



## Reviews

Reviews can be one of the most powerful forms of social proof for your book. They help readers decide whether to take a chance on a new author, and they signal to retail algorithms that your book is worth showing to more people. Reviews don't need to be perfect or glowing, they just need to be genuine.

### **A Quick Prompt to Get You Started**

*What do I want a reader to feel after finishing my book, and how can I encourage them to share that feeling?*

### **Why Reviews Matter**

Reviews help your book:

- build early trust
- improve visibility on retail platforms
- attract new readers
- strengthen your credibility
- create momentum over time

Even a small number of honest reviews can make a meaningful difference.

### **Where Reviews Come From**

Most early reviews come from:

- friends and family who read advance copies
- early readers or beta readers
- your mailing list
- social media followers
- genre communities
- book bloggers or reviewers

You don't need a huge audience, just a few people willing to share their thoughts.

## **Asking for Reviews (Without Pressure)**

Readers are more likely to leave a review when asked gently and clearly.

Simple ways to encourage reviews include:

- a short note at the end of your book
- a friendly reminder on social media
- a message to your mailing list
- a quiet request to early readers

The key is to ask without expectation. Readers can feel pressure, and pressure rarely leads to good reviews.

## **Understanding Negative Reviews**

Every author receives negative reviews. They're part of the landscape, not a reflection of your worth.

Negative reviews can be:

- a sign that your book is reaching new audiences
- a reminder that taste is subjective
- occasionally useful feedback
- occasionally unhelpful noise

A single negative review doesn't harm your book. In fact, a mix of opinions often makes your reviews look more authentic.

## **What Not to Do**

A few boundaries protect your peace and your professionalism:

- don't argue with reviewers
- don't reply to negative reviews
- don't ask people to change their reviews
- don't pay for reviews on sales platforms (it will breach their conditions)
- don't join "review swap" schemes

These practices can damage your reputation and, in some cases, violate platform rules.

## **ARC Readers and Early Feedback**

Some authors use ARC (Advance Reader Copy) readers to gather early reviews.

This can be helpful when:

- you're launching a series
- you have an existing audience
- you want early momentum

ARC readers should never feel obligated to leave positive reviews, only honest ones.

## **Long-Term Review Growth**

Reviews often grow slowly and steadily over time.

This is normal, especially for:

- first-time authors
- niche genres
- books without large marketing pushes

Consistency matters more than speed. As more readers discover your book, more reviews will follow.

## **A Simple Exercise**

Write a short note titled "My Review Approach."

Include:

- how you'll ask for reviews
- where you'll ask
- how often you'll remind readers
- how you'll protect your peace when reading feedback

This gives you a calm, sustainable plan.

## **A Final Thought**

Reviews are not a verdict, they're a conversation between your book and its readers. When you approach them with openness and perspective, they become a source of insight, connection, and long-term growth rather than stress.

Whilst they can be important, for the reasons given, there are also many people that don't read them, or don't make buying decisions because of them.