's imperative to experience writing the end of a story, so if you're someone who might end up discouraged by the reception your story gets on RR, you might want to write further into your project than others so that you finish it. Further, the more you have already written, the smoother your process publishing on RR will be, and the more likely you are going to be able to navigate initial release, especially if you manage to hit Rising Stars (more on this [here](#)).

You can also go beyond 10k. With the way that RR works, having 20k before you start publishing is even more beneficial (and recent changes to the Rising Stars algorithm make this even more true). Our overly ambitious recommendation is to have 50k written before you start publishing to set yourself up for the most success both on RR and for monetizing.

Tip 2: Seek feedback from a trusted source

It's also important to get feedback on your first 10k because they're arguably the most important words in your story. Especially the first chapter, which you can improve by using this [first chapter study](#). They're the first words your audience will read, and if you want them to become readers who follow you, then you'll want to ensure you've hooked them. The only way to know how an audience will receive your story is by having someone share their thoughts with you about your story.

You may receive feedback that you don't agree with or that makes you upset or angry. That's normal, and it's important to learn how to take that kind of feedback and remain productive and true to your vision.

- *Disclaimer:* You will likely see advice and/or receive feedback that RR readers dislike such things as female MCs, slice of life, cozy, slow pacing, mind control, etc. However, there are many notable exceptions that exist to these "dislikes." What RR readers tend to dislike above and beyond those things is putting your MC(s) into positions that lack power and/or agency. Your MC should always be making active choices that impact the story and should have power over their own decisions/lives as much as possible.

Tip 3: Revise and improve

Revision is an important skill that will serve you well if you're hoping to make a career out of writing. As RR and other venues get more saturated, the best way to stand out the crowd is by improving the quality of your writing. Stories that do the best on RR regardless of genre tend to have better prose than the average story on RR. The same can be said of Amazon.

- *Disclaimer:* There are also some people who write “to market.” That typically means privileging quantity over quality; writing more books rather than spending time making each book as good as possible. That's valid and fair depending on your goals, but at the end of the day, even “to market” books that are well-written will likely outperform the average. Always keep improving!

In general, we recommend that you at least proofread your work before posting it to RR so that your writing isn't full of typos and grammar errors, which can get in the way of reading comprehension. You want your work to be readable for your readers. You can use tools like [Grammarly](#) or [ProWritingAid](#) to improve your story's readability.

Tip 4: Make connections

If you're hoping to go big *quickly*, it's important to have a connection with other writers on RR so that they can help increase your story's visibility. You can also make these connections while you're publishing. Also note that we're not suggesting that you *network*. Networking implies approaching and interacting with people who will benefit your professional career. However, the writing community is small and, yes, a professional space, but it is also a space where colleagues and friends blur. Be friendly. Make connections with people no matter whether they might be “beneficial” to you later.

- *Disclaimer:* **You will likely not find this on RR forums. Instead, join the Discord community of stories on RR that you like to make friends with people who share your interests.** We cannot stress enough how important it is to have friends who are writers, especially as you grow your career and write more books, since you can ask them for their input earlier in the life of your projects (see the [Improving](#) section).

Tip 5: Choose a good title and subtitle

Arguably, the subtitle is perhaps the more important aspect here, but a good title will increase your visibility by large margins. You want a title that will pique a reader's interest. Some of the most successful stories have titles that capitalize on trends or tropes, make a joke or a pun, describe the main character(s), or encapsulate the premise of the story.

The importance of the subtitle is that it should communicate the genre (for example, LitRPG Adventure, Tower Climber, Dungeoncore, System Apocalypse, Progression Fantasy) of your story in places on RR where the genre isn't visible, such as the Front Page. The Front Page includes Latest Updates, which is where your story will first start to gain visibility.

Communicating as much as possible about your story via your title and subtitle (and your cover) is imperative because that's all the space you have to pull in readers.

- *Disclaimer:* There are stories that do perfectly well without a subtitle. Some stories will start with a subtitle and then eventually remove the subtitle because, as much as a certain genre might pull in some readers, it might also put off some readers that might otherwise like your story if they just gave it a try.

Tip 6: Pick a good cover

Having a cover on RR is typically better than having no cover because you can communicate more information to your reader. However, having no cover is better than having a *bad* cover. That means having no cover doesn't deter readers, it just doesn't help you stand out, while a bad cover will actively deter readers.

Finding a good cover is difficult, so sometimes commissioning a cover is your best bet. For that, you can find willing artists on Twitter (search #commission or #commissionopen), [r/HungryArtists](#) (be sure to read the rules), or on [Fiverr](#).

- *Disclaimer:* If you plan to commission a book cover for Amazon/Kindle United, make sure that you're paying for commercial use. Expect to be charged +50% at minimum for commercial use, though more often it's +100%. Commercial pricing can vary, but knowing what we should pay helps us avoid screwing over artists by accident, too. [r/HungryArtists](#) has some [good documentation](#) on what to expect when commissioning artists.

However, if you're not ready to sink that kind of money into your story yet, then try using a website like [Canva](#), looking for a stock image ([Adobe Stock](#) has a free trial but otherwise about \$30/mo; Google images advanced search for commercial usage rights) or a pre-made cover (there are a few people on RR forums that offer this service for free and for a small cost). **Under no circumstances should you steal art and use it without permission from the artist.**

- *Disclaimer:* Multiple successful stories have launched on RR with AI-generated images as cover art. Before turning to AI-generated images, please be aware of ethical concerns and make sure you're comfortable with [how they work](#) (warning: very technical) for art, as well as how training datasets are composed of copyrighted material as [opposed to copyright-free or voluntarily provided samples like music models](#). We encourage you to read from the perspective of [various artists](#), [coders](#), and [others](#) before making a decision whether to use AI-generated images for your cover. However, we don't recommend using an AI-generated cover for launching on Amazon/Kindle Unlimited.

Whether you're commissioning an artist for a cover, searching for a stock image to use to make one yourself, or generating images to use instead, in general, a good cover will communicate something about your MC or the world that your title and subtitle can't. For example, if you have a male or female MC or a non-human MC, whether your setting is in the modern world or a fantasy world, or the general tone like dark and gritty or cozy and slice-of-life.

Essentially, your cover should tell part of your story or convey the mood of your story by using accent colors and contrasts, creative compositions, and/or compelling imagery that will make an impact on your audience. The cover should also be legible in a thumbnail size.

Accent Colors and Contrasts

- Your cover can play around with color theory to find the [best color palette](#) to convey the mood of your story based on complementary or contrasting colors. You can also use a [color palette generator](#). We believe one of the most important things for a cover on RR is high contrast between colors.
- Remember that [different colors convey different moods](#) and use that to your [advantage](#). Some colors are even considered [symbolic](#).
- You can also play around with contrasts outside of color, such as shadow and light use, blank/white/negative space, guiding lines, and different composition elements.

Creative Compositions

- [Composition](#) in art means the conscious arrangement or organization of different elements (how they're "put together") in a piece of art. The most common [elements of art](#) include line, shape, texture, form, space, and color. Don't try to get creative with all of these elements; rather, pick one or two of them to approach more creatively.
- For book covers, your composition includes the layout of your design, which might utilize creative compositions like making bold choices with typography or using imagery as an accent.
- Although maybe one of the least important aspects for RR covers, typography refers to the arrangement and styling of your book title (and byline). Often that means the font choices, the size of the fonts used, the arrangement of words or where they're placed on the cover, and the color. A bold typography choice might include a [futuristic font](#) for a science fiction story, a [parchment-like](#) font for a high fantasy story, or a [scary font](#) for a horror story. You can purchase commercial use licenses through [Adobe Fonts](#) or use free fonts from [Google Fonts](#).

Compelling Imagery

- Imagery may be the best way to convey the mood of your story or communicate something about your story that your title/subtitle can't, but you should choose imagery that will make an impact on your specific audience.
- Compelling imagery might include the setting of your world, whether it's futuristic, modern, pre-modern, industrial, steampunk, alien, or fantastical. You might also use art of your main character, which would include depicting their clothes, which would also communicate something about your setting. The pose your character is in might convey a more slice-of-life feeling with a casual or comfortable position or the feeling of thrilling action by being in a dynamic fighting pose.

You may want to study [your favorite covers](#) in your genre for ideas or in order to use genre conventions to your benefit. There's a vast difference in what is expected imagery in fantasy, high fantasy, science fiction, or hard science fiction.

Tip 7: Write a concise blurb

After you've enticed a potential reader to your story's page with a good title, a good subtitle, and a good cover, you need to hook them into actually reading your story. Your blurb will do that if written well. You can use [this blurb study](#) to help you.

→ *Disclaimer:* There are stories that do very well with longer blurbs, one-liner blurbs, unconventional blurbs, etc. Some of these are exceptions, but as long as your blurb captures the essence of your story

Tip 8: Study how RR works

Technically, if you're reading this guide, you're doing that right now. If you're someone who already reads stories on RR, you're ahead of the curve here too. Other than reading this guide, or other available guides, you should also be sure to read at least one or two books that are successful in your genre and study *why* you think they're successful.

Tip 9: Decide how long you want your chapters to be

RR doesn't have any mechanism that saves a reader's spot in a chapter. That means if a reader gets halfway through your chapter and closes the window, they will lose their spot in the chapter. Furthermore, a lot of readers are reading on mobile. Therefore, it's generally recommended to keep chapter lengths to something that can be read quickly by your reader without a reader needing to stop. However, your mileage may vary depending on your genre.

Another factor to keep in mind is that your chapters should be a length that is easy for you to maintain quality and update as frequently as possible. Ideally, you want to upload as often (and consistently) as possible because a more frequent update schedule increases visibility and contributes to your story's growth (as related to Rising Stars, more on this in the next section). A story that posts chapters that are only 1k words M-F (5k total) will receive more visibility than a story that posts one 5k chapter during that same time. However, for some people, writing five 1k chapters in a week is entirely feasible without burning out, but for other writers, feasible may mean writing three 1k chapters a week. **The idea here is that you should pick a schedule that will prevent burn out!**

For LitRPG in particular, shorter chapters tend to be better. Readers of LitRPG generally expect shorter chapters, anywhere from 1-2k. However, readers of LitRPG also expect more frequent updates, and having shorter chapters tends to make it easier to produce more chapters so you can release more frequently.

→ *Disclaimer:* Other genres also benefit from more frequent chapters because of the increased visibility (see Rising Stars).

For non-LitRPG genres, readers don't seem to care how long the chapters are or how frequent the updates are. Non-LitRPG readers are more accustomed to longer chapters and less frequent updates. They also tend to save up chapters for when they have a larger chunk of time to read and will binge read. For this reason, stories with longer chapters and/or that update less frequently tend to have less visibility and grow more slowly.

→ *Disclaimer:* There are obvious exceptions on RR and lots of stories that are both LitRPG and non-LitRPG that have longer chapters and a slower release schedule that do very well. Some of them are slower to grow.

Tip 10: Decide if you want to monetize early

Some guides tell you to monetize as early as possible while others will tell you to wait until someone asks about it. Both are valid choices depending on your goals.

If you want to monetize early, then you'll need to set it up before you start publishing and also create a larger backlog so that you can offer chapters in advance (see the Monetizing section for more about this). Delaying monetization can lead to losses because you want to catch everyone in the 'binge' moment. Methods to monetize are [described here](#).

→ *Disclaimer:* It can take a while for monetization efforts to see any monetary gain, and the wait can be demoralizing for some.

Tip 11: Decide if you'll crosspost

Some people will crosspost their stories to other websites. For example, some people might start publishing their story first on [HFY](#) ahead of RR. Other people might publish their story on [ScribbleHub](#) in tandem with RR. It does take more time to crosspost than it does to simply post on RR. We believe RR's readership is wider than the other places, and it seems stories get pirated more from those other sites.

→ *Disclaimer:* Other places you can crosspost would be Wattpad and Tapas. Both of these websites, along with the others listed above, have a different core demographic, so you should study each so that you know what to expect from publishing there. You can also change your mind one way or the other at any point.

Tip 12: Decide how you want to interact with readers

You will have people review and comment on your writing, and so having a plan for how you'll interact with those people can be a good idea. The general rule of thumb for responding to reviews for writers is to not respond. [Reviewers](#), [literary agents](#), [editors](#), [other writers](#), and [readers](#) all agree: **especially do not respond to your bad reviews!**

On the other hand, you can definitely respond to comments. A lot of them will be positive, too! Revel in it! You will get a lot of people who will comment with "thank you for the chapter" (or tyftc for short)—sometimes on every chapter. Do you want to respond by thanking them for reading,

give Reputation points, or simply ignore? Some writers will only give Reputation points to really good comments while others will give as many Reputation points as possible until they run out. Some writers don't respond to any comments at all. All of these are valid options, and even if you decide to respond to every comment, you can change your mind later. Just be prepared to deal with [possible negativity](#).

Rising Stars

This section discusses the various lists on RR with a focus on Rising Stars, which is one of the lists on RR that gives stories the most amount of visibility.

- *Disclaimer:* Contrary to popular belief, it's possible to hit Rising Stars at any point in your story's life as long as you haven't already been on the list for the maximum amount of time (~2 months). It's usually a little bit harder since you're working against the growth you've already achieved, but it is possible to grow enough later to hit the list.

The life of a story on RR begins with the Updated Stories list. RR's Front Page (FP) lists the 10 newest stories that were updated. Depending on when you update, your story may stay on FP for as little as 1 second and as long as 1 hour (this section will go over this in more detail later). However, depending on user traffic, appearing for 1 second may generate you as many views as staying on for 1 hour. In general, though, the more you update your story, the more you will appear on this list, and the more opportunities people have to find your story.

A small minority of stories on RR also end up on the Rising Stars (RS) list, which uses an algorithm to determine the top 50 stories currently "Rising" the most on the website. The top 7 stories on this list additionally appear on RR's FP, which can net you thousands of views in a day. The goal for most stories is to hit #1 on RS to gain as much visibility as possible.

Tip 1: Study the algorithm

By reading this guide, you are technically studying the algorithm. The actual algorithm used by RS is not published anywhere, nor do the site admins discuss it in detail anywhere. (We also don't recommend that you try to crack it or break it in any way.) What's most important to know is that the basic principle behind the RS algorithm is growth in all areas except word count and review trades. That means that it measures how much your story gained new views (increasingly more important), new comments, new followers, new favorites, new ratings, and new reviews compared to before. Then it takes that measurement and compares it to all the other eligible stories on the site in order to create RS as a ranked list.

- *Disclaimer:* Don't worry about receiving *bad* ratings or reviews because simply gaining a new rating or review is what matters here; RS does not factor in *what* your rating is just that you got a new one. However, you should know that you can submit a support ticket if you think you received a suspicious rating (such as a .5★ rating as soon as you hit RS) as long as you explain that it's suspicious. ***Do not submit a support ticket for every .5★ rating or a rating you simply disagree with.***

In essence, you are competing with yourself first. You have to have grown more than the day before in order to move up the list. Further, you have to have grown *more* in that time than the other stories on the list. The more your story grows on average compared to the average growth of other stories, you'll appear higher and higher on the list. Being at the bottom of RS produces

more visibility than being on the Updated Stories list alone, and the higher your story appears on the list, the more people are likely to check out your story.

Tip 2: Update frequently (and consistently)

As discussed in the last section, chapter frequency helps a lot with visibility. This is especially true for when you're just getting started and if you're attempting to get on RS. Each chapter is a new view. Each new reader is a new view on each of your chapters. It's easy to grow your views but simply posting more. If you're looking for a guideline on posting frequency, you'll likely see the most success with a committed and consistent daily schedule because of the way that views interact with the algorithm.

- *Disclaimer:* The time that you publish a new chapter isn't super important, but you can study the trends (with incomplete data) [here](#). Typically, when there's higher traffic on RR, there are also more people updating their stories, so you're competing for the attention of a bigger pool of readers with more stories at that time. Post your chapter at a time that will not cause you anxiety.

Besides frequent and consistent updates, there are two approaches for getting on RS.

Start posting semi-slow and then speed up as you go higher on the RS list

- We recommend this method for newer writers who haven't finished a project or are seeking feedback on their work to implement as they continue writing.
- For the majority of newer writers, it's best to start posting semi-slow and then speed up as you go higher on the RS list. That way, you'll naturally get more growth the further you are up the list because you're increasing your own visibility by posting more.
- Further, it's important to note that the algorithm disadvantages (or suppresses) stories that are under 20k words. This disadvantage lessens at 10k and disappears once your story has 20k published words. The quicker you get to that 10k and 20k mark, the quicker you might find your story on RS.
- The idea is that you want to grow your growth rather than explode all at once. If you don't have a substantial backlog after 20k, you'll burn through your backlog if you dump 20k worth of chapters at once or as quickly as possible, leaving you without a method to force growth later if you stagnate on the list. More or less, you should create a large enough backlog to keep your ideal pace.

Dump 20k at the beginning and keep a steady posting rate afterwards as you climb RS

- We recommend this method if you have a very large backlog, have a lot of shout-outs lined up (see Tip 4), or have an audience already (i.e., you've already published on RR and you're sure a fairly large number of your readers will like your new work).
- At this point, if you're aiming for a high spot on RS, it's become increasingly advantageous to dump 20k words the first day and then continue posting at least once a day afterwards. This means that you'll need to write a lot upfront and have a large backlog, which means you won't be able to implement as much (if any) reader feedback, which is what RR is meant to provide.

- The idea is that you want to capitalize as much as possible with each new reader. If they already have 10 chapters to read on the first day, then you'll net 10 views rather than 1 view if you only had 1 chapter. Each new chapter then creates an opportunity to grab a new reader and net another 10 views (+1 for the new chapter).
- For this method to work, your reader retention has to be rather high. In other words, you have to keep readers reading through the 20k you dumped on the first day or you burned your backlog for no reason. See more on keeping readers reading in Tip 3.

In general, we recommend updating as frequently as your writing pace and backlog allows you, which means adjusting to a slower or faster release pace based on your writing output and what pace you think you'll need to get on and climb RS. However, if you can't keep up a daily release schedule, then start slower than once a day so that you can speed up to a daily release when it'll help you most. On the other hand, if you have the backlog for it, you can start with daily and then increase from there.

→ *Disclaimer:* Please keep in mind that posting 2-3 times a day or more might create reader fatigue and cause some people to switch from keeping up-to-date on your story to waiting for chapters to pile up for a binge later. It's okay to adjust your chapter release schedule as needed.

The idea, in either case, is to pick a schedule that will allow you to speed up without compromising your backlog (or sleep). Also keep in mind that readership over the weekend dips, and a lot of people catch-up with weekend releases on Monday, which means if you need a break, take one over the weekend. And it's okay if you do need to take a break. Your readers will understand.

Tip 3: Keep readers reading

Once you have a new reader trying your story, you want them to keep reading all your available chapters (and, ideally, any advance chapters you might be monetizing). Arguably, this is the hardest part. The best way to keep a reader engaged with your story is to strategize your chapter structures, especially the ending. In general, you'll want to end your chapters with something for your readers to discuss, theorize, or anticipate. That means alternating between story elements such as cliffhangers or decision points to avoid stagnation.

→ *Disclaimer:* You don't want to end every chapter the same way. For example, if you use a cliffhanger for every chapter ending, it'll reduce the effectiveness of the cliffhangers.

Here is an example of structure being critically important to avoiding stagnation:

Case A

- First chapter: Hero meets the evil lord, sends a monster at them. The hero runs away, thinking about all the different things the monster can do. The chapter ends as the monster closes in on them.
- Second chapter: Hero runs away from the monster. Hero finds cover in nearby ruined ancient city. But--oh no! There's monsters here, too! End chapter on the monsters preparing to fight.

Case B

- First chapter: Hero meets the evil lord, who sends a monster at them. The hero runs, the monster catches up, and we enter a conflict as the hero needs to use their wits to escape. End the chapter as the hero continues running, catching a glimpse of the ancient city. Salvation!
- Second chapter: Hero investigates the nearby city. Finds the monsters hiding there. Conflict of the chapter occurs when the monsters don't like that and they fight. Our hero wins (obviously) and we close off on them planning on what they should do next OR on a new hook of the original monster catching up--some form of resolution, at least.

The second one does have a little more content to it, but there's a difference in structuring basically the same events. The first one loads its conflict and the start and end, while the second case sees each chapter have a buildup to a conflict followed by the exploration of its consequences. This isn't always going to be optimal, and this example isn't perfect, but it's a bit of an illustration of how story structure later on can lead to stagnation (Case A) or continued growth (Case B).

Tip 4: Get shout-outs from other writers

This is when having made connections matters most. Getting shout-outs from other writers is the best way to get extra visibility for your work outside of Latest Updates or RS. If you're on RS, shout-outs can help catapult your growth. It's easiest to ask for and/or arrange a well-timed shout-out with a friend or acquaintance, or whose story you particularly enjoy.

- *Disclaimer:* Since we know the RS algorithm works stories that are under 20k (more so under 10k), we do advise that you wait to get shout-outs once you've passed one of these benchmarks. If you make it onto RS before you've passed either threshold, it might be advisable to get started on getting shout-outs early; start small and ramp up, much like our advice surrounding update frequency.

Any shout-out from another story will help your growth, no matter how many followers the story has. One new reader is still one new reader, and likely a new reader you wouldn't have reached if you hadn't gotten the shout. Another factor to consider in getting shout-outs would be audience overlap.

If you're anxious about asking an acquaintance or potential stranger for a shout-out, please know that many writers on RR want to help out new writers or writers trying to get on RS. To reduce the amount of writers who tell you no, you can check to see if they've given shout-outs to other stories before, how frequently they give shout-outs, and what types of stories they tend to shout-out. An author who never gives shout-outs might have a personal policy about it. Authors who give infrequent shout-outs might have a personal policy to only recommend stories they're personally invested in. They might also only shout-out stories with audience overlap.

- *Disclaimer:* If you're still too anxious to ask anyone for a shout-out, you can take out an ad on RR to jump start your growth. You'll want to have an eye-catching ad with your title and subtitle

visible. You'll also want to make sure you're getting readers at different times without blowing through your ad money; we suggest manually controlling the times you turn your ad on with the goal of catching new readers in every time zone without blowing through your impressions.

Also remember that no one owes you a shout-out. While most writers don't want anything in return for giving shout-outs, it's always nice to offer a shout-out in return.

→ *Disclaimer:* It can be a gray area to offer a rating or review in exchange for a shout-out, since that can be viewed as "ratings manipulation."

Tip 5: Stick with once daily stat checks

Because RS is based on growth, it's very easy to become overly invested in your stats and where your story appears on the list. However, although RS updates every 15 minutes, with more significant changes in rankings every hour, the most significant change comes at the daily system update [5pm PST](#). We recommend checking your position on the list and your stats at that time. This is because the growth you track in the short-term clouds your judgment of your growth in the long-term; checking every 15 minutes diminishes your ability to perceive how much you've grown during the whole 24 hour cycle.

The other reason to avoid checking your stats and your position on the list frequently is that it's easy to start reducing how "good" you are or how "successful" your story is to your numbers. In fact, there are a lot of *good* writers with stories—that didn't make it to RS or get a lot of followers at all—who publish on Amazon/Kindle Unlimited *successfully*.

Tip 6: Don't revise past chapters

As you get more readers, you'll have a better idea of how well your first few chapters are doing at pulling in and keeping readers because you'll have retention stats. You might also encounter plot points that your readers respond negatively to or receive feedback from a reader that reveals a plot hole or worldbuilding contradiction, etc. That is, you might get the feeling that you should go back to the beginning of your story and revise it to be better. Just don't get stuck in a rewrite loop!

In general, it's better to stay away from revising past chapters and simply move forward with the goal of finishing the story. If it's a continuity error or something you can easily ret-con a correction, then go for it. But if the revision would take time away from you keeping up with your posting schedule, then wait to revise until you're ready to transition the book from RR to someplace like Amazon/Kindle Unlimited.

→ *Disclaimer:* If you strongly feel that the beginning of your story is preventing readers from giving your story a fair shot and that if you revised it, your story would have a significantly better chance at growing quicker, then listen to it. You know what's best for your story better than anyone else.

Tip 7: Explicitly ask for ratings, reviews, and upvotes

The best way to get ratings, reviews, and upvotes on reviews is to ask your readers for them explicitly. Readers forget to do these things and quite honestly don't know how much they help stories gain visibility. Communicate to your readers why comments, followers, favorites, ratings, and reviews are helpful to you, especially if you're aiming for or already are on RS.

→ *Disclaimer:* It is against RR rules to ask for *specific* ratings (like 5★) or a *good* review (like a 5★ review) or to *upvote* specific reviews (like 5★ reviews), as that behavior is viewed as “ratings manipulation.” We recommend using phrases like: “if you like the story, please give it a rating/review” or “if you agree with a review, please give it an upvote.” It is against the RR rules to have “[campaigns encouraging others to upvote or downvote reviews, whether positive or negative](#),” so don't do that.

We also suggest using [memes](#) to ask your readers to do these things, especially rating and reviewing. Try not to ask for ratings/reviews/upvotes in every chapter. Ideally, aim to ask your readers to upvote reviews they agree with if you find that negative reviews that don't accurately portray your story dominate the first page (since this can turn off new readers). Wait to ask for ratings/reviews for when you've finished an arc so that you receive them from readers who have a more accurate picture of your story than only the first few chapters.

Tip 8: Find a way to deal with negativity

Be assured that almost all of your readers are enjoying your story, since they're still reading it. Look at your chapter view count and imagine a room filled with that many people. Those are people who like what they're reading. Those are the people who are your fans.

Unfortunately, it's less likely that readers who are enjoying your story will tell you than it is for readers who aren't enjoying your story to tell you. There is a very vocal minority of readers on RR who are very loud about what they don't like in comments and reviews, and these people are more likely to rate your story low, upvote your negative reviews, or downvote your good reviews. This happens to every story, and indicates that your story is becoming visible. Fortunately, that room full of your loving albeit silent fans should count as much or more than the tiny handful of loud hecklers.

We suggest finding a way to tune out the negativity in whatever way works best for you—if the negativity bothers you. You can disable rating stats on RR, which means that your dashboard will not show your story's rating and ratings on the reviews you receive will be invisible to you (this feature is available on the [left-side menu](#) of your Author's dashboard). You can also use an adblocker like UBlock Origin on your dashboard's review *and* comment sections to make it invisible. **Just do not respond to bad reviews** (more on this [here](#) in case you missed it).

For some writers, their comment section is meant for other readers and so they don't moderate it. For other writers, it's meant to provide a community of people who like your story, so they

delete overly negative comments in order to foster a more positive comment community section. Negativity in your comment section can also impact how other readers enjoy your story.

→ *Disclaimer:* Deleting negative comments can get you low spite ratings, but getting any new rating can be helpful on RS!

Tip 9: Make connections

If you haven't already made connections with other writers or even if you have, being on RS is a great time to meet other writers on RS. Being on RS isn't easy (if that hasn't become clear already) because with increased visibility comes increased scrutiny (from yourself and others). Other people on RS at the same time as you will be going through very similar things. Reach out to them, connect with them, and help each other navigate the rough RS waters.

→ *Disclaimer:* In case you missed it in the Pre-Publishing section... **You will likely not find this on RR forums. Instead, join the Discord community of stories on RR that you like to make friends with people who share your interests.** We cannot stress enough how important it is to have friends who are writers, especially as you grow your career and write more books, since you can ask them for their input earlier in the life of your projects (see the [Improving](#) section).

Tip 10: Keep author's notes short and sweet

Yes, you'll want to pack in a few memes asking for followers, favorites, reviews, ratings, etc. (although we suggest spacing these asks out over a few chapters and alternating between different asks rather than all of them in every chapter). You might also choose to shout-out other stories in this space. **However, under no circumstances should your author's take up more physical space on the page than your actual chapter.**

→ *Disclaimer:* This might be a bit of an exaggeration, but it's a good rule.

Tip 11: Fight imposter syndrome

The hardest milestones are actually at the very beginning: posting your work publicly and gaining your first follower. After that, your goalposts for what is "good" or "successful" will naturally shift as you meet those goals, but that doesn't mean you're not already good or successful. You're doing the best you can do, so although you might feel that you could do better, remember that's an indication that you've grown as a writer rather than that it makes you any kind of imposter.

What you're truly aiming for is to get better and to be more successful.

Monetizing

This section discusses how to monetize your story.

Tip 1: Monetize early

As mentioned before, monetize as early as possible—whatever that means to you. If that means as soon as you start publishing, then do that. If that means as soon as you hit RS, then do that. If that means once you have 100 readers salivating at the idea of paying you money, then do that.

- *Disclaimer:* We don't generally advocate for taking out any advertisements (on RR or elsewhere) until you've monetized your work and earned enough from writing to pay for the ad. We're working on a guide for ads on RR, but our general advice is to market to specific niches without coming across too professional (to avoid [banner blindness](#)) and to link to your story's page rather than your first chapter.

Tip 2: Set up maintainable Patreon offerings

Some writers monetize by asking for support only without offering any extra chapters. However, we strongly recommend offering chapters in advance by setting up something like Patreon.

- *Disclaimer:* Patreon is the most common method on RR to monetize stories, so our advice is mainly around that. Other places you can monetize your writing would be [Substack](#), [Ghost](#), or [Revue](#). You could also use [Ko-Fi](#) for tips. However, RR only has support buttons for Patreon and Paypal.

Two things to consider with Patreon are how many advanced chapters and how many tiers you want to offer. You want to stick with a schedule that you can maintain because you're being paid to keep that schedule.

In general, it's best to offer as many advanced chapters as you can, but you don't want to devalue your work, either. In general, we recommend offering about 10 chapters in advance. You also want to offer the most amount of chapters in your highest patreon tier at a price that is the best deal of all your tiers. That means if you offer 10 chapters for \$10, if you wanted a second cheaper tier, you'd want to offer something like 4 chapters for \$5.

Another factor in maintaining your Patreon is the work it takes to post to more than one tier. If you have a \$10 tier that gets a new chapter on Monday, your readers subscribed to that tier will receive a notification about it. Your \$5 tier does not receive that notification. When your \$5 tier hits that chapter, you'll have to re-release that chapter for that tier. For these reasons, some people only offer one tier.

Lastly, some writers will create a Discord community for their readers and add Patreon benefits like a special role and/or special channel. Just keep in mind that you'll need to moderate and maintain it alongside everything else you already do.

Tip 3: Appeal to readers to become Patrons

There are probably a ton of different reasons a reader will subscribe to your Patreon, but we believe the two biggest reasons are: the reader who wants to remain completely up-to-date and the reader who wants to finish their binge. Both of these types of readers want to keep reading because you've done a good job keeping them reading. The elements that kept them reading from chapter to chapter will also draw them to your Patreon.

→ *Disclaimer:* There are also readers who will just want to support you, and those are the best.

We also recommend directly appealing to your readers to join your Patreon. Communicate what it means to you that you earn money writing. We also recommend that you use memes a lot to ask readers to join your Patreon. Unlike with asking for ratings or reviews, it's fine to include a reminder to join your Patreon every chapter. These reminders are especially effective on major cliffhangers.

Tip 4: Communicate with your Patrons

Inevitably, you'll need a break from your Patreon schedule. It might be because you've reached the end of a book and want time to plan your next book. It might be because you got sick and need time to recover. It might be because you want a vacation so that you don't burn out. These are all valid reasons to take a short hiatus, and your readers will absolutely understand as long as you communicate this to them.

Tip 5: Prepare a newsletter

When you've finished your book, we recommend that you publish it to Amazon/Kindle Unlimited. You can submit your story to independent publishers and sign a publishing contract with one of them to accomplish this; these publishers can also help you get an audio deal. You can also self-publish and pursue an audio deal separately. In either case, making the jump from webserial to a published book is necessary if you want to make more money. More on publishing on [this guide of publishers](#) or [this self-publishing guide](#).

The best way to alert as many readers of your story as possible of an impending book debut on Amazon/Kindle Unlimited is through a newsletter. Of course, you could also announce it in an author's note on RR and on your Patreon. However, what about readers who don't read that email from Patreon or don't read your author's notes or keep up-to-date with your story but would buy your book?

Improving

This section discusses how to improve your writing. Although some people might tell you it's not worth it to try to improve your writing, it's absolutely important to continue improving if you want to grow your career.

Tip 1: Identify your strengths and weaknesses

We recommend asking a trusted source for feedback, like a writer friend or a writing group, to get feedback to help you improve. Having another writer look at your work can not only help you identify your strengths and weaknesses, but you can also seek suggestions from them on how to improve. The way that they may fix a weaker spot in your story may be different than you would, and people in your writing group may offer different suggestions or contradict each other, but all of that is information for you. You can take and leave what you want.

(Un)fortunately, readers on RR are often vocal about aspects of your story that they find to be weak. They won't always be right, but sometimes they will be. The general rule is to look at all this feedback together to identify trends; multiple people saying the same things are weak are probably right. On the other hand, someone may drop you some feedback that you immediately agree or disagree with. Learn to listen to those feelings to guide you toward feedback that's the most helpful to you.

- *Disclaimer:* It can be really easy to write off negative comments or mean critique. Take in what you can from it, knowing that they're critiquing their perception of your story rather than you as a person. However, just because it's negative or mean doesn't mean it's wrong. There may still be a seed of truth in there.

There will also be times while you're rereading your own work or while you're writing that you'll know what you're producing isn't the best you could do. That's normal, especially while you're serializing a story, because you're improving all the time as you write. Just remember that what you're posting on RR is a *draft*, and it's not meant to be perfect. It's meant to help you get feedback, identify your strengths and weaknesses, and revise your story into an even better story for publication outside of RR.

- *Disclaimer:* Some people have the mentality that their work is "good enough" if it's "good enough" for RR. That's valid if that's your goal! However, if you want to publish on Amazon/Kindle Unlimited and have a better shot at being a full-time writer, your end goal shouldn't be "good enough" for RR. Your career will go further if you focus on improving the quality of your writing.

Tip 2: Learn to revise

Once you've identified your strengths and weaknesses, through feedback from your readers and also your own sense as a writer, you should learn how to strengthen both. If your pacing is

too slow, it's important to figure out how to balance it out. Or if your characterization is weak, it's important to figure out how to strengthen that. Similarly, if your pacing and characterization are both strong, how can you make them even stronger?

Writing is not a one-size-fits-all, so in revising your story to improve it, you're learning many different ways to solve problems you'll encounter in the future. The more tools you have when you encounter those problems, the easier it'll be to avoid them or to fix them.

Tip 3: Finish a story

The only way to learn how to write a story is to write one, and the same can be true of each part of a story. That means that you learn how to write beginnings by writing them...and you learn to write endings by writing them.

It's also important to finish a story because you'll learn a lot about your writing process through the entire journey of completing the story. You'll know what strategies worked for you and didn't work for you, which means you'll know what new strategies you can try next time. Also knowing that you've done it once will help you do it again.

Please note that we're not saying that you have to finish the first story you've ever written. You might decide at any point that writing a story until the end won't be a good investment of your time and so you start a new project. That's fair and valid, but try to set yourself up in that next project to write it until the end to give yourself an opportunity to learn how to do it.

Tip 4: Write a new story

Related to the previous tip, but it's important not to get stuck on one project. You might want to revise your first story into something better now that you've done it once and know better what you're doing. It's also important to learn how to revise! However, at a certain point, revising the same project won't teach you anything new.

Applying what you learned in your first story to an entirely new story is important in improving your writing. You'll be reinforcing skills you already have and also strengthening the weaknesses you'll now know you have. You'll be able to test your writing process and learn new strategies for getting words down on the page.

Essentially, like any skill, the best way to improve is to practice. Keep writing.

Tip 5: Read and read some more

One of the most undervalued tips to improving your writing is to read—and read widely.

Being able to articulate why a story is your favorite and what it's doing well (or not well) will help you do the same for your own writing. You can learn how other writers control their pace, weave in worldbuilding and characterization with action, and emulate their strategies.

It's important to read within your genre (speculative fiction as the wide genre umbrella, fantasy/science fiction as slightly more specific, LitRPG or Progression Fantasy as most specific), both in terms of new/popular traditionally published books and new/popular books on RR or indie published books. These authors are your colleagues, and being familiar with their work will help you expand your writing community as you grow your career. You'll also learn new writing tricks that are specific to the genre, like worldbuilding tricks.

It's also important to read outside of your genre. This might mean books on [craft](#) or even academic books or articles that analyze important works in the genre. This might also mean reading contemporary, romance, or mystery books. You can learn writing tricks from books in other genres, like characterization, and apply them to your own work. You can also deepen your understanding of how the world works in order to build more believable worlds in your story.