

Fiction Writing Cheat Sheet: Tips, Tricks, and Resources

Embarking on the journey of writing fiction is both exciting and challenging. This cheat sheet compiles essential tips and tricks to help you craft compelling stories. It also includes a list of useful websites and recommended books, focusing on Australian resources where possible.

Tips and Tricks for Writing Fiction

1. Understand Your Genre

- **Research Genre Conventions:** Familiarise yourself with the expectations and tropes of your chosen genre.
- **Read Widely:** Dive into works by both international and Australian authors to gain diverse perspectives.

2. Develop Strong Characters

- **Create Detailed Profiles:** Outline your characters' backstories, motivations, and flaws.
- **Show Growth:** Allow characters to evolve in response to the story's events.

3. Craft a Compelling Plot

- **Use Proven Structures:** Consider frameworks like the Three-Act Structure or Hero's Journey.
- **Incorporate Conflict:** Ensure that obstacles and stakes are clear to engage readers.

4. Show, Don't Tell

- **Use Sensory Details:** Engage the five senses to create vivid scenes.
- **Demonstrate Emotions:** Let actions and dialogue convey how characters feel.

5. Write Authentic Dialogue

- **Listen to Real Conversations:** Capture natural speech patterns and colloquialisms.
- **Advance the Story:** Use dialogue to reveal information and deepen relationships.

6. Create Vivid Settings

- **Be Specific:** Include concrete details to bring places to life.
- **Reflect Themes:** Let the environment mirror the story's mood and message.

7. Maintain Consistent Point of View

- **Choose Wisely:** Decide between first-person, third-person limited, or omniscient narration.
- **Stay Consistent:** Avoid head-hopping to keep readers grounded.

8. Revise and Edit Thoroughly

- **Take Breaks:** Step away between drafts to return with fresh eyes.
- **Seek Feedback:** Join writing groups or find beta readers for constructive criticism.

9. Understand the Australian Literary Landscape

- **Explore Local Themes:** Incorporate Australian settings, culture, and history.
- **Be Culturally Sensitive:** Respectfully represent Indigenous perspectives by consulting appropriate resources and communities.

10. Stay Persistent and Keep Writing

- **Establish a Routine:** Write regularly to build momentum.
 - **Embrace Rejection:** Use it as a learning opportunity and keep submitting your work.
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Useful Websites

1. **Australian Writers' Centre**
 - www.writerscentre.com.au
 - Offers writing courses, podcasts, and resources.
2. **Writing NSW**
 - www.writingnsw.org.au
 - Provides workshops, courses, and support for writers in New South Wales.
3. **Writers Victoria**
 - www.writersvictoria.org.au
 - A hub for Victorian writers with resources and events.
4. **Queensland Writers Centre**
 - www.qwc.asn.au
 - Offers programs and support for writers in Queensland.
5. **Writing WA**
 - www.writingwa.org
 - Supports writers and writing groups in Western Australia with resources and events.
6. **Australian Society of Authors**
 - www.asauthors.org
 - Professional association providing advocacy and advice.
7. **The Wheeler Centre**
 - www.wheelercentre.com
 - Hosts literary events and discussions in Melbourne.
8. **AustLit**

- www.austlit.edu.au
 - Comprehensive resource for Australian literature research.
9. **Westerly Magazine**
- www.westerlymag.com.au
 - A literary journal publishing contemporary Australian writing, especially from Western Australia.
10. **State Writers' Centres**
- Check your local state writers' centre for resources and events.
11. **Australian National Dictionary Centre**
- www.anu.edu.au/research/research-initiatives/australian-national-dictionary-centre
 - Resource for understanding Australian English usage.
12. **Meanjin Literary Journal**
- www.meanjin.com.au
 - Quarterly literary journal featuring Australian writing.
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Recommended Books

1. **"The Writing Book: A Practical Guide for Fiction Writers"** by Kate Grenville
 - Australian author Kate Grenville offers practical advice on crafting fiction.
2. **"Writing Fiction: An Introduction to the Craft"** by Garry Disher
 - An Australian perspective on the fundamentals of fiction writing.
3. **"The Little Red Writing Book"** by Mark Tredinnick
 - Provides clear guidance on writing with style and grace.
4. **"The Writer's Room: Conversations About Writing"** by Charlotte Wood
 - Interviews with Australian authors discussing their writing processes.
5. **"The Art of Reading"** by Damon Young
 - Explores the relationship between reading and writing.
6. **"The Writing Life"** by David Malouf
 - Reflections on writing by a renowned Australian author.
7. **"Australian Writer's Marketplace"**
 - Comprehensive guide to getting published in Australia.
8. **"Writing Without a Parachute: The Art of Freefall"** by Barbara Turner-Vesselago

- Encourages writers to find their authentic voice; the author has connections to Australia.
 - 9. **"The Art of Time in Fiction: As Long as It Takes"** by Joan Silber
 - Offers insights into handling time in narratives.
 - 10. **"Breath"** by Tim Winton
 - Study this exemplary Australian novel to learn storytelling techniques.
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Additional Tips

- **Join a Writing Group**
 - Connect with fellow writers for feedback and support.
 - Consider groups affiliated with local writers' centres.
 - **Attend Literary Festivals**
 - Events like the **Sydney Writers' Festival** or **Melbourne Writers Festival** offer inspiration and networking opportunities.
 - **Read Australian Fiction**
 - Authors like **Tim Winton**, **Helen Garner**, and **Kim Scott** provide examples of strong Australian fiction.
 - **Stay Informed About Industry Trends**
 - Follow publishing news and trends, especially within the Australian market.
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Conclusion

Writing fiction is a rewarding endeavour that requires dedication, practice, and continual learning. Utilise these tips and resources to hone your craft, connect with the writing community, and bring your stories to life.

Note: All links and resources are accurate as of October 2023. Always verify websites and publications for the most current information.

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