

# HOW TO PICK AMAZON BOOK CATEGORIES

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GET YOUR BOOK FOUND IN SEARCH &  
MAXIMIZE YOUR SALES

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PUBLISHING

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# INTRODUCTION

## WHY AMAZON CATEGORIES ARE IMPORTANT

Readers drive sales.

*That's the big reason Amazon categories matter: they help readers find your book.*

You might have heard people talk about how important it is to be an Amazon bestseller, and how that is dependent on the categories you pick.

But most of what you've read — and even a lot of the stuff Amazon tells you about book categories — isn't entirely accurate.

You have to pick the right categories to maximize reader exposure and sales, or being an Amazon bestseller won't mean a thing.

In this PDF, you'll learn what an Amazon bestseller is, how to elevate your Amazon rank, and how to find and select categories that will connect the right readers to your book to boost sales.



## WHAT IS AN AMAZON BESTSELLER?

One of the main reasons that people obsess over book categories is so they can be an “Amazon bestseller.” They choose non-competitive categories, just so they can hit that “#1” spot.

BEING an Amazon bestseller can be a great tool — especially for entrepreneurs — when it comes to things like pitching media, being introduced at speeches, or bragging on your LinkedIn profile. It can help you get more business by building some credibility.

LET’S BE CLEAR THOUGH: All it takes to make the Amazon bestseller list is selling 50 books a day.

THERE ARE many authors that have been able to achieve this and there are many companies that are able to help authors get there.

THE THING IS, it isn't that difficult to accomplish if you know what to do or hire someone who knows how to do it.

HOWEVER, if your goal is to actually sell a lot of books and make money doing it, a different strategy will be required.

## HOW TO RANK HIGH IN RELEVANT CATEGORIES

**A**mazon gives every book a few Amazon Bestseller Ranks (ABSR) based on how many sales or downloads it's had in a certain amount of time.

THERE'S an overall ABSR which compares your book with all the other books on the site (or on the Kindle store).

THEN THERE ARE other ABSRs that are based on the categories you've chosen for your book. When people brag about their #1 status, they usually mean that they got to the top of these smaller sub-categories.

YOU CAN FIND your book's ABSR on its Amazon book page under Product Details. Each edition (Kindle, audiobook, paperback, etc.) will have a different rank, depending on how it's selling.

## Product details

File Size: 6237 KB

Simultaneous Device Usage: Unlimited


Publisher: AMA PUBLISHING (July 14, 2020)

Publication Date: July 14, 2020

Sold by: Amazon.com Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B08D1P3SJK


Text-to-Speech: Enabled 

X-Ray:

Not Enabled 

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled 

Amazon Best Sellers Rank: #1,731 Paid in Kindle Store ([See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store](#))

#13 in [Motivational Self-Help \(Kindle Store\)](#)

#111 in [Motivational Self-Help \(Books\)](#)

#1 in [Women's Spirituality](#)

THE ABSR FLUCTUATES BASED on how many books are listed and how many books people buy. Still, here are some useful estimates to help you gauge how your book stacks up:

- If you sell 40 copies in 2 days, you'll probably hit an overall ABSR of 10,000.
- If you sell 150 copies in two days, you'll probably hit an ABSR of 3,000.
- If you sell 400 copies in 3 days, you'll probably hit an ABSR of 1,000.

THE LOWER YOUR ABSR, the better.

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YOU CAN ALSO USE the ABSR to learn how your book or competitors' books are selling. Putting a book's ABSR into the *Kindle Calculator*, will tell you how many copies sell each day.

THE CALCULATOR CAN ALSO HELP you decide which categories will work for your book.

FOR EXAMPLE, if you pick a category where the #1 book has a high ASBR, you won't have to sell as many books per day to reach #1. There's not a lot of competition for books on underwater basketweaving, for example. There's also not a huge market.

IF YOU PICK a competitive category where the #1 book has a really low ASBR, you'll need to sell more copies to get a good sales rank. Your market will likely be bigger though.

## STEP 1: RESEARCH POTENTIAL CATEGORIES

**T**here are thousands of Amazon categories to choose from, but Amazon doesn't compile them into a single page.

SO YOU HAVE to do your research.

THERE ARE 3 main steps to finding good categories for your book:

1. Look for Keywords
2. Look at Competitors
3. Check the Bestsellers

IF YOU DON'T KNOW your competitors or can't think of great keywords, *Publisher Rocket* makes this whole process easier.

. . .

BUT YOU CAN DO this on your own by following this guide.

## **1. Look for Keywords**

Create a list of keywords that describe your book (see my PDF on this topic for more info).

IF YOU'RE HAVING a hard time coming up with words, think about how you've positioned your book:

- Who's your audience?
- What are your objectives?
- What are the main topics you cover?
- How have you marketed your book so it reaches the right people?

ONE AT A TIME, put the words you've come up with into the Amazon search engine.

FROM THE RESULTS, compile a list of books that seem close to your own. Those are your competitors.

## **2. Look at Competitors**

You want to appeal to the readers who have bought your competitors' books, so looking at your competitors' categories is a great place to start.

Go through each competing book and see what categories their authors selected.

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IT HELPS to keep a running list of the categories relevant to your book. You will probably start to see some patterns.

YOU WILL PROBABLY ALSO NOTICE subcategories that you might not have expected. For example, David Goggin's book *Can't Hurt Me* falls under both "Motivational Self-Help" and "Self-Help." Without research, you might not realize that those are different categories.

PRO TIP: You can put another book's ISBN or ASIN (Amazon Standard Identification Number) into the search bar, and click through the categories on the left-hand side.

THE BOOK PAGE ONLY LISTS BOOKS' top three categories, but clicking through will let you see *all* the book's categories.

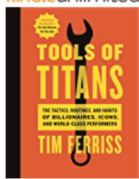

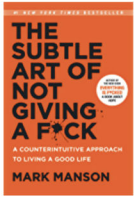
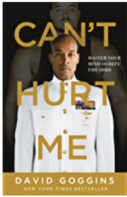
### **3. Check the Bestsellers**

When you find a category that seems useful, click on it. This will bring you to the bestsellers page for that category.

## Best Sellers in Motivational Self-Help

Top 100 Paid

Top 100 Free

<p>#1</p>  <p>Tools of Titans: The Tactics, Routines, and Habits...</p> <p>› Timothy Ferriss</p> <p>★★★★★ 2,278</p> <p>Kindle Edition</p> <p>\$15.99</p>	<p>#2</p>  <p>30 Days - Change your habits, Change your life:...</p> <p>› Marc Reklau</p> <p>★★★★★ 306</p> <p>Kindle Edition</p> <p>\$4.99</p>
<p>#3</p>  <p>The Subtle Art of Not Giving a F*ck: A...</p> <p>› Mark Manson</p> <p>★★★★★ 6,062</p>	<p>#4</p>  <p>Can't Hurt Me: Master Your Mind and Defy the...</p> <p>› David Goggins</p> <p>★★★★★ 4,010</p>

SOMETIMES YOUR COMPETITORS will be at the top of that list. If they found a set of categories that seem to work, follow their lead.

IF YOUR COMPETITORS aren't at the top of the list, click into the individual pages for the bestsellers. See what categories they're listed under and decide if those are a better fit for your book.

## STEP 2: HOW TO SELECT THE RIGHT CATEGORY

**B**e clear on what you are trying to achieve. If you want book sales, choose categories that drive book sales. If you want to hit bestseller, choose the easier categories that will get you to bestseller.

THE GOAL IS GETTING visibility for your book, but you also want to attract the right kind of readers (who will leave you the right kind of reviews).

THAT'S why categories should be relevant to your book. Don't pick "underwater basketweaving" for a book about business.

CATEGORIES ARE ORGANIZED into category strings, which means that each top-level category breaks down into a smaller niche category.

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YOUR BOOK WILL AUTOMATICALLY BE in the top-level category for any category you choose, so you don't have to pick big ones.

FOR EXAMPLE, SELECTING "DIRECT MARKETING" places you in the "Marketing" top-level category.

TO MAXIMIZE SALES, your categories should hit a sweet spot between accuracy and specificity.

AN ACCURATE CATEGORY is one that accurately represents your book, so people can easily find it with a keyword search. This might be more general, like "self-help."

A SPECIFIC CATEGORY is more specialized, so it will have less competition and as a result, a higher likelihood that you can hit bestseller status. An example is "cognitive behavioral therapy."

A LITTLE SECRET not too many authors know about is you can pick up to 10 categories, so it shouldn't be too hard to have some categories that meet both criteria. We usually recommend:

- 1-2 easy categories, where the #1 book clocks in around 10,000 ABSR. That way you can make sure you hit #1 in at least 1 category (assuming you care).
- The rest should be in the 1,000-3,000 ABSR range. That way, you will be near the top of some bigger categories that actually get traffic. This is how you ensure more readers can find your book.

### **STEP 3: HOW TO GET ADDITIONAL CATEGORIES**

**T**he more categories you're in, the higher your visibility will be.

REMEMBER, visibility leads to readers, and readers lead to sales.

KINDLE DIRECT PUBLISHING allows you to pick two categories directly through their platform.

TO GET YOUR FULL 10, you have to do some easy work though.

SIGN into Amazon Author Central or your KDP account.

SCROLL to the bottom of the page and find the tiny "Contact Us" link. It will take you to a page that looks like this:



amazon AuthorCentral Author Page Books Sales Info Customer Reviews Help

**Contact Us**

**1 What can we help you with?**

Select an issue  
> < Please make a selection >

**2 How would you like to contact us?**

☐ E-mail  
Usually answered within 24 hours

☐ Phone  
Only available for authors with a US phone number. Estimated wait: less than 1 minute.

IN THE FIRST DROP-DOWN BOX, click “My Books.”

amazon AuthorCentral Author Page Books Sales Info Customer Reviews Help

**Contact Us**

**1 What can we help you with?**

Select an issue  
My Books

Select details  
> < Please make a selection >

**2 How would you like to contact us?**

☐ E-mail  
Usually answered within 24 hours

☐ Phone  
Only available for authors with a US phone number. Estimated wait: less than 1 minute.

IN THE SECOND DROP-BOX, click “Update information about a book.”

amazon

AuthorCentral

Author Page

Books

Sales Info

Customer Reviews

Help

Contact Us

1

What can we help you with?

Select an issue

My Books

Select details

Update information about a book

< Please make a selection >

2

How would you like to contact us?

☐ E-mail

Usually answered within 24 hours

☐ Phone

Only available for authors with a US phone number. Estimated wait: less than 1 minute.

SELECT “BROWSE CATEGORIES.”

amazon

AuthorCentral

Author Page

Books

Sales Info

Customer Reviews

Help

Contact Us

1

What can we help you with?

Select an issue

My Books

Select details

Update information about a book

Browse Categories

< Please make a selection >

2

How would you like to contact us?

☐ E-mail

Usually answered within 24 hours

☐ Phone

Only available for authors with a US phone number. Estimated wait: less than 1 minute.

SELECT “I WANT to update my book’s browse categories.”

1 What can we help you with?

Select an issue

My Books

Select details

Update information about a book

Browse Categories

I want to update my book's browse categories

Did You Know?

Click [here](#) to learn more about browse categories. If you'd like to make a change to these categories, please give us a call.

2 How would you like to contact us?

☐ E-mail

Usually answered within 24 hours

☒ Phone (preferred method of contact)

Only available for authors with a US phone number. Estimated wait: less than 1 minute.

3 Talk with Author Central Customer Service

Request a call back

To talk with us, please enter your phone number.  
(You'll need an open phone line to receive this call)

Your number

( ) -

Ext.

Call me now

Call me in 5 minutes

YOU WILL BE GIVEN the option for them to contact immediately by phone or within 24 hours by email.

HAVE your book's title and ASIN ready, plus the categories that you want your book to be added to.

HINT: If you don't know your book's ASIN, you can find it under "Product Information" on your book's Kindle page.

## Product details

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X-Ray:

Not Enabled 

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled 

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#1 in [Women's Spirituality](#)