



# 500 Ways to Be a Better Writer

*Chuck Wendig*

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## **500 Ways to Be a Better Writer** Chuck Wendig

500 WAYS TO BE A BETTER WRITER aims to provide novelists, screenwriters and other flavors of penmonkey with an avalanche of writing tips and storytelling tricks. All of it greased up with whisky and bad language (let that serve as your first and only warning: this is a very NSFW book of writing advice).

500 WAYS contains the following:

Prologue: 25 Things You Should Know About Writing Advice  
25 Questions To Ask As You Write  
25 Reasons You Won't Finish That Story  
25 Things You Should Know About Endings  
25 Things You Should Know About Mood  
25 Things You Should Know About NaNoWriMo  
25 Things You Should Know About Queries, Synopses And Treatments  
25 Things You Should Know About Self-Publishing  
25 Things You Should Know About Social Media  
25 Things You Should Know About Theme  
25 Things You Should Know About Writing Horror  
25 Virtues Writers Should Possess  
25 Ways To Be A Better Writer  
25 Ways To Defeat Writer's Block  
25 Ways To Fuck With Your Characters  
25 Ways To Make Exposition Your Bitch  
25 Ways To Plot, Plan And Prep Your Story  
The Life Cycle Of A Novel (In 25 Steps)  
Appendix 1: 25 Sleep-Deprived And Also Drunken Thoughts On Writing  
Appendix 2: 25 Brief-But-Hopefully-Potent Writing Exercises

## **500 Ways to Be a Better Writer Details**

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## From Reader Review 500 Ways to Be a Better Writer for online ebook

### A.K. Pittman says

Great advice. Some of it common sense, some "I've done this before and this is what worked for me", all presented in an awesomely conversational manner that's fun to read. I know I'll read parts of 500 Ways as part of my preparation before every book I write. It's that good. It's that damn funny.

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### Veronica Sicoe says

Chuck Wendig's incomparable voice roars through the chitter chatter of online writing advice and pops your skull open, exposing your eager little brain to 500 tips that improve your writing. Sure, you mutter, most of the advice in this book isn't new, and if you're a diligent, studious little "penmonkey" you've come across it before -- but not like this.

Covering aspects from theme, mood, exposition, plotting, characters and endings, to the problems of writing life: writer's block, excuses you make, the distractions of social media, or writing synopses and queries, this book plows through every [mis-]conception you had about being a writer and brings forth the naked truth. And it's a truth that hasn't shaved or bathed in a while. Yet, you instantly recognize it, because in one way or another, it reflects your own writing life. It's just... hairier.

Apart from the frivolous and beautifully blasphemous language, that makes your toes tingle each time a piece of advice strikes a chord, the true value of Chuck's work lies in the incitement to screw limits and be yourself, put your heart and your writing out there and be proud of it.

As to the abundant expletives: I generally tend to pay attention if someone makes a point as simply as possible, and if he can make me laugh in the process all the better. So what if he swears? I would choose a foul-mouthed, shameless writer over a white-gloved bore anytime. Maybe it's because I've had a tough childhood (okay, being the only girl in a hoard of fifteen combative boys who feared no one was kinda awesome, but that's not the point), or because I'm allergic to uptightness in the storytelling world, but Chuck's book really hit home. It crashed through the door, sat on my couch, ate all my cookies and spilled the milk, but I'm still going to keep it. I love it. There, there, little ebook, mommy won't sell you to the gypsies. Now stop sucking Julius's toes.

Anyway, the message of the book basically boils down to this: "Know your limits, then take those limits, wrap them around a hand-grenade, and shove them up the a\$\$ of a velociraptor." "Have the courage to go forth and do not what everybody else is doing but what you want to do. Have the courage to put yourself out there."

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### Mel says

Most of Mr. Wendig's writing books were culled directly from his blog, and in this one at least, it's obvious, both in the profusion of his jokes and in the repetition of some of them, you know, if you want people to come back tomorrow, you have to hook them today. On a day-to-day basis it works very well, but it felt a bit

try-hard to me here, which is a cryin' shame, because dude knows his shit.

I'm a grown-ass woman, bro. You don't need the airplane game to get me to eat.

I read his THE KICK-ASS WRITER before this, and I'm grateful for that, because I loved it, but this one was so off-putting to me that I don't want to read any more of the series. (This too is a cryin' shame, because I bought them all before I read any of them. Nice going, dumdum.)

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### **Alexander Fitzgerald says**

I really enjoyed this book, but I read it off and on over a few years. I finished the last few sections in one sitting, just so I could finally mark up the sections I needed and be done with the book, and it really got grating at that point.

Chuck Wendig's advice on how to write is second to none. I found myself shaking my head at how exact he got some emotions writers go through. His advice is a punch to the gut and well needed. He's logical. He has great ideas. Even better, I laughed out loud over and over during several passages.

The problem Wendig faces is these are composed from his blog posts. Since he's a smart writer who actually needs to feed himself from the craft he punches up blog posts that rattle off a variety of jokes. This is excellent for getting people hooked, but over a book it can get exhausting.

I didn't find it nearly as irritating as some other people did. As a male, perhaps more of the advice appealed to my "just the facts ma'am" masculine tunnel vision. Perhaps I just loved his, "shut up and write," sections, his unrelenting "kill your darlings" advice on how to edit, and everything else I can confirm actually leads to making money in the real world.

It's a great cheap read for anyone who actually wants to (in his words) become a "pen monkey" or "ink slinger" for a living. His humor shows an attempt to try what has not been done before, and consequently much of his advice is as innovative as his analogies.

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### **Caitlin says**

This is, if possible, even more impeccable than the first. There are now so many highlighted passages in the version on my Kindle the whole screen is yellow.

Chuck Wendig makes me unafraid to take risks with my prose, and pushes me away from the bland and insipid. There can be nothing better.

I haven't tried the writing exercises yet, but I will be sure to whenever I am stuck or blocked.

Long live Chuck Wendig and his inventively foul-mouthed advice.

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## Heather says

I adore Wendig's nonfiction. He's gritty, real, and not afraid to tell you 'suck it up, buttercup'. Not in those words. In words that are much more brutally honest. Words your best friends might not even tell you even if you're being a little whiny butt complaining penmonkey. If you're wondering anything about writing, visit [terribleminds.com](http://terribleminds.com) Wendig's blog. Or read his nonfiction.

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## Julia says

I read this book quite slowly because I found that I needed time to a) get over the crazy language overload you get in every single sentence and b) let the information sink in and percolate. At the beginning of the book, I was stuck on a particular scene and I was in complete avoidance, but something about Wendig's writing style really helped move me past the block.

This book is not for everyone. But I enjoyed so this worked for me. What I think I liked most was the balance. A lot of the advice I had heard before, but like most advice, it's not having a nugget in your hand that solves the problem but the way you see the entire matrix.

I will definitely be reading this again and then probably again after that.

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## A.M. says

The profane Wendig is back with another tome divided into twenty rough sections of twenty five headings in each. Each part has no more than ten lines. It is succinct, pithy and real. And it's good advice.

He starts off with the plum that there is all kinds of writing advice, but what really matters is what works for you. He also suggests that reading and absorbing something that you later use from that novel you took time off writing to read, is also a kind of training. He insists that you get help even if you have to pay for it. That you will always have to wrangle the Amazon gorilla. That twitter followers are NOT fans. Ninety percent are probably other writers if your twitter feed is anything like mine, all re-tweeting each others links.

But he suggests being seen as 'you' is what you need to do on twitter. Even if, as he suggests, you send tweets about baby poop.

Be authentic. If all you do is promote your own work people will block or unfollow you.

Identify your themes. Work on your synopsis. If YOU can't distil your novel into a paragraph or a page, how do you expect someone else to do it? He even suggests writing it first. hmmm

He has some fabulous ideas for writer's block. And some great hints for plotting and planning novels.

And he finishes with 25 writing exercises.

It's all good, it's all easy to read and absorb, it's stuff I might come back to when I get stuck... no... not might; will.

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## Emma says

I loved this so much. There isn't much I can say like read this book because you can tell by the title, it appeals to a certain demographic. I have read a few books like this and this by far was the funniest. I kept laughing out loud in public and it was embarrassing. That aside, Chuck Wendig gives you all these tips of different aspects of writing but it is never YOU MUST DO THIS OMG. It is more of a here are your tips and I hope the help but if they don't cool!

It is worth a read if you want to be a writer or like to laugh at people who write or both.

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### **Thais says**

The writer uses a lot of sexist and vulgar language to try (unsuccessfully) to conceal he doesn't know much about how to write better.

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### **Wendy Christopher says**

I love Chuck Wendig's books on writing. I love that he kicks my butt and swears at me like the grumpy uncle while totally getting how tough it can be to be a writer and making me feel like he's in my corner anyway. Many of his 500 Ways... books are compiled from his blog posts, so I've probably read a lot of the stuff in this book there as well in the past, but I'm still glad to have them all collated in this book where I can re-read them again whenever I want to, because the advice, the butt-kicking, the encouragement and the NSFW humour is solid gold. Don't ever change, Chuck.

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### **Amy says**

There's some real gems of advice in here but an incredible amount of cussing. Not for the faint of heart.

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### **Sally Kilpatrick says**

I adore Chuck Wendig's voice, and this book is chock full of good advice presented in a no-nonsense and RATHER entertaining way. Yes, there are plenty of expletives. There's also a running joke about an orangutan named Orange Julius. Both made me laugh.

Two things bothered me. First, the book is obviously a compilation of past blog posts and makes no effort to hide the fact. The fact that it's comprised of blog posts doesn't bother me so much as the numbered lists get a little repetitive. That said, the format lends itself to reading in bite-sized chunks. Second, Under 25 Things You Need to Know About Self-Publishing, about 44% through, it says "Do Not Buy This Book" and adds "Anything it contains can be found elsewhere. For free." What the what? So that was disconcerting. (Or maybe I misunderstood? Maybe this is what I get for reading books while on the recumbent bike?) At least I can comfort myself in the knowledge I've helped pay for the Little Wendigo's future braces, I suppose.

All in all, I enjoyed the advice and the philosophy behind it--as with all writing advice books, it's not a formula for success or a plan of action that you can implement. No, it's a book of things you need to hear over and over again in order to internalize them.

## **J. B. Pichelski says**

Chuck Wendig should be considered an inspiration to writers everywhere. I have learnt so much about the way of the penmonkey from his teachings. I found that every piece of brilliant advice he gave, also doubled as a massive confidence boost. You're amazing Chuck! While some people may not appreciate his hyperbole-licious style of writing, I found that it kept the book both interesting and re-assuring to receive writing advice from some who obviously knows how to do it well.

I'll definitely read his other books now and I look forward to doing so.

Keep drinking for our literary sins, Chuck!

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## **Steven Cowles says**

If you like your writing advice to be full of strict rules on word usage and grammar, then this book is the Anti-Christ.

However - if you're currently spinning your wheels trying to *actually write* a book (rather than master the higher occult echelons of syntax), then this is the book you should seek.

It's a humor-filled profane romp that'll motivate you to stop reading endless books on how to write and *actually write* stuff.

If writing a novel is a Rocky movie, then reading this book is the montage training scene.

In short - it's the writing book you deserve, and it's also the one you need, right now.

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