



# Publication Dates

The ‘Publication date’ and the date on which you will receive your book from our printer *are not the same*. When we allocate a publication date, this is the ‘official’ date on which the book is published, and the date towards which we work as regards marketing. The publication date is usually many weeks *after* you will have received your books.

## How we set your publication date

We work to book industry guidelines when setting publication dates. This means that your publication date may seem to be in advance of when you were expecting. Every Matador book will have a publication date of the 28th of the month. We set our official publication dates roughly six months in advance, because the book trade works that far in advance. By matching book trade expectations to publication dates, we are able to give our books the best chance of competing on an even playing field with mainstream published books, and we can meet book wholesalers’ catalogue deadlines (which allows our books to be listed in literature sent out by them to most of the UK bookshops). We can also meet seasonal buying timetables and pre-publication previews.

This lead-in time also gives us the chance to get our books actively promoted in bookshops by our sales representatives, Star Book Sales. To be able to rep a book, Star requires information about each title five months in advance of publication, so our publication dates must allow enough time for this to happen. (Star don’t rep all of our titles, however – please see **Factsheet 10** for more details.)

We would expect to receive finished copies of a book before some weeks in advance of the official publication date, and we make books available to sell *as soon as they are printed* (unless you ask us not to). We do not ‘embargo’ titles for sale to the trade, so you (and we) can sell a title immediately. Some bookshops won’t release a book for sale until the publication date has been reached, but most do, and the book will be available from Amazon before its publication date (unless you wish it not to be).

It’s important that there is time between a printed book arriving in our warehouse and the official publication date, to allow for the books to get into the supply chain. From a media perspective, it’s important that we have review copies available in advance of the publication date. Much of the media expect copies of a book up to three months prior to its publication date before they will even consider a review or feature. This lead-in time allows us to make the best possible use of any opportunities that are available.

If you are not taking any of our marketing services then it’s possible for you to have an earlier publication date. For authors undertaking all their own marketing, we generally set publication dates four months in advance, but do check with us if you are unsure.

## Can I change my publication date?

If your book is being repped via Star Book Sales, we must retain a publication date that fits with their repping cycles, so we cannot bring your publication date forward. If you insist on changing your publication date, then your book cannot be handled by Star Book Sales – they cannot drop everything because you are in a hurry.

If your book is being marketed (but not repped), we can potentially bring a publication date forward, but you will lose the benefits of working to the book trade dates – which will in turn reduce the effectiveness of the marketing and thus damage sales. Please discuss with your marketing controller if you are unsure.

If your book is not being marketed by us, then we can change a publication date to what would be realistic in terms of the time the production process is likely to take.

If there is any reason why you want to change your publication date, we'd advise speaking to the marketing or production team to discuss it in more depth first. Information about your publication date is sent to all booksellers and is also used on your marketing materials (if applicable) and on our website. If you wish to have the date changed, we have to update this information across all channels, which takes a considerable amount of time, and thus additional charges may be necessary.

We must emphasise that the official publication date does not prevent you or us from selling your book as soon as it is in from the printer. You can even organise a launch or event before the official publication date if you wish.

### **What happens if my book misses its scheduled publication date?**

If there are any delays in the production or printing process for your book, and it looks as if your book will miss its scheduled publication date, we shall contact you and tell you that we feel it is prudent to move your publication date back. We regularly check all publication dates in this way to ensure that no books is officially published before they have actually been printed.

Moving a publication date back is not uncommon within the trade, and will not cause any problems with the book supply chain moving forward. Production delays are common in the book trade, moving publication dates back is a common part of the process of publishing.

### **Now I have a publication date, can I arrange my book launch?**

We strongly recommended *not* arranging a book launch or event until your production controller has confirmed a delivery date when your book will arrive from the printer. Book production and printing is a complex manufacturing process and it's possible for delays to occur. While we do everything in our power to ensure you have your book for the original scheduled publication date, we cannot guarantee this. There is nothing we want less than for you to have an event organised but no books...

We therefore advise not booking an event until you have a confirmed delivery date from your production controller. Even then, arranging an event for the day of the delivery or shortly after is risky, as we are all relying on a printer and a delivery company carrying out their job on time. Delivery companies in particular are less than reliable, so please allow plenty of time between a delivery date and an event.

**If you would like more information contact:**

**marketing@troubador.co.uk**

**0116 279 2299**