

Submission Summary

Agent/editor details

Name of agent/editor _____

Title of agent/editor _____

Agency/publishing house _____

Physical location _____

Web address _____

Email address _____

Submission details

source of info

Date of request _____

Name of ms _____

How many pages _____

Synopsis (y/n, length) _____

Where send _____

How send (.doc, pdf, etc.) _____

Deadline to submit _____

Usual turnaround time _____

Date to follow up _____

Other notes/instructions/considerations

Cover Letter Checklist

Intro

- Salutation/name (check spelling & formality).....
- Remind how/when/where mat'ls were requested.....
- Manuscript title.....
- Word count
- Genre
- Any additional information that was requested.....

Pitch Paragraph

- 7-9 lines long
- Third person, present tense.....
- Hook
- Plot catalyst.....
- Genre indicators.....
- Voice.....
- Main character
- Goal, motivation, conflict.....
- Sense of setting.....
- Does **not** reveal resolution.....
- Balance of elements (not too much character development or world-building)
- Easy to understand (not too complex or confusing).....

Bio Paragraph

- Your publishing credits
- Applicable education/experience.....
- Platform (like social media presence) only if impressive & applicable.....
- When in doubt, leave it out.....

Closing

- Mention what mat'ls included/attached.....
- Thank them.....
- Don't give deadline
- Be brief.....
- Include how they can reach you
- Professional signature line.....
- Professional email address.....

Subject Line/Envelope Notation (e.g. *Requested materials*).....

Have someone else proof-read it.....

Synopsis Checklist

- Third person, present tense.....
- Single-spaced if one page, otherwise double-spaced
- Slugline: top left name/name of manuscript.....
- Page number (if more than one): top right “Synopsis Page #”
- Chronological
- Primary characters only
- Primary plotline only
- Secondary plot/char’s only if essential to understand primary.....
- Hook and/or plot catalyst occur early.....
- Tell (rather than show)
- Include genre indicators.....
- Include voice.....
- Include main character’s arc.....
- Include goal, motivation, conflict, and stakes (internal and/or external)
- Include setting.....
- Reveal resolution
- Use minimal or no dialogue.....
- Balance of elements (e.g. not too focused on beginning scenes or world-building).....
- Easy to understand (not too complex or confusing).....
- Optional: begin with short, catchy summary
- Streamline, cut, tighten down to essentials.....
- No info about you or notes directly addressed to agent/editor
- Have someone else proof-read it.....**

Submission Pages Editing Checklist

- Standard manuscript format.....
- Begin story in the right place.....
- Plot catalyst occurs within first ~30 pages
- Show (rather than tell)
- Include genre indicators.....
- Show goal, motivation, conflict, stakes (internal and external)
- Show setting
- Eliminate info-dumping.....
- “Trickle in” backstory
- Avoid having characters say/think things for benefit of reader.....
- Eliminate personal “crutch” words and phrases (like “just”).....
- Replace *to be* verbs with stronger verbs.....
- Use active voice and verbs, not passive (unless done intentionally).....
- Eliminate or replace empty adverbs
- Choose adverbs and adjectives thoughtfully; use sparingly
- Avoid big “thesaurus” words when regular words will do.....
- Check for common contraction/homophone errors (its/it’s)
- Check for subject-verb agreement.....
- Check for dangling modifiers.....
- Use “said” for dialogue tags more than 90% of the time
- Relax dialogue that’s too “perfect”
- Cut dialogue “filler,” like greetings.....
- Tone down dialect/accents in dialogue (a little goes a long way).....
- Reduce laundry-lists to one salient detail whenever possible
- Check for “head-hopping” and shifting point-of-view.....
- Eliminate exclamation points
- Avoid clichés
- Streamline, cut, tighten.....

First Page Considerations

- Something happens.....
- Conflict.....
- Sense of setting.....
- Genre indicators.....
- Does the reader know what's at stake?.....
- What does the reader wonder or is afraid will happen?
- Does it make the reader care?
- Why would the reader turn the page?.....
- Minimal exposition.....
- Avoid backstory.....
- No infodumping.....
- No clichés
- Reduce redundancy and tighten (make every word count)
- Great first line.....
- Great last line.....
- Have someone else proof-read all pages of submission.....**

Submission Tracking

Sent to: _____ (name of agent/editor)

At: _____ (agency/publishing house)

Address: _____ (email or snail mail address)

Date sent: _____

Expected response date: _____

Date to follow up: _____

Acceptance/rejection/withdrawal: _____