

Creating a World Book for Your Game or Story

Goal: Build a reference document that supports consistency, creativity, and long-term storytelling.

1. Your world book is a tool, not homework: It exists to serve the story or campaign, not to impress anyone.

2. Start with rules before details: Decide what *can't* happen in your world before you decide what *can*.

3. Track cause-and-effect: If magic exists, what are its limits? If gods intervene, what do people stop doing?

4. Write from the inside out: Focus first on what characters experience daily, not cosmic lore.

5. Separate “known truth” from “actual truth”: What people believe vs. what’s real creates plot.

6. Use flexible categories

Good sections to include:

- Geography (only what matters)
- Culture & power structures
- Magic/technology rules
- History (key turning points only)
- Unanswered questions

7. Leave intentional blanks

Empty space gives you room to improvise.

8. Keep a “change log”

If something evolves, note *when* and *why*.

9. One page per major element

If it needs more than that, it probably belongs in the story—not the world book.

World Bible Template (Writer + GM)

Purpose: Maintain consistency while leaving room for discovery.

A. World Rules (Non-Negotiables)

- What cannot happen in this world?
- What always has a cost?
- Why?

B. Power Structures

- Who holds power?
- Who believes they do?
- Who actually does?
- What ongoing conflict shapes daily life?

C. Magic / Technology

- Who can use it?
- Who can't?
- What breaks when it's used?
- What happens when it's overused?

D. Culture & Daily Life

- What does an average day look like?
- What do people fear losing?
- Shared beliefs:
- Taboos:
- Meaningful rituals:

E. History (Turning Points Only)

- One founding myth:
- One great mistake:
- One unresolved past event:
- Cataclysm:

F. Known Truth vs Actual Truth

- What the world believes:
- What's really true:
- Why this difference matters:

G. Locations That Matter

- Places tied to memory, power, or loss:
- What makes it important:
- What threat or opportunity it holds:

H. Open Questions (Leave These Blank Ask yourself these before you play or write)

- What does no one know yet?:
- What do you want to discover through play or writing?:
- Questions you want the story/campaign to answer:

I. Change Log

- Date / Session / Chapter:
- What changed?
- Why it matters now:

Note: A good world bible supports choices—it doesn't replace them.

World Book Prompts (Use one of these or something like them weekly)

1. **What's the most dangerous thing someone can do in your world?**
2. **What happens when the sun doesn't rise?**
3. **Describe a holiday everyone hates. Why doesn't it get canceled?**
4. **What belief unites everyone — until it doesn't?**
5. **If magic disappeared tomorrow, who would thrive? Who would suffer?**

TAKEAWAY: *A good world book doesn't limit imagination—it protects it.*