

Author Preparation Guide

Everything You Need Before We Start

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Welcome!

Congratulations on taking the exciting step of creating an audiobook ! This guide will help you prepare everything needed for a smooth, successful production process.

Proper preparation ensures:

- ✓ Faster production timeline
- ✓ Fewer revisions needed
- ✓ More authentic character voices
- ✓ Better overall quality
- ✓ Smoother collaboration

SECTION 1: MANUSCRIPT PREPARATION

YOUR MANUSCRIPT CHECKLIST

☐ FINAL PROFREAD COMPLETE

Your manuscript should be in its absolute final form. Changes after recording begins can be costly and time-consuming.

- ✓ All typos corrected
- ✓ Grammar and punctuation finalized
- ✓ Plot holes filled
- ✓ Character names and physical appearances consistent throughout
- ✓ Timeline inconsistencies resolved

☐ PROFESSIONAL EDITING COMPLETED

Your manuscript should have been through:

- ✓ Development editing
- ✓ Line editing
- ✓ Copy editing
- ✓ Proofreading

■ FORMATTED CORRECTLY

- ✓ Clear chapter breaks
- ✓ Scene breaks marked
- ✓ Dialogue properly formatted
- ✓ No unusual fonts or formatting
- ✓ Page numbers included

■ SAVED IN CORRECT FORMAT

Preferred formats:

- ✓ Microsoft Word (.docx)
- ✓ PDF with selectable text - BEST
- ✓ Google Docs (share link with edit access)

AVOID:

- ✗ Scanned PDFs
- ✗ Image files
- ✗ Unusual file formats

MANUSCRIPT BEST PRACTICES

◆ DIALOGUE TAGS

Use clear dialogue tags, especially in scenes with multiple speakers.

Instead of:

“I love you.”

“I love you too”

“Forever?”

“Forever.”

Use:

“I love you,” he whispered.

“I love you too,” she replied softly.

“Forever?” he asked, hope in his voice.

“Forever,” she promised.

◆ INTERNAL THOUGHTS

Clearly differentiate internal thoughts from dialogue.

Use italics or clear tags like “she thought” or “he wondered.”

◆ ACCENTS & DIALECTS

If characters have accents, provide:

- Description of the accent (Southern drawl, Scottish brogue, etc)
- Reference examples (celebrity voices, audio samples)
- Specific words/phrases that should be pronounced differently

Avoid phonetic spelling unless absolutely necessary.

◆ FOREIGN LANGUAGES

For non-english words and phrases:

- Provide pronunciation guide
- Indicate if translation should be read aloud
- Specify if accent should be authentic or Americanized

◆ EXPLICIT CONTENT

Mark particularly explicit scenes if you want:

- Advance warning before recording
- Specific tone/approach discussed
- Option to record in separate session

SECTION 2: CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

CHARACTER VOICE BRIEF

You'll complete a detailed Character Voice Brief form, but start thinking about these elements now:

FOR EACH MAIN CHARACTER;

☐ BASIC INFORMATION

- Full name and pronunciation
- Age
- Physical description (height, build, etc.)
- Occupation
- Background/upbringing

☐ PERSONALITY TRAITS

- Confident or insecure?
- Introverted or extroverted?
- Guarded or emotionally expressive?
- Serious or playful?
- Dominant or submissive energy?

■ VOICE CHARACTERISTICS

- Pitch (high, medium, low)
- Pace (fast talker, slow and deliberate)
- Volume (soft-spoken, commanding)
- Texture (smooth, raspy, breathy)
- Emotional range

■ SPEAKING PATTERNS

- Formal or casual language?
- Complete sentences or fragments?
- Verbal tics or catchphrases?
- Accent or dialect?
- Educational level reflected in speech?

■ EMOTIONAL VOICE

How does this character sound when:

- Happy/excited
- Angry/frustrated
- Sad/heartbroken
- Scared/anxious
- Aroused/intimate
- Vulnerable/open

VOICE INSPIRATION EXAMPLES

Providing voice inspiration helps immensely! Consider:

◆ CELEBRITY VOICES

“She should like Emma Stone - warm, slightly raspy, approachable”

“He has a voice like Chris Hemsworth - deep, commanding, with warmth”

◆ OTHER AUDIOBOOK NARRATORS

“Similar to how Narrator X voiced Character Y in Book Z”

◆ MOVIE/TV CHARACTERS

“Think of how Outlander’s Jamie Fraser speaks - Scottish accent, deep, protective”

◆ AUDIO SAMPLES

If you have specific audio clips that capture the vibe, share links!

◆ DESCRIBE THE FEELING

“Her voice should make you feel safe and comforted”

:His voice should send shivers down your spine”

“They sound like sunshine and optimism”

SECTION 3: PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

CREATE YOUR PRONUNCIATION LIST

■ CHARACTER NAMES

List every character name (even minor ones) with pronunciation.

Example:

- Kaelan = KAY-lan (not kee-LANo)
- Siobhan = shi-VAWN (not see-OH-ban)
- Evangeline - eh-VAN-jeh-leen (emphasis on VAN)

■ PLACE NAMES

- Cities, towns, villages
- Countries or realms (fantasy)
- Streets, buildings, landmarks
- Fictional locations

Example:

- Caelum = KAY-lum
- The Thornwood Estate = THORN-wood (not THORN-wuhd)

■ SPECIALIZED TERMS

- Fantasy/sci-fi terminology
- Historical terms
- Technical jargon
- Made-up words
- Species/creature names

Example:

- Fae = FAY (not FAE as in “face”)
- Grimoire = grim-WAR (not GRIM-or-ee)

■ FOREIGN WORD/PHRASES

- Provide pronunciation
- Indicate language of origin
- Specify if authentic accent desired

Example:

- Mon cheri = moon sheh-REE (French, light accent)
- Amore mio = ah-MOR-ay MEE-oh (Italian, authentic)

PRONUNCIATION NOTATION METHODS

Use whatever method is clearest for you:

METHOD 1: Phonetic Spelling

Rhysand = REESE-and

Feyre = FAY-ruh

METHOD 2: Rhyming

Rhysand = Rhymes with “peace and”

Feyre = Rhymes with ‘player’

METHOD 3: Syllable Breakdown

Rhysand - REESE (like the candy) + AND

Feyre = FAY (like “say”) + RUH (like “duh”)

METHOD 4: Audio Recording

Record yourself saying the names and share the audio files!

SECTION 4: TECHINCAL REQUIREMENTS

FILES YOU NEED TO PROVIDE

■ FINAL MANUSCRIPT

Format: .docx or PDF

File name: [BookTitle]_[YourLastName]_Final.docx

☐ AUTHOR BIO

For opening/closing credits

Length: 2-3 sentences OR 30-50 words

Example:

“[Your Name] is a USE Today bestselling autor of spicy paranormal romance. When she’s not writing about alpha shifters and their fated mates, she’s drinking coffee and plotting her next book. Find her at [website].”

☐ BOOK METADATA

- Full title and subtitle
- Series name and book number (if applicable)
- ISBN (if you have it)
- Copyright year
- Dedication (if you want it read aloud)

☐ COVER ART (Optional but helpful)

- High-resolution cover image
- Helps me visualize the tone and vibe

INFORMATION TO CONFIRM

☐ NARRATION STYLE

- First person or third person?
- Single POV or multiple POVs?
- Past tense or present tense?

☐ DISTRIBUTION PLANS

- ACX/Audible exclusive?
- Wide distribution?
- Royalty share or pay-for-production?
- This affects the file specifications

☐ TIMELINE PREFERENCES

- Firm deadline or flexible?
- Rush needed?
- Preferred start date?

☐ SERIES INFORMATION

- Is this part of a series?
- Will you want the same narrator for future books?
- Any character voices that need to match previous audiobooks?

SECTION 5: COLLABORATION & COMMUNICATION

SETTING EXPECTATIONS

☐ YOUR AVAILABILITY

How quickly can you:

- Respond to questions during recording?
- Review milestone samples?
- Provide feedback on voice samples?
- Approve final delivery?

☐ COMMUNICATION PREFERENCES

- Email, text, phone, video call?
- Best times to reach you?
- Time zone?

☐ INVOLVEMENT LEVEL

How involved do you want to be?

◆ HANDS-OFF APPROACH

“I trust your expertise. Just send me the milestones and final product for approval”

◆ COLLABORATIVE APPROACH

“I’d love to be involved! Send me samples often and let’s discuss character voices in detail.”

◆ SOMEWHERE IN BETWEEN

“I want to review the key milestones but trust you for day-to-day decisions.”

QUESTION TO CONSIDER

Think about these before our consultation:

☐ TONE & MOOD

- What's the overall vibe of your book?
- Dark and brooding? Light and fun? Emotional and angsty?
- What emotion should listeners feel most?

☐ PACING

- Is this a slow-burn romance or fast-paced action?
- Should intimate scenes be slow and sensual or passionate and quick?
- Any specific scenes that need special attention?

☐ HEAT LEVEL

- How explicit are the intimate scenes?
- Fade to black, steamy, or explicit?
- Any specific approach you want for these scenes?

☐ EMOTIONAL DEPTH

- What are the most emotional scenes?
- Where should listeners cry?
- Where should they swoon?

☐ DEAL-BREAKERS

- Any specific things you absolutely don't want?
- Any pronunciations that would ruin the experience?
- Any character interpretations that would be wrong?

SECTION 6: ROMANCE-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

INTIMATE SCENES

■ HEAT LEVEL CLARITY

Rate your book's heat level:

- ☐ Sweet (kissing only, fade to black)
- ☐ Warm (Sensual, some detail, not explicit)
- ☐ Hot (explicit, detailed intimate scenes)
- ☐ Scorching (very explicit, multiple detailed scenes)

■ SCENE APPROACH

How should intimate scenes be narrated?

◆ EMOTIONAL FOCUS

"Focus on the emotional connection and feelings rather than physical mechanics"

◆ BALANCED

"Balance between emotion and physical description"

◆ EXPLICIT

"Don't hold back - narrate everything as written"

■ VOICE CHANGES

Should character voices change during intimate scenes?

- Breathier?
- Deeper?
- More vulnerable?
- Stay consistent?

■ COMFORT LEVEL

Are there any specific words or phrases you want:

- Emphasized?
- Softened?
- Avoided (if possible)?

INTIMATE SCENES

RELATIONSHIP DYNAMICS

Describe the romantic dynamic:

- Enemies to lover?
- Friends to lovers?
- Fated mates?
- Slow burn or instant attraction?

POWER DYNAMICS

- Who pursues whom?
- Equal partnership or dominant/submissive?
- How does this show in their voices?

KEY ROMANTIC MOMENTS

List the scenes where chemistry is crucial:

- First meeting
- First kiss
- First intimate scene
- Declaration of love
- Climactic reunion
- Happily ever after

CHEMISTRY GOALS

What should listeners feel between the characters?

- Electric tension?
- Comfortable warmth?
- Dangerous attraction?
- Soul-deep connection?

TROPES & THEMES

Identify your main tropes (helps me understand the vibe):

COMMON ROMANCE TROPES

- Enemies to Lovers
- Friends to Lovers
- Forced Proximity
- Fake Relationship
- Second Chance
- Forbidden Love
- Fated Mates
- Grumpy/Sunshine
- Protector Romance
- Alpha Hero
- Cinnamon Roll Hero
- Other _____

SECTION 7: GENRE-SPECIFIC PREPARATION

PARANORMAL ROMANCE

SUPERNATURAL ELEMENTS

- What supernatural creatures/beings are in your book?
- Should they sound different from humans?
- Any special vocal effects needed (echo, growl, etc.)

WORLD-BUILDING TERMS

- Magic system terminology
- Supernatural hierarchy
- Realm/dimension names
- Powers and abilities

CREATURE VOICES

Should vampires/shifters/fae sound:

- More predatory?
- Ancient/timeless?
- Otherworldly?
- Mostly human with subtle differences?

PARANORMAL ROMANCE

■ TIME PERIOD

- Specific era and year
- Location (England, Scotland, America, etc.)
- Social class of characters

■ LANGUAGE STYLE

- Period-appropriate dialogue?
- Modern language with historical setting?
- Formal speech patterns?

■ ACCENTS

- British (Which region?)
- Scottish, Irish, Welsh?
- American (Which region?)
- Authentic or softened for clarity?

■ TITLES & FORMS OF ADDRESS

- Duke, Lord, Lady, etc.
- Proper pronunciation and usage
- When formal vs. informal

CONTEMPORARY ROMANCE

■ SETTING

- Urban, suburban, small town, rural?
- Specific city or region?
- Does location affect accent/dialect?

■ PROFESSION/LIFESTYLE

- Do characters use industry jargon?
- Specific terminology to pronounce?
- Educational background reflected in speech?

MODERN REFERENCES

- Pop culture references
- Technology terms
- Brand names
- Current slang

FANTASY ROMANCE

WORLD-BUILDING

- High fantasy or urban fantasy?
- Magic system
- Political structure
- Different races/species

NAMING CONVENTIONS

- Are names from specific language roots?
- Pronunciation guide for all fantasy names
- Consistency in similar names

MAGICAL ELEMENTS

- Spell names and incantations
- Magical creature names
- Realm/dimension names

SECTION 8: MARKETING & LAUNCH PREPARATION

THINK AHEAD

MARKETING CLIPS

Which scenes would make great promotional clips?

- Teaser-worthy moments (no spoilers)
- Swoon-worthy romantic moments
- Funny or memorable dialogue
- Emotional hooks

■ RETAIL SAMPLE

The first 5 minutes will be your retail sample on Audible.

- Does your opening hook listeners immediately?
- Should we include a brief intro/hook before Chapter 1

■ SOCIAL MEDIA PLANS

- Will you promote the audiobook launch?
- Do you want to collaborate on promotional content?
- Can I share behind-the-scenes content?

■ SERIES PLANNING

If this is book 1 of a series:

- When do you plan to release book 2?
- Should we schedule book 2 now?
- Any series discount interest?

SECTION 9: BUDGET & PAYMENT

FINANCIAL PREPARATION

■ UNDERSTAND PRICING STRUCTURE

Review the service tiers:

- Basic: \$200-300 PFH
- Standard: \$250-375 PFH
- Premium: \$325-450 PFH

■ CALCULATE ESTEMATED COST

Formula: $(\text{Word Count} / 9,300) \times \text{PFH Rate} = \text{Total Cost}$

Example:

$60,000 \text{ words} / 9,300 = 6.45 \text{ finished hours}$

$6.45 \text{ hours} \times \$300 \text{ PFH} = \$1,935 \text{ total}$

■ PAYMENT SCHEDULE

Standard payment terms:

- 25-30% upfront (upon contract signing)
- 50% at halfway point (50% milestone)
- 20-25% upon final delivery

Plan your budget accordingly!

■ ADDITIONAL COSTS TO CONSIDER

- Rush delivery surcharge (25-75%)
- Erotic content premium (50-80%)
- Complex multiple-POV surcharge (\$25-75)
- Author-requested revisions (75% PFH rate)

■ ROYALTY SHARE OPTION

If choosing royalty share instead::

- Understand the commitment (7 years exclusive)
- Know your book's sales potential
- Consider hybrid options (partial upfront + royalty)

SECTION 10: FINAL CHECKLIST

BEFORE OUR CONSULTATION

- Read this entire guide
- Make notes on questions or concerns
- Gather all required materials
- Think about character voices
- Create pronunciation list
- Review your manuscript one final time
- Prepare voice inspiration examples
- Consider your budget and timeline
- Write down your goals for the audiobook
- List any specific concerns or requirements

READY TO START?

Once you've completed this preparation:

1. Schedule your free consultation
2. Complete the Character Voice Brief form
3. Gather all required files
4. Submit your project inquiry

I'll review everything and provide:

- ✓ Detailed quote
- ✓ Estimated timeline
- ✓ Answers to all your questions
- ✓ Next steps to begin production

BONUS: QUICK REFERENCE CHEAT SHEET

MUST-HAVE MATERIALS:

- Final, proofread manuscript (PDF or .docx)
- Character Voice Brief (completed form)
- Pronunciation guide for all unique names/terms
- Author Bio (2-3 sentences)
- Book metadata (title, subtitle, series info)

HELPFUL MATERIALS:

- Voice inspiration examples (celebrities, audio samples)
- Character mood boards or visual references
- List of key emotional scenes
- Marketing clip preferences
- Cover art (high-resolution)

INFORMATION TO CONFIRM:

- Timeline and deadline requirements
- Budget and payment preferences
- Heat level and intimate scene approach
- Communication preferences
- Involvement level (hands-off vs collaborative)

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

- What's the overall tone/mood of your book?
- What emotion should listeners feel most?
- What are your deal-breakers or must-haves?
- Is this part of a series?
- What are your marketing/launch plans?

QUESTIONS OR NEED HELP?

Don't stress! I'm here to guide you through every step.

Contact Kelly Jean:

✉ Email: connect@kellyjeantaylor.com

🌐 Website: kellyjeantaylor.com

Schedule your free consultation:

[CLICK HERE TO SCHEDULE TIME](#)

Looking forward to bringing your story to life! 🎙️❤️

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