THE AUTHOR'S ROADMAP · PART 11

# Event Go/No-Go Checklist

Decide whether a signing, festival, or market table is worth it before you pay the fee.

Work through this sheet for each event you're offered. The math takes five minutes with the Event tab in the Launch Budget and Break-Even Worksheet from Part 10; the questions take a little longer.

## The event

Event name _____

Date and hours _____

Location _____

Organizer and contact _____

Table fee and what it includes _____

Who sells the books? Tick one.

- ☐ I sell my own copies and take the money.
- ☐ The store or an official bookseller sells them, ordered through its supplier.
- ☐ The store sells them on consignment, at a split we agree on.

## Before you book

- ☐ The event draws readers of my genre. I've asked the organizer who usually comes and looked at past vendor lists.
- ☐ I know who sells the books and what I earn on each copy.
- ☐ I know the table fee and what it includes (table, chairs, power, a tent).
- ☐ I've added up travel, food, parking, and any lodging.
- ☐ I know the setup and teardown times.
- ☐ For an outdoor event, I know whether I need my own tent and weights, and I have a rain plan.
- ☐ I know whether the organizer requires insurance or a vendor permit.
- ☐ I've written down what would count as a good day besides sales: email sign-ups, a store contact, an invitation back.

## The break-even math

**Total cost of the day ÷ earnings per copy = copies to break even**

Total cost of the day ($) _____

Earnings per copy ($) _____

Copies to break even _____

Copies I expect to sell _____

*Example from Part 11: a $50 table, $30 of gas, $15 for lunch, and $5 parking come to $100. The sample book earns $10.96 a copy after a Venmo business fee ($15.99 price, $4.60 print cost, tax added at checkout), so $100 ÷ $10.96 = 9.1, which rounds up to 10 copies.*

## The decision

- ☐ **Go.** Expected sales cover the costs.
- ☐ **Go for other reasons.** Sales may fall short, and the other goals are worth the difference.
- ☐ **No-go.** The numbers and the goals don't justify the day.

My reason _____

## Sales tax at events in Tennessee

**Checked against the Tennessee Department of Revenue, November 5, 2026.**

- ☐ **Check the small-seller exception.** You may not have to collect if you paid sales tax when you bought the books **and** either you average under $4,800 in gross sales a year, or you sell at only one or two temporary events a year (in any state, 30 days or shorter) with no ongoing retail business. Any tax you do collect must be sent in.
- ☐ **Register if you need to.** A sales and use tax account is free through TNTAP.
- ☐ **Add the event** before the end of the event's month: email the Department your account number and the event's name, date, and address.
- ☐ **Charge the rate for the event's location.** The promoter's letter from the Department gives it, or use the local rate lookup on tn.gov. The state rate is 7%, plus a local rate of up to 2.75%.
- ☐ **Decide on your price sign:** tax added at checkout, or tax included with a sign saying "Prices Include Sales Tax."
- ☐ **File by the 20th** of the month after the event (special event return), or on your next regular return if you already file.
- ☐ **Outside Tennessee,** search your state's department of revenue for "special events" or "temporary vendor."

## Packing list

- [ ] Books to sell (count: ____ )
- [ ] One copy to display and flip through
- [ ] A table cover that reaches the floor
- [ ] One or two book stands
- [ ] Price sign that says whether tax is added or included
- [ ] Payment QR code sign
- [ ] Phone or card reader, charged, plus a power bank
- [ ] Cash float of small bills and coins
- [ ] Email sign-up sheet and pens
- [ ] Sales log or receipt book
- [ ] Bags for buyers
- [ ] Tape, clips, and a marker
- [ ] Water and snacks
- [ ] Tent, weights, and a rain cover (outdoor events)
- [ ] Your sales tax certificate or the promoter's letter

## Be the vendor organizers invite back

- [ ] Show up a little early.
- [ ] Offer to help your neighbors and the organizer.
- [ ] Clean up your space when the day ends.
- [ ] If you finish early, help others clean up theirs.

## After the event

Copies sold _____

Email sign-ups _____

Contacts made _____

Total cost of the day ($) _____

Profit or loss ($) _____

Would I come back? _____

Checked November 2026. Payment fees and tax rules change, so confirm with the Tennessee Department of Revenue (revenue.support.tn.gov) and your payment app before each season. This sheet is general information, not tax advice. Full walkthrough: Part 11 of The Author's Roadmap at fordmountainpublishing.com/for-authors/.