



Worldbuilding

(Side Quest)

Workbook

Worldbuilding Bible Worksheet

Complete this checklist for your new world. Keep it sketchy. Don't feel the need to go into any more detail than you might in a casual conversation. Many of the prompts are merely suggestions to get you thinking about your world. **Have fun and by the end your world will feel a lot more real than when you started.**

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Who's in charge?

A king? A president? A commune? A theocracy?

Figure out **who's at the top of the tree and the bottom and inbetween.**

Do ordinary people vote? Do they trust the powers-that-be? How secure are those in power? Who sets and keeps the laws of the land? What's the punishment for breaking the law?

Magic & Technology

Is there magic? How does it work? What are the consequences of using it? How advanced is the technology? Can you fly between the stars? If so, how long does it take? How advanced is weaponry and communications? How do they get about: horse and carriage, or personal jetpack?

One of the most important things to consider is how magic and technology will change the world. If you're going to have a society of robots with a high level of artificial intelligence, then where else is that tech used? If you have magic, then who can use it? If we have teleportation, then how can that tech be abused? Think of how something as simple as the internet or cell phones have changed our world and how we interact with one another.



Environment & Economy

What are the natural resources? Are they abundant, or rare? Are people scavenging to survive? **How does the environment affect their everyday life?** Do the normal laws of physics apply, or are there quirks? How many moons does your world have? Will that affect the tides? Are there magical plants or poisons? How dangerous is the wildlife? What's the weather like across the world? Which places suffer from natural disasters? What do people do when they get sick?

How do people earn a living? How do they pay for stuff? Coins, bartering, slavery? Are there guilds or trading blocks? What are the most notorious narcotics and contraband?

What are the significant places? The big cities, ports, mountains ranges, deserts and oceans. How is the world broken up geographically?



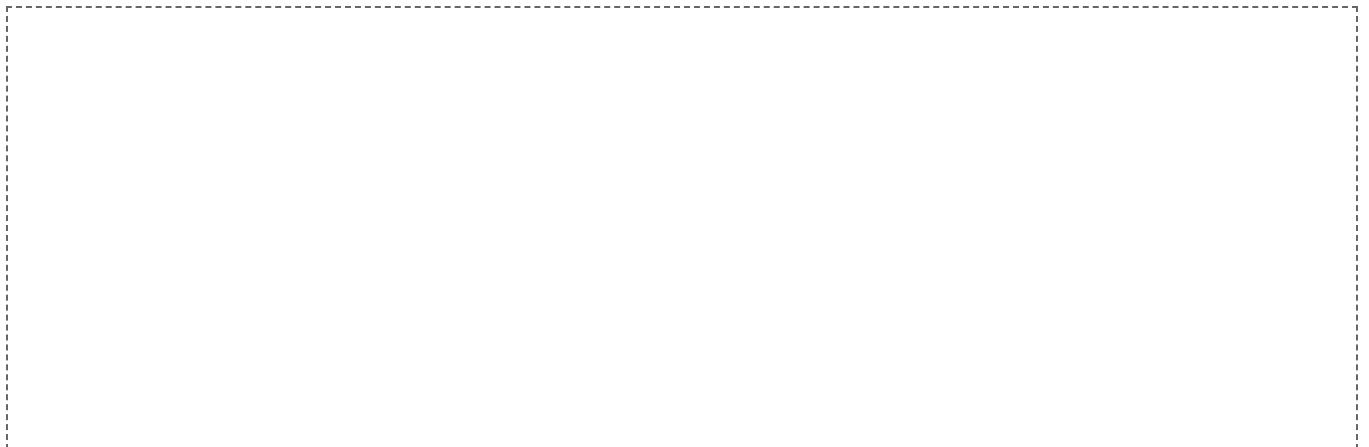
Maps

It's common for fantasy novels to feature a map for readers to reference, but it can be just as useful for the author too. **The good news is you don't have to be an expert cartographer.** A rough sketch to give you an idea of distance and space will help you visualise your world. Allow yourself space to change as your story evolves. **Start by listing some of the key locations in your story and describe where they are in your world.**



Culture & Customs

Do they worship gods? Or are they driven by science? Are they divided by different cultures? Different languages? Are there important holidays, festivals, rituals or songs? **Who are the great artists and musicians?** What are the taboos? How do they greet one another? What's an offensive remark or gesture? Are there any rites of passage? Do they get married? How many spouses? What's the ceremony like? What are their death rituals? How many languages does the average citizen speak? What are the accents like in different parts of the world? Is there a class system? **What sports do they play?** What food do they eat?



History

What came before and how did it shape the world of your story? What were the significant events that everyone knows about? What are the lies of history created by those in power? Is their history broken into recognised eras? **What are the myths and legends?** Who are the titans of history? Who are the forgotten heroes?

Contrast & Diversity

Those old science fiction movies where the aliens all arrive wearing the same silver jumpsuits, or fantasy worlds that are all desert or lava... they don't really cut it anymore. We expect a little sophistication from our worlds these days. Make sure there's room for contrasting civilisations and locations. **What are the key cultures in your world?**

Naming Conventions

If you are building fantastical worlds, then try to have a continuity when it comes to naming conventions. History can be your friend here. For example, if you're writing a fantasy about two warring nations, then maybe give all the characters from the east Celtic names, and all the characters from the west Nordic names. This will subliminally help the reader make the distinction between the two cultures. **What are the names of your heroes and villains?**

Your Protagonist

Where do they fit into this world? Are they one of the ruling classes, or a hungry peasant? Are they living a comfortable life that's about to be shook up by world events? How are they perceived by others? **And how will they move in society by the end of the story: up or down?**

From the notes you've written on the checklist, list five worldbuilding elements that could be dramatised in your story. For example: If your hero has to complete a rite of passage, do they defy the rules or stick to tradition?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.