How to use Word to lay out a chapbook

Set your page size to 5” wide and 8.5” high. This is equivalent to an 8.5x11 sheet folded in half.

Widen your margins to give your poems more space. The margin along the book’s gutter should be a bit wider than the margin by the book’s fore-edge. You can manually set the margins page by page / poem by poem by highlighting the text whose margins you want to change and dragging the arrows on the ruler bar at the top of the page.

Pick a smaller font, if necessary (9 or 10 is about as small as you should go).

Use the footer to put in page numbers. You can tell word not to put numbers on the first page if you like.

The first page you see in your document will be the page facing you when you open the chapbook, so you probably want to make it a title page with the book’s title and your name.

Leave blank pages if you want the back of a given page to print blank.

You might want to include a table of contents on your third page, which will help readers navigate your book.

You can include a dedication, a quote from a writer whose work has influenced these poems, or anything else you think will guide the reader into your book.

This page could be left blank.

A good spot for your table of contents.

Poem title #

Next title #

Next title #

I would leave this one blank too.

First poem could begin here.

Try to use a different type style or typeface for the title to differentiate it from the poems.

Give the body of the poem some space from the title.

Keep adding pages until all of the poems are in the chapbook.

If you want to do something visual, you can past jpg files in here, but I recommend using InDesign instead.

Once all of the poems are in, consider whether you want to include notes or acknowledgements at the end.

Look at books that you like – you can mimic their layout.

As a final stage, save this word document as a pdf.

Open your pdf in Acrobat and choose “Print.”

For *Page Sizing and Handling*, choose “booklet.” This will automatically lay out the poems for saddle-stapling.

Print the file double-sided.

Fold each page down the middle (each one becomes a folio), and stack them all so they are in order.

Bind these folios either by stapling through the spine or sewing along it with a needle and thread. See the pdf on our website for a sewing diagram.

You can also bring your pdf file to your local print and copy shop and they will do it for you.

Poem 2

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Poem 3

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poem 4

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poem 5

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poem 6

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Poem 7

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Poem 8

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