

## How to plot your novel- it's not that hard.

For many writers the thought of plotting one's novel is abhorring. However, after writing and selling your first novel, it will become almost necessary to give the publisher some form of outline, and thus plot, for your next novel that they would be interested in possibly publishing.

However, plotting your novel doesn't have to be a chore and in fact it can be quite fun. This is where you get to brainstorm all of the juicy ideas that have been swimming around in your head. Now is the time to finally be able to pull them all together in one cohesive story line.

Some would say that plotting one's novel would take all the creativity out of writing it. This isn't necessarily the case. Although writing and plotting your novel is a very personal thing, and no two writers go about this in the same fashion, you may be pleasantly surprised by the way that you have a rope to hold onto while in the sea of composition, actually furthers your creativity.

So how do you plot your novel?

One method that works well for plotting your novel is to brainstorm or mindmap. What this means is create a sentence of an idea then draw a circle around it. From this circle start coming up with other ideas that stem from this first one. Then draw a circle around the second idea for your plot. From here you can expand on the first circle or the second as you gain ideas for your plot. You can expand as much as you want, the idea here is that you will come up with many ideas to turn into plot points. They may be the main story line or they may turn into sub plots. Keep along this path until you feel you've got enough ideas to start building your plot.

Okay, you've got a bunch of great ideas for your plot. Now what?

You will want to start putting these ideas down in a logical manner. Start with plot points that will set up the rest of the story, such as prologue ideas that give a bit of back story and set up the plot for the main character.

Take a sheet of paper and start with either the prologue or chapter one. In the first line, write down the plot point idea you have. For some writers, writing just a sentence about the plot here is all that they need, while other writers have a more drawn out plot description for each chapter. Try both ways and see which works best for you.

An example of a drawn out plot would consist of what the plot point is, such as: The main character must decide whether to save the girl or get away. At this point you have an idea of the set up. Now you might want to list what the scene or chapter will look like. Give a description of what the area looks like and add a few details here to add flavor. Next, give a reason as to why this is happening now. Is it to introduce a character or characters? To further the plot? To give information to the reader that they will need soon? It is essential to realize why you have this plot point in your story. If you can't articulate exactly why this plot point is here and the purpose for it, then you may want to either scrap this plot point or rework it until it makes sense to you as to why it is in your novel.

Continue to do this for the remainder of the plots that you have developed. Work them into the outline for each chapter that you have in your book. Look at how the sub plots mesh with the main story line. Do they run parallel to each other and never cross, or does the sub plot somehow intertwine with the rest of the story? And don't think you are limited to just one sub plot. Make as many as you want, and need, to keep the action going. Just don't forget to tie up your sub plots before you finish your novel. No loose ends please.

One final piece of advice that I like to use is a story line. This helps me visualize the plots in my novel. I draw on a white board, although you can do this on paper as well. Draw a line. At the left hand side of the line is when the story starts and the right hand side of the line is when the story ends. Anything before the left hand side of the line is all back story and this is where I will write in a few sentences about the major back story of my novel.

I then will draw arcs somewhere along the line for my sub plots. This may start at the same spot as the beginning of the line on the left hand side- the same time the main story line starts, or it may start later along the line running to the right.

These arcs will then be labeled with a name of the sub plot that means something to me. That way I can tell where my sub plots start and end within the story.

On the main story line, I will create hash marks that intersect the main story line at various points along the line. This lets me know where in the time line of the story that a major part of the story line is going to start or end.

You don't have to fear plotting out your novel any more than just getting the story down in the first draft. And remember, while plotting your novel may help you get the story down, don't be ruled by your plot points and your outline. In the first draft at least, if you come up with another great idea- go with it and adjust your outline accordingly.

If you want to read more tips on how to write go to [www.creativewritingfortherestofus.blogspot.com](http://www.creativewritingfortherestofus.blogspot.com)

If you would like to know how to get online reviews of your book and how to get agent and publishers to look at your work as well as where to send your novel to 17 different award sites then go to: [All you need to know about writing a book.](#)

## About the Author

Want to learn how to get an agent and publish your book? Want to submit your novel to award sites? Want free books on how to write? Then go to [www.creativewritingfortherestofus.blogspot.com](http://www.creativewritingfortherestofus.blogspot.com)