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Writing on the go: the writer's smartphone

Long gone are the days of the writer retreating to their quiet country home to churn out their next masterpiece. Today's modern writers are all around us: in parks, backyards, and in coffee shops. Writers, like everyone else, are busy and they need tools that will help them on the go. Smartphones allow writers to stay organized by allowing users to have constant access to their calendars and email and help them to keep track of their meetings.

Features such as notes and a camera phone can help record inspirations and ideas for later integration into one's writing. It would also be worthwhile to check out the app stores offered by Apple, Android, and BlackBerry for more writing tools, such as apps that help writers keep track of plot and characters as they work on their novels.

[Evernote](#)—available across numerous platforms—is a note-taking app that lets you organize your notes on your machine later on.

[Dictionary.com](#) has an app available for Apple, Android, and BlackBerry. Look words up quickly when you're on the go!

[Goodreads](#) has an app available across all major platforms. Goodreads allows you to see what is popular in the book market and discuss what you're reading with others who are enthusiastic about books.

Writing genre fiction

This is the first part of a series on writing genre fiction.

The writing of fiction of any kind usually has the same elements: plot, character, setting, dialogue, structure, etc. Genre fiction, however, is set apart from what is usually described as "literary fiction." Works of fiction that readers and critics would consider literary often have a strong focus on character development and exploration, the complex and innovative use of language, experimental use of structure and narrative, and/or ambitious themes. This kind of

fiction often challenges the reader both technically and aesthetically.

Genre fiction, on the other hand, has a different focus. Compared to literary fiction, it tends to have an engaging balance between plot, character, and action. A more distinctive aspect is that a work within a particular genre will consist of familiar elements of characterization, theme, and setting. Readers within each genre maintain these expectations, while hoping to read new and interesting approaches to them.

The biggest examples of genres include science fiction, fantasy, horror, mystery, thriller, and romance, and within each you will find subgenres and even works presented as crossovers and hybrids borrowing from other genres.

As a genre writer, it's important to keep abreast of genre traditions and innovations, reader expectations, and even marketing trends. Stay tuned to future editions of *Ardith's Notebook* for some quick tips on writing within each major genre.



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