

Do I need to use a pen name?

Using a pen name is optional but can be useful in certain circumstances.

Reasons to use your real name

- You're writing a business book that you'll use as marketing collateral
- You're an expert in your field
- You're writing a memoir
- You want a book published "in your name"
- You plan to promote the book to your community/network

Reasons to use a pen name

- You're writing "controversial material" (sex, drugs, violence)
- Privacy is important to you
- Your author brand clashes with your real-life brand
- There's already an author with your name
- Your name doesn't suit your genre

How do I choose a pen name?

- Search for "rare surnames"
- Look at a map: street names often provide good surnames
- Choose a name with the same initials as your real name
- Pick the first name or surname of a favourite book character or hero
- Search your family tree for interesting ancestral names
- Try an online name generator

RECOMMENDED

- A name that suits your genre
- A name that's rare or unique
- A name that's memorable and easy to spell

NOT RECOMMENDED

- Accents/diacritics/punctuation
- The same (or very similar) name as a famous person
- Using initials - full stops can create inconsistency

CONSISTENCY IS CRITICAL

Using the *exact same name* for all future books is very important for your author brand - plus many platforms won't recognise variations as the same author:

Dr M Brown/Michael Brown/M J Brown/Dr Mike Brown/Michael J Brown/Doctor Mike

Pick one and **stick with it!**