

KDP Launch Checklist

A 30-day prep + launch + 30-day follow-through. Launch day is the milestone, not the work.

PHASE 1 — BEFORE LAUNCH (7–30 days out)

COVER

- Lock cover by day 21 (or earlier with a designer)
- Test 3 drafts on genre readers — not friends/family
- Make sure it reads clearly at thumbnail size & signals the genre

BLURB / DESCRIPTION

- Write only after the cover is locked; match its tone
- Hook in sentence 1 → 3–4 paragraphs of escalating stakes → genre-payoff closer
- Keep it 1,500–2,500 characters (of 4,000 allowed)

A+ CONTENT

- Build at least a 3-module layout (author photo, book art, pitch)
- It's free and lifts conversion — do not skip it

CATEGORIES & KEYWORDS

- Choose 3 categories at publish; favor fit over raw traffic
- Fill all 7 keyword fields — use long-tail phrases
- Plan to request up to 10 categories via KDP support post-launch

ARC LIST & NEWSLETTER

- Line up 15–30 ARC readers by 14 days out
- Schedule emails: teaser (–14d), cover/preorder (–7d), launch day, +3d follow-up
- No newsletter? Build one — biggest predictor of a strong 2nd launch

PHASE 2 — LAUNCH DAY

FIRST 12 HOURS

- Click publish; confirm live (usually 4–12h after approval)
- Verify cover renders, description line breaks intact, categories correct
- Send the launch-day newsletter
- Notify ARC readers the review window is open
- Post to social channels with a direct listing link
- Notify personal-network reviewers

NEXT 12 HOURS

- Monitor sales rank: top-1,000 in a subcategory holds 7–14 days
- Top-100 in a subcategory hits Hot New Releases
- Launch all paid promos (Amazon Ads / BookBub / FB) on day one, not day three

PHASE 3 — DAYS 2–7

- Monitor reviews (start day 2–5); confirm Amazon compliance
- Politely nudge ARC readers who haven't posted yet
- High clicks + low sales → blurb/cover mismatch
- Low clicks → cover or categories are wrong; adjust now

- Track BSR: top-10,000 by day 3 = on track
- Past top-100,000 by day 5 = off track
- Don't pause an ad before day 10 (unless ACOS >100% with no path to fix)

PHASE 4 — DAYS 8–30

- ~60% of first-30-day reviews land between day 7 and 21
- Under 5 reviews by day 14 → ARC list was too small

- By day 21, check subcategory ranking; if none, change categories via KDP support
- Start planning book 2 / follow-up promo by day 21 — backlist drives long-term income

⚠ COMMON LAUNCH MISTAKES

- Launching with no ARC list (reviews lag sales 2–4 weeks)
- Choosing categories by traffic instead of fit
- Skipping A+ Content (free conversion left on the table)
- Running ads before the listing is dialed in

QUICK REFERENCE

Approval time: usually <24h, up to 72h in busy periods

Preorder vs. direct: debuts launch direct — preorders dilute velocity

ARC readers: 15–30; about half review within 14 days

Amazon Ads: \$5–15/day, start launch day, don't optimize before day 10; then cut high-spend/zero-sale keywords and expand winners