



Children's Book Printing 101 Guide

Print beautiful children's books



Are you an independent author or self-publisher looking for resources and advice on the ins and outs of printing your children's book? Help is here! This simple guide outlines 5 important factors when printing your book:



1. Sizing & trimming
2. Choosing the right paper
3. Typesetting and ink
4. Evaluating multiple quotes

First a little about us... MCRL Overseas Group is a top-rated offset printer. With a dedicated North American customer care team and an overseas print team, we offer exceptional service and competitive pricing, handling every detail of production and delivery. You can depend on ...

1

Our High Standards

Quality is incredibly important to our team. We ensure every project meets or exceeds North American expectations. Oh... and with Canadian and US offices, clients can see samples and communicate efficiently in their own time zone.

2

Our Environmental Focus

We believe in producing products with the least environmental impact possible. We're fans of Eska®board, FSC and Tree-free Paper. As a Trees for the Future sponsor, MCRL has planted over 36,000 trees. Include a badge to show you chose a printer who cares about communities and the climate.

3

Our Experienced Team Members

We're more than a printing shop. Our team takes the time to listen and share best practices. Get peace of mind knowing you have a printing expert on speed dial. Ask us about custom features and kitting ideas (like plush toys) that engage readers and enhance your story!



“When Susan and I discovered the environmentally conscious MCRL we were over-the-moon thrilled. Planet friendly? Check. Then we talked with the MCRL team. Patient and kind? Check. (When you're new to book publishing, like us, that's key.) Phenomenal quality? Check. I cannot sing the praises of MCRL loudly enough!”



-Lucy Noland, award winning broadcast journalist, co-founder and author at [Archimedes' Printing Shoppe & Sundry Goodes](#)

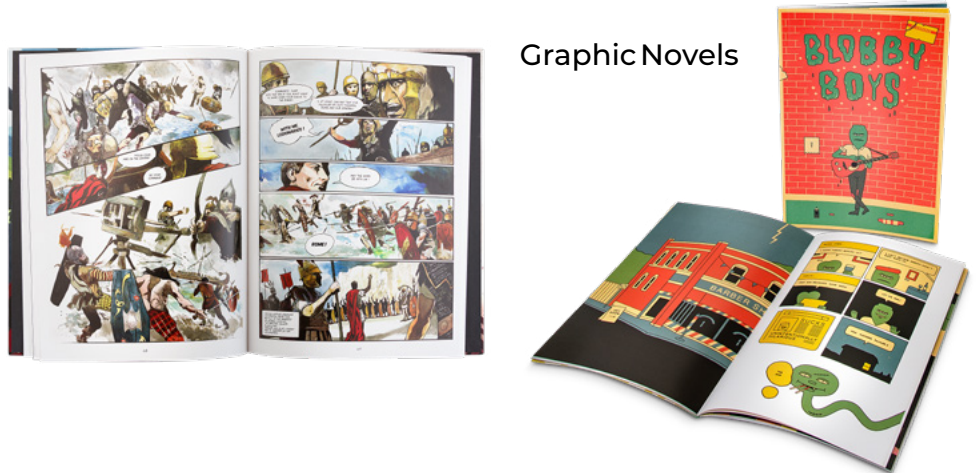


Our team helps authors and publishers print all types of children's books, including:

Hard Cover



Graphic Novels



Chapter Books & Easy Readers



NEW! BoardBookPrinting.com - focused exclusively on making it easier to print awesome board books



1. TRIM SIZE

FAQ: What SIZE should I print my children's book?

Books like people come in different shapes and sizes. From the smallest pocket-sized books for little hands to beautiful table top collections...the **size, cover** and **weight** of your book influences the reading experience. Since the **trim size** also impacts your book's marketability and cost, it's important to know industry best practices.

Types of Trim Sizes

Trim size in printing or publishing terms refers to the book size. A book is trimmed before it is bound and released into the world. Trim size is usually measured in terms of **width x height**; measured in inches in the North America and millimeters in the UK. We can print any book size but these are the most common trims.

The standard trim sizes for **Children's Books** are:

- 8 inches x 8 inches
- 8.5 inches x 11 inches
- 9 inches x 8 inches

The most common **board book** sizes:

- 5 inches x 5 inches
- 6 inches x 6 inches
- 7 inches x 7 inches
- 8 inches x 8 inches

Fiction books are typically printed in:

- 4.25 inches x 6.87 inches
- 5 inches x 8 inches
- 5.5 inches x 8.5 inches
- 6 inches x 9 inches

Tip: The printing process requires books be printed in multiples of 4 pages (with the exception being board books). 24 -36 pages is the most common length for children's books.

Children's Book / Board Book



"I have used MCRL for my past two books and will continue for 7 more!"



Charlie
GREAT DISCOVERIES
Marley



*I have been extremely happy with the **quality** of my book. Pages are intact and never fall out. The spine of the book is strong, the quality of the pages and color; excellent. **Thank you Carol and team for all you do for us!***



- Analynn Sardella, CEO CHAR-MAR PUBLISHING LLC
CHARLIE & MARLEY'S GREAT DISCOVERIES SERIES

2. PAPER STOCK

FAQ: What type of paper should I choose for my book's cover and interior pages?

Your book cover gives a glimpse of your story and intrigues the reader! The quality and design of your cover is a key selling feature.

We recommend **Eska@board** for book covers because it is a 100% recycled solid board that lays flat and stays flat. **Eska@board** is manufactured in the Netherlands under precise humidity levels to ensure quality and durability.

MCRL also prints with [Forest Stewardship Council \(FSC\) Certified Paper stock](#). FSC certification means materials are harvested and manufactured in a sustainable manner from responsibly managed forests, meeting the highest environmental and social standards. Producing books safe for tiny hands and the environment is our number one priority.

Opacity & Weight

Opacity refers to how much ink will show through on the reverse side of the paper. Opacity is determined by the weight and finish. If a piece of paper is 100% opaque, no ink will show on the reverse side.

The most common paper selected for children's books is 80lb or 100lb gloss or matte paper. Board books are typically 40pt or 80pt. The thicker the paper, the more opaque it is.

Other Factors To Consider

Book Design Tip: Your front cover and spine should include your book's title, subtitle, and author name.

The interior flap of the dust jacket or back cover typically includes a description, book reviews, author bio, ISBN, and barcode.

Our printing team can share typography and design tips to make sure your book cover and interior pages attract readers on-shelf and online.



3. ECO-FRIENDLY INK

FAQ: What is the safest ink to choose for my children's book?

MCRL Overseas Group always uses lead-free soy-based ink because it:

- is the safest ink for people and the planet
- produces more vivid and accurate colors
- is much easier to recycle than oil-based inks
- is biodegradable and renewable

...plus soy-based ink happens to be more cost-effective because less ink is used compared to traditional printing inks.



Glitter, Gold Foil, Gilding?

That's our specialty!

Note: Custom illustration treatments like these are only possible with an offset printer

FAQ: Are there typesetting best practices for children's books?

Typesetting is "the process of setting material in type or into a form to be used in printing". Typesetting plays a key role in your readers' experience. Our team can share the typesetting "rules of thumb" depending on the size and type of your book for such things as:

- Margins
- Alignment
- Line & Paragraph Spacing
- Page Breaks
- Lines after Subheadings
- Word Stacks ...and more

Design Tip:

Once your book is properly formatted, you'll need to prepare press-ready PDFs with all fonts/images embedded OR InDesign CS6 packaged files with all supporting links and fonts included. Make sure all images are saved as high resolution 300dpi. We can provide templates into which you can place your artwork/story. This saves time for everyone!



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TREES PLANTED



**TREES
FOR THE
FUTURE**

4.

EVALUATING MULTIPLE QUOTES

FAQ: How to choose the right printing partner?

Here are a few tips to help you choose the right printer for your children's book.

1. Identify what's most important to you

Late with a deadline? Speed might be your most pressing need.

First project? A printing expert you can speak can be a lifesaver.

A repeat print run? Quality could be your #1 concern.

Identify your show stoppers and keep this in mind as you shortlist vendors.

2. Understand what items are included (and not included) in your quotes.

It may sound strange but MCRL recommends you get two other quotes, in addition to ours. Make sure others include these five drivers of cost and quality. Here's what is included in every MCRL ALL-IN quote:

- **Customs Charges** - all duty and customs fees are included
- **Delivery** - we include the sea and trucking charges to your final destination. Not just to the nearest port.
- **Customization** - we include pricing for all unique features in our quote
- **Materials** - we include a description and cost of materials. Not all suppliers provide this level of detail. Watch for suppliers who include the lowest priced materials, not necessarily the most durable or appropriate.
- **One Physical Sample** - most suppliers charge extra for a physical sample to proof or don't recommend this important final step.

3. What value do you place on Quality? Price? Communications? Peace of Mind?

Evaluate your quotes based on:

- How well the vendor understands your project
- How well they communicate with you (poor English can be a red flag)

MCRL's print expertise and high standards ensure your product's quality exceeds expectations. Our North American team provides regular communications in your language and time zone. **When you're new to printing, "you don't know what you don't know"**. Working directly with an overseas printing house can be risky and stressful. MCRL handles all the details so you don't have to.

4. Connect with vendors personally before deciding

Call or send each vendor a question related to your quote. Their responsiveness and quality of answer is a good indication of the type of customer service you are likely to receive.

When you [request a quote](#) from MCRL Overseas Group, you get the highest quality product & hands-on project management, at the best possible price.

“Clients



Us. And it's Mutual”



ANGELEAH DONAHUE
AUTHOR OF [QUEST FOR BRIGHTLAND](#)



“I would like to personally thank, and recommend MCRL printers!

We worked together on my children's book [Quest For Brightland, Book 1, The Blessing Ball](#), over the course of many months. They were the only company I could find who was willing to take a risk and print glitter on every page.

It was not easy to figure out but they did everything they could to solve challenges and keep working with me until I was happy. And HAPPY, is exactly what I am!! My book is actually stunning, the glitter makes every picture as magical as I intended them to be.

- Angeleah Donahue, co-author and illustrator of [Quest for Brightland Book 1: The Blessing Ball](#) | [@questforbrightland](#)



• CLOSE UP - SPOT GLITTER



• CLOSE UP - SPOT GLITTER



NATALIYA MOON
AUTHOR OF [ADVENTURE TO THE TOP OF THE MOUNTAIN](#)



“I am very pleased with how my children's book turned out. The team was very helpful from the beginning and always promptly responded to all my emails with questions and concerns. The delivery of my books was very smooth. I highly recommend MCRL and would print with them again in the future.”

- Nataliya Moon



ALEX SIDNAM
THE TALES OF CHARLIE WAGS: NEW
YORK CITY



"MCRL has a wonderful reputation for a reason. As a first-time self published author, we were pointed their way (along with a few other printing companies) by an industry professional. MCRL was in every way the easiest and best to work with — from pricing to proofing to final delivery, the entire process was seamless and professional. The team is responsive and dedicated to your books from beginning to end. And of course, the final product was delivered in great condition and a week early (even despite a port strike). 1000% recommend."

- Alex Sidnam



LINDA SACHS
CHILDREN'S BOOK AUTHOR



"From start to finish the MCRL team made my offset printing experience extremely easy. The communication was perfect with quick response to all my questions and needs. Then my order arrived in a timely manner and my books exceeded my expectations. I used bamboo paper and the quality of this paper is top notch. The soy ink makes the images in my children's picture book pop off the pages. All in all, I'd say the print copy of my book has been advanced to a whole new level of superior quality. Thank you MCRL! I will be back for all my large print projects."

- Linda Sachs



LISA VONFELDEN
CHILDREN'S BOOK AUTHOR



"MCRL was amazing to work with! I am a first time self published author of a children's book. Working with Carol and Jamie made everything so much more rewarding. They were patient with my learning curve and were genuinely happy to help me every step of the way. My book, "Ellie with the Belly", is beautiful. The quality of the book is beyond what I had imagined, and the pricing was the best around! I will definitely use them again and again".

- Lisa Vonfelden



**TREES
FOR THE
FUTURE**

Show you care about people and the planet by mentioning Trees for the Future in your online book description.

For example,

"The printer of this book plants trees each year in some of the world's poorest communities through their partnership with Trees for the Future".

**We're here to help you
print a beautiful book.
Contact Us Today!**

 **1-888-988-6275x106**

 sales@mcrlprinting.com

 www.mcrlprinting.com