



What a Beginning Author's Website Should Include

Summary

A beginning author's website is a credibility hub: a simple, professional place readers, media, and event organizers can verify who you are, discover your books, and take the next step (buy, subscribe, contact, or invite you). The best early-stage author sites prioritize clarity over complexity: a strong homepage, a simple path to your books, a clear author story, an email list, and a minimal friction contact option.

Goals of a beginner author website

A new author site should do four jobs well:

- Establish trust: prove you're real and professional
- Convert interest into action: drive book sales, email sign-ups, and inquiries
- Centralize information: one link you can share everywhere
- Support long-term growth: a platform you can expand as your catalog grows

Core pages every beginning author needs

1. Homepage (the "why you" page)

Your homepage should answer three questions in under 10 seconds: Who are you? What do you write? What should I do next?

Include:

- A clear headline that states your genre or audience
- A short subhead that adds personality and specificity
- One primary call to action (CTA), such as Join my newsletter or Explore my books
- A featured book section (even if you only have one)

- Social proof, if available (reviews, awards, endorsements)

2. Book's page (the “buy” page)

This is the highest-value page for most authors.

Include for each book:

- Cover image
- Short, interesting description
- Formats available (paperback, ebook, audiobook)
- Retail links (Amazon, Bookshop.org, Ingram-enabled retailers, etc.)
- A clear “start here” note if reading order matters

3. About page (the “connection” page)

Readers buy from authors they feel connected to. Your About page should be warm, specific, and reader-focused.

Include:

- A short bio and a longer bio (useful for media)
- A friendly photo
- A “why I write” paragraph
- A few personal details that match your brand
- A CTA at the end (newsletter, books, or contact)

4. Contact page (the “yes” page)

Make it easy for opportunities to find you.

Include:

- A simple contact form
- A direct email option (optional but helpful)
- A short list of reasons to contact you (events, interviews, speaking, rights)
- Links to social profiles

5. Newsletter sign-up (the “owned audience” engine)

An email list is one of the most reliable assets an author can build.

Include:

- A clear sign-up form placed on the homepage and in the site footer
- A simple promise of what subscribers get (updates, freebies, behind-the-scenes)
- A small incentive, if possible (sample chapter, printable, short story)

High-impact extras (recommended as soon as you can)

Media/Press kit page

Helpful for podcasts, bloggers, bookstores, and event organizers.

Include:

- Author bio (short and long)
- High-resolution headshot
- Book cover images
- One-sheet or sell sheet (PDF)
- Awards, notable reviews, and links
- Event topics or speaking themes

Events page

If you do signings, school visits, readings, or conferences, list them.

Include:

- Upcoming events
- A short “Book me” section with a CTA to contact you

Blog or articles (optional, but strategic)

A blog is not required at the beginning, but it can help with search visibility and reader trust.

Best early topics:

- Behind-the-scenes of your writing process
- Book inspiration and research
- Reader resources related to your genre
- Updates on launches and events

Essential website elements (regardless of pages)

Clear navigation

Keep the top navigation short:

- Home
- Books
- About
- Contact
- Newsletter (or a prominent button)

Strong calls to action

Use one primary CTA per page. Too many options reduce conversions.

Mobile-first design

Most visitors will arrive from social media on a phone.

Basic SEO foundations

You don't need advanced SEO, but you do need the basics:

- Page titles and meta descriptions that match your genre and name
- Image alt text for covers and photos
- A readable URL structure (example: /books, /about)

Trust signals

Even small signals help:

- Professional photos and consistent branding
- Testimonials or reviews (even a few)
- Logos of associations, awards, or publications (if applicable)

Common mistakes to avoid

- No clear next step: visitors don't know what to do
- Too much on the homepage: long scrolls without structure
- Hiding the books: make buying obvious
- Skipping email capture: relying only on social media
- Outdated info: old events, broken links, missing book details

Minimum viable author website checklist

If you want the simplest version that still works, build this:

- Homepage with a headline, featured book, and one CTA
- Book's page with buy links
- About page with photo and bio
- Contact page
- Newsletter sign-up embedded on homepage and footer

Conclusion

A beginning author's website doesn't need to be complex. It needs to be clear, credible, and conversion-focused. Start with a few strong pages, make your books and newsletter easy to find, and treat the site as your long-term home base as you grow your audience and catalog.

(This information is not meant to be any form of solicitation and is for information purposes only. It reflects one author's opinion.)