

## Beta reader checklist

For each of these phases, you should find someone who:

1. is open about which genres they work with and which they don't

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2. is prepared to discuss your requirements and theirs with you beforehand, either by email, Skype or phone, so you can agree on exactly what they'll be doing. They should confirm this in writing. Your discussion should include why they feel they're a fit for your book

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3. fits the general picture of your target reader in terms of age, gender, background and so on, OR who is able to put themselves in the place of the reader regardless

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4. reads widely and diversely, from *Romance* to *Horror* to *Self-Help*, or the equivalent. If you were to visit their house, in every room they'd have wall-to-wall bookshelves overflowing with well-thumbed books. You could ask them what their favorite books in your genre are, as a good starting point

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5. has an online presence, or word of mouth referrals, that give you a good idea of how competent they really are at the business of things to do with writing. If you're going the friend/relation route, then go and count their bookshelves

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6. can differentiate between what works well and what they don't like personally. This is very important because you need a highly objective opinion at the end of it all

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7. isn't afraid of upsetting you. This is why your partner or child may not be the best person for the job

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8. is prepared to be honest while also being constructive and kind. Their input should build, not break, both you and your book

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9. will provide you with a written report and possibly Skype or telephone discussions of their findings

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10. if you wish, will give you brief updates during the process, in an email or short conversation, so you don't become a complete nervous wreck

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11. can give you a reasonable timeframe and understands the need to stick to it

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12. gives you a sense that you could work well together

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