



Using A Designer

A professional designer can elevate your cover from “good” to “compelling.” They bring experience with genre expectations, visual hierarchy, typography, and market trends, but more importantly, they bring an outside eye. Working with a designer is a collaboration, not a hand-off. The clearer you are about what you want, the stronger the final cover will be.

A Quick Prompt to Get You Started

Ask yourself: *What do I want a designer to solve that I can't solve myself?*

Clarity here makes the whole collaboration smoother.

Why Work With a Designer

A good designer offers more than technical skill.

They bring:

- genre fluency - they know what readers expect
- market awareness - what sells, what stands out, what feels dated
- visual problem-solving - turning themes into imagery
- professional polish - typography, spacing, balance
- objectivity - they're not emotionally attached to the manuscript

If you want your book to compete visually with traditionally published titles, a designer can help you get there.

What You Need to Provide

Designers work best with clear direction, not vague wishes.

Useful things to share:

- a short description of your book's tone
- your genre and sub-genre
- three covers you like and dislike (and why)
- any essential elements (e.g., a specific symbol or mood)
- your preferred colour palette (if you have one)

You don't need to know design language, you just need to know how you want the book to *feel*.

How to Choose the Right Designer

Not all designers are the same. Look for someone whose work already matches the style you want.

Consider:

- portfolio - do their covers look professional and genre-appropriate
- experience - have they worked in your category
- communication style - do they listen, ask questions, and explain choices
- process - how many concepts, revisions, and file formats are included
- rights - do you own the final artwork

A good designer is a collaborator, not a dictator.

Working Together Smoothly

The best results come from a clear, respectful partnership.

Tips for a good collaboration:

- give specific feedback, not "I don't like it"
- explain why something feels off
- trust their expertise, but stay true to your vision
- avoid designing by committee, too many opinions dilute clarity
- allow time for revisions; good design isn't instant

Think of it as co-creating the book's first impression.

Costs and Expectations

Design prices vary widely depending on experience, complexity, and rights.

You're paying for:

- expertise
- time
- licensing of images or illustrations
- multiple file formats (print, Ebook, audiobook)
- revisions

A higher price doesn't always mean a better cover, but extremely low prices often mean shortcuts.

A Simple Exercise

Write a short brief titled **"What My Cover Must Do."** List three things only. This becomes your anchor when reviewing concepts.

A Final Thought

A designer doesn't replace your vision, they refine it. When you bring clarity and they bring craft, the result is a cover that feels both professional and unmistakably yours.

A designer costs money so you need to be sure that your work justifies the expense.