

Checklist: Choosing the Right Cover Image for Your Book

Use this checklist to evaluate whether your cover image truly fits your book—and whether it can compete in the market.

1. Genre & Market Awareness

Question	Yes []	No []
I have analyzed current book covers in my genre.		
I recognize common colors, motifs, and visual styles.		
My cover aligns with genre expectations without feeling generic.		

2. Capturing the Core of Your Book

Question	Yes []	No []
My cover does not try to show the entire story, but focuses on one clear core idea.		
I can explain in one sentence what my cover visually represents.		
The image conveys the mood, genre, and tone of the book.		

3. Clarity & Visual Impact

Question	Yes []	No []
My cover works well even in small formats (e.g., thumbnails).		
The design is not overcrowded or visually confusing.		
The title is clearly readable and works well with the image.		

4. Personal Images vs. Professional Visuals

Question	Yes []	No []
I have evaluated whether my own image is professional enough (quality, composition, resolution).		
I have honestly assessed whether it can compete with other covers in the market.		
I have considered alternatives such as stock images or illustrations.		

5. Image Rights & Licensing

Question	Yes []	No []
I have verified that the image can be used for commercial purposes.		
I understand the licensing terms (e.g., print runs, advertising, reuse).		
I have documented the image source and license.		

6. Cover Concept & Design

Question	Yes []	No []
The image, title, typography, and colors work well together.		
The cover looks professional and not like an unmodified template.		



I have used templates consciously—not just filled them with random content.		
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7. Target Audience & Impact

Question	Yes []	No []
My cover visually appeals to my target audience.		
I have gathered feedback from others.		
My cover is competitive compared to similar books.		

Evaluation

- **Many “yes” answers** → Your cover image is clear, market-ready, and well aligned with your book.
- **Some “no” answers** → Your cover works overall, but certain aspects (e.g., clarity or market fit) need improvement.
- **Many “no” answers** → Your cover image needs a fundamental revision, especially in terms of impact, audience appeal, and professionalism.

Final Thought

A strong cover doesn't show everything—it shows the right thing. The clearer your visual focus, the stronger your book will stand out in the market.

For more in-depth tips, see the related **magazine article**:

> [How do I find the right image for my book cover?](#)

For more useful tools and resources, check out our **newsletter** here:

<https://www.grin.com/en/newsletter/>

