

NaNoWriMo Step by Step

Writing a novel in 30 days, as in the case of National Novel Writing Month (NaNoWriMo), is an ambitious undertaking. Here's an outline of the steps you can follow to accomplish this goal:

Preparation (Before Day 1):

- 1) **Idea Generation and Conceptualization:**
 - a) Start with a clear idea or concept for your novel.
 - b) Develop a basic plot or outline.
- 2) **Character Creation:**
 - a) Create your main characters, including their backgrounds, motivations, and character arcs.
- 3) **Research:**
 - a) If your novel requires research, gather relevant materials and information in advance.

Week 1 (Days 1-7):

- 1) **Set Daily Word Count Goals:**
 - a) Divide the 50,000-word target by the number of days in the month (typically 30) to determine your daily word count goal.
- 2) **Establish a Writing Routine:**
 - a) Determine your best writing times and establish a daily writing routine.
- 3) **Write Act 1:**
 - a) Focus on the setup of your story, introducing your characters and the central conflict.

Week 2 (Days 8-14):

- 1) **Maintain Consistency:**
 - a) Stick to your daily writing schedule, even if it's challenging.
- 2) **Write Act 2 (Part 1):**
 - a) Develop the middle section of your novel, where complications and challenges arise.

Week 3 (Days 15-21):

- 1) **Stay Committed:**
 - a) It's common to face a mid-month slump; persevere and stay committed.
- 2) **Write Act 2 (Part 2):**
 - a) Continue developing the middle of your story, building tension, and character growth.

Week 4 (Days 22-30):

- 1) **Push Through the Finish:**
 - a) As the end approaches, maintain your momentum, and don't worry about perfection. Numerous New York Times bestsellers have started as rough drafts created during NaNoWriMo such as "Water for Elephants" by Sara Gruen, "The Night Circus" by Erin Morgenstern, and "Cinder" by Marissa Meyer.
- 2) **Write Act 3:**
 - a) Bring your story to its climax and resolution.

- 3) **Edit and Revise:**
 - a) Resist the urge to edit as you go; instead, save editing for after the month is over.
- 4) **Complete Your 50,000 Words:**
 - a) Ensure you reach or surpass your daily word count goals to achieve the 50,000-word target.

Post-November:

- 1) **Take a Break:**
 - a) After finishing your draft, take a break from it. Let it rest for a few weeks.
- 2) **Revise and Edit:**
 - a) Return to your manuscript with fresh eyes and start the revision process. Make structural changes, improve dialogue, and refine your writing.
- 3) **Seek Feedback:**
 - a) Share your work with critique partners or beta readers for constructive feedback.
- 4) **Final Polishing:**
 - a) Make final edits, correct grammar and spelling, and polish your manuscript.
- 5) **Query or Self-Publish:**
 - a) Decide whether you want to pursue traditional publishing (query agents) or self-publish, and take the appropriate steps.
- 6) **Celebrate Your Achievement:**
 - a) Regardless of the publishing path you choose, take a moment to celebrate your accomplishment of writing a novel in 30 days.
- 7) **Submit your published novel to our library's Local Author Program:**
 - a) Contact localauthor@sandiego.gov to submit your published novel to our annual Showcase.

Writing a novel in a month is a challenging but rewarding endeavor. Remember that the first draft doesn't have to be perfect; the key is to get the story out of your head and onto the page. Writing a novel is a journey, and NaNoWriMo is a fantastic way to kickstart that journey.