

The Audiobook Promotion Guide

1. Introduction

I started to listen to audiobooks in 2014 when I signed up for my first Audible trial to buy a Neil Gaiman full-cast production (it was *Neverwhere*).

It blew me away and I immediately wanted more more more MORE. That's how I found the Kindle Unlimited Read and Listen for Free books which kept me quite busy for a while, followed by the Audible Romance Package (I miss you!).

In 2018, I had the idea to write some things down about the audiobooks I had listened to and the tricks I found to keep listening affordable. I had always wanted to blog and now I had this wonderful thing in my life that I could talk about for HOURS. That's how LovelyAudiobooks.info was born.

Long story short, I delved into the world of book bloggers where I stumbled over the word "ARC" for the first time. ARC stands for Advanced Reading Copy and usually refers to a free book that is given to reviewers in exchange for ratings and reviews.

And this opened up a whole new world of listening to me. Which I now want to share with you!

Who is this guide for?

This guide is for you if you love audiobooks and want to share this love with the world!

Whether you listen to 30 audiobooks a year or 300 doesn't matter as long as you feel you have something to say about the books you listened to.

Whether you are an avid audiobook fan who wants to learn how to build a Social Media presence, or an experienced blogger or influencer who wants to branch out into audiobooks, this guide will have something useful for you.

What is this guide about?

We will start with the benefits of audiobook promotion: What you can gain from it (free audiobooks, community, and possibly even a book budget), and how you can support your favorite authors and narrators with this work.

We will look at strategies to promote audiobooks on Facebook and Instagram (and shortly discuss why I chose these two platforms specifically).

And I will outline what you need to know about copyright and disclosures.

What is the goal of this guide?

After finishing, you can go and request your first audiobook review copies right away and I want you to have the tools to start promoting audiobooks on Facebook and Instagram. I also want you to have the motivation to do this work as you will be aware of all the benefits it brings.

You ready? Okay, let's go...

2. Why Become an Audiobook Promoter?

The Audiobook Market

The global audiobook market is flourishing! American publishers earned \$1.6 billion in 2021 alone. And while audiobooks only account for an 11.3% market share in the US, they show a steady two-digit growth every year.

Over 23% of Americans listened to at least one audiobook in 2021, which is a 15% increase from 2020.

73% of audiobook fans listen to them during their daily commute. Young adults between the ages of 18 and 29 represent the largest share (30%) of audiobook listeners. And over 45% of Americans have listened to an audiobook at least once in their life as of 2022.

Audible is the most popular audiobook platform, used by 49% of audiobook listeners.

Why am I telling you this? Because one of the biggest struggles beginning bloggers and influencers have is the feeling that there are already so many voices out there – and

so many loud voices at that – that no one will hear you anyway.

But look at the numbers above! So many people are fascinated by audiobooks. And every one of us audiobook promoters has a unique voice and a unique view on each book. That's why your content will have value and can be a real contribution!

What can you gain from becoming an audiobook promoter?

Promoting books on Social Media is a journey.

In the beginning, you have a bit of extra work as you set up your profiles. But you will immediately be able to use some services to receive free audiobook review copies. The rewards are right around the corner!

Once you are further in and have built an audience, more opportunities will open up for sought-after review copies and for monetization.

You can earn directly through Facebook and other Social Media platforms once you have reached a certain level of engagement. And you can earn commissions on audiobook sales generated through affiliate links.

When you are promoting books you also have the opportunity to connect with fellow audiobook enthusiasts, narrators, authors, and industry professionals and become part of the amazing audiobook community.

For me personally, book promotion has felt very rewarding creatively as well. Sharing my thoughts on a book and how I understood it is fulfilling and all-around fun.

What do Authors, Narrators, and Publishers gain from ARCs?

You have a lot to gain from promoting audiobooks, but so do the creators of these books!

Advanced reading copies in any form, be it ebooks, physical copies, or audiobooks, help publishers create buzz for a book. *"I'm seeing that book everywhere! I should give it a try..."*

For indie authors who have a smaller reach, ARCs help to show their book's value. On Audible, customers are more likely to give a book a shot that already has a few decent reviews, than one that has none at all. Especially when it's not an Audible Plus included book.

ARCs also help to spread the word on Social Media. I'm more likely to buy a book that I

have already seen somewhere before.

And so, so often I only become aware of a book because I see someone post about it!

For a while, authors benefitted financially from handing out Audible codes as they were paid the equivalent royalties as if their book had been purchased with an Audible credit. However, as there was a lot of fraudulent use of this feature, Audible has discontinued it. [Authors are not paid any royalties for review copies](#). They are purely a marketing tool now.

3. Getting Started with Social Media

There are so many Social Media platforms out there. And naturally, you will feel drawn to the ones you have been using most. And that makes sense!

If you use TikTok or Twitter a lot, go and start on these platforms as you – consciously or subconsciously – already know the written and unwritten rules of these communities.

My platform of choice is Facebook as it has a huge community of audiobook fans that is easy to connect with through groups.

Facebook is also linked closely to Instagram which makes it easy to use both platforms. So, these are the two we will be talking about in more detail now.

We begin with [creating a Facebook page](#). This is different from your personal profile and will make it easier for you to keep any personal posts separate from your audiobook posts.

On Instagram, you can consider creating a new profile that you link with your new Facebook page.

Linking them will give you access to very convenient tools through the [Meta Business Suite](#) that allow you to publish your posts to Facebook and Instagram simultaneously.

Once you have your FB and IG set up, you can create several posts. Even if you don't have any followers yet, your profile should have something to offer those who come in the future.

Add reviews for your latest listens, share audiobook-related posts, and create engaging bookish content, and, of course, let me know so I can follow you!

I find the first days or weeks with a new FB page the most taxing as it can feel like screaming into the void. However, once you are getting into the groove, you will pick up momentum and Facebook will offer you many helpful tools along the way.

Once your page looks pretty and has a bit of content, we can go out and make ourselves known.

The best way to organically grow your page followers is by joining big audiobook groups and being active there. Not every group allows pages to join. So focus on the ones that do!

If you are helpful and share good information, people will likely choose to follow your page and Facebook will promote it more actively as well.

Make sure to stick closely to each group's rules. Be careful with posting your own promotion as this is often not allowed. The better path is to promote your page indirectly by replying to other members' questions.

Facebook will start to show a little "Follow"-link right next to your name when you comment so people can conveniently like your page.

Whether you find it easier to grow on Facebook or on Instagram will depend on what kind of content you enjoy creating. Instagram relies more on you having eye-catching visual content than Facebook. If you have been using IG a lot and can create great graphics or photos you might find more success there.

If you have been mainly using Facebook or generally prefer to put your focus on written content, focus on that.

I have always found it best to learn just one platform at a time. It's a more rewarding experience as you can truly connect with your followers and find out which kind of content resonates most with them. And you will also learn what the algorithm of the platform rewards.

Meta has made it very convenient to cross-post between IG and FB and I highly recommend that you make use of that. Even if you only use one of the two platforms for now, it will help you to grow on the other one in the future as you have already laid the groundwork.

Meta Business Suite also offers you a content plan and insights that can help you decide how often to post. The popular guideline I follow is "once a day" for Facebook but I find their own recommendations very helpful to see which content forms to explore and which amount of content is still acceptable and not "spammy".

4. Creating Valuable Social Media Content

There are a lot of audiobook promotion pages and groups out there that look like they are automated. They probably aren't and people are by hand copying and pasting promotional material from authors into their pages. But Facebook and Instagram hate these pages and their posts are not shown to a lot of users.

While you can use prepared promotional posts from authors as a basis for your own post, all Social Media loves fresh content! So, I encourage you to take the time and write down your own thoughts about a book or author, or make your own graphic.

It's fine to occasionally share prepared promotional material. But your own thoughts and opinions should be the main thing on your page.

If you have already been an avid Audible reviewer, it's as easy as copying your Audible review into your Facebook page, giving it a light edit, and adding the audiobook cover. That's a whole, worthwhile audiobook promotion post, that you can even cross-post to IG!

If your focus is IG, you can copy and paste your review and then create a nice new graphic, e.g. showing the main points of your review, your rating, and the audiobook cover.

Generally, you might want to focus more on talking about the books you already know and listened to than about new releases that you can't say much about.

But of course, you want a mix of posts.

So, you can write about an upcoming release that has you excited because it's narrated by your favorite voice actor or written by your favorite author. You can publish your reviews of books you have already listened to. And then mix this up with your top 5s for a specific genre or trope and, once your followers grow, you can add discussion topics and questions to increase engagement.

Engaged followers make your page valuable in the eyes of Facebook, which makes it show your profile and content to more people.

Your reviews, on the other hand, make you valuable in the eyes of publishers looking to give away audiobook review copies.

One thing I want spell out here is that your review for the latest Christina Lauren or Rebecca Yarros release has a far bigger chance of pleasing the platform's algorithm

and engaging your followers than your review of a debut indie author's title.

As a book promoter, you have to consider how you want to deal with this.

Growing your profile as a whole is good and important. But if you want to support indie authors, I encourage you to do that from the start.

You can find many big book influencers on all platforms who will talk exclusively about the books that everybody else is also talking about. The platforms' algorithms recognize the book title and will show the content to anyone interested in that book.

Whenever you talk about a book no one knows, the platform doesn't know who to show your content to, other than a handful of your followers.

The challenge now is to figure out ways to deal with this. One way could be to take turns talking about popular books and about lesser known ones.

Another could be to connect a famous title with a newcomer ("Try this new book if you loved that bestseller").

I'm sure you can come up with your own strategies. The important thing is to be aware that not every book review will be equal in the eyes of the algorithm and your followers.

5. Requesting Review Copies

There are several ways to get free audiobooks to review. The first one is the easiest and is immediately open to you.

You can find several websites and Facebook groups where authors give away Audible codes for their audiobooks. You can request any book that sounds interesting to you, give it a listen, and then share your review on Audible, GoodReads, and your Facebook and Instagram pages. We'll get back to this in a moment!

The second option is well-known among book reviewers and has recently added audiobooks to their catalog as well: Netgalley! You can sign up for an account and create your profile right away. There are always some audiobooks that are available to any interested listener. You have access to these right away as well.

But the majority of books on Netgalley need to be requested. The more reach and engagement you are getting on your Social Media profiles, and the better your Netgalley profile's request-to-review ratio, the more likely it is that publishers will

accept your requests, or even add you to their reviewer list which grants you automatic approval for any of their titles

The third option is the LibroFM ALC program. While this is an excellent program that I can't recommend enough, it does not publish current requirements to be accepted into the program. It is worth keeping this one in mind though!

And lastly, once you have built a platform and made a name for yourself, you can email bigger publishers directly to be added to their reviewer lists. Tantor and Penguin are two big audiobook publishers who have special programs where reviewers can request any audiobook they are interested in. It feels incredibly rewarding to be able to listen to many of their anticipated releases before anyone else!

How to use Audible Promo Codes

An Audible promo code is a unique combination of letters and numbers. Together with the Audible promo code, you'll receive an Audible link.

Just copy and paste the code into that page and click the button to redeem it. The audiobook will be added to your Audible library, and it will be yours to keep, just like any Audible book you would buy yourself.

You don't need an active Audible membership or provide payment information to redeem free Audible promo codes! You can simply log into the Audible website and app with your usual Amazon login and password and go to the promo code page to redeem.

You can also make account on other Audible marketplaces. It's often easier to get a UK promo code for an audiobook than a US one. You can simply go to [Audible.co.uk](https://www.audible.co.uk) and create a free account there, no matter where in the world you live.

Websites for Free Audiobook Codes

You can start using the following four websites before you even set up your Social Media profile. They all offer review copies in exchange for Audible reviews.

Don't get discouraged if your first look at their catalogs isn't what you expected though. I have found many gems on these types of websites. But it takes a bit of time and browsing to find something that really appeals to you.

[Audio Freebies](#)

AudioFreebies is a very convenient, easy-to-use site with free audiobook codes for Audible, Spotify, and other platforms.

Just browse the catalog, click on an audiobook you're interested in, and request a code. You can also listen to a sample directly on AudioFreebies.

Requirements: Requirements may vary. But generally, you should leave a review within one month. For some books, you need to apply with your reviewer profile, for others, the code gets displayed on your screen automatically.

[Audiobooks Unleashed](#)

Audiobooks Unleashed works very similarly. You can receive Audible promo codes directly after choosing an audiobook from their catalog. And you can sign up for an account with which you can apply for advanced listening copies from popular authors and narrators.

Requirements: None. You don't have to review books you get through free audiobook codes from Audiobooks Unleashed. If you make an account, connect it with your Audible listener page, and write reviews regularly, you might be eligible for very limited ARCs though.

[StoryOrigin](#)

StoryOrigin offers author services and connects reviewers with indie authors. They have a great catalog of audiobooks that you can browse through by tags.

You can also build up a profile here as a trustworthy reviewer.

Requirements: You create an account and provide info on the places where you will leave reviews. When you request an audiobook, the author will decide whether they send you an Audible promo code.

[Free Audiobook Codes](#)

This site used to be called Audiobook Boom and offers a very convenient way to get free audiobook codes.

You can browse their catalog and look through different genres. And you can see in the overview already how many US and UK codes are left for any given book.

To get the code, you don't even need an account. It's displayed directly on the screen.

Requirements: None.

6. Writing Effective Audiobook Reviews

As I said in the beginning, one of the goals of this guide is to get you access to audiobook review copies and to support authors and narrators. But let's not forget that posting Audible reviews is first and foremost helpful for other audiobook listeners!

Reviews are invaluable when we're trying to decide whether something is worth buying or not. That's why it's so great for other readers and for authors when you leave a short audiobook review as often as possible.

Why it's important to leave an Audible Review

With every Audible review, you support authors and narrators. Even with a negative rating!

Like many others, I have bought my fair share of audiobooks because I knew I'd likely enjoy what other people criticized. (*"Oh really, you felt this book had too many bedroom scenes and bad words? BUY!"*)

And sometimes, it can look suspicious when an audiobook has exclusively positive ratings. When you write a negative review – depending on how you write it, of course – this could give the other reviews and the book more credibility.

After all, no book can be loved by absolutely everyone!

But you might also stumble over a new author whose audiobook has no reviews yet. If you enjoyed the story and thought the audiobook production was good, your opinion will help other listeners take a chance on this book when, otherwise, they wouldn't have.

What an Audiobook Review should focus on

You can make writing audiobook reviews very easy on yourself. There's no need to write 10 paragraphs, summarize the book, and do an in-depth analysis. Don't forget: You write audiobook reviews for other listeners not for school!

A typical structure for an audiobook review would be:

- Short Summary
- Your Review of the Story

· Your Thoughts about the Narration

However, please be aware when and when not to include a summary. An Audible or GoodReads review should not include a summary as the blurb is displayed on the same page. Readers want to get to the juicy bits – your opinion – right away. On your Social Media, however, it's useful for readers to see a short summary of what the book's about.

There are no hard and fast rules of what to discuss and include in your review of the story. You don't need to comment on certain technical and storytelling elements if that makes you uncomfortable. It's perfectly acceptable to only discuss how the book made you feel!

Your followers will find you and stick with you because they enjoy your voice and share your taste in books.

And it's of course an integral part of any audiobook review to talk about the narration and how well it fit the story and characters.

Questions to answer in your Audiobook Review

Here are a few questions you can use in the beginning to develop your own reviewing style.

Did the audiobook meet your expectations?

Start your review by describing if and how much you enjoyed the audiobook and if there were specific issues that you didn't expect based on the blurb and sample.

For example: *"I loved this audiobook but I was a bit disappointed that my favorite narrator only read the epilogue."*

How did the story make you feel?

"It was such a cute and funny story with some super hot scenes. I also loved how the heroine's family was portrayed."

Did the narrator make it easy to follow the story?

It should be easy to distinguish between different characters during dialogue scenes. And the narrator should read the story in a lively way with good intonations that pull you in so you stay focused on the story.

“This was my first time listening to this narrator. She did a great job and I was captivated the entire time.”

Did you find the narrator’s voice fitting for the main protagonist?

Sometimes, narrators sound too old or too young. Or they are too bouncy when the story is solemn.

“The narrators were cast perfectly. Their voices were very fitting for the main characters and really brought them to life.”

Do you recommend the audiobook and will you pick up more?

End your review with a clear takeaway message about whether you recommend the audiobook or not, whether you only recommend it for certain listeners, and if you plan to get more books from the author and narrator.

“I’ll definitely continue with this series and recommend it to anyone who loves this genre!”

How to write a negative Audiobook Review

Again, don’t underestimate the value of negative reviews! If you’ve ever decided against picking up a book because it only had positive ratings, or if you’ve ever picked up a book after reading a negative review, you know how important they are.

This is something I have to keep telling myself, too. It’s difficult to convince myself that a critical review can still support the author. And to keep in mind that it’s really important for other readers.

Going by the questions above, this is an example of a constructive negative review.

“This audiobook wasn’t quite what I expected. I was in the mood for a light college romance. But this was very dark and angsty which wasn’t clear to me from the blurb.

The female-sounding narrator was great, but for me, the male-sounding narrator seemed too old to be a college student.

Fans of darker New Adult romance will likely enjoy this story though.”

A negative review becomes especially valuable when it provides a lot of information. If you expected something different from the book, it’s likely other readers will feel the same way. So, commenting on possible misconceptions is extremely helpful.

Sometimes, books (especially on Audible, for some reason) have very short blurbs that don’t provide any information. If you find yourself picking up a book like that or notice that a book you listened to doesn’t show the blurb on Audible, it is excellent if you

provide a review on the Audible page with a summary and your thoughts because other readers are most certainly waiting for that!

A very popular strategy for providing constructive criticism is the sandwich method. This is especially valuable if you review on Netgalley as publishers will often take your feedback to heart and pass suggestions on to authors and narrators.

This is a review I posted on Netgalley for a very anticipated book:

“I enjoyed this story very much! It has everything I love about [this author’s] books: A captivating plot, a steamy love affair, questionable but lovable characters, and a body count.

As for the audio version, I like the narrator's voice, and for some stretches, his narration flowed nicely. But in other parts, the clipped way of reading, with a long break. after. every. single. word. was simply awful and even made me put the book away for a while. It kept me from really immersing myself in the story. Increasing the narration speed to 1.7x made it a little more bearable but it just didn't flow well, especially in the earlier chapters of the book.

It's a real shame, too, because I'm sure the author put a lot of effort into finding a narrator who could do all the right accents. And there isn't anything wrong with [this narrator’s] voice either.

It seemed to me like this clipped way of reading is something he can simply do or not do. So, it's an all-around shame that this audiobook has it so much because it makes listening considerably less fun than it should have been.”

This was probably one of the harshest reviews I have ever written, mind. But the narration of the second book in the series flowed much, much better. And I believe all the reviews (not just mine) commenting on the narration style led to this change.

I have mixed feelings about including this kind of feedback on Audible though. Authors and narrators generally respect reviewer spaces and will not (or should not) read Audible reviews.

So, keep in mind who each of your review posts is for. On Netgalley, you can include feedback that you hope the publisher will consider. On Audible and your Social Media, you should only address your fellow audiobook fans. Negative comments can give your review depth and help others go into the book with the right expectations, but it’s unlikely they will lead to any changes in the audiobook production.

The one famous example that could almost prove me wrong would be Fourth Wing by Rebecca Yarros. This book was partly re-recorded because many reviewers complained about the narrator sounding ill. However, this book was an immense and unexpected hit. Due to the high cost, it’s very rare that audiobooks get a re-record.

Finding your Voice

Your review page is YOURS and you can post any way you like. If you are a thoroughly positive person who only wants to write rave reviews, that's great and you will find followers who will love your enthusiasm!

If you are someone who tends to have a lot of conflicting thoughts, your followers will appreciate your thoughtfulness and complex arguments.

People have also built an audience successfully with bad reviews as they can be incredibly entertaining and validating.

I recommend that you consider early on which direction you wish to go into. If you want to build ties to the author and narrator community, honestly, it will hurt your chances if you publish a lot of bad reviews.

While, as I just said, most authors respect reviewer spaces and agree that negative reviews have to exist, it's understandable that they don't want to see and read how someone hated their book.

A page built solely around recommendations (books you loved) will work better if you are looking to e.g. interview authors and narrators.

If your focus is a big audience, then bad reviews can work really well, too.

I want to throw one more thought in here though: As I said earlier, the algorithm will give more reach to posts about well-known books. So, negative reviews about these big, hyped books can engage your followers and grow your audience (it can also cost you followers, of course). Indie authors, on the other hand, benefit more from positive visibility. Tearing those people down who already aren't well-known can hurt their career without benefitting you in any way, as people who see your post might just take away that this book isn't worth reading.

That is to say, a healthy mix of positive and negative reviews on a book's Audible or GoodReads page is excellent. Negative reviews can be a big selling point for a book (example: "too much smut!").

For your Social Media presence, you should make a conscious decision though which kind of content you want to publish. Over time, you will get practice and hone your voice as a content creator. But you took the time to look at this guide and that means it's also a good time to consider what you would like your profile to look like and what your goals are.

7. Earning a Book Budget

When you are starting out, free review copies will be your main benefit from promoting audiobooks. But over time, you can start to earn money, too.

Let's take a look at the main ways you make money as a book influencer!

Once you have built a significant following, you can become an affiliate with Amazon (Audible) and other audiobook stores like Chirp. As an affiliate, you can generate individual links and whenever someone makes a purchase after using your special link, you earn a small fee.

The fees depend on the product's value though. So, influencers who promote expensive travel destinations can earn much more than we book people who promote a \$1.99 Chirp deal.

However, affiliate fees for audiobook subscriptions can add up to significant sums!

Most Social Media platforms also pay content creators directly once they have reached a certain level of engagement. For example, Facebook, Instagram, and Threads offer various bonus programs. You can also monetize video content on platforms like YouTube or TikTok, if you decide to go the visual route.

If you are doing well growing your Instagram or TikTok, you might also get opportunities for sponsored content from bookish brands.

Publishers are known to pay certain big publications to run reviews on their most promising new releases. But on the influencer and blogger level, it is unusual that there are payments involved in the reviewing process.

So, it makes more sense as a bookish influencer to focus on affiliate fees and video monetization.

8. Ethical Practices and Disclosure

The moment you step into the world of book promotion, there are a few things to keep in mind, because as soon as you receive free books in exchange for reviews, you are

bound by certain laws.

Let's take a look at the legal and ethical aspects!

Disclosure and Transparency:

Ensure that any promotional content or reviews clearly disclose any affiliations, sponsorships, or financial interests related to the audiobook. Transparency is essential to comply with consumer protection laws and avoid misleading practices. That means if you are reviewing an audiobook you have received for free with the purpose of reviewing it, you need to say so in your post (Example: I received this audiobook for free in exchange for my honest review).

Being transparent with your audience about any incentives, free copies, or compensation also builds trust!

Intellectual Property Rights:

You have to respect copyright laws! When sharing excerpts or discussing audiobooks, avoid infringing on the author's rights. Authors and publishers are often willing to provide audio snippets or excerpts, but you have to ask permission first and for each book.

Using an audiobook cover either directly or in a graphic is considered fair use and it's not necessary to ask for permission first. However, the cover needs to be visible in its entirety on any graphics you create.

Accuracy and Honesty:

Avoid false claims or misleading statements. Ensure that any information shared about the audiobooks is accurate and verifiable.

Provide honest reviews based on your genuine experience. Misleading reviews can harm both your audience and authors.

Avoid Defamation and Libel:

Don't make false statements that harm an author, narrator, or publisher's reputation. Defamatory content can lead to legal consequences.

Be constructive in your criticism and avoid any personal attacks.

Community Guidelines and Platform Policies:

Familiarize yourself with Facebook's community guidelines. Violations can result in account penalties. Some book covers can be an issue due to nudity!

Promote positive interactions within your community and avoid spammy or aggressive tactics.

9. Conclusion

Thank you for making it through this entire guide!

I hope you could find something useful here and that you are now confident to start promoting audiobooks. You know where to get free audiobook ARCs, you know how to write a review, and you know what to keep in mind when being an online influencer.

If you have any questions or feedback, please don't hesitate to reach out to eline@lovelyaudiobooks.info or on [Facebook](#).