

THINK LIKE A PUBLISHER

Release Date Planning Questions

Before choosing a release date, answer these questions first.

A release date should support your publishing goals—not dictate them. Use these questions to work backward from what you want your book to accomplish before committing to a launch date.

1. What do I want this book to do?

2. What action do I want readers to take after finishing my book?

3. How will I measure whether this launch was successful?

- ☐ Book sales
- ☐ Speaking opportunities
- ☐ Business leads
- ☐ Media coverage

- ☐ Reviews
- ☐ Brand awareness
- ☐ Other: _____

4. Who is my target audience?

5. Who is most likely to purchase my book?

6. Are my target audience and target buyer the same person? If not, who is making the buying decision? *(They aren't always the same person. For example, children's books are often read by children but purchased by parents, grandparents, teachers, schools, or libraries.)*

7. What problem does my book solve, or what need does it fulfill?

8. When are they most likely to be thinking about that problem?

9. Does my book align with any of the following?

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| ☐ Holiday shopping | ☐ Book festival |
| ☐ Back-to-school | ☐ Product or business launch |
| ☐ National awareness month | ☐ Anniversary or milestone |
| ☐ Seasonal topic | ☐ Other: _____ |
| ☐ Conference or speaking engagement | _____ |
| ☐ Trade show | |

10. If yes, when do people begin making those buying, booking, or stocking decisions?

11. Have you done your research? Before announcing your release date, have you researched:

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| ☐ Typical release windows for your genre | ☐ Major book festivals |
| ☐ Industry buying cycles | ☐ Award eligibility windows and submission deadlines |
| ☐ Relevant conferences and trade shows | ☐ Seasonal buying trends |
| ☐ School or library purchasing calendars | |

12. What is my ideal release date?

13. Working backward from that date, how much time do you or your publisher need for the publishing process?

Editing: _____
Cover design: _____
Interior layout: _____
Proofing and revisions: _____
eBook conversion: _____

Selling setup/listings: _____
Printing: _____
Shipping/in-hand date: _____
Pre-launch marketing: _____
Added cushion: _____

14. Does this release date support your publishing and marketing goals, as well as the book you *actually* want?

Typical Book Release Windows by Genre

Strategic starting points to help you choose the right release date.

A release date should support your publishing goals—not dictate them.

While certain genres perform well during specific seasons, the strongest release is one that aligns with what you want your book to do. Use alongside the **Release Date Planning Questions** worksheet to clarify what you want your book to do, then build a timeline that supports your publishing, printing, selling, and marketing goals.

Typical Release Windows

Release Window	Genres Commonly Released	Strategic Questions to Consider
January–February	Business, leadership, self-help, finance, productivity, health	Are readers setting New Year's goals or looking to improve their careers, finances, or personal lives? Will your book help them start the year?
March–May	Children's books, education, parenting, gardening, travel, inspirational	Will teachers, librarians, schools, or organizations be making purchasing decisions before summer or the next school year? Does your book align with spring events or awareness months?
June–August	Beach reads, romance, thrillers, YA, memoirs, adventure	Are readers looking for vacation reading? Will you be speaking at conferences or events during the summer?
September–October	Cookbooks, holiday books, journals, planners, literary fiction, historical fiction	Will your book be available before holiday shopping begins? Have you left enough time to build awareness before your busiest selling season?
November–December	Holiday-themed books, gift books, devotionals, inspirational titles	Is your book specifically tied to holiday shopping or gift giving? If not, would a January launch give you more time to build momentum and avoid competing during the busiest retail season?

Publisher's Perspective

At BookLogix, we generally advise that if your book won't be available by the end of October, it may be smarter to consider waiting until the New Year, unless directly tied to holiday sales or gift buying.

For Christmas books and planners, plan even earlier. A June or July release can support Christmas in July promotions and align with when many retailers begin considering holiday inventory.

Publisher's Tip

Don't plan your release around when readers will use your book. Plan it around when they'll discover it, buy it, recommend it, stock it, or book you because of it. Those dates are often very different.