Introduction

My books are all written in standard manuscript format, Courier font, wide margins, doublespaced, with a number of typographic standards used. If this manuscript is bought by a publishing house, it is converted via their internal standards to the format used for their books. In previous times, this meant that the entire book was re-typed by a typesetter. In this day and time, the electronic copy of the book is sent to the publisher converted.

However, if I am doing the conversion myself, there are a large number of things that must be changed. This document is an attempt to specify that list of conversions so that if I do it again on another book, I’ll not have to re-invent the process each time.

This is a document subject to change, as I refine my book layout format.
Comparison Between Formats

The manuscript format is based on typewritten sheets, and even in this age of universal access to word processors, this format persists. It is fairly staightforward.

Paper is 8.5 inches by 11 inches, with one inch margins all around. Text is written double-spaced with a simple font, left justified, on one side of the paper. I have always used Courier and when I started writing, the advice was to avoid proportional fonts. Courier most closely matched the mechanical typewriter typography that it replaced. However, this has changed somewhat over the years and standard fonts like Times are often used.

The title of a book should be on a separate page and each chapter should start half-way down on a new page.

The manuscript standard is designed to give information to the editors and typesetters—not to make a artistically crafted printed page. Stick to a single font. If font changes are necessary, then that is marginal information, not actually part of the manuscript. There are a few standards for the most common markups.

Any text that is underlined in the manuscript will be set in italics. Any text that has a wavy line under it will be set in bold print.

Scene changes or breaks in time are indicated by hash marks as above. This will be typeset as additional white space in the final copy—sometimes with additional typesetter flourishes. It helps to have a style—I use Header3—that centers the marks.
Since a scene break is a structural element of the text, marking it as a third level header allows you to index it if you find that useful.

Sentence shifts, can be indicated by a “--“ double-dash in the manuscript. This will be converted to an *emdash* in the book format. It helps if it is written as “SpaceDashDashSpace” in the manuscript. That allows the line to wrap easier and conversion is easier.

I have Word’s “smart quotes” turned off by default in my manuscripts, since the original text is frequently edited and Word can get confused when the quotes are changed under it. It is very easy to put the slanting quotes back in as part of the conversion process.

Manuscript headers and footers are for the editor, with the primary purpose of supplying contact information on the first page of the manuscript, and the ability to put the unbound, loose sheets of the manuscript back together if several stories fall off the desk and get mixed together by accident.

The page one header should have the author’s name, address and other contact information, as well as the approximate word count of the text. I usually put contact information on the upper left and word count on the upper right, although there are some house standards, and you should follow the publisher’s directions if they want it formatted their way.

On subsequent pages, put the author and manuscript title on the upper left and the page number on the upper right.

Footers aren’t actually used.
Book Layout Format

One common trade paperback format is 6 inches by 9 inches, and there are many things that must be converted to change a manuscript into a pleasingly formated printed page. This time, the formatting is for the reader, not a professional “in the industry”.

Here is what I have had to do to convert my manuscript using Microsoft Word as my word processor:

Create a new fresh document.

File > Page Setup > Settings-Microsoft Word:

Custom Page Size: 6 by 9

Margins:
- Top .75
- Bottom .75
- Left .75
- Right .75
- Gutter .25
- Header .4
- Footer .6

The purpose of these settings is to fit your text to the smaller page size with a gutter. This means that the odd pages will be shifted slightly to the right and the even pages will be shifted slightly to the left. When the pages are bound together, that will shift the text of the page away from the binding to make it easier to read.
Select all the text of your manuscript and paste it into the new document. Close your original manuscript, so there’s no chance you’ll accidentally make a change that will mess up your original.

Convert your styles.

You have been smart in writing your manuscript and have set up your standard manuscript styles for body text, for your headers and titles, for your block quotes, etc. You’ve done this in a consistent fashion and all of your manuscript is controlled by these styles. Thus your job to convert to a book format style or to any other style is a lot easier.

**You will not edit your styles.** You will create new ones for the book layout.

**Format > Style...**
Select your body text style in the list. Click **New...** and name your new book format style. Then using the Format pulldown define the new style.

Repeat this process for each of the styles used in your manuscript. The basic changes you will be making are changes to fit the new format:

Define a new font and font size for your main text. Change your double-line spacing to single or some other spacing, depending on what you want the page to look like. Change your paragraph indent to a smaller spacing to match the new look. New chapters no longer have to start half way down the page, but should have a pleasing spacing of some kind.

Now, one by one, change your text to the new styles.

Bring up the **Find and Replace dialog box**, and with no text in the search field, under the extended options area, choose **Format > Style** and select the style to be changed. In the
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replace search area, do the same and select the replacement style.
Click the **Replace All** button. Repeat for each style.

My style list includes:

* HenryManuscript*
* Blockquote*
* Title*
* Heading1*
* Heading2*
* Sign*

and others, depending on the need.

By now, your text should look radically different, but you still have to convert all those manuscript typograpical standards to what they represent.

Bring up the **Find and Replace dialog box.** Click the **No Formatting** button if it is lit.

**Find:** Format > Font > underlined

**Replace:** Format > Font > italics, no underline

**Replace All**

Next change all **wavy underlines to bold, no underline** using the same technique.

Next change all double dashes “Space--Space” to **Special Em Dash** with no spaces.

Next select all “###” markers and replace with a marker character, like •. In my first attempts, I just wanted extra white space, so I deleted the hash marks and left a blank line. This was a mistake, because the AutoFormat step, done next, kindly removes blank lines for you, whether you want it to or not. I had wiped out my scene breaks! You can delete the ### or • *after* using AutoFormat, but make sure you don’t use it again after that.
Next go to **Format > AutoFormat > Options**. Select only **Replace straight quotes with smart quotes** and **Preserve styles**. Then **Autoformat Now**.

Go to the beginning of your manuscript and add the standard introductory pages; Title Page, Copyright Page, Table of Contents (Word can generate one for you if you’ve used the right header styles), and your Acknowledgements/Dedication page.

Now we have to create the Headers and Footers. Delete all headers and footers from the manuscript. First Mark each chapter as a separate section so that headers can be customized by chapter.

Place the cursor immediately in front of the chapter title and insert **Section Break (Odd Page)**. Repeat for each chapter.

This will put each chapter starting on the right hand side page.

Now, let’s set up the headers. Go to Section 2, which has chapter 1. **View > Headers and Footers**.

Move your cursor to the header and set your header options, **Different Odd and Even Pages** and **Different First Page**.

Move to the Odd Page Header and turn off the **Same as Previous** option. Type in the *chapter title*.

Move to the Even Page Header and turn off the **Same as Previous** option. Type in the *book title*.

Use the Show Next on the Header Footer tool bar to get to the next Odd Page. Turn off the **Same as Previous** option. Type in the *chapter title*.

Loop back to the • and repeat for each chapter.

Now set up the footers.
Go back to Section 2, which has chapter 1.

Move your cursor to the Odd Page Footer. Turn off Same as Previous option. Insert > Page Number...

Choose Position Bottom of Page (Footer) and Alignment Outside and Show number on first page. Under Format, select Start at: 1

Move to the Even Page Footer. Turn off Same as Previous option. Insert > Page Number...

You should now have page numbers on all pages, beginning at the first page of the first chapter. Title and copyright pages at the beginning are skipped over in the numbering.

You can choose to embellish the scene breaks now. Remove the scene break markers by replacing with a space, or an optional graphic. You can also use Drop Caps under the Format Menu to add a that marker, as in this paragraph. It really helps in novels, where scene breaks can mark point of view changes that can be really confusing if the reader doesn’t notice it.

Most of the formatting is now done. Now comes the review and cleanup. Review the entire book for formatting issues and repair them on a case by case basis. Some things can be fixed by changing the margins at the document level, or by adjusting the styles you have defined, but there are other issues as well.

Sometime there are sections of text that are split across pages that look bad. You can select that paragraph and with the Format > Paragraph > Line and Page Breaks > Keep Lines Together force the paginator to move it to one page or the other.

Every time you fix something, make sure your table of contents is still correct. That should always be the last thing you do before saving the document and quitting.
By writing to a standard manuscript format, and using styles to handle the bulk of the formatting, converting to a new format is straightforward. In fact, most of the conversion listed in this document could be scripted, and I’ve considered doing that.

But whether manual or scripted, the review of the final product is critical. There are no second chances after this step. You will also likely find typos and errors in your text that have survived un-noticed through all your previous review steps. When you make those corrections, make sure they get preserved in the manuscript as well.