

# Essential Advice for Your First Draft

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The beautiful torture of the writing of the first draft does not have to be a painful experience. From what I understand, the key to getting the story down is to stay at it, moving forward to the finish.

We are all guilty of it. We've all, at the very least, glanced back at what we've written. It's all so very tempting just to hear how our story is playing out up to that point. However, the best advice in this instance is to hold yourself back from any proofreading or editing of what you've written until the story has been laid down entirely. Get the writing of the first draft complete, no matter how rough or unruly. Only when you've finished that draft should you revisit what you've written.

Pausing to look back on what you've written before finishing that first draft can get you stuck in that section of the story. The reasons why could be endless...

- It could or should be worded better.
- It doesn't flow appropriately.
- The characters aren't strong enough.
- The scene should be reworked.

All of the above are jobs to be tackled in your upcoming rounds of edits.

By stopping to read what you've written you will get sucked into the temptation to edit and most likely lose your forward momentum with the draft. Here is where your headaches begin and your situation could possibly result in an unfinished story.

You can get so caught up in fixing what you've already written that you simply lose your passion that you had for the story in the first place.

If you can hold yourself back 'til that draft is complete, you can give yourself the opportunity to step away from the story for a couple of weeks. Come back to it for your first round of reading and edits with a fresh perspective, a new set of eyes. You should have a clear understanding of the layout and direction of the story at this point, which will strengthen your story arch throughout the editing process.

**First drafts don't have to be perfect, they just have to be written!**



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