

RESOURCES FOR THE AGENT SEARCH

Read this first: [Overview article](#)

Finding agents to query:

- Check the agents of writers you love (google, authors' websites, acknowledgement pages of books).
- If possible, talk to other writers with agents to see if theirs would be a good fit and if they'd make the connection – a good way to get out of the "slush pile" is if an agent knows you were recommended by one of their writers (mention it in email subject line).
- Check [Manuscript Wish List](#), where agents looking for clients share what they're looking for. The wish list is also a hashtag on twitter (X) you can look up: #MSWL (or [aggregated](#) here).
- Other sources from Jane Friedman's blog (with links):
 - "[PublishersMarketplace.com](#) is the best place to research literary agents; not only do many agents have member pages there, but you can search the publishing deals database by genre, category, and/or keyword to pinpoint the best agents for your work. Some other resources to consider include [QueryTracker](#) (free and paid versions) and [Duotrope](#)."
- *Poets & Writers* magazine (a good resource for lots of reasons) features interviews with agents and an agent-specific issue each year. There's the full print version (many libraries have subscriptions, including Cole) as well as the [website](#).

Additional tips:

- Agents looking for new clients will also read literary magazines and contact writers whose work they admire, so submitting shorter works to magazines while writing a book is a good idea. (It may also give you some accolades to list in your bio when querying.)
- When you're ready to begin querying, make sure you are following all the instructions of that particular agent/agency (on their website); they will discard submissions that do not adhere to their specifications. For example, some agents want the query letter pasted into the body of an email and won't open attachments; some want the first 10 pages, some 50, etc.
- There's no point in contacting an agent who does not represent the genre of the book you're submitting; do your homework (tips above).
- It takes time to write a successful query letter. Consult reliable sources for information on what that letter should (or should not) include. [Here's a place to start](#). (Professor Entel will also share her annotated query letter [fiction] upon request.)
- Querying for fiction and for nonfiction are different processes. Be sure you're following the appropriate guidance. (The articles I've linked to will give more information.)
- Many writers advise querying a smaller group of agents at a time in case you decide you want to revise your letter before querying further.
- Not every writer uses an agent. Some publishers accept manuscripts directly from authors, and there are also book prizes in which the winning manuscript is published. (Most of these prizes will be announced in *Poets & Writers*.)
- Finally, don't rush into querying. Your best chance at finding the right agent will happen when you've taken your manuscript as far as you possibly can.