

Witchy Book of the Year Awards - Official Rules

Eligibility

- The Witchy Book of the Year Awards are open to any author over the age of 18.
- Open to self-published or traditionally published books which are publicly available.
- Entries must be published between June 1 2024 and May 31 2025. Your submission must include the copyright page.
- Entries published prior to June 1 2024 are not eligible.
- All entries must prominently feature a witch or witches as a central character or focus. This is non-negotiable. Entries *without* a witchy protagonist or a storyline where witchcraft is central will be automatically disqualified without refund.
- Only adult fiction is eligible. No children's books, young adult (YA) books, short stories, poetry, graphic novels, or nonfiction.
- Anthology submissions must have the permission of the publisher and/or all authors in the anthology before submission.
- Debut submissions may only be submitted by authors who have **never** had another work of fiction commercially available. This category is to celebrate those who are releasing their first books out into the world.
- Authors may enter a maximum of two books per author - NOT per pen name. Each book may only be entered once.
- Unless otherwise stated, the minimum word count for entries is 65k words. Entries must meet the minimum word count for their category, where applicable.
- Plagiarism, AI-generated fiction, or any confirmed copyright violation will result in immediate disqualification.

Prohibited content

The following content is strictly prohibited and will result in automatic disqualification without refund:

- **Child sexual abuse or sexualized depiction of minors** under the age of 18 years.
- **Bestiality** including the sexualization of or sexual acts with non-sentient, non-human animals (does not apply to sentient shifters in humanoid or animal form).
- **Necrophilia** including sexual acts involving non-sentient dead bodies (does not apply to conscious undead beings like ghosts, vampires, etc.).
- **Hate speech or dehumanization of marginalized groups**, including racism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, etc.

Content consideration required

Books containing the following content **will be accepted**, however authors will be provided with checkboxes for content warnings within their entry form. These warnings will not be used to disqualify entries and won't impact your score—they are simply used to make accurate, respectful judge assignments.

Examples of commonly flagged content:

- Dubious consent (dubcon)
- Consensual non-consent (CNC)
- Religious trauma
- Sexual violence or assault
- Step-sibling or step-parent romance
- Age gap
- Captivity or ownership dynamics
- Kink or BDSM
- Addiction, mental illness, self-harm, or suicide
- Pregnancy loss or infertility
- Gore, extreme violence, or horror elements
- Major character death
- Animal death
- Trauma-related flashbacks or dissociation

If your book includes anything you think might upset or trigger a reader, **please list it**. These content tags won't be published publicly—they're for internal use only.

Categories

1. Best Witchy Paranormal Romance
 2. Best Witchy Rom-Com
 3. Best Witchy Paranormal Women's Fiction
 4. Best Witchy Paranormal Cozy Mystery (50k+)
 5. Best Witchy Urban Fantasy
 6. Best Witchy Fantasy Romance
 7. Best Witchy Dark Romance
 8. Best Witchy Erotic Fiction
 9. Best Witchy Historical
 10. Best Witchy Novella (Minimum 20k to maximum 40k)
 11. Best Witchy Anthology (Multi-author anthologies only)
 12. Best Witchy Debut (Anthologies not accepted)
 13. Witchy Book of the Year (Finalists are the winners of each category above)
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Entry details

- Entry Fee: \$78 AUD (Approx. \$50 USD). *Please note: All payments are processed in Australian Dollars. International entrants are welcome! Final charge may vary slightly based on current exchange rates and your bank's conversion fees.*
- Payments will be made via Trybooking.
- After payment, you will be emailed a link to the entry form in order to complete your entry. Please check your spam folders carefully.
- Categories are capped at 30 entries each.
- Categories must receive a minimum of 10 entries to run. Entrants in categories with fewer than 10 entries will have their entry reallocated to their second choice category.

- Each entry should include a single PDF file of the published book with a maximum file size of 10MB. This file should include your copyright page. This file should have **no** watermarks, DRM, privacy restrictions, or passwords.
- We will not accept any other file type. We will not accept print books.
- Entries without payment will be disqualified.
- Entries without a fully completed form will be disqualified without refund.
- For any entry questions, please email witchybookoftheyear@gmail.com.

Refunds

- Refunds will only be issued if the Witchy Book of the Year Awards are cancelled.
 - No refunds will be issued if an entrant wishes to cancel their entry.
 - No refunds will be issued for disqualifications due to authors not checking their entry eligibility or providing the correct submission details.
 - No refunds will be issued for disqualifications due to rule violations *including but not limited to* the use of prohibited content, lack of relevant content warnings, and the use of AI.
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Timeline

- Entries Open: May 1, 2025 at midnight PDT [Los Angeles]
 - Entries Close: May 31, 2025 at midnight PDT [Los Angeles] (or when categories are full)
 - Judges' scores submitted: July 31 2025
 - Finalists Announced: September 15
 - Winners Announced: October 1
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Judging process

Category Awards

- All books will be read and scored by reader judges with a passion for witchy and paranormal fiction.
- Scores will be based on:
 - Witchfactor
 - Plot
 - Characterization
 - Writing quality
 - Overall enjoyment
- Each score category can earn a possible 10 points for an overall maximum possible score of 50.
- The judges' scores will be averaged to reveal the entry's final ranking score.

Witchy Book of the Year Award

- The finalists will be the top scoring book of each category.
 - The winner will be the top scoring entry overall.
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Prizes

- Category Finalists will receive:
 - A printable certificate
 - A digital finalist badge for use on covers, marketing, and social media
 - Recognition across Witchy Bookworms platforms, including:
 - Announcement on our website, online newsletter, Facebook page, and Facebook group
 - Category Winners will receive:
 - An official Witchy Book of the Year Awards category winner trophy
 - A printable certificate
 - A digital winner badge for use on covers, marketing, and social media
 - Recognition across Witchy Bookworms platforms, including:
 - Announcement on our website, Facebook page, and Facebook group
 - A featured spot for your book in our Witchy Bookworms newsletter, including blurb and buy links
 - The Witchy Book of the Year Finalists will receive:
 - A printable certificate
 - A digital finalist badge for use on covers, marketing, and social media
 - Recognition across Witchy Bookworms platforms, including:
 - Announcement on our website
 - Featured posts on our Facebook page, and Facebook group
 - A featured interview in our Witchy Bookworms newsletter, including your book cover and buy links
 - The Witchy Book of the Year Winner will receive:
 - An official Witchy Book of the Year Awards winner trophy
 - A printable certificate
 - A digital winner badge for use on covers, marketing, and social media
 - Recognition across Witchy Bookworms platforms, including:
 - Announcement on our website
 - Featured posts on our Facebook page, and Facebook group
 - An exclusive interview and book spotlights with buy links in an issue of our online newsletter dedicated entirely to you
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Disqualification criteria

- Any book that does not center around witches or witchcraft will be disqualified without refund.
- Any book that includes prohibited content as outlined in our rules will be disqualified without refund.
- Any book not provided in full PDF format (as published) by the submission deadline will be disqualified without refund.
- Plagiarism, AI-generated fiction, or any confirmed copyright violation will result in immediate disqualification without refund.

Other Notes

- Judges will remain anonymous and all decisions are final.
- Judges may reach out to authors with feedback if they choose. If you are an author and do not wish to receive constructive feedback, please ensure you mark this in your entry form.
- Any judges who are also authors may not judge in categories where they have entered a book.
- By entering, you agree to abide by the rules and deadlines outlined above.
- Any questions should be emailed to witchybookoftheyear@gmail.com.