HOW TO
FOR AUTHORS:
FORMATTING

Prep your document properly and save your formatter time and headaches

and save you headaches too.

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and save ~~you~~ headaches too.

Formatting is a mandatory step in the publishing process in which the text, page numbers, titles, images, *everything*, are laid out to look like a book.

NOTE:

When making a formal submission to a publisher, it is still best to be professional, with contact information at top left of title page, proper indents, page numbers and so on.

SO WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

Certain keystrokes in your document slow down the formatting process.
These keystrokes are unnecessary because they are troublesome roadblocks for anyone formatting your work for paperback and ebook.

WHY?

Every time you press the space bar, tab, enter, e.t.c., hidden characters are put into your document by your word processing program.

For example: when you press the space bar, a dot appears. You cannot see it (unless you make it visible from the menu). Yet, all these keystrokes slow down the formatting process.

If those formatting your book are doing so manually, those extra characters are troublesome. If your document will be run through a formatting program, the program will misinterpret these characters, and create a jumbled mess.

WHEW!

So Let's clear this issue up!

▶ **If you have the know-how, you can format it yourself, but you will still likely want to be sure your document is clean and ready.**

▶ **If you are going to have someone else format for you,**

You have two choices

A:

You can write your story in a way that it is automatically ready for formatting.

OR

B:

You can write your story any way you want, but be willing to "clean it up" *before* formatting.

Are you self-publishing?

A

is likely best for you. Learn to write your document in a way that it is ready to be formatted when you're done!

*Just be sure this is okay with your editor, because although your document is prepared for formatting, it will NOT look proper to you.
More below.

*So, you wrote your book in a way that it is ready to be formatted, your editor has gone through your work and corrections are made.
Now all you have to do is get it formatted...
then PUBLISH!

That's it!

A publisher publishing your book?

A or B

but likely neither!

**When you query or submit your story, it *must be* professionally and properly written.
(Title page, address, proper indents e.t.c.)**

*After accepting your submission, your publisher will make you aware of any specific requirements, but as far as formatting goes, more than likely your publisher will have the resources to take your story and run with it.

That's it!

So then, if I need to prepare or fix my story so it is ready for formatting, how do I do that?

We think our document looks neat. Like this:

P1

P2

But under the hood (when the hidden characters are revealed), page 1 looks like this:

CHAPTER 1

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet. Qui praesentium fuga a sequi voluptas et corrupti veniam est explicabo earum qui eius architecto vel esse aliquid. Aut impedit sunt quo dolorum neque id corrupti quidem qui fugiat. Aut consequatur nemo est nihil galisum sed saepe dolorem. Est laudantium optio aut delectus soluta aut maxime eveniet eum magni sunt ut repellat internos.

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Quo voluptates nemo aut pariatur aspernatur ut temporibus iste sed iusto nesciunt est obcaecati consequatur At recusandae omnis est similique illo. Sed deleniti sint sed omnis quis eos odio soluta ab voluptatem architecto ut nobis numquam qui obcaecati voluptatibus.

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet. Qui praesentium fuga a sequi voluptas et corrupti veniam est explicabo earum qui eius architecto vel esse aliquid. Aut impedit sunt quo dolorum neque id corrupti quidem qui fugiat. Aut consequatur nemo est nihil galisum sed saepe dolorem. Est laudantium optio aut delectus soluta aut maxime eveniet eum magni sunt ut repellat internos.

Ut officiis quia qui maxime maiores voluptate enim quo quia vitae a dolores quis. Ea accusantium voluptas eos eius ipsa hic unde quia qui modi fugiat qui nobis aliquid est animi vitae. Aut excepturi distinctio rem voluptatem galisum sed ipsum natus sed rerum autem.

Quo voluptates nemo aut pariatur aspernatur ut temporibus iste sed iusto nesciunt est obcaecati consequatur At recusandae omnis est similique illo. Sed deleniti sint sed omnis quis eos odio soluta ab voluptatem architecto ut nobis numquam qui obcaecati voluptatibus.
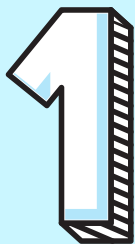
All those hidden characters (that used to be called, "non-printing characters"), are the ones that mess up the formatting process. Sometimes it is a good idea to reveal those characters because they can show you any unneeded spaces, tabs and paragraphs.

Again, if *you* must prep your document for formatting, you can write normally, then after your story is finished go back and remove all these characters.

But what a pain!

So, if you would rather learn to write in a way that does not add these unneeded characters in the first place, here are the things you can do:

1 Don't press tab at the start of a paragraph.

*Some formatters are okay with this one, but if you're going to put in the effort to change your writing habits, it's a good idea to omit pressing tab.

Remember, this is about making you and the formatter's life easier (and less time working on your project can save time AND money), but ALWAYS check with your editor to be sure she can still do her job if you write this way. 😉

2

Do not press enter to end every line, ONLY use enter at the end of a paragraph to begin a new paragraph.

*Pressing enter signifies what is called a, "Hard Return." (When using a typewriter one must hit return to begin the next line.) Formatting software interprets hard returns as the start of a new paragraph, even if it isn't the start of a new paragraph.

What do you do? Just keep typing. Your text will flow onto the next line by itself.

Tip: Do you really need to end a line *before* the margin (*before* a new paragraph), as with poetry?
Then you may use a soft return:
Shift+Enter
A soft return signifies the end of a line instead of the end of a paragraph.
This can still be problematic for your formatter. Rarely, if ever, do a soft return.

3

If you get to the end of your text before getting to the end of the page, what do you do?

Normally, people do this:
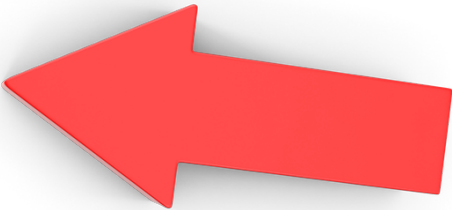
Enter
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Enter

But doing that causes this to happen:

Chapter·3¶
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→   Lorem·ipsum·dolor·sit·amet.·Qui·praesentium·fuga·a·sequi·voluptas·et·corrupti·veniam·est·explicabo·earum·qui·eius·architecto·vel·esse·aliquid.·Aut·impedit·sunt·quo·dolorum·neque·id·corrupti·quidem·qui·fugiat.·Aut·consequatur·nemo·est·nihil·galisum·sed·saepe·dolorem.·Est·laudantium·optio·aut·delectus·soluta·aut·maxime·eveniet·eum·magni·sunt·ut·repellat·internos.¶
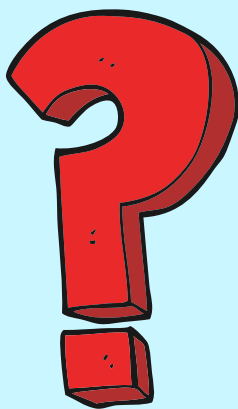¶
Ut·officiis·quia·qui·maxime·maiores·voluptate·enim·quo·quia·vitae·a·dolores·quis.·Ea·accusantium·voluptas·eos·eius·ipsa·hic·unde·quia·qui·modi·fugiat·qui·nobis·aliquid·est·animi·vitae.·Aut·excepturi·distinctio·rem·voluptatem·galisum·sed·ipsum·natus·sed·rerum·autem.¶
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No doubt you see the characters, made visible so you can see them...
it's like the letter P backwards... over and over and over.

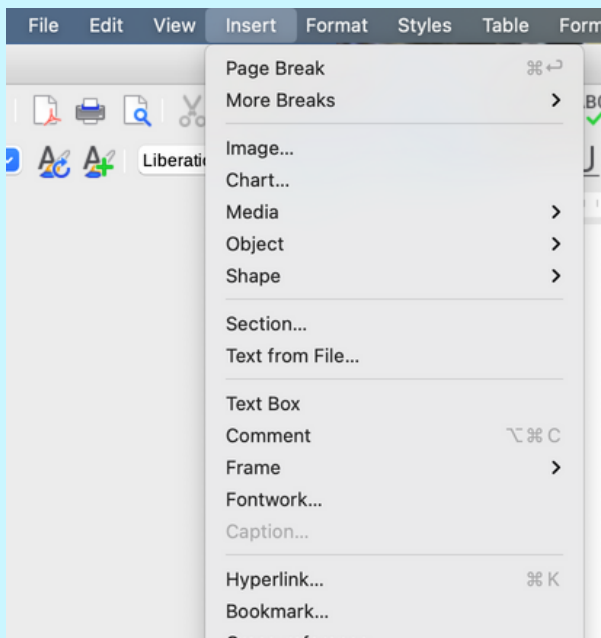*Remember, even when you don't see them they are there, and these characters will cause formatting problems!
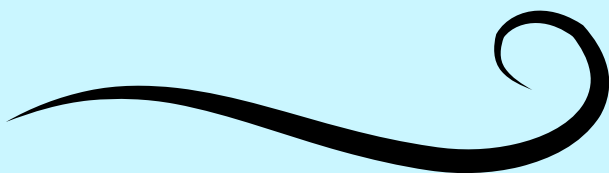
What does one do in this situation

If you are ready to go on to the next page before typing gets you there, do a page break.

You can find page break in the menu. Depending your word processor it will look similar to this:

Or you can learn the shortcut. For a page break in Word, the shortcut is: Ctrl+Enter

Until you get used to doing things this way, your pages will feel funky. But all those extra & unnecessary characters will be gone using these 3 actions.

Your pages will look like this:

Chapter 1¶

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet. Qui praesentium fuga a sequi voluptas et corrupti veniam est explicabo earum qui eius architecto vel esse aliquid. Aut impedit sunt quo dolorum neque id corrupti quidem qui fugiat. Aut consequatur nemo est nihil galisum sed saepe dolorem. Est laudantium optio aut delectus soluta aut maxime eveniet eum magni sunt ut repellat internos.¶

Ut officiis quia qui maxime maiores voluptate enim quo quia vitae a dolores quis. Ea accusantium voluptas eos eius ipsa hic unde quia qui modi fugiat qui nobis aliquid est animi vitae. Aut excepturi distinctio rem voluptatem galisum sed ipsum natus sed rerum autem.¶

Quo voluptates nemo aut pariatur aspernatur ut temporibus iste sed iusto nesciunt est obcaecati consequatur At recusandae omnis est similique illo. Sed deleniti sint sed omnis quis eos odio soluta ab voluptatem architecto ut nobis numquam qui obcaecati voluptatibus.¶

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet. Qui praesentium fuga a sequi voluptas et corrupti veniam est explicabo earum qui eius architecto vel esse aliquid. Aut impedit sunt quo dolorum neque id corrupti quidem qui fugiat. Aut consequatur nemo est nihil galisum sed saepe dolorem. Est laudantium optio aut delectus soluta aut maxime eveniet eum magni sunt ut repellat internos.¶

Ut officiis quia qui maxime maiores voluptate enim quo quia vitae a dolores quis. Ea accusantium voluptas eos eius ipsa hic unde quia qui modi fugiat qui nobis aliquid est animi vitae. Aut excepturi distinctio rem voluptatem galisum sed ipsum natus sed rerum autem.¶

Quo voluptates nemo aut pariatur aspernatur ut temporibus iste sed iusto nesciunt est obcaecati consequatur At recusandae omnis est similique illo. Sed deleniti sint sed omnis quis eos odio soluta ab voluptatem architecto ut nobis numquam qui obcaecati voluptatibus.¶

But writing your story will come easier because all you have to do is type! You can focus more on writing and not worry about all the moving, adjusting and lining up. What looks good to your eyes doesn't matter. Getting your story into book form and published matters. Your job is to write, let your formatter format!

CHEAT SHEET

1 Don't press the tab key.

2 Only press Enter when you want to start a new paragraph.

3 Page break to go to the next page.

Final word:

This booklet is created with the typical situation in mind. Many situations are unique. Our goal is to help you get your book to formatting quickly and without problems that can cause delays, expense, and frustration. We suggest you always speak with the following people about your methods to be sure the entire process runs smoothly as possible.

Editor/Proofreader
Publisher
Formatter
CoAuthors

Happy Writing!

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PUBLISHING

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