

Anatomy of a Book Cover



 **Star Print Brokers**
CUSTOM BOOK PRINTING IN ASIA

Design Book Covers. Simple Book Covers for Non-Designers.

Simple book covers are not hard to design if you use the basic elements listed here. You can design book covers like a pro if you know the anatomy of a book cover.

The anatomy of a book cover is so important. To design book covers, know that you only have a few seconds to capture the readers' attention. Simple book covers must instantly deliver the message.

An anatomy lesson for simple book covers

Looking at the basic layout, from left to right, are the back cover, spine, and front cover. When printing with Star Print Brokers, we will provide measurements for your book and spine width.

Front cover – the first sales message

The must have elements on the front cover of simple book covers, are the title and author. Nothing more is really needed. But, unless the typeface of the title delivers that compelling invitation to open the book, you probably also want to add a photograph, illustration, or graphic element.

My preference is to use an original photo or image of your own creation. The the rights. You need to know how many impressions you can use, or pay for an extended license. Always give credit to the creator or website. Add it to the copyright page or in acknowledgements.

A subtitle, if any, appears below the title. A well-crafted subtitle is part of the delivery of the instant message you want readers to see to buy your book. It should be styled along with the title; if you wish to design book covers like a pro.

Title size

I hate to lecture, but I do when it comes to the size of the type on the front cover of simple book covers. Small type is beautiful, and looks especially pleasing on the cover of a book with lots of

white space around it. But, before you get too carried away with your design, reduce the cover to the thumbnail size that will appear on Amazon, or Barnes and Noble.

Yes, you probably have a website to sell your book. You might even have distribution lined up, although most of our clients do not use distribution service. But, what website has more traffic than practically any site on the planet? Amazon. Whether you sell on Amazon or not, make the title large enough when you design book covers, so that it cannot be overlooked if the cover image is reduced. This is fundamental to simple book covers.

Spine

The title is at the top of spine. It should be in the same typeface as on the front cover. The author's name should appear below the spine title. Sometimes a publisher's logo appears on the very top or bottom of the spine.

Did you ever notice that the type is on it's side, facing left? In other countries it may be customary to face right. Just make sure to check this detail.

Back cover – the second sales message to deliver when you design book covers

When readers are browsing online, after the front cover, they will most often look at the back cover. The back cover contains your most important sales information to entice them to buy your book.

Summary

A summary consists of several short, well-written sentences to tell readers what they will find the book. This is your chance. Distill your content down to a few statements. You may consider writing them as feature – benefit statements. In other words, describe a feature and the benefit the reader will derive. An example is as follows ...

In this book, the author (use your own name) lists the elements to include in a great cover layout, so your book attracts more reader attention. This translates to better sales.

Depending on the type of book, you may want to add bullet points for notable content. While this would not be pertinent to a novel, it is a good sales tool for a non-fiction, reference, or how-to books.

Book Blurbs

Book blurbs are statements about the book, or testimonials that will help to validate the book purchase. Blurbs are written by the author, publisher, or another source praising the work. It gives the author or book *authority*, so you sell more books. Put one or three blurb statements in quotes, and cite the person or source.

Jane Doe's new book does not disappoint! She created defined characters that come to life. The plot has so many twists and turns. I loved the surprise ending. I wholeheartedly recommend her new book.

—John Smith, The *Local Blog* book reviewer

About the author

If you are designing simple book covers for either a soft cover or hard cover book, add a photo of the author and a short author biography. Also, include any other titles by the author.

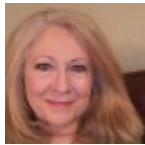
Barcode

The barcode needs to be in the lower right hand areas of the back cover. Allow for the hinge of the cover. You don't want the scan area to fall into the indentation of the hinge area. The barcode can be reduced to 80 percent, but 92 percent is standard.

Try to design book covers, but remember, we can [design](#) it for you too

We suggest working in either [Adobe InDesign](#) or [Adobe Photoshop](#) when a non-designer wants to design book covers. My personal preference is InDesign.

Now you can try to design book covers, that is simple book covers by even a non-designer!



About Nancy Starkman

Nancy Starkman is a book self-publishing expert as well as a book printing broker and book designer. She co-founded Star Print Brokers in 1999. Nancy works with self-publishers in the USA and other countries to print and ship books almost anywhere in the world. Self-publishers get the highest quality books at a low unit cost. They keep 100 percent of their profits and rights.