



# PUBLISHING AND SELLING YOUR FIRST TECHNICAL BOOK WITH LEANPUB



An opinionated guide

BY EUGENE DORFLING

# **Publishing and selling your first technical book with Leanpub: An opinionated guide**

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# Publishing and selling your first technical book with Leanpub: an opinionated guide

In this guide, I will show you a simple way to write, publish and sell your book with the help of an online service called [Leanpub](https://leanpub.com)<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup><https://leanpub.com>

# Part 1 - Getting started with Leanpub

In this article, you will get your book set up on Leanpub.

More specifically you will:

1. Sign up for a Leanpub account.
2. Create a book on Leanpub

## What is Leanpub?

Leanpub is an online book publishing service that makes it easy for you to write, publish, and sell ebooks. Leanpub does way more than just generate ebooks but mentioning all you can do here might be confusing, instead I am going to show you the exact process I use, from start to sold.

## Creating your first ebook

Now you will create your ebook following an easy three-step process that includes signing up for your Leanpub account.

Click [here](https://leanpub.com/create/book)<sup>2</sup> to open the Leanpub “Create a Book or Course” page. This will open up the following page with three sections to complete:

---

<sup>2</sup><https://leanpub.com/create/book>

Author

Search title or author

Sign In Sign Up

1 Create a Book or Course 2 Choose Plan 3 Create Your Account

1 Create a Book or Course

I'D LIKE TO CREATE:

A Book A Course

Your Book

TITLE

The Next Leanpub Bestseller

You can change your book title at any time

BOOK URL

leanpub.com/ yourbook

You can change your book's URL at any time. Shorter URLs are better for promoting your book on social media.

MAIN LANGUAGE USED IN YOUR BOOK

English

Image: 1 *Leanpub create a book page*

## Step 1: Create a Book or Course

In the first section you can enter the following details:

1. Choose that you would like to create: “A Book”
2. Give your book a catchy title. (This can be changed later)
3. Choose an available URL for your book.
4. Select the language your book will be written in.
5. For a theme select: “Technical”
6. Then select that you want to write “In your web browser”

1 Create a Book or Course

2 Choose Plan

3 Create Your Account

1 Create a Book or Course

I'D LIKE TO CREATE:

A Book

A Course

Your Book

TITLE

How to sign up for Leanpub

You can change your book title at any time

BOOK URL

leanpub.com/

howtosignupforleanpub

You can change your book's URL at any time. Shorter URLs are better for promoting your book on social media.

✔ This url is available!

MAIN LANGUAGE USED IN YOUR BOOK ?

English

This helps us to set up the fonts that we use in your book.

BOOK THEME


Business

Technical


Fiction

Please note you can always change your book's theme at any time, and the main difference between them is just the page size.


Where do you want to write?



In your web browser  
(Free, Standard or Pro plans)



On your computer  
(Standard or Pro plans only)

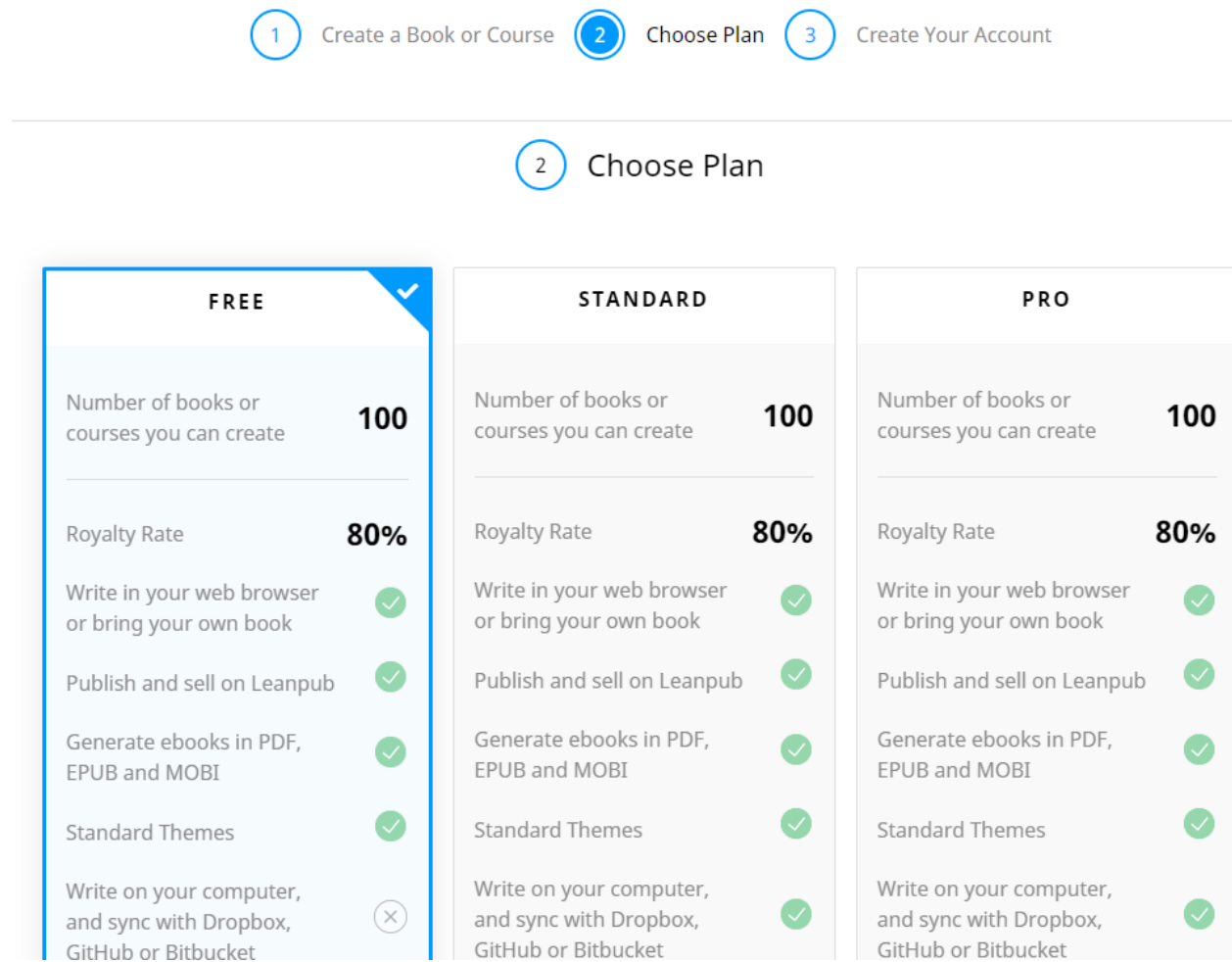


Bring your own book  
(Free, Standard or Pro plans)

Image: 2 Create a Book: Section 1

## Step 2: Choose a Plan

Up next you can choose the free plan. Here you can also see what the other two plans offer, should you need to make use of the other services, choose the appropriate plan here.

Image: 3 *Create a Book: Section 2*

## Step 3: Create Your Account

Enter your details for the automatic account creation. *Note, if you already have an account you can simply click the sign-in button, or if you are already signed in, it will show your signed-in account and you can continue.*



1

Create a Book or Course

2

Choose Plan

3

Create Your Account

### Your Account Information

NAME

Eugene Dorfiling

EMAIL

eugene@ritza.co

USERNAME

leanpub.com/u/ eugene-dorfiling

PASSWORD

.....

☒ I accept the Leanpub [Terms of Service](#) and [Privacy Policy](#).

This site is protected by reCAPTCHA and the Google [Privacy Policy](#) and [Terms of Service](#) apply.

Sign up for the Free plan

Already have an account?

Sign in

Image: 4 *Create a Book: Section 3*

Once you have completed all the fields, accept the terms and conditions, and click on the “sign up” or “add to plan” button. This will create the base of your ebook and open up a “getting started” page.

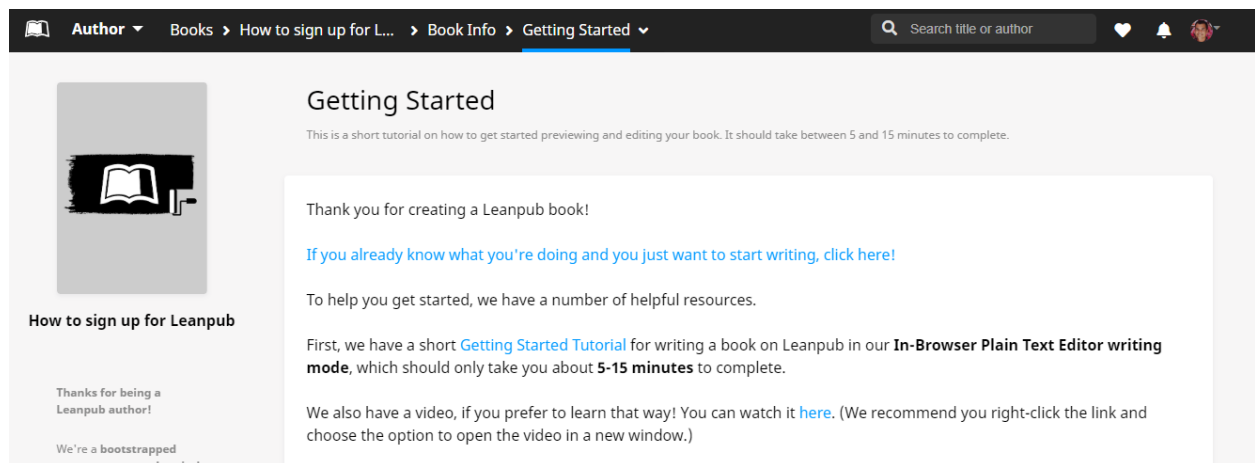


Image: 5 *Getting started page*

From the getting started page, you can click on the first link on the page that will take you straight to the in-browser text editor where you can start writing.

The first time you open up your book in the editor, you will find three example chapters that give you some tips on getting started.

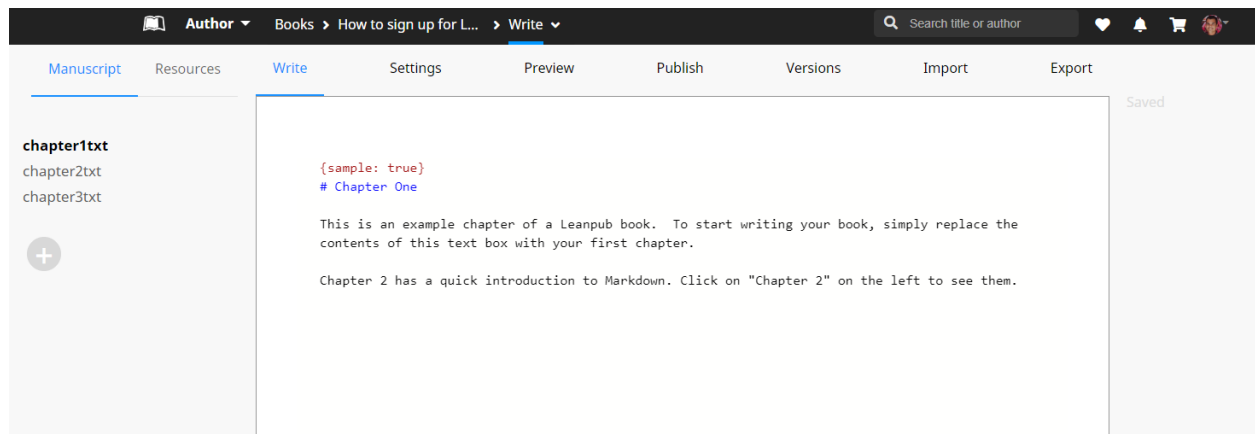


Image: 6 *Online editor: First open*

You have now set up your Leanpub account and created your first ebook. In the next part of this guide, you will learn about Markdown and write your first chapter using the In-Browser Editor.

# Part 2 - Writing your first chapter with Markdown

Now that you are all set up on Leanpub and your book is created, you can start writing your first chapter.

In this section, you will learn how to write your first chapter with Markdown using the in-browser editor.

More specifically you will:

1. Be introduced to the Leanpub in-browser plain text editor.
2. Learn the basics of Markdown.
3. Write your first chapter.
4. Generate your first preview.

## Opening the Leanpub In-Browser Editor

In your browser, go to [leanpub.com](https://leanpub.com) and sign in with your account details.

From the home page of Leanpub, you can select the first dropdown menu in the top left corner called “Store” then select “Author”.

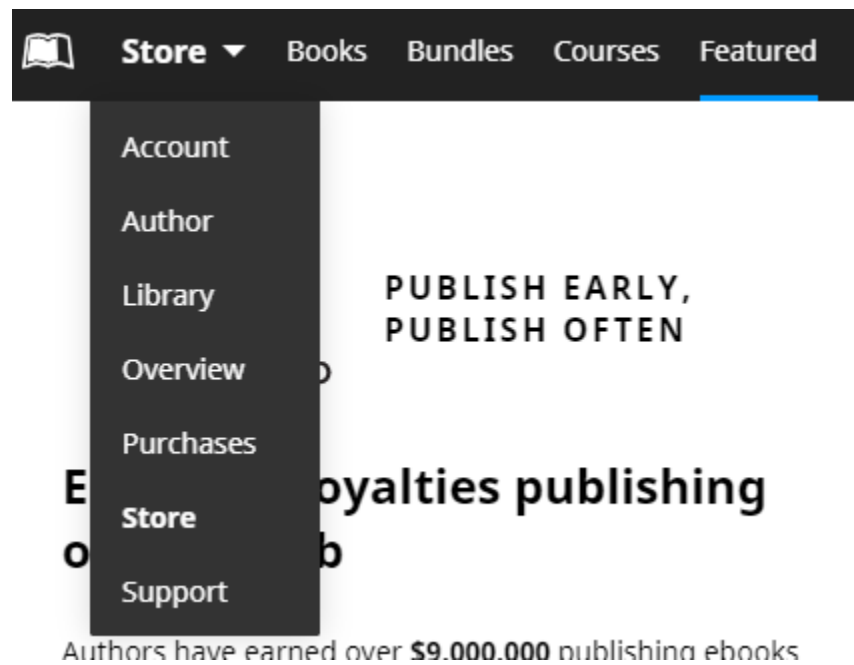


Image 1: Leanpub Menu - Store

This will open up the author's dashboard. From the second menu called "Metrics," you can navigate to "Books" where you will find your book under "Your Books" to the right. Click on the relevant book title then select "Write".

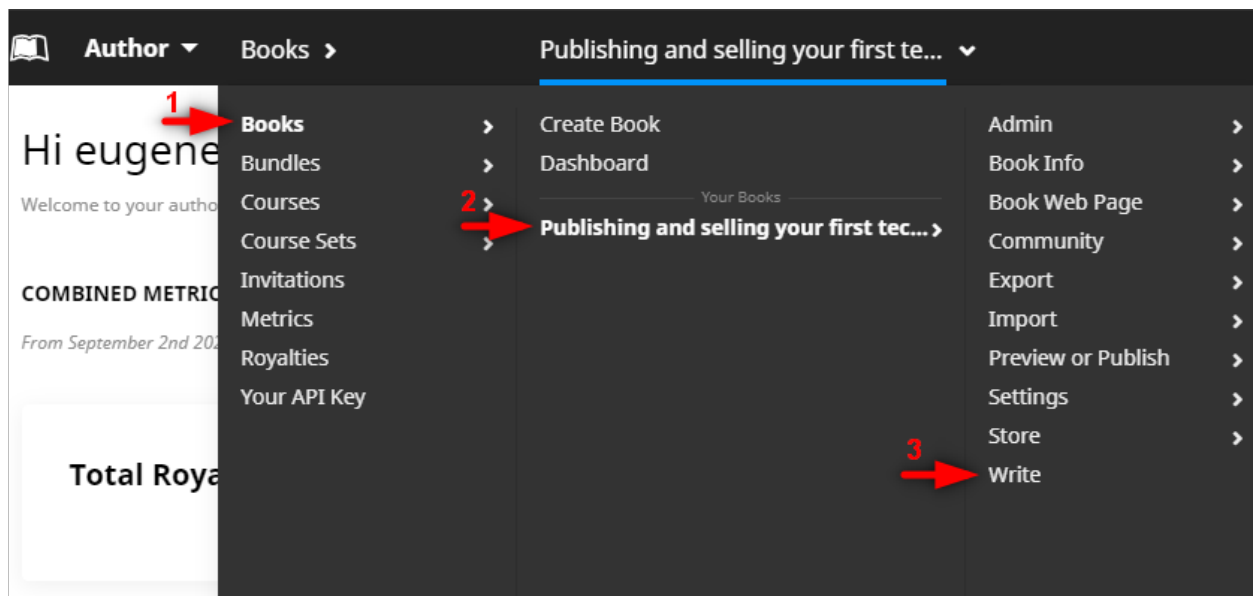


Image 2: Leanpub Menu - Author

## The Leanpub In-Browser Editor

Now that you have the editor open, you will find the left pane contains two tabs: Manuscript (where your words live / chapters are stored) and Resources (where your media can be stored and referenced). For now, make sure that “Manuscript” is selected so that the three chapters are listed.

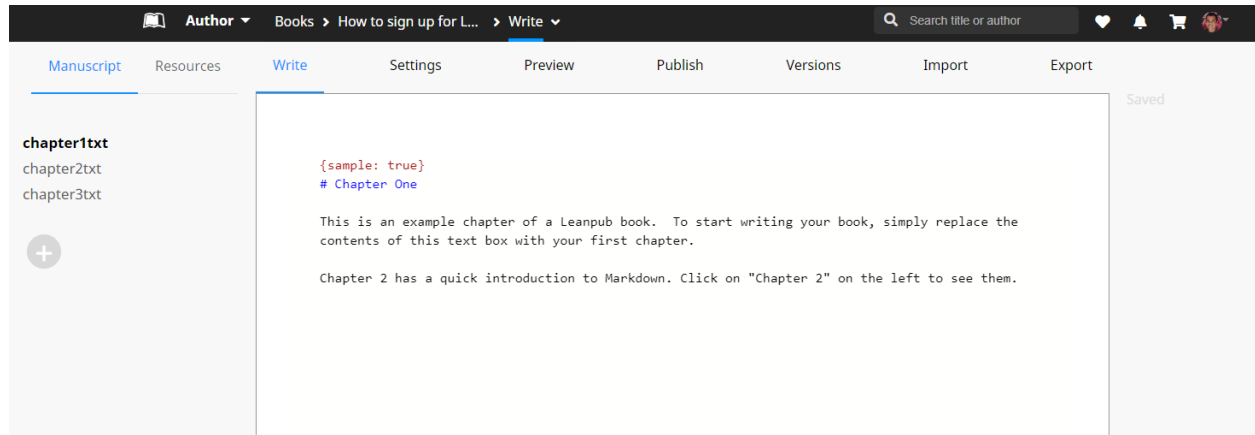


Image 3: First time opening the editor

## Create your First Chapter

To create your new chapter, click on the plus icon in the left pane under the existing chapters, enter a name for the chapter, and click on “OK”. This will create a chapter and add it under the existing chapters.

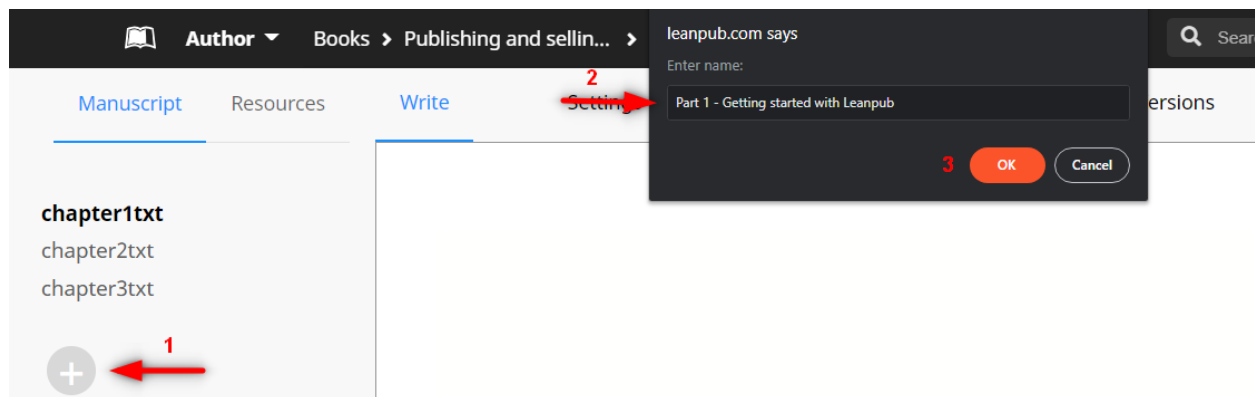


Image 4: Adding a Chapter

Delete the three default chapters. To do this, hover your mouse over the chapter name you want to delete and click on the gear icon that appears to the right. Click on delete and confirm the deletion. *Note: You can reorder your chapters by clicking and dragging the names, and you must have at least one chapter in your manuscript.*

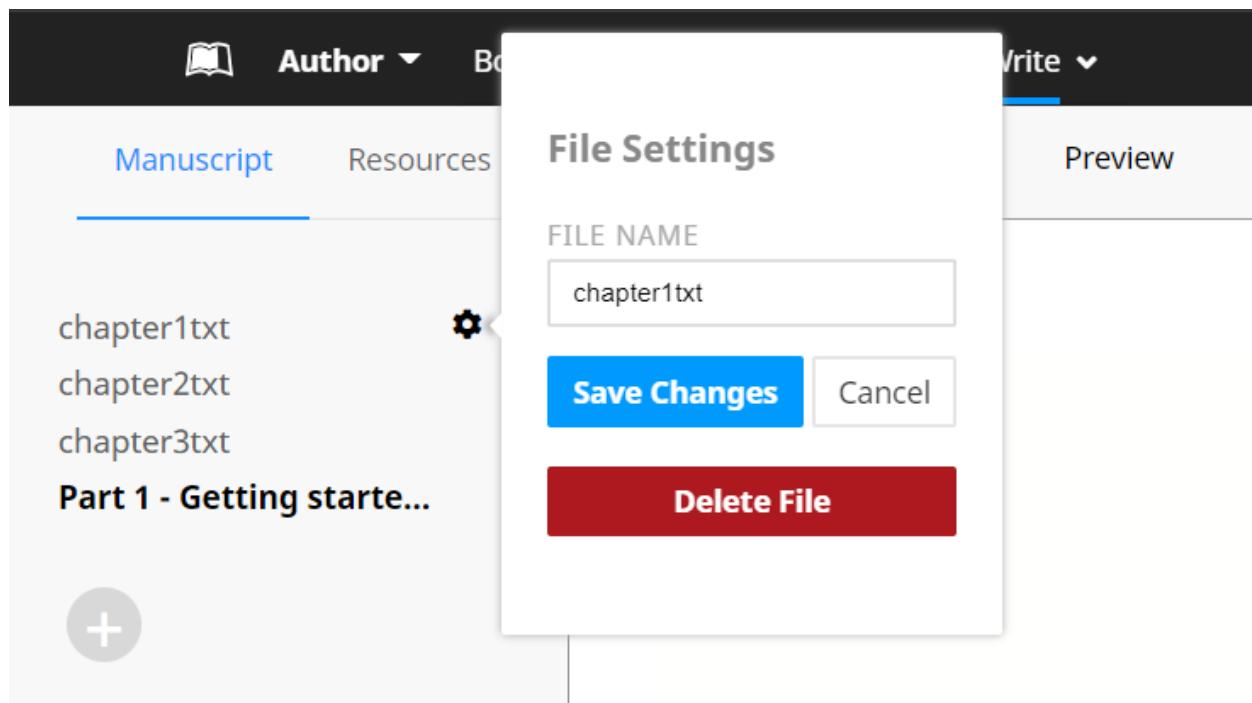


Image 5: Deleting a Chapter

Select your chapter and click on the blank page to the right, as you will see as soon as you start typing, all the clutter on the page fades away. This is a fancy feature called “focus” mode that aims to keep the writer from being distracted. From here you will add some content to your book using Markdown.

## What is Markdown

Markdown is a lightweight markup language that is used to easily format plain-text documents. Leanpub uses a modified version of Markdown to format your ebook. In this guide I will introduce you to the basics of the Leanpub Flavored Markdown (LFM) while writing the first chapter of your book, however, you are welcome to check out the [LFM Manual](https://leanpub.com/lfm/read)<sup>3</sup> for a more detailed guide.

## Start Writing

Give your chapter a heading. Note the preceding pound sign in the below example, this tags the following words as a heading(H1) and will format the text accordingly when generating the ebook.

---

<sup>3</sup><https://leanpub.com/lfm/read>

```
# Publishing and selling your first technical book with Leanpub: an opinionated guide
```

**Image 6: Heading**

Headings are used by LFM to structure your ebook, a single # (H1) creates a new chapter, sections are started with ## (H2) and sub-sections with ### (H3), you can carry on to create sub-sub-sections following the same pattern. *Note: there must always be a space between the '#' and the first letter*

```
1 # Chapter 1
2 ## Section 1.1
3 ### Sub-section 1.1.1
```

Now add some introductory paragraphs. In my example, I link out to the Leanpub website. The syntax used to create links within your text is [text](http://theURL.link). Leanpub will create footnotes of all your links at the bottom of the page.

```
# Publishing and selling your first technical book with Leanpub: an opinionated guide
```

Are you thinking about publishing your own technical book, to share your unique perspective on a particular technology or programming language, but then realized you have no idea where to start?

In this guide, you will be shown a simple way to write, publish and sell your book with the help of an online service called [Leanpub](<https://leanpub.com>)

**Image 7: First Paragraph**

With the introduction done, create the first section of your book. Here I will include a list. Bulleted lists are created with - Item and numbered lists 1. Item as seen in the image below:

## ## Section 1 - Getting started with Leanpub

In this article, we will get your book set up on Leanpub.

More specifically we will:

1. Sign up for a Leanpub account.
2. Create a book on Leanpub

**Image 8: Numbered List**

Now start writing the content of your book. You can do this by adding some sub-sections and writing your ideas within them.

### ## What is Leanpub?

Leanpub is an online book publishing service that makes it easy for you to write, publish, and sell ebooks. Leanpub does way more than just generate ebooks but mentioning all you can do here might be confusing, instead I am going to show you the exact process I use, from start to sold.

### ## Creating your first ebook

Now you will create your ebook following an easy three-step process that includes signing up for your Leanpub account.

**Image 9: Sub Sections**

To include images upload them under the “Resources” tab and link to them with the following syntax `![Image Caption](imageName.png)`.

To upload your images, click on the “Resources” tab in the top left to open the resources page. From here, click on the plus icon, click choose file, select the image you would like to upload from the file explorer then click on the “Add button” to upload. *Tip: You can click on the copy icon next to the name of your uploaded image and it will automatically add the correct link to your clipboard*



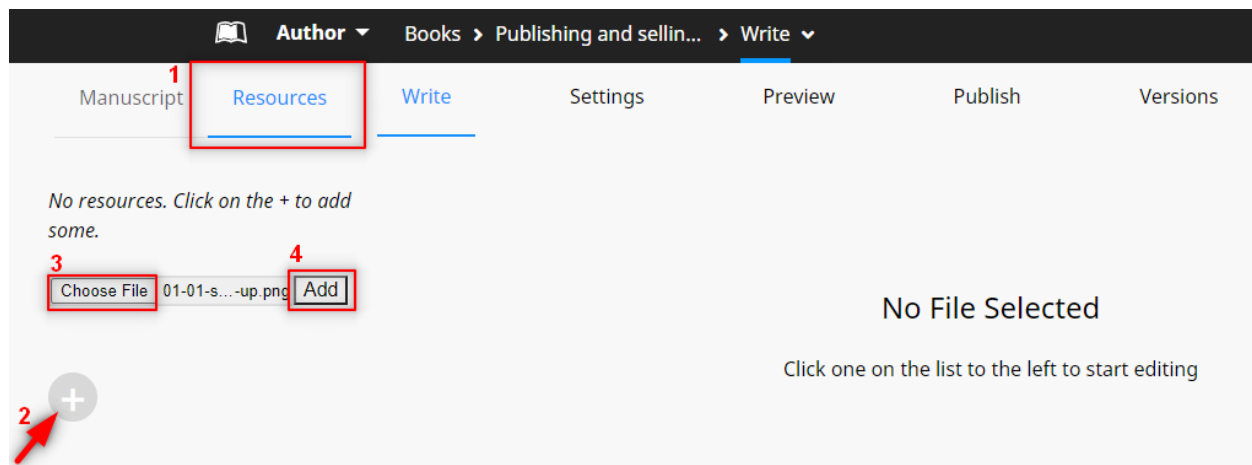


Image 10: Add Images

```
!["Image: 3" *Create a Book: Section 1* ](01-03-signup-sect1.png)
```

```
### Step 2: Choose a Plan
```

Up next you can choose the free plan. Here you can also see what the other two plans offer, should you need to make use of the other services, choose the appropriate plan here.

```
!["Image: 4" *Create a Book: Section 2* ](01-04-signup-sect2.png)
```

Image 11: Add Image links

Note how the image captions in my example above contain asterisks, these are for emphasis. One asterisk on each side of your word or sentence makes it *italic* and two asterisks for **bold**. ie:

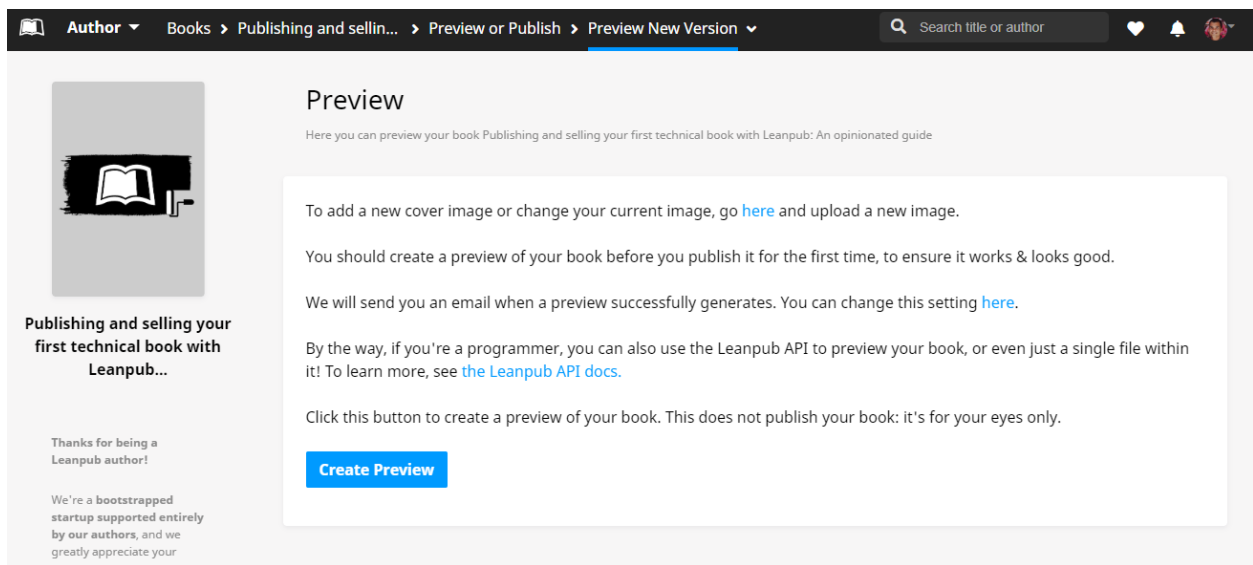
*\*Italic\** = *Italic*

**\*\*Bold\*\*** = **Bold**

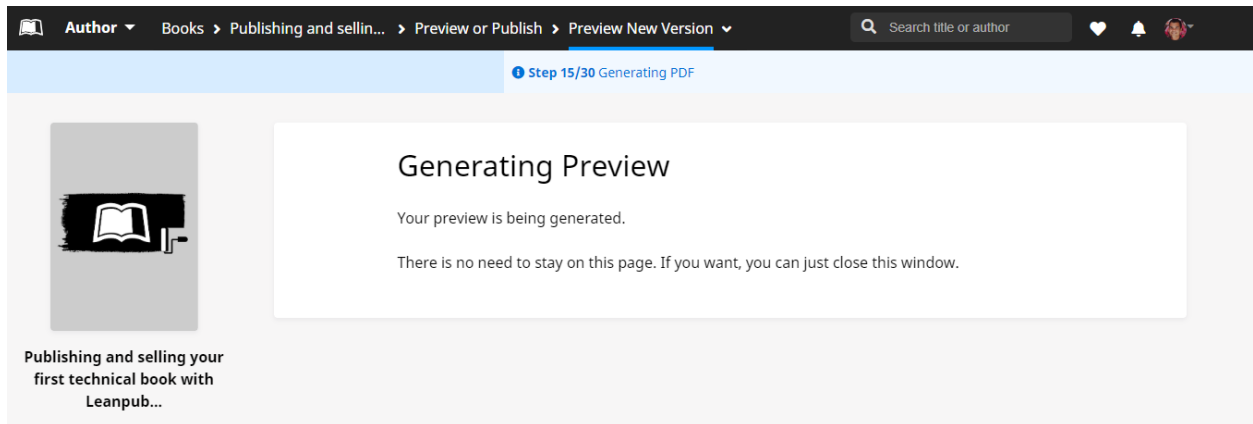
## Preview your book

You now know enough to carry on writing and finishing your first technical book. But before you continue writing, let me show you how to generate a preview of what your book currently looks like.

In the top bar above your document, select “Preview”. You will then be directed to the Preview page where you can click on “Create Preview”.

Image 12: *Create Preview*

Leanpub will then generate your ebook in three different formats, showing a progress bar at the top of the page. You can also close the page as they will send you an email once your ebook generation is complete.

Image 13: *Generate Ebook*

When complete, links to download your book in PDF, EPUB, or MOBI formats will appear. Click on the first (PDF) link to download and preview your ebook in PDF format.

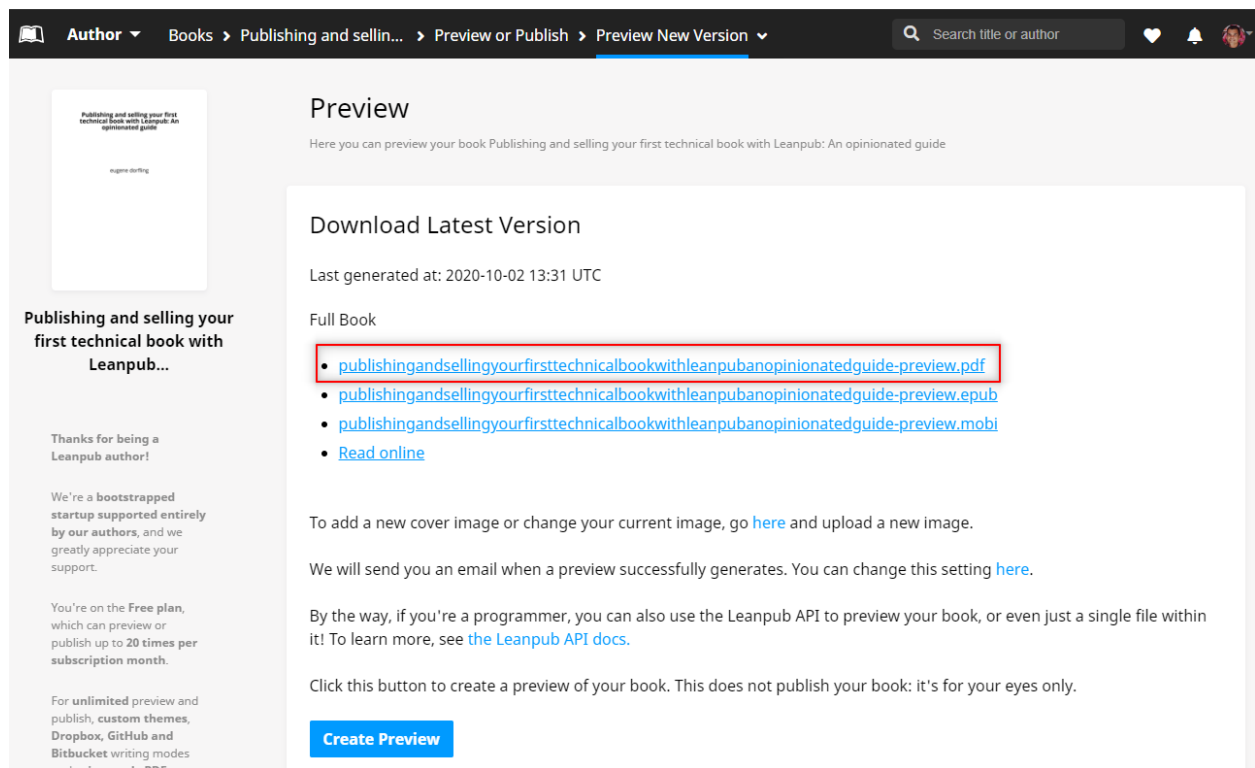


Image 14: *Download Preview*

In the next part of this guide, you will design and attach a book cover using Canva, and publish your book on the Leanpub store.

# Part 3 - Creating a Book Cover and Publishing

In this section, you will be designing the front cover of your book, upload it to Leanpub, and then publish your book on the Leanpub Book store. You'll use Canva, which is a free and simple online design tool that includes templates for book covers.

More specifically you will:

1. Create a Canva account
2. Design the cover of your book
3. Upload your cover to Leanpub
4. Publish your ebook on the Leanpub store

## Creating a Canva account

Click [here](#)<sup>4</sup> to navigate to the Canva Book Cover Maker and click on the button called “Start Designing Your Book Cover”

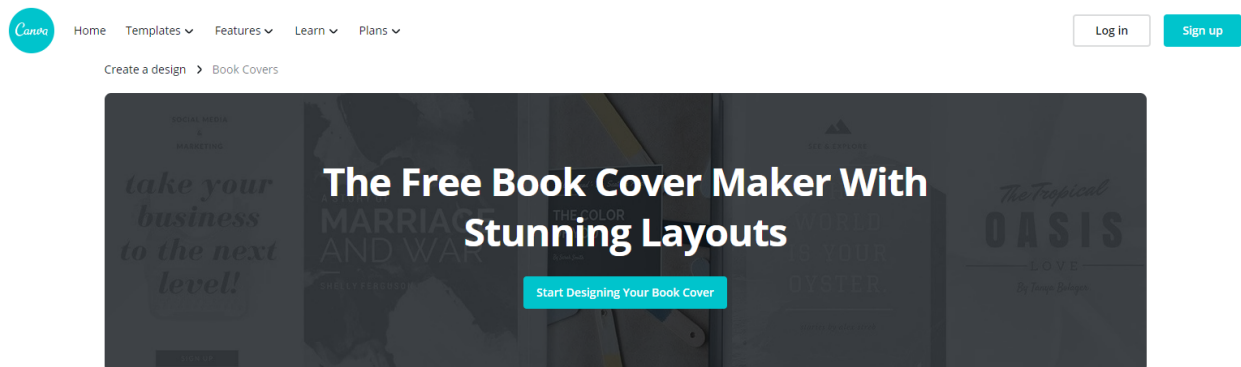


Image: 01 Canva Book Cover Maker

Choose “Sign up with email”. Enter your account details and click on the “Get Started” button. *You can also sign up with your Google or Facebook account.*

---

<sup>4</sup><https://www.canva.com/create/book-covers/>



## Create a book cover in seconds for free

No design experience? No problem. Canva is the world's easiest design tool. Create book covers, Wattpad covers, eBook covers and more, for free.



Sign up with Google



Sign up with Facebook

Sign up with email

Already signed up? [Log in](#)

Image: 02 Canva Sign Up

Image: 03 Canva Sign Up Details

## < Create your account

We'll have you designing in no time.

Name

Julie Smith

Email

julie@example.com

Password

.....

Use 8 or more characters with a mix of letters, numbers & symbols.

**Get started, it's free!**

By signing up, you agree to Canva's [Terms of Use](#) and [Privacy Policy](#).

Already signed up? [Log in](#)

Image: 03 Canva Sign Up Details

You should now be directed to the Canva design platform, where you will find a 4 step onboarding pop-up message that you quickly run through to get familiar.

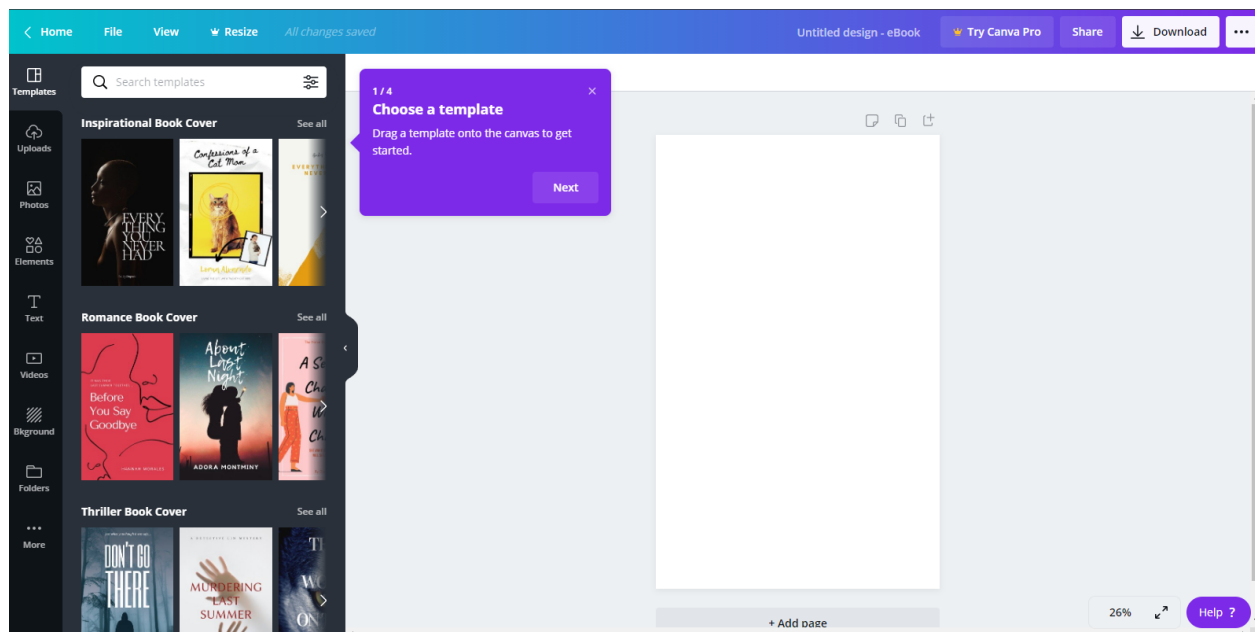


Image: 4 Canva Design Page

## Designing and Uploading your Book Cover

From here you have the option to design your cover from scratch, however, the pre-existing templates are plenty to choose from and are fully customizable so I will be using a template in this example.

In the search box, top left, type in a phrase that matches what your book is about. From the templates that come up below, choose one that you like and select it. The template will be applied and you can then start editing the template to fit your design needs.

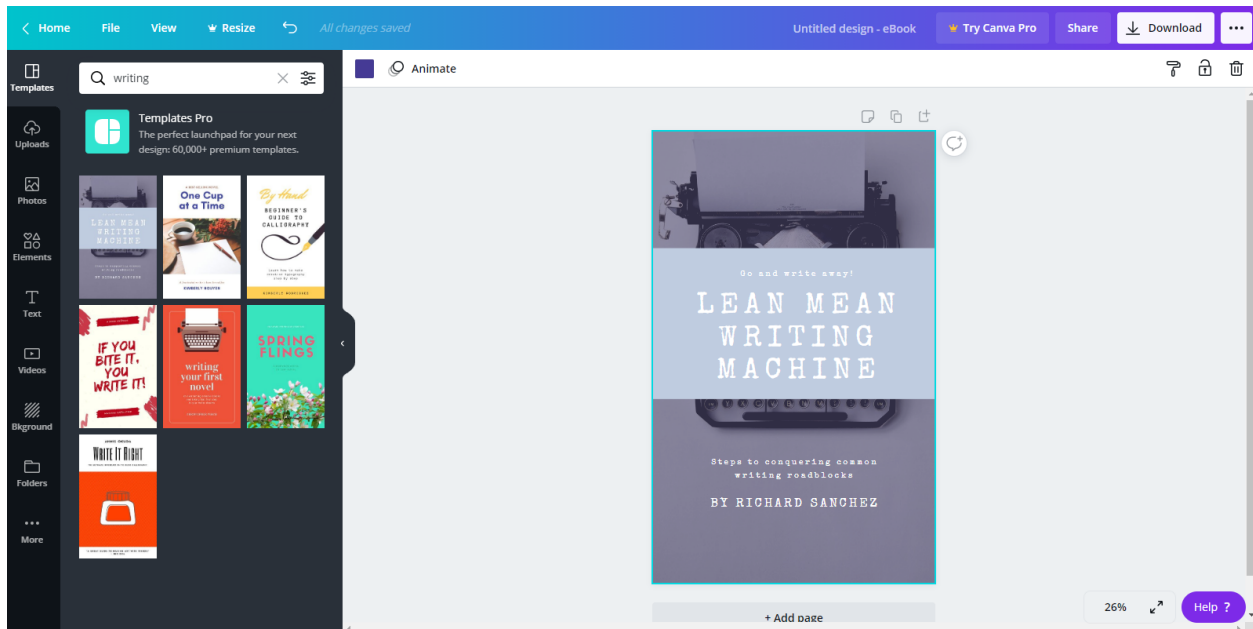


Image: 5 Choose Template

You can double click elements on the template to edit them, right-click for more options and select new elements from the left toolbar to customize your cover design.

Once you are happy with the design of your cover, click on the download button in the top right corner. From the dropdown menu select the PNG file type. Select a download location and click on save to start the download. *Note: Leanpub only supports PNG and JPEG of which JPEG is lower quality*



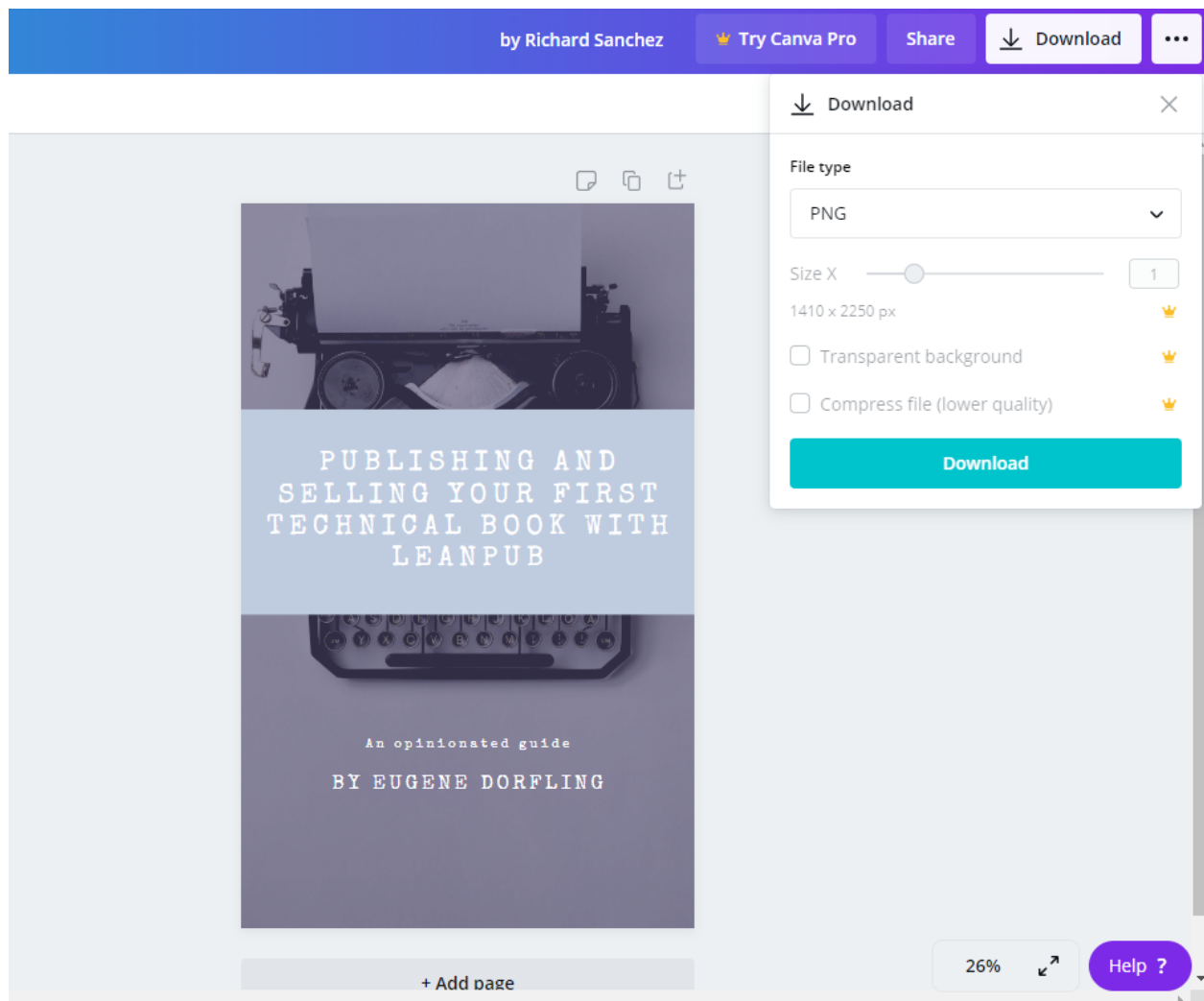


Image: 6 *Download Cover*

When your download is complete, go back to the Leanpub platform and from the “Books” menu navigate to “YourBookTitle”, “Settings” and then select “Upload Book Cover” as seen below:

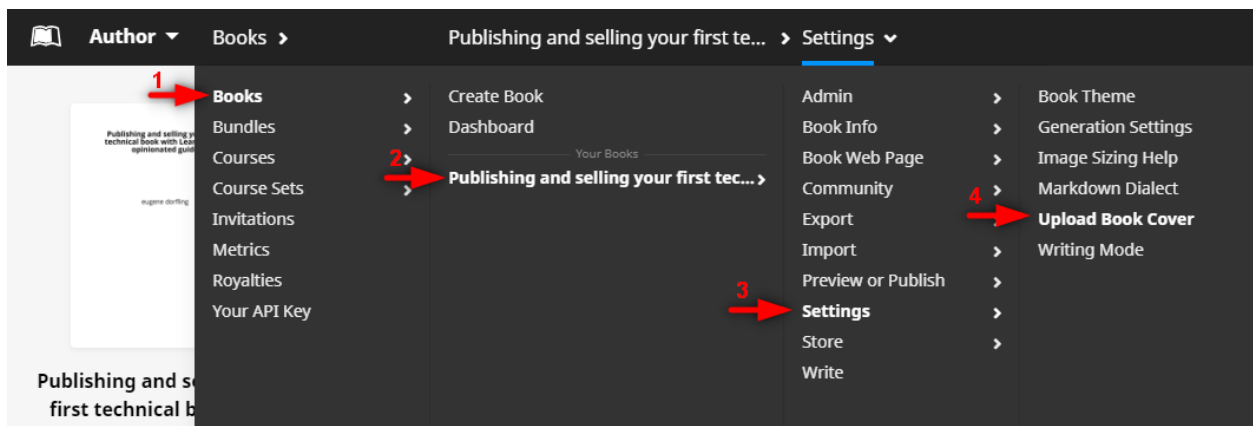


Image: 7 *Upload Book Cover Page*

Scroll down to below the current default cover page and click on the “Choose File” button. From the file browser pop up, navigate to the cover that you downloaded from Canva, select it, and click “Open”. Now click on the “Update Book Cover” button and your cover will start uploading.

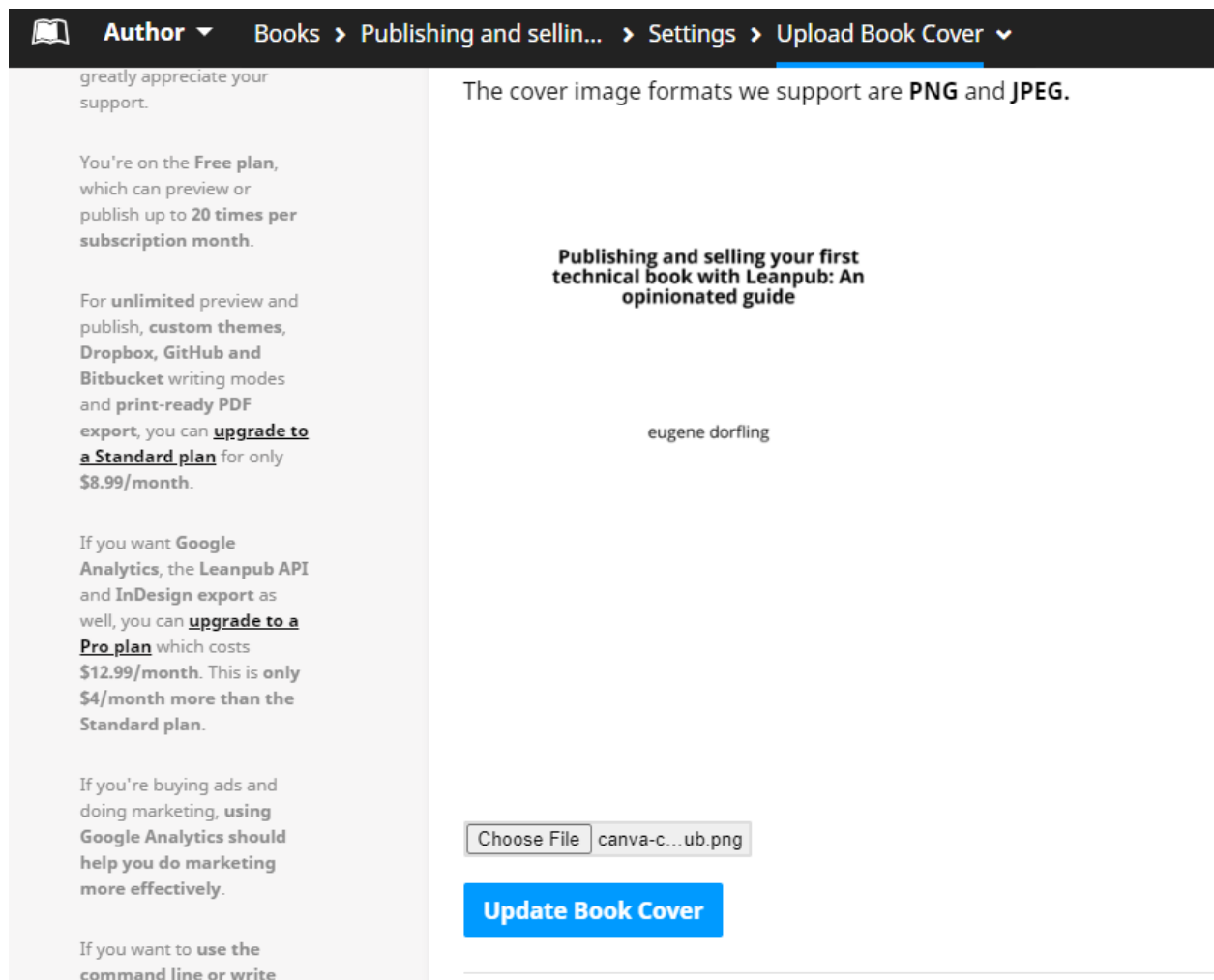


Image: 8 *Upload Book Cover*

When the upload is complete you should see the default cover update to now show your newly designed cover.

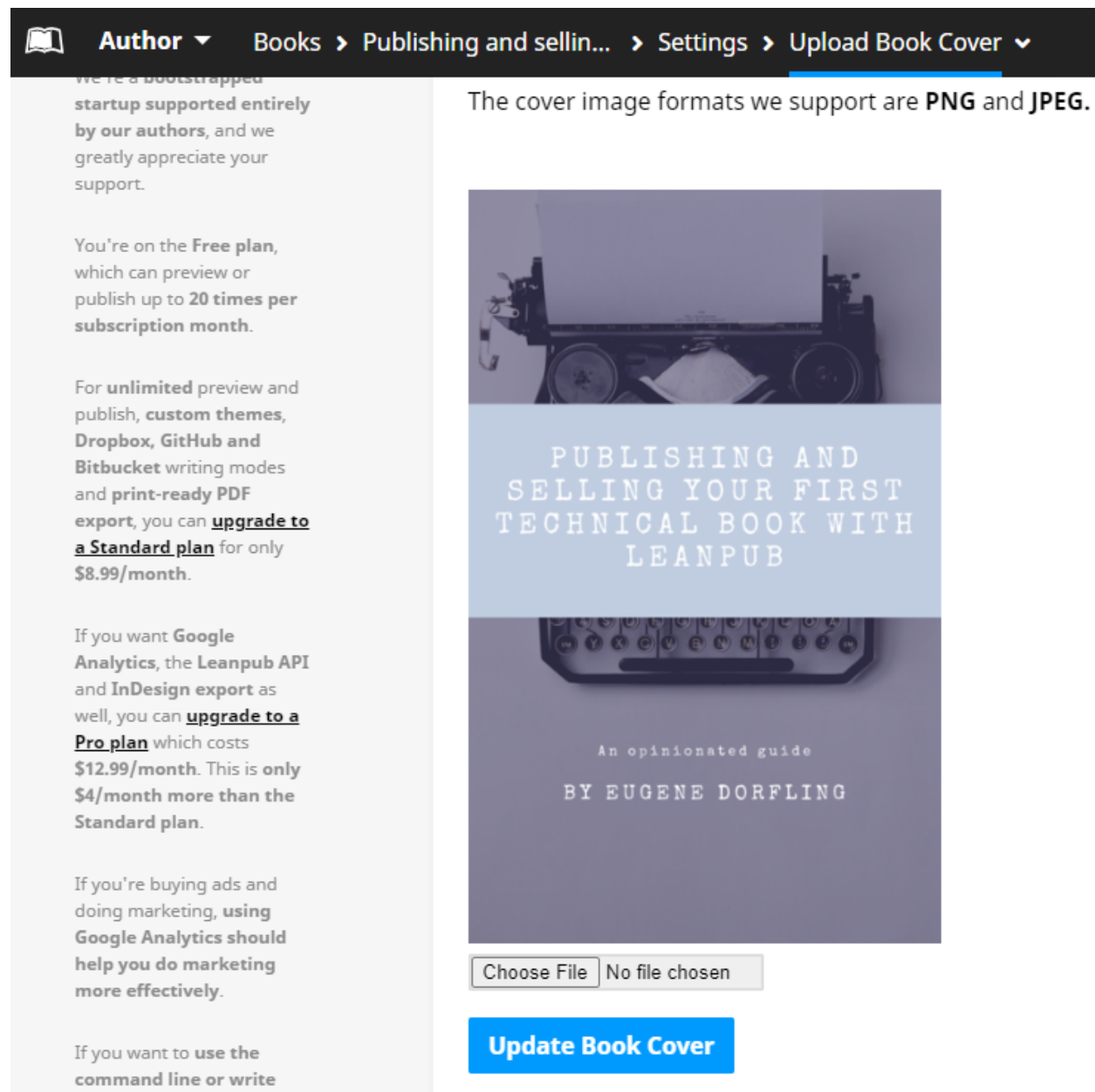


Image: 9 Preview Book Cover

Now that your book has content and a beautiful cover image we can proceed to publish your book on the Leanpub store to start selling.

## Publishing your book on the Leanpub Book Store

Before you can publish your book on the Leanpub store, there are a few last steps you need to complete that will help with the marketing of your book.

The steps we will look at are:

1. Setting the price.
2. Completing the “About the Book” section and writing some teaser text.
3. Adding some categories.

## Set the Price

Leanpub uses a variable pricing model that allows authors to set a minimum price and a suggested one, this encourages the readers to pay a little more while giving them the option to choose what they can afford.

By default, your book has a minimum price of US\$4.99 and a suggested US\$9.99, however, for this guide, we will be generous and make it a free book.

Open the “Pricing” page by navigating to “Store” under your book in the “Books” menu as seen below:

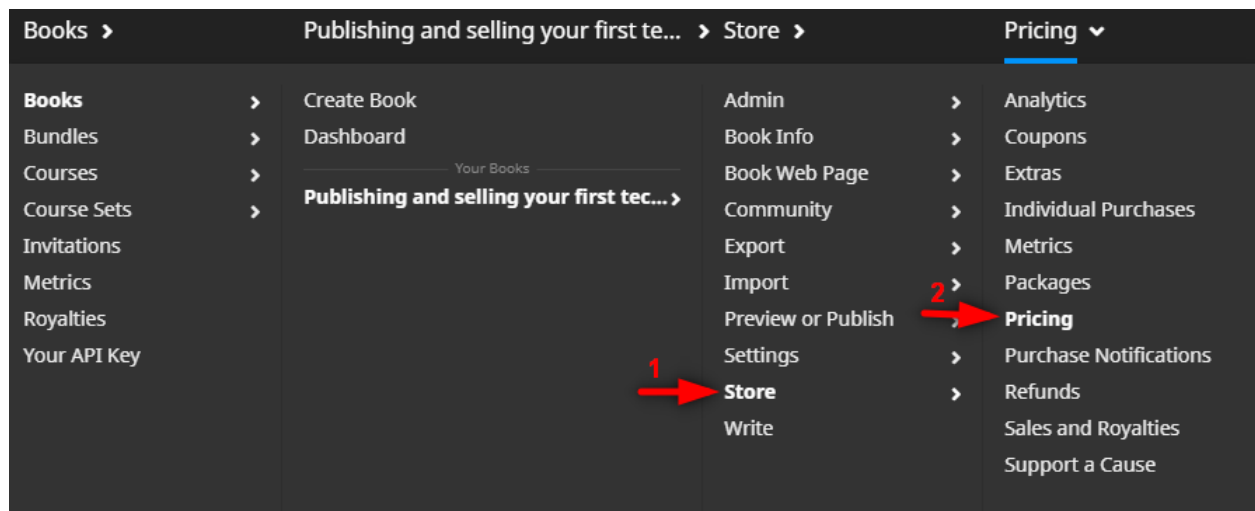
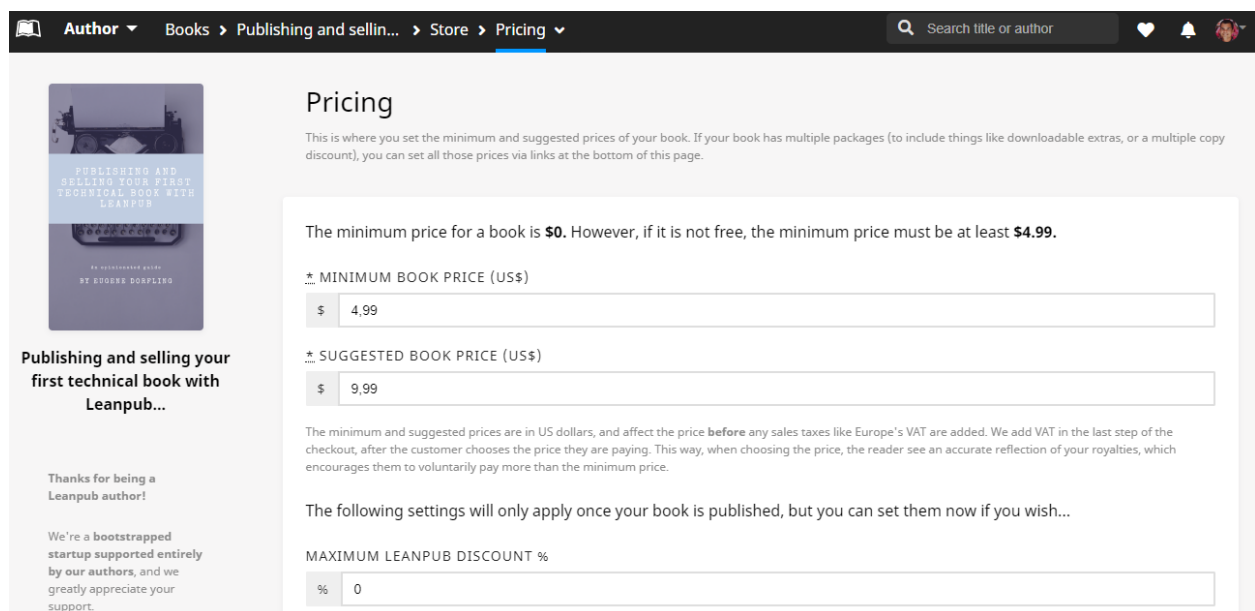


Image: 10 Price menu

Enter the minimum book price of \$0 and a suggested book price of \$0, then scroll down and click on the “Update Pricing” button. You should see a confirmation message saying “Pricing updated”.



**Pricing**

This is where you set the minimum and suggested prices of your book. If your book has multiple packages (to include things like downloadable extras, or a multiple copy discount), you can set all those prices via links at the bottom of this page.

The minimum price for a book is **\$0**. However, if it is not free, the minimum price must be at least **\$4.99**.

✚ MINIMUM BOOK PRICE (US\$)

\$ 4.99

✚ SUGGESTED BOOK PRICE (US\$)

\$ 9.99

The minimum and suggested prices are in US dollars, and affect the price **before** any sales taxes like Europe's VAT are added. We add VAT in the last step of the checkout, after the customer chooses the price they are paying. This way, when choosing the price, the reader see an accurate reflection of your royalties, which encourages them to voluntarily pay more than the minimum price.

The following settings will only apply once your book is published, but you can set them now if you wish...

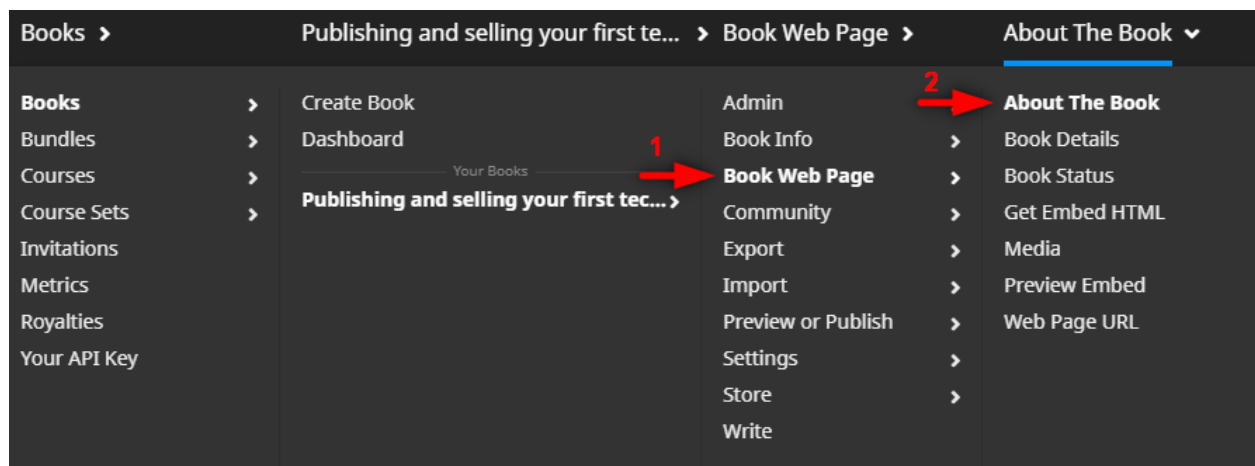
MAXIMUM LEANPUB DISCOUNT %

% 0

Image: 11 Price Page

## Complete the “About the Book” Section

Up next, you can navigate to the “About the Book” section under your book, then “Book Web Page” in the “Books” menu as seen below:



About menu

On the “About the Book” page, you can write a short “teaser text” and complete the “About the Book” section then click on the “Update Book” button to save your changes.

**About The Book**

You can edit your book's About The Book content here.

**TEASER TEXT** (123 characters remaining)

**B I U S**  $x_2$   $x^2$

In this guide, we learn how to use Leanpub to write a technical book with Markdown. We also design and upload a book cover with the help of Canva and we publish your book on the Leanpub Book Store ready for readers to purchase.

1-3 sentences to summarize your book and excite your prospective readers.

**ABOUT THE BOOK**

**H. H. B I U S**  $x_2$   $x^2$

An easy, step by step guide to get your Technical Book published on the Leanpub store. In this guide, we have chosen a specifically simple route to get your book published as soon as possible with the basics covered. The rest is up to you.

This text is shown on your book page very prominently. Write it well!

**META DESCRIPTION** (160 characters remaining)

Write a quick summary that will be displayed with results on search engines.

**Update Book**

About the Book Page

## Adding Categories

Lastly, add some categories so that your readers can find your book easily.

Navigate to the “Categories” page under your book, “Book Info” then categories from the “Books” menu as seen below:

**Books** > Publishing and selling your first te... > Book Info > Categories

**Books** > Create Book > Admin > Authors

Bundles > Dashboard > **Book Info** > Book Details

Courses > Your Books > Book Web Page > **Categories**

Course Sets > Publishing and selling your first tec... > Community > Contributors

Invitations > Export > Copyright

Metrics > Import > Dedication

Royalties > Preview or Publish > Getting Started

Your API Key > Settings > ISBN (optional)

> Store > Language

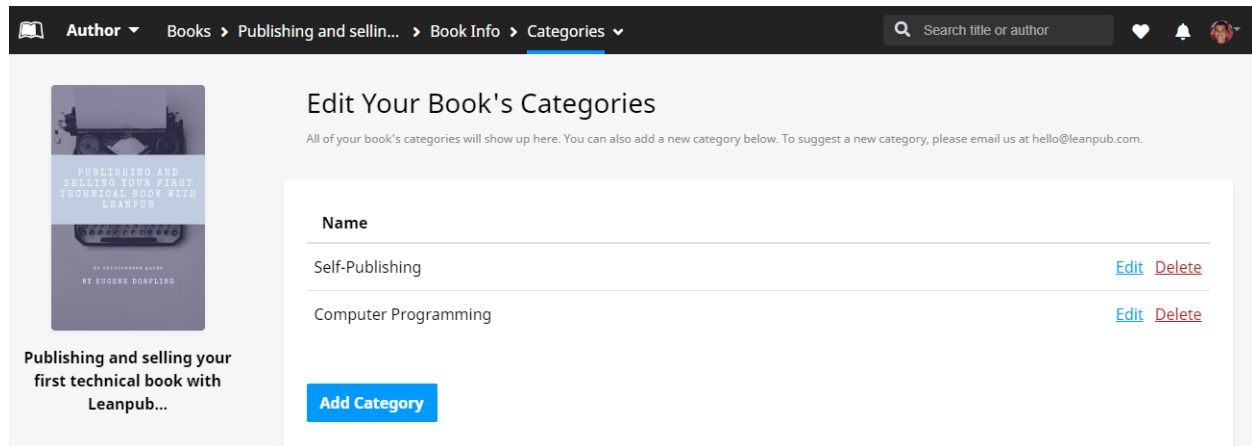
> Write > Mature Content

> Overview

> Thank you

Categories Menu

On the categories page, click on the “Add Category” button, then select an appropriate category from the drop-down list and click on “Update Book”. You can repeat these steps to add multiple categories. The categories chosen will then be listed as seen below:



Categories Page

## Publish Your Book

Well done, you are now ready to publish your Technical Book for the world to see.

From the book menu at the top, navigate to your book, select “Preview or Publish” and click on “Publish New Version”.

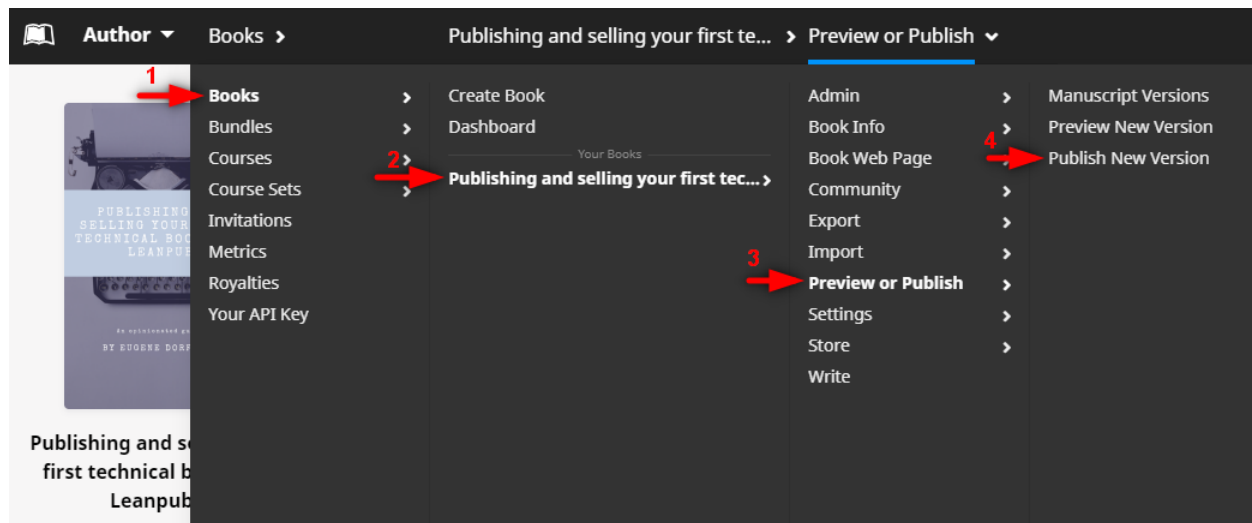
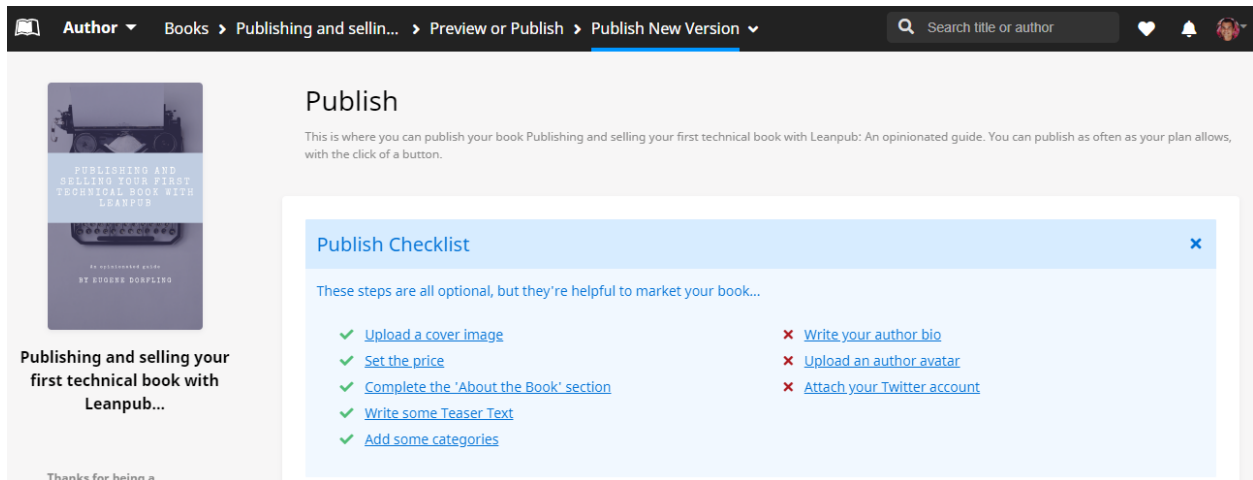


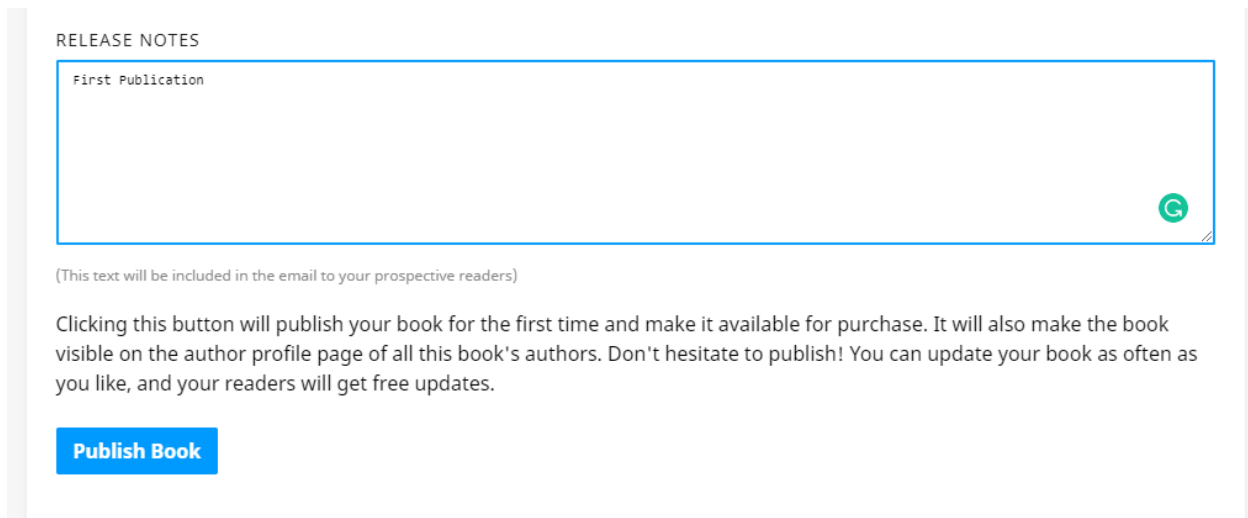
Image: 16 Publish Menu

On the Publish page, you will see a checklist of steps that you can complete before publishing your book. We have covered the more important steps above but feel free to complete the others as they improve the marketing of your book on the Leanpub store.



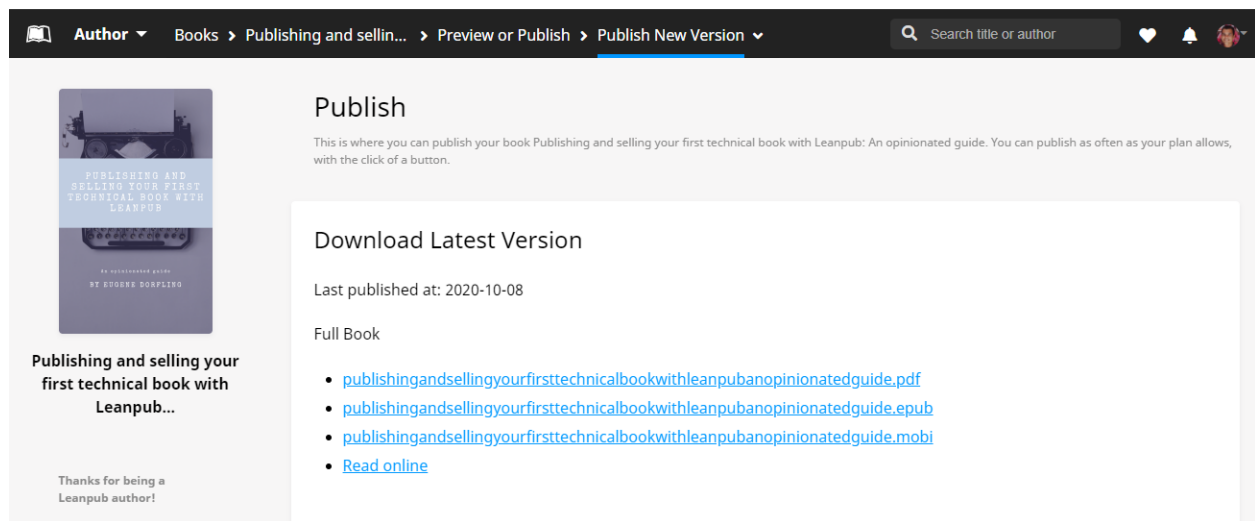
Image: 17 *Publish Page*

Scroll down to the “Release Notes” section, add your release notes and click on the “Publish Book” button. *Note: the release notes are added to the email that Leanpub sends out to your prospective readers*



Release notes &amp; Publish

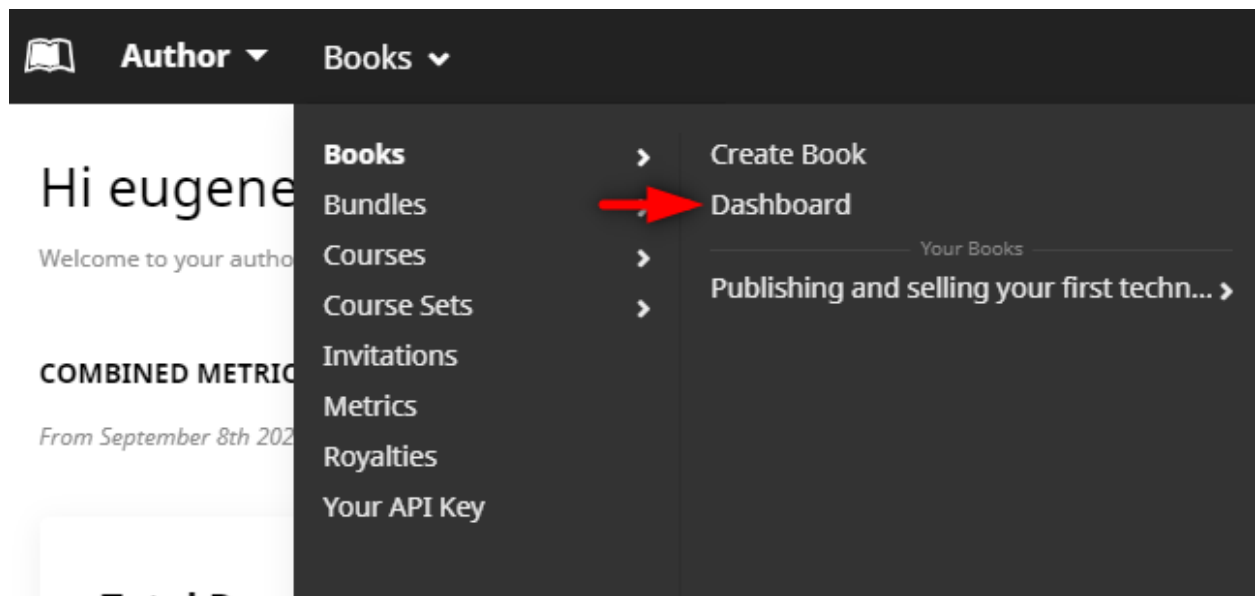
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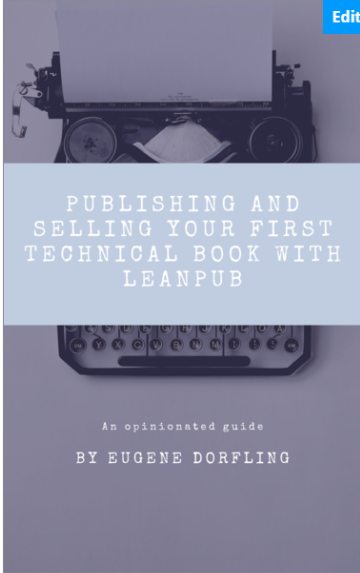
## Publishing and selling your first technical book with Leanpub: An opinionated guide

 [eugene.dorfling](#)

In this guide, we learn how to use Leanpub to write a technical book with Markdown. We also design and upload a book cover with the help of Canna and we publish your book on the Leanpub Book Store ready for readers to purchase.

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