

Typical Elements of a Book Block

The below is based on a similar list in the fourteenth edition of *The Chicago Manual of Style*. Not every book has all these elements, and some books may contain elements not listed.

Front Matter (a. k. a. Preliminaries)

Book half-title	i
Series title, list of contributors, frontispiece, or blank	ii
Title page	iii
Copyright notice, publisher's agencies, printing history, country where printed, ISBN, CIP	iv
Dedication or epigraph	v
Blank	vi
Table of contents	v or vii
List of illustrations	recto or verso
List of tables	recto or verso
Foreword	recto or verso
Preface	recto or verso
Acknowledgements, if not part of preface	recto or verso
Introduction, if not part of text	recto or verso
List of abbreviations or chronology	recto or verso

Text (a. k. a. Main Body)

First page of text (introduction or chapter one)	1
or second book half-title or first-part title	
Blank	2
First page of text	3

Back Matter (a. k. a. End Matter or Reference Matter)

Epilogue, afterword, or conclusions	recto or verso
Appendix or appendices	recto or verso
Notes	recto or verso
Glossary	recto or verso
Bibliography	recto or verso
List of contributors	recto or verso
Index or indices	recto or verso

Typical Elements of a Book Cover

Not every book may have all these elements, and some books may contain elements not listed.

Dust Jacket (used only on hardcover books)

Usually printed four-color (CMYK) on glossy paper stock, the dust jacket is then varnished to protect the jacket from spills or other damage. It is folded to wrap around the cover, with the outer flaps tucked inside. If the cover artwork is not wrap-around—that is, covering the front cover, spine, and back cover all at once—the flaps, spine, and back cover generally will be a solid or patterned background. Wherever there is room the publisher generally will add text intended to entice a browsing customer to buy the book.

Hardcover

The core of a modern hardcover is sturdy pasteboard, wrapped with a colored fabric or heavy paper stock. The spine may be reinforced with fabric book tape some distance beyond the hinges, with the wrapping overlapping it. There may be no art or printing other than foil-stamped type on the spine. Normally a sewn binding is used for a hardcover book, as a glued binding is not sturdy enough for the task.

Book block: The entirety of the book's interior, so called because it is printed, assembled, and trimmed as a block, separately from the cover. The cover and block are then bound together as a final step.

Half-title: The main title of the work only, without subtitle, author byline, series title, or other information.

Frontispiece: An introductory illustration.

ISBN: *International Standard Book Number*, required for any book intended to be sold through the booksellers' distribution system. For periodicals, the equivalent is the ISSN, or *International Standard Serial Number*.

CIP: *Cataloging in Publications*, basic catalog data assigned and maintained by the national library of the book's country of origin. In the US, this is the responsibility of the Library of Congress; in the UK, of the British Library; and in Canada, of the Library and Archives Canada.

Epigraph: A quotation germane to the work, generally set in italic body type.

Foreword: A short statement or essay by someone other than the author of the work, usually laudatory or reminiscent. At its end should be a signature-style credit of the foreword's author. Note the spelling; the term means "a word at the fore [beginning]", not "forward".

Preface: A short statement or essay by the book's author, usually explanatory—giving reasons for or details of motivation, methodology, and other pertinent information. It may also contain acknowledgement of and permissions granted by other persons or entities, as appropriate. It is not necessary to provide a signature-style credit at the end.

Introduction: When preliminary information is necessary to a full understanding or appreciation of the book, rather than optional as with a preface, it should be placed in an introduction. If it is short, and not part of the text as such, it should be part of the front matter. If it is long, or is a genuine lead-in to the main body of text, it should be treated as if it were a chapter in its own right, "chapter zero".

Softcover

A product of the twentieth century, the softcover is nearly always made of heavy card stock, often called cover stock, printed four-color (CMYK) or even five colors or more. To reduce costs, many recent paperback novel covers contain no artwork at all, instead relying on striking graphic design; such covers may be printed entirely with spot colors. Until recently a gloss varnish would protect the cover from spills or other damage, but a range of options including matt varnish recently has become available. Glue binding is used almost exclusively, as softcovers do not have the strength to handle sewing.

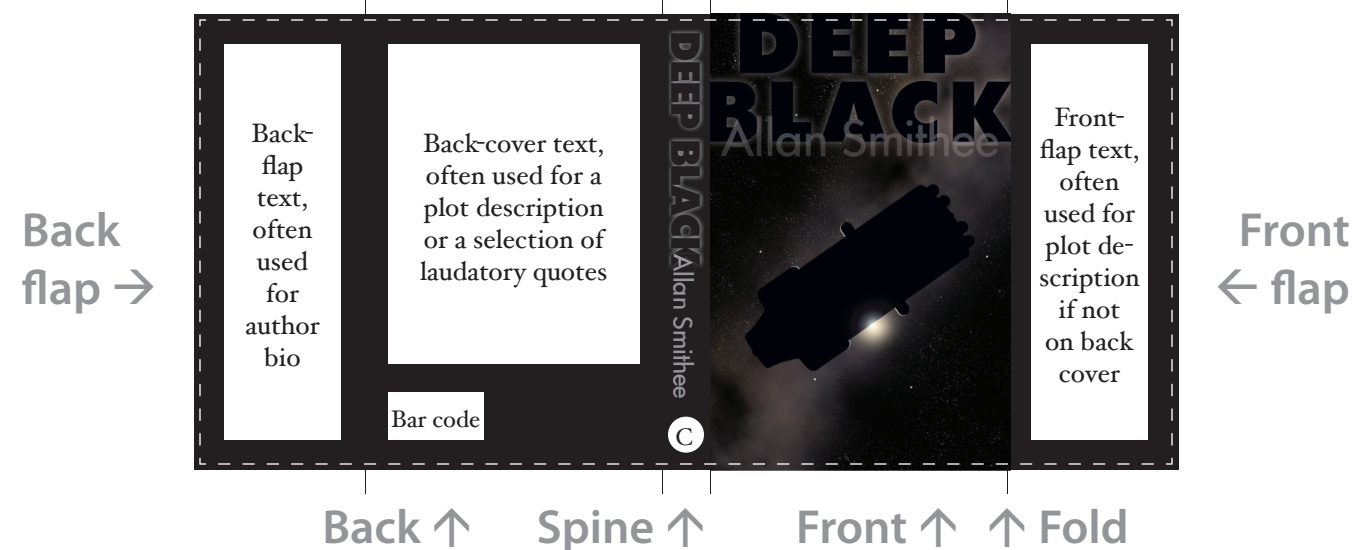
Embossing or stamping: On dust jackets or softcovers, type or graphic elements may be embossed or foil-stamped, although this is not as common as in the 1980s and 1990s.

Bar code: Identification and pricing information generally will be grouped into a small white box at the lower left or lower right corner of the dust jacket's or softcover's back. A white background is necessary to accommodate the bar code.

Colophon: The publisher's colophon (trademark or logo) appears at the top or bottom of the book's spine.

Bleed: Dust jackets and softcovers both are printed with bleeds as necessary.

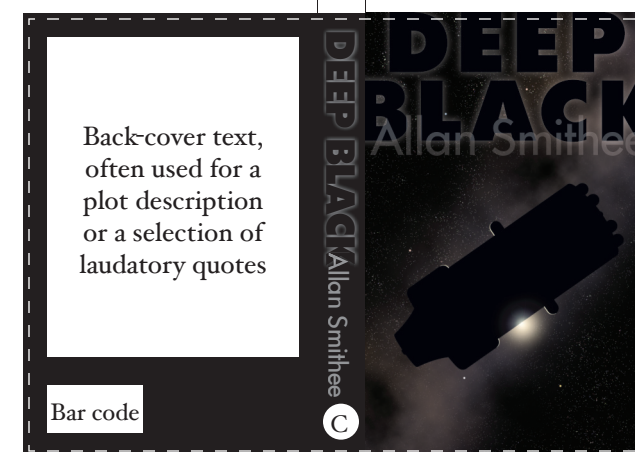
Dust jacket (a. k. a. dust wrapper)



Hardcover (a. k. a. case binding)



Softcover (a. k. a. pliable cover)



Cheat sheet courtesy of
Catspaw DTP Services
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Evolution of the bar code

The bar code and associated data printed on new books has changed steadily over the last thirty years. It has become a sophisticated method of identifying and tracking specific editions of books around the world, and so dominates the distribution network that failing to include it can destroy a book's chances of seeing the light of day.

The nine-digit SBN, or *Standard Book Number*, was developed in 1966 by Gordon Foster to identify newly-published books in the English-speaking world. It was supplanted in 1970 by the ten-digit ISBN, which in turn was superseded by the thirteen-digit ISBN in 2007.

A recent book's thirteen-digit ISBN is identical to its Bookland EAN, or *European Article Number*, assigned to a book. The EAN, JAN (*Japanese Article Number*), and UPC (*Universal Product Code*) standards all derive from the GTIN (*Global Trade Item Number*) protocol used throughout the retail world, although they may use different styles of bar code.

The ISBN now generally appears above the bar code,

set in OCR A, a typeface developed specifically to be read easily by both computer and human users. This practice may disappear gradually as ten-digit ISBNs give way to thirteen-digit successors.

The larger part of the bar code is the EAN; human-readable numerals are set at the bottom of the code. The smaller five-digit bar code to the right is optional, and in the book trade tends to be used for pricing information. The first digit is the currency ("5" indicates US dollars), and the succeeding four digits represent the price. If the latter exceeds 99.98, the code 9999 is used, and the price must be keyed by hand. If the publisher declines to use this part of the bar code, the code 90000 is used instead.

Needless to say, the print quality of a bar code is critical to prevent misreading by point-of-sale scanners.

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Tint box

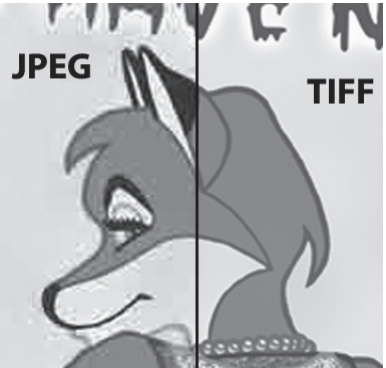
Reversed type
(light on dark) ↘

Chapter Head (Usually Includes Chapter Number and Title)

← Margin →

Page or running head(er); often includes folio if page design does not use a footer

While this is a typical design, it is only a basic example. Designers can and should experiment, so long as the design does not interfere with readability. Design is not an end in itself—it exists to facilitate communication, not to obfuscate it. As an example of the potential problems: a perceived preoccupation with design over clarity is why engineers distrust graphic artists; a dismissal of aesthetics that would entice a target audience to read and comprehend the text is what frustrates graphic artists about engineers. Understand the client, the audience, and the available options.



The above is a figure, and this is a caption. The text wraps around both figure and caption.

Collectively, the marks around the outside are called *printer's marks*

The area inside the margins and gutter, where all important page elements must fall, is called the *live area*

Bleed → ←

Registration mark → ⊕

THE FIRST LETTER IN THIS SENTENCE is a *drop cap*. This page is the *chapter opening*, and the opening paragraph generally is set with no first-line indent. Setting the first few words of the paragraph in small caps is an old tradition that is being revived today as typographers rediscover methods partially or completely abandoned during the decades when phototypesetting machines or early desktop publishing software were the state of the art. Be careful not to use the application software's "small caps" format command; it simply will shrink normal caps down, which will look spindly and out of place, especially compared to surrounding text. If true small caps are available in the font, use those instead—otherwise just avoid small caps entirely.

← Gutter →

→ ← Column

This is *body text* or *body copy*, the general run of prose. It is set without additional space between paragraphs and with an initial indent; a common indent is a quarter-inch, though this can vary as the designer deems appropriate. In fiction, an extra line between paragraphs indicates a scene break. This is less common in nonfiction, but is not completely unknown. Roman type is easiest to read, so it should make up the bulk of the text in any large block of copy. Italic or small-cap type is harder to read and in general is not recommended for long stretches of text.

Unless the book's *trim size* is large, putting tables or figures on the first page of a chapter will make it look cluttered. A more or less solid block of text is less intimidating and more likely to draw in the reader. Of course, this is less of a factor in a novel, where illustrations are rare and often are full-page. Sometimes, if the space is available, the opening text may be made to appear even friendlier by using large type with loose leading.

Page or running foot(er); usually includes folio, or page number information

Verso (left) page: even-numbered

Recto (right) page: odd-numbered

← Trim (shown for clarity)

Spread (both pages)

← Margin →

← Margin →

Leaves are the trimmed sheets of paper on which pages are printed

Trim marks ↗ ↘

file name and page numbers for printer's reference

time and date stamp for printer's reference