



How To Approach A Canadian Indie Bookstore About Consignment

Are you a self-published author? Do you have a book you'd like to sell at your local independent bookstore? Here are some things to consider before making your approach:

- **PROFESSIONAL PRINTING:** Most bookstores prefer to accept books that are professionally printed. If yours is not, please review the consignment policy of your local store to check if they make exceptions to this rule.
- **ISBN:** An ISBN (International Standard Book Number) is a 13-digit number that is unique to an individual book. Without an ISBN stores cannot post your book on their website. Not all stores require consignment authors to have an ISBN but it does help!
- **RETAIL PRICE:** Be aware of the pricing of similar books/products on the market. You will want to ensure your price is reasonable for both you and the consumer.
- **BE REALISTIC ABOUT YOUR PROFIT:** The industry standard is that bookstores will take 40% of the retail price for all consignments that are sold. The consignor would be paid 60%. Individual bookstores may have different terms but this is a general guideline.
- **CONSIDER YOUR AUDIENCE:** Does your book deal with a subject matter of local interest? Does it have wider, general appeal? Consider your audience, and the audience of the store you are approaching before you get in touch with a bookstore. Be ready to describe why your book is a great fit for the store!
- **IS IT THE RIGHT FIT?** If there's a bookstore you have in mind to sell your book, do your research! Visit their store and website and get a feel for the type of products they offer before you approach.



- **DISCOVERABILITY:** To ensure a wide selection of titles that caters to the interest of their customer, a bookstore stocks thousands of titles. Most books will be shelved spine-out. Identifying information (title, author name) on the spine of your book will increase its discoverability.
- **YOU WILL NEED TO MARKET YOUR TITLE:** A consignment contract does not guarantee that a bookstore will actively market your book. The more attention you can draw to your title, the more likely it will sell.
- **KNOW YOUR PITCH:** Consider creating a 'sell sheet' for your book. This would contain a picture of the cover, pricing and ISBN, a synopsis, author bio and contact info, and list any relevant selling points (compare your book to other titles on the market, describe your relevant credentials, outline your marketing plans, etc.)

What's next?

When you're ready to get in touch with a bookstore, visit the store's website to understand their unique consignment policy. If you can't find it, visit, email or call the store to ask *how* they would like you to pitch your title. Be respectful of the store's unique process and you'll be more likely to find success.

Good luck!