



2020 Self-Publishing VS Traditional Publishing Full Analysis

Growth Stats, Comparisons, Royalties,

& Visual Data Explained Easily



In recent years, self-publishing versus traditional publishing has become the new “Oxford Comma” debate in terms of its polarity. Some say there’s only one publishing to them, and it’s traditional. Others praise the innovation of self-publishing as being revolutionary to the publishing industry as a whole.

We’re here to help you decide this for yourself.

In this analysis, you’ll find everything from charts of traditional versus self-publishing book sales, royalty rate comparisons, a visual comparison of what is included in each type, common misconceptions factualized, and more.

But if you want to watch a live training including some of this and a lot more about how you can self-publish in the next 90 days, [**register and save your spot right here**](#) before viewing this analysis!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART 1: MISCONCEPTIONS 01

Common Misconceptions Factualized

PART 2: COMPARISON OF WHAT'S DONE/INCLUDED 05

“What You Get” Comparisons

PART 3: ROYALTIES 07

Royalties of Books

PART 4: COST COMPARISON TO START 09

Cost to Publish Comparison

PART 5: COST COMPARISON TO START 11

The Publishing “Status” Quo

PART 6: STATUS 12

Very Next Steps to Publish



PART 1

Misconceptions

Let's start with the common misconceptions associated with self-publishing versus traditional publishing.

Unfortunately, there's a ton of misinformation out there about self-publishing, crafted when it first bloomed into an industry back around 2007. Thirteen years later, more than a few things have changed but the information about it from all those years ago still remains.

And we want to change that by going over some of the most common misconceptions and the factual information surrounding them.

"Self-publishing isn't legitimate."

This is wrong for so many reasons. Many people think that self-publishing doesn't carry the same authority as traditional publishing.

That's false. Either way you publish, you've still written the book. You've still put in the work to publish it, and many would say you put in *more* work and effort to self-publish.

Self-publishing is a more and more legitimate publishing method as the years go by. We predict that self-publishing will surpass traditional publishing in the coming years due to the freedom it allows and the lengthy process of traditional publishing becoming more unappealing.

"Traditional publishing means you're a better writer."

There are self-published books that are way better written than traditionally published books. Remember: traditional publishers want to *sell* books. This means they'll choose to buy and publish books they know will fly off shelves, the ones that are trending.

They're less likely to take on a super unique book because it's risky. They don't want to lose money.

And the simple truth: traditional publishers will buy your book and “work with you” to get it publish-ready. While they don’t take on completely terrible writers, they have a team of editors and in some case, rewriters, to make books better.

Your method of publishing has no bearing on your skill as a writer.

“Self-publishing is only for people who can’t get a book deal.”

While this is sometimes the case, it’s not *only* for those who have previously sought a publishing deal.

Your decision to self-publish or traditionally publish is completely a *business decision*. Not a last resort. If you go into publishing with the mindset of traditional being the only option “until you fail,” you’ll have a much harder, longer, and painful journey.

Many authors prefer self-publishing and have no desire to traditionally publish. Their first option is to self-publish.

“Self-published books are bad.”

When it comes to this misconception, the information is based on a small section of authors and people who haven’t read a self-published book since the crappy one they ordered in 2007.

Once they had their opinion, they didn’t stick around to see how much the industry has changed.

Nowadays, authors want to make money. With the Amazon algorithm, that now means getting book reviews, and *good* ones. You can’t do that with a bad book. Which means the standards for selling your books on Amazon have risen.

The books’ quality has as well.

In our [***Become a Bestseller program***](#), we always, always, ALWAYS, inform our students about why they need a book editor before publishing. Quality is our top priority.

👉 **“You’ll only make money if you traditionally publish.”**

This one is probably the very most misleading of all of these. And by misleading, I mean *really* misleading to the point that many traditionally published authors don’t make anything past their first upfront check.

In fact, if a traditionally published author doesn’t sell enough books to cover their advance, they won’t make *any* money in royalties. And if that book doesn’t sell well, publishers will often pull them from shelves completely and since they don’t have the rights to that book, they can’t publish it themselves for money.

Self-published books can actually generate *double* the profit as traditionally published books can over a 10 year period.

Here’s a graph of a first-time traditionally published book’s income and a self-published physical copy book’s earnings over a period of 10 years. Yes, *years*.



Comparison Criteria

(OVER A 10 YEAR TIMELINE)

Criteria	Self-Publishing	Traditional Publishing
What you get in advance	\$0	\$10,000
Book Price	\$13.99	\$13.99
Royalty	60%	10% (12% after 10,000 copies sold)
Profit per book	\$8.39	\$1.39
Books sold per day	2	7

Source: <https://stevelaube.com/what-are-average-book-sales/>

**Disclaimer:* The total books sold for traditionally published books of 25,550 is actually a very high number for a new author that didn't "hit it big" as they say. So this number, in reality, may be smaller. This graph is made to illustrate a controlled profit difference based on fixed numbers per year.

But...just imagine what that graph would look like if you wrote more than one book, more than two, three...

PART 2

Comparison of What's Done/Included

Here's an overview of what you get with both self-publishing and traditional publishing. Overall, self-publishing give you 100% control over your own work, but on your own dime upfront (that actually can be paid back easier since you do keep 100% of your book's profit as well).

But with traditional publishing, they take care of everything except writing the book for you, but at a much higher cost of your royalties, since they have to earn money to do all of those services. Check out the chart below for more details.

What You Get	Self-Publishing	Traditional Publishing
Sole controle of your book's outcome	✓	✗
Sole controle of your book's rights	✓	✗
Control over the story	✓	✗
Control over the cover	✓	✗
100% book profits	✓	✗
Editing included	✗	✓
Cover design	✗	✓
Marketing	✗	✗
Deadlines	✗	✓
NYT Bestseller Chance	✗	✓

A note on bestseller lists: this is difficult to cover because the "rules" in order to land yourself on these lists vary for each but when it comes to the New York Times Bestsellers List, the criteria is highly selective at best and are actually sort of "rigged," in a way.

You can [read more about how to get on the NYT bestseller list right here.](#)

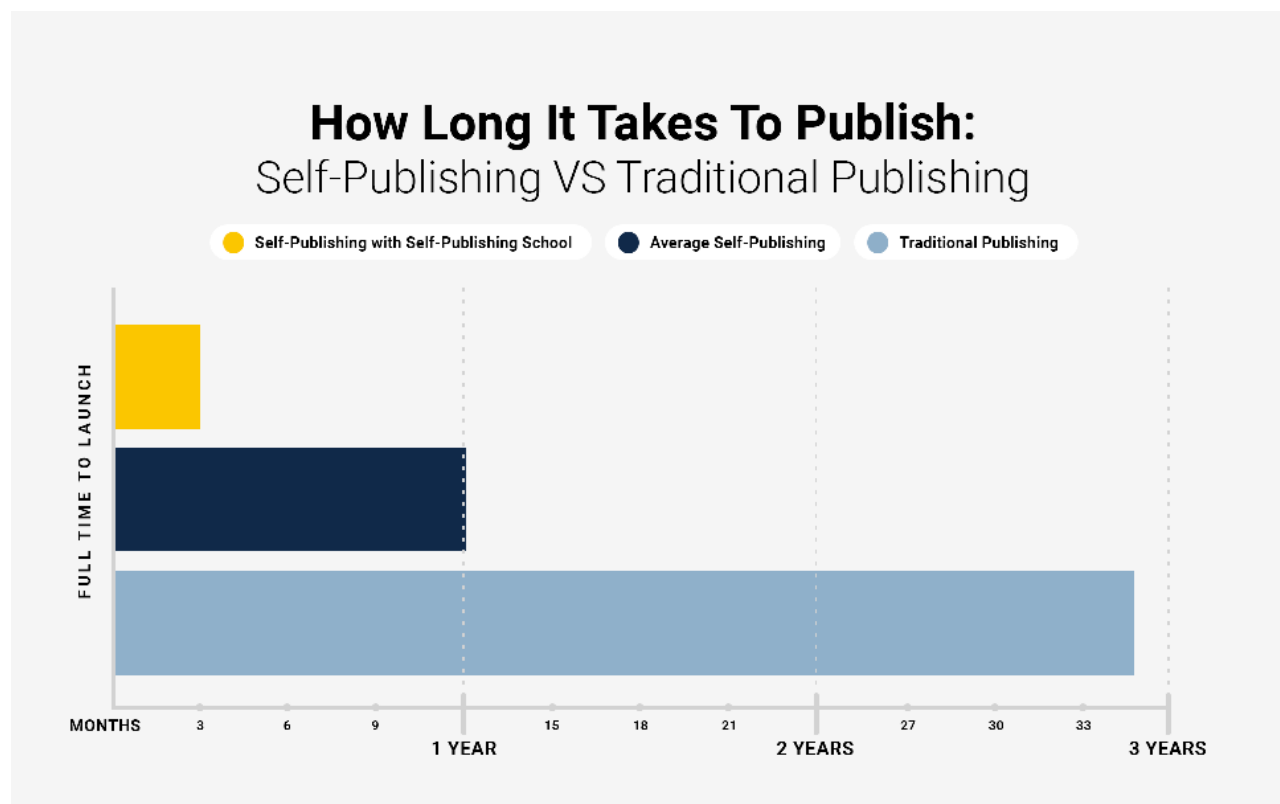
How Long it Takes to Publish Comparison

The biggest comparison between these two aside from the book production responsibilities is the time it takes to publish.

With self-publishing, you can publish in as little as 90 days with [the right \(our\) system](#).

With traditional publishing, you can wait up to 2+ years *after* signing your book deal, and this doesn't include the time it takes to find an agent.

Ultimately, you can self-publish faster and you can put out more books than you can being traditionally published. This also allows for more income generation.



PART 3

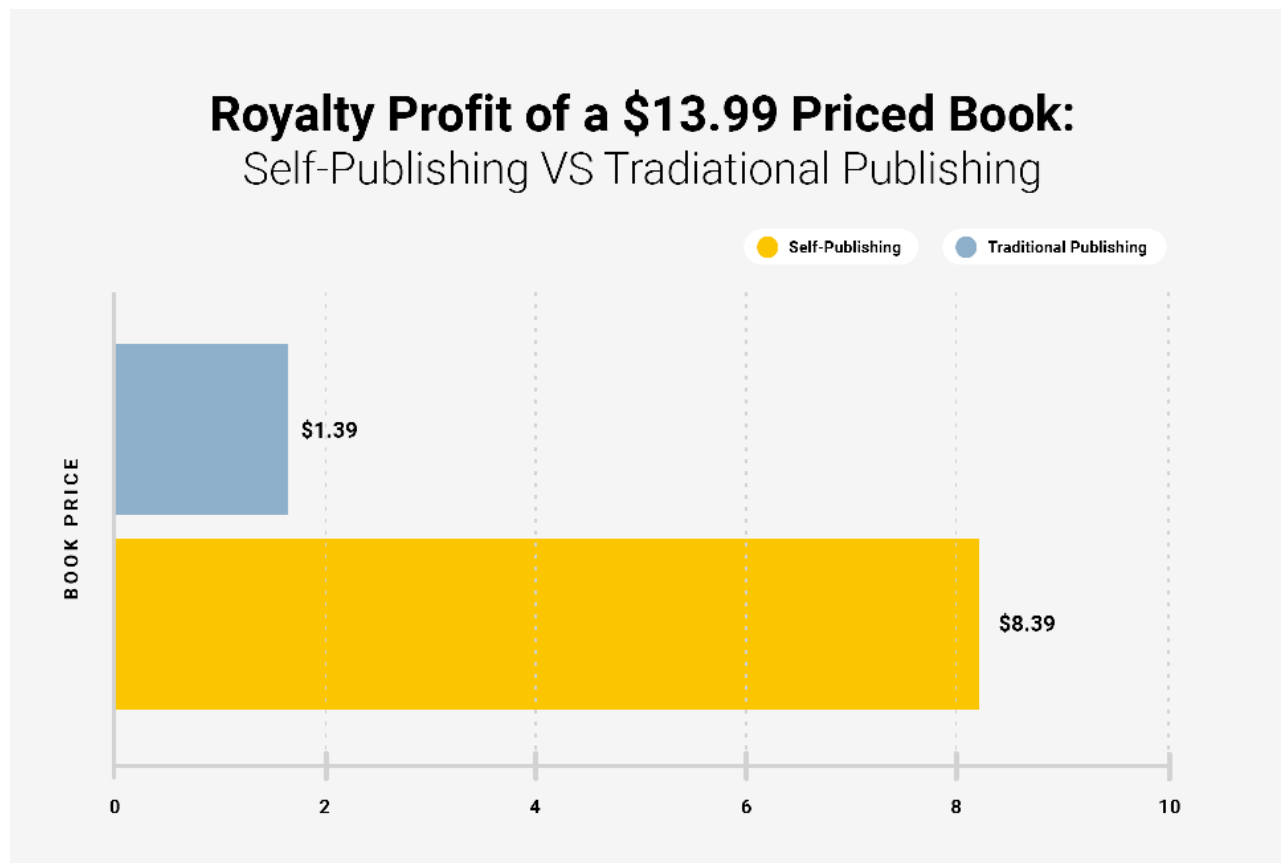
Royalties

I'll be straight up with you here: you will get a far, far lower royalty rate number with a traditional publisher. This is due to the fact that they have to pay editors, designers, marketers, and your agent also gets a cut.

With self-publishing, you get to keep 100% of your book's profits, which is a much higher rate than what traditional publishers will give you.

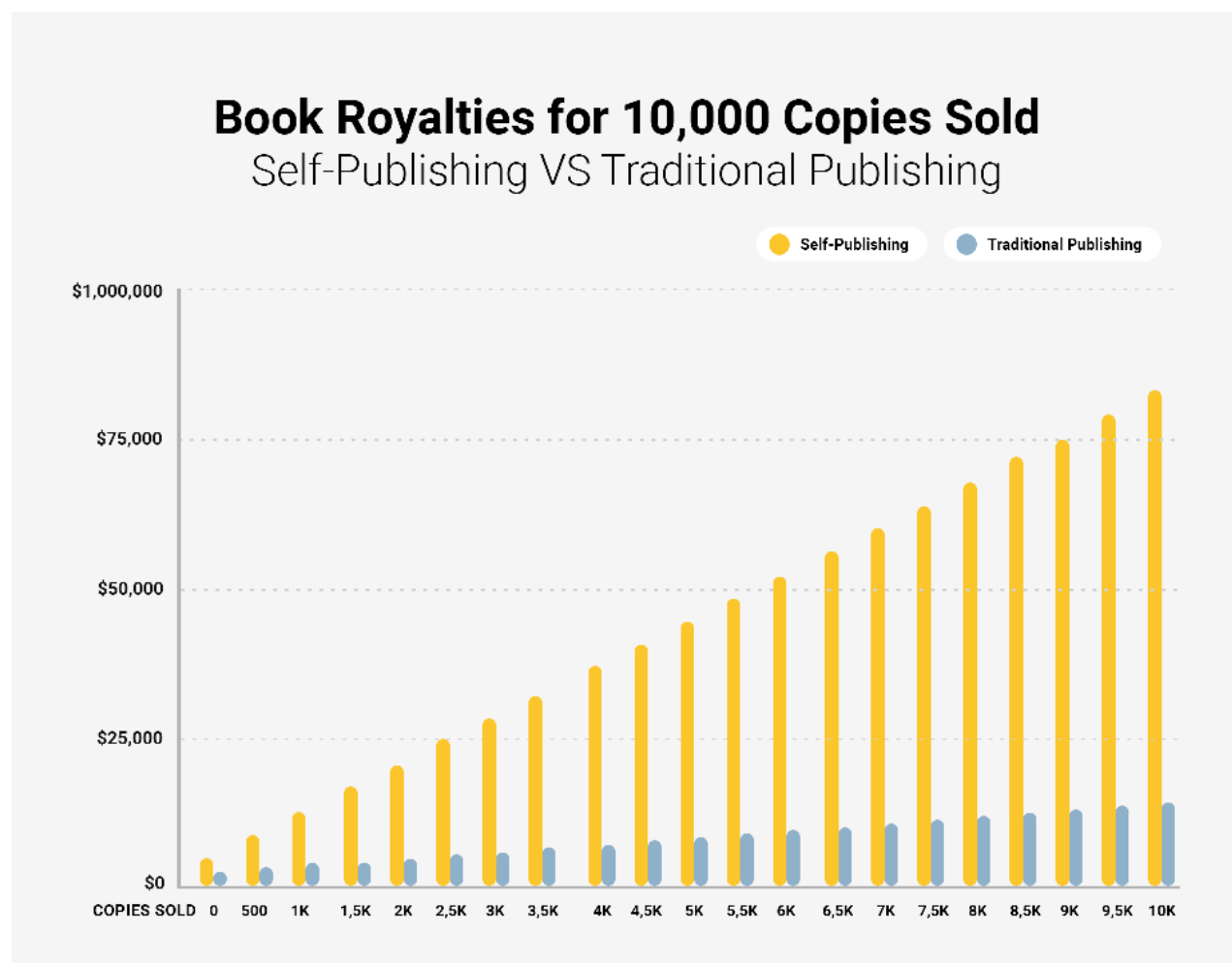
Here are some comparison charts for your reference (you can even make one of these for [yourself at SelfPublishing.com here!](https://www.selfpublishing.com)):

Here's a visual of the profit per book at a \$13.99 sale price, 60% royalty rate for self-published authors and 10% for traditionally published authors:



Here's an overview of what you get with both self-publishing and traditional publishing. Overall, self-publishing gives you 100% control over your own work, but on your own dime upfront.

But with traditional publishing, they take care of everything except writing the book for you, but at a much higher cost of your royalties, since they have to earn money to do all of those services. Check out the chart below for more details.



PART 4

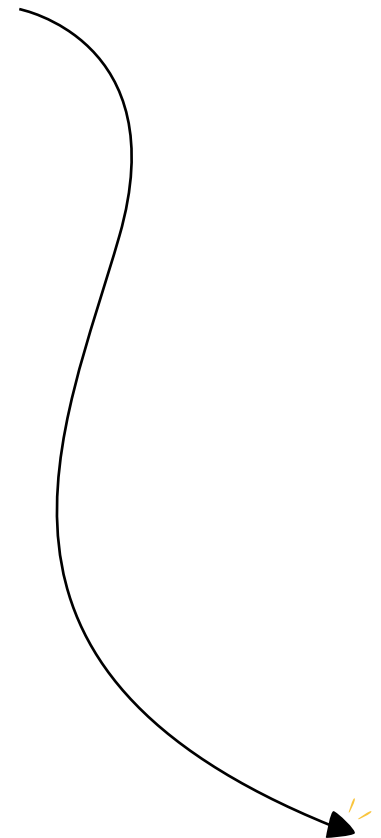
Cost Comparison To Start

This is where most people don't even want to bother with self-publishing because they know they'll have to put forth some money in order to gain success from it. But that's with any business venture worthwhile, isn't it?

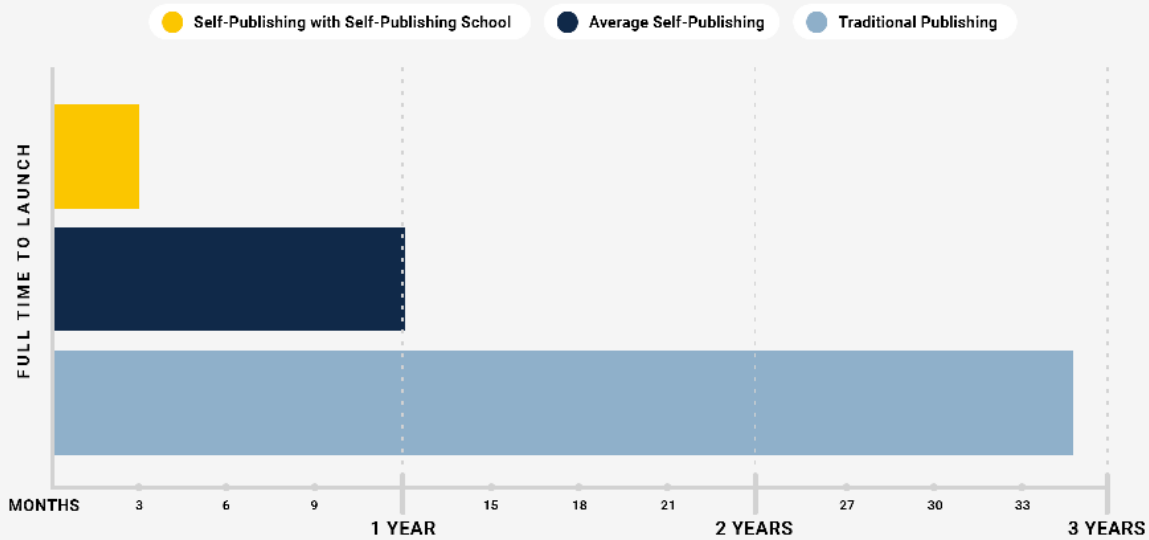
Yes, being an author means you are your own business.

As our fiction coach R.E. Vance says, "If you treat it like a hobby, it will only ever be that."

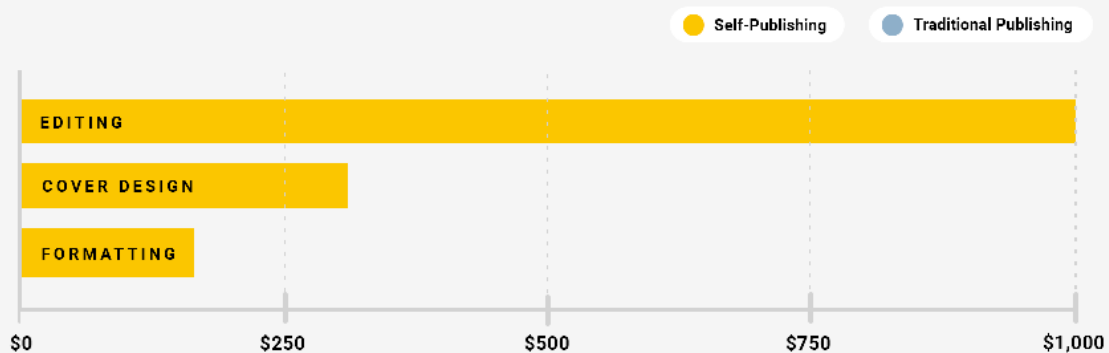
That being said, there are two areas of investments, or "costs," to compare when looking at publishing a book: Time Investments and Monetary Investments.



How Long It Takes To Publish: Self-Publishing VS Traditional Publishing



Cost to Start: Self-Publishing VS Traditional Publishing



As you can see, traditional publishing takes a lot longer to get done due to querying an agent, the time it takes to make edits, and then wait for launch time.

And for self-publishing, you have to spend more up front in order to have a high quality product. But trust us, it's worth crafting a quality book if you want sustained sales and high ratings.

PART 5

Status

We can't talk about self-publishing versus traditional publishing without mentioning the status portion. This is largely why there's a debate in the first place and many people will tell you that their reason for wanting to traditionally publish has little to do with the cost or time and more to do with the status.

There's a stigma that often comes with self-published authors because of misinformation. We're working to change this perception, since it's based on nearly 15 year old information.



But when it comes to traditional publishing, some people see this as a sign of status, of authority and overall skill.

Because there are so many gatekeepers to the traditional publishing industry, people often have the impression that your book must be so much better because it managed to get through all of those people.

But the truth is, like mentioned above, the traditional publishing industry is about making money. They buy what's trending and what will sell. This has no true meaning about whether or not the book is well written or better than any other.

It simply means that it's in a genre or niche that will sell well.

If you know how to self-publish in a way that works with the Amazon algorithm and you actually gain exposure, you don't have to worry about if your book is "trending" because you'll get it in front of the right audience, who will buy.

That's what we do here at Self-Publishing School.
We get our authors' books in front of the right audience to sell.

PART 6 - VERY LAST STEPS

Now it's your time to decide!

Do you want to take the **traditional publishing** route
or
would you prefer to **self-publish** your book?

If you're still not sure, sign up for a **FREE** breakthrough call with one of our Publishing Success Strategists. They can go over more information, learn about your unique book and publishing goals, and help you move in the right direction.

[JUST CLICK RIGHT HERE TO SAVE YOUR SPOT!](#)