

HOW TO WRITE A REVIEW TUTORIAL

Hi! As I've mentioned to many of my fans, testimonials and reviews really help sell a book. Honest testimonials; honest reviews. *Social proof* of enjoyment is vital. If you would like to offer a testimonial or review, please feel free. If you have never written a testimonial or review, don't despair. I'm going to show you how to do so.

If you are reading this, you might want to watch the video where I show you how to do a review. You'll find that video on my News & Events menu > Interviews.

First, I'd like to share a few examples of good testimonials. If you choose to write one, you would send it to me so I can forward it to my publisher. FYI, not all will be used. That doesn't mean they aren't good, but sometimes too much of a good thing can be *too much*.

As you'll see, testimonials need to be short and punchy with catchy words, and a **cozy mystery** testimonial is quite different than a **suspense or thriller** testimonial.

SAMPLE TESTIMONIALS

For my cozy mysteries:

"I can never have enough of Avery Aames's Cheese Shop Mysteries!" ~ *Open Book Society*

"Daryl Wood Gerber has found the perfect recipe for all of us who love cozy mysteries and food." ~ *Lesa's Book Critiques*

"A delectable page-turner with a tasty mix of characters, crime, and cookbooks." ~ Kate Carlisle, *New York Times* bestselling author

For other authors' suspense books:

For Jenny Milchman's *Cover of Snow* ~ "Milchman makes [readers] feel the chill right down to their bones and casts a particularly effective mood in this stylish thriller." ~ *Kirkus Reviews*

For Jamie Freveletti's *Running From the Devil* ~ "A breathless, hair-raising read, one of the most gripping thrillers I've read in a long, long time." ~ Tess Gerritsen, *New York Times* bestselling author

For Meg Gardiner's *Ransom River* ~ "You can't go home again—and survive—in this mesmerizing crime novel by Meg Gardiner, "a top-tier mystery writer at the top of her game." ~ *BookPage*

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Now, reviews can be trickier than testimonials to write. How short is too short? How long is too long? Did the reviewer give away too much? (Heaven forbid!) Is it honest, kind, or mean? Here are two samples. *Notice that reviewers often thank the author or publisher for an Advanced Reader Copy (ARC) in exchange for an honest review.*

SAMPLE REVIEWS

For *FUDGING THE BOOKS* (cozy mystery, #4 in *Cookbook Nook Mysteries*):

Terrific Series! ~ Name of Reviewer

This is such a fun series, and this book doesn't disappoint! When a small time publisher is murdered, local candy maker and cookbook author, Coco is the prime suspect. Jenna Hart believes Coco who says she didn't commit the murder. Jenna finds herself swept up in the chaos of the bookshop when pirate week sweeps through Crystal Cove, hosting the local cookbook club, and finding clues to solve the murder. There are plenty of twists, and surprises that you'll be kept guessing until the end. There are a few recipes included that sound scrumptious! I look forward to visiting Crystal Cove and The Cookbook Nook again.

I received an advanced copy of this book from the author in exchange for an honest review.

[My critique: Nice length, just enough enthusiasm.]

For Lisa Gardner's *FIND HER* (thriller, series)

Another Great Lisa Gardner Book! ~ Name of Reviewer

Flora Dane was kidnapped and held captive for 472 days. Can you imagine what kind of hell that must have been? Better yet, now imagine what part of your soul you have to give up to survive. To survive that ordeal you would have to give up a part of yourself, tuck it away in a little box, hope that someday it could be recovered again....maybe (if your lucky) or maybe not! You may be giving up that part of yourself forever just to survive. To deal with what is being done to you. Flora, was taken for more than a year! She had to either adapt or die. Throughout the book we find out what happened to Flora during those 472 days and what is happening to her now.

At times I didn't know how I felt about her. Did I feel sorry for her, did I dislike her (and I can't tell you my reasons without giving too much of the story away). I honestly did not know how I felt about Flora. She was the victim, so I wanted to feel bad for her, but....

Enter D.D. Warren, whom I love from previous books, although you do not have to read Gardner's other books to enjoy this one. Find Her is absolutely a stand-alone book. Having D.D. On the case, for me, just added to my enjoyment of the story. D.D. Is on restricted duty, but that does not stop her from wanting to solve the current case of missing girls and figure out how Flora is mixed up in the situation. D.D. Is very good at her job so it is only a matter of time before she will figure it out- with the help of her Cracker Jack team and hubby of course! The ending was one of those duh moments - I should have seen that coming, but didn't until D.D was also getting closer to the truth. I will blame it on reading the book in one day and I was a bit blurry eyed by the end. :)

Love Lisa Gardner and this book is no exception. Highly recommend!

[My critique: A little long in length. Reviewer could have allowed synopsis to reveal much of it, but great enthusiasm.]

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Now, for newbies [those of you who have never written a review], if you're wondering how to post a review, I'll show you. I'll use Amazon as the example, although you can also post on Goodreads, other reader forums, blogs, and book purchasing sites. You are only limited by your imagination and time.

HOW TO POST A REVIEW

Here are easy and visual steps for how to review, say, my book *GIRL ON THE RUN*.

Go to the Amazon site: www.amazon.com

Type in *GIRL ON THE RUN* in the search bar or go to this link: http://bit.ly/GirlOnTheRun_Kindle

Click on the title *GIRL ON THE RUN* written by Daryl Wood Gerber. [*Note: Sometimes there are other books with the same or similar title. Make sure you choose the one written by me.*]

Now click on CUSTOMER REVIEWS (if there are any) and you will see the following WRITE A CUSTOMER REVIEW box below my picture and biography.

FYI, for the purpose of this tutorial, I will use my friend Krista Davis's book, *THE DIVA STEALS A CHOCOLATE KISS*, as visual examples since *GIRL ON THE RUN* is not yet up on Amazon as I create this tutorial.] Do you see how Krista has a "link" that reads:104 customer reviews? Click on that link.

The Diva Steals a Chocolate Kiss (A Domestic Diva Mystery Book 9) Kindle Edition

by [Krista Davis](#) (Author)

★★★★☆ 104 customer reviews

▶ [See all 3 formats and editions](#)

Kindle
\$7.99

Read with Our **Free App**

Paperback
\$26.99 ✓ **Prime**

3 Used from \$22.90
14 New from \$22.74

Mass Market Paperback
\$7.99 ✓ **Prime**

30 Used from \$1.43
49 New from \$3.56

The *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Diva Wraps It Up* unwraps an all-new tale in which chocolate is the kiss of death...

Now you will see this screen. Krista's photo and biography are above it.

Customer Reviews

★★★★☆ 57
4.6 out of 5 stars ▾

5 star		68%
4 star		28%
3 star		2%
2 star		0%
1 star		2%

Share your thoughts with other customers

[Write a customer review](#)

[See all 57 customer reviews ▶](#)

Click on the box WRITE A CUSTOMER REVIEW.

It *might* prompt you to sign in to your Amazon account. Do so.

Next, you will see the book and some boxes to check: *POOR, OKAY, GOOD, GREAT*.

But first...

See your name as it appears for Amazon in the upper right corner? Some people like to remain anonymous. If you want to change your name, to protect the innocent, (you can change it to sweet reader, dog lover, your initials, or anything you choose) do this NOW. Click on the CHANGE link to fix it. Type in your new name and click DONE.

59
HELPFUL VOTES
FROM CUSTOMERS

Daryl Gerber
YOUR PUBLIC NAME
[Change](#)

Miss (A Domestic Diva...

Okay

Good

Great

Okay, you're back at the page that shows 4 boxes from POOR to GREAT. Choose the one that applies to your opinion.

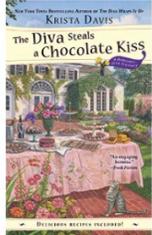
Your Reviews

59

HELPFUL VOTES
FROM CUSTOMERS

Daryl Gerber

YOUR PUBLIC NAME
[Change](#)



[The Diva Steals a Chocolate Kiss \(A Domestic Diva...](#)

Krista Davis

How is the author's writing?

Poor

Okay

Good

Great



[Insert product link](#)

[What's this?](#) ▾

Write your review here

That will prompt another set of boxes to appear. Select your answers.



The Diva Steals a Chocolate Kiss (A Domestic Diva...)
Krista Davis

How is the author's writing?

Poor Okay Good **Great** ✓ Posted.

Is there violence?

No violence Some violence Graphic violence ✓ Posted.

Is there sexual content?

No sexual content Some sexual content Explicit sexual content ✓ Posted.

How is the story narrated?

First person Second person Third person Alternating persons I don't know ✓ Posted.

☆☆☆☆☆

[Insert product link](#) [What's this?](#)

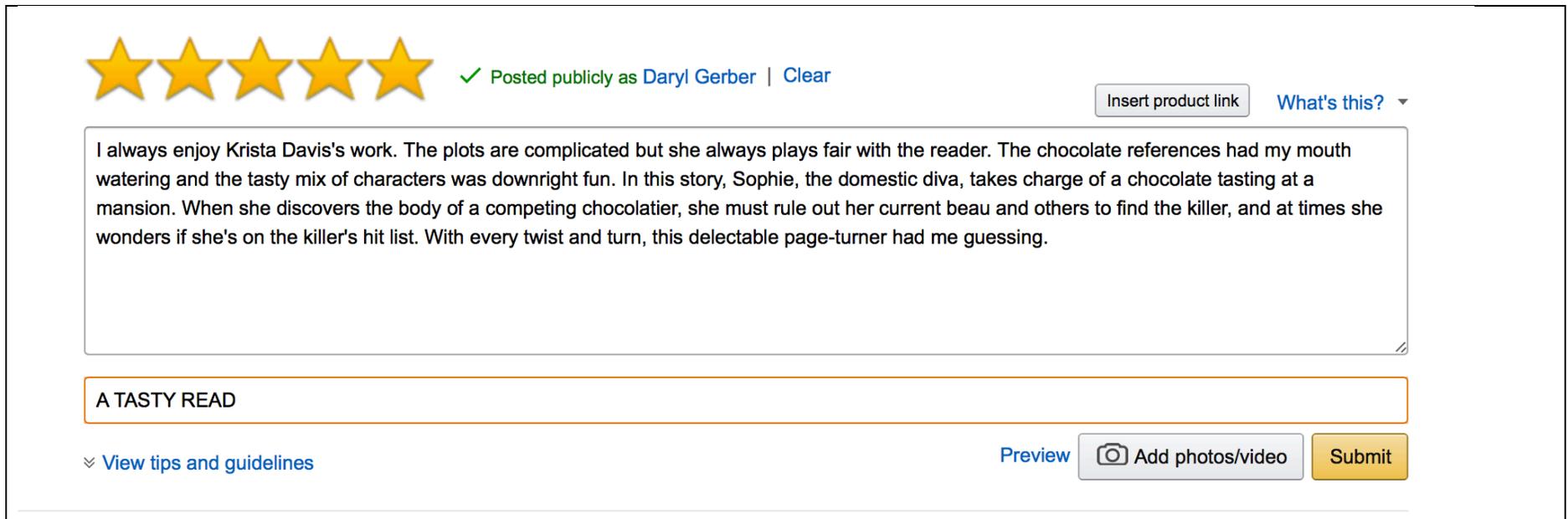
Write your review here

Click on your star rating choice, 1 to 5, with number 5 being the *best*.

By the way, *GIRL ON THE RUN* is written in “third person.” You do *NOT* need to click on *INSERT PRODUCT* link.

Write your review, give it a title like A CLEVER SUSPENSE or LOTS OF TWISTS AND TURNS (you get the idea).

Next, you choose your star rating and type your review.



The screenshot shows the Amazon review interface. At the top, there are five yellow stars representing a 5-star rating. To the right of the stars, it says "Posted publicly as Daryl Gerber | Clear". Further right, there are two buttons: "Insert product link" and "What's this?". Below this is a large text area containing the review text: "I always enjoy Krista Davis's work. The plots are complicated but she always plays fair with the reader. The chocolate references had my mouth watering and the tasty mix of characters was downright fun. In this story, Sophie, the domestic diva, takes charge of a chocolate tasting at a mansion. When she discovers the body of a competing chocolatier, she must rule out her current beau and others to find the killer, and at times she wonders if she's on the killer's hit list. With every twist and turn, this delectable page-turner had me guessing." Below the text area is a label "A TASTY READ". At the bottom left, there is a link "View tips and guidelines". At the bottom right, there are three buttons: "Preview", "Add photos/video", and "Submit".

Then click SUBMIT. That's it! You did it! You'll get a note from Amazon in your email thanking you for offering a review. Congratulations!!

Last but not least, if you have never written a review and are scared, don't be! Here are a few suggestions from my fans, pals, and readers on how to write and NOT write a review. Most suggest that you read a few sample reviews and notice what you like in each and then tailor your style to that.

SUGGESTIONS ON HOW TO WRITE A REVIEW

S said: I write reviews including the information I would like to see. If there is a good synopsis of the story, I will include a note that says: "You can read the synopsis above". I want to know about the characters, the setting, and the storyline, so my comments go that direction. **I only write reviews for books I enjoy**, so my reviews tend to average about 4.5 or higher. I want to encourage others to buy the book. I am not writing a review to tear anything down.

MB said: Your thoughts on what you did or did not like are much more important than summarizing the plot. This is especially true if you are reviewing some place that already includes a copy of the back summary/teaser of the book. **DO NOT INCLUDE SPOILERS.** Be honest. The more reviews you write, the better you will get at it. As you read other reviews, think about what you like about them and whether they work for you or not. Take what you like, but ignore what you don't. Length isn't as important as saying what you need and want to say. Have fun with it.

N said: I always, if it's part of a series, include a very brief summary of what the book is about, if I enjoyed it, and why. I keep it *short and sweet*. Also, if I'm going to be completely honest, I've never given a "bad" review, I don't want to be that person.

K said: PLEASE don't include a detailed plot summary. "Susan and her friends try to solve a murder that took place at her shop" is **adequate**. I don't want to read more. That info is already available on the main book page of whatever website you're using. Instead, tell what you liked/disliked and why. "Susan is a likable character because..." or "Susan's friend Amy annoyed me, as she was a little too whiny." Was the plot well written? **Did it keep you guessing** until the end? Was there too much description of unnecessary things? Was there enough backstory that you could pick up a mid-series book and follow along? When I read a review, I am looking for your opinion.

M said: I focus on conveying **how much I love** the series or the characters etc., what I love about them (great characterization, gripping plot, strong spunky sleuth, wild and wacky relatives, strong independent seniors, zany situations, fascinating historical context, and so on).

And remember always mention if you received the book or advanced reader copy from the publisher or author in exchange for an "honest review."

Thank you one and all for your support!

~Daryl