



THE ROADMAP: 2015 WRITING PLANNER

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SETTING GOALS THAT WORK

The problem with New Year's resolutions is that we tend to base them on all those things we think we really *should* do or stop doing rather than what we really, truly want.

For us though, it's easy.

What we really, truly want is to write.

Simple.

Reviewing your year and setting out what you want to 2015 to look like isn't about setting random aimless goals you'll forget in a week. It's about looking at what's important to you, about being clear about how you want your writing to feel, what you want to do, why you want to do it and most importantly *how to get there*.

You are responsible for your writing, your creativity, how you manage your time and energy, and a fulfilling writing life doesn't just happen by accident.

You have to create it.

How are you going to get an agent for your first book if it's sitting in the drawer? Or you might have published two books but the third won't magically write itself.

Dreaming is all well and good, but doesn't having a dream and a map sound better?

This process will probably take you an hour or so, but there's a cheaty quick version you can do in 10 minutes at the back if you're the impatient type.

Happy writing!
Charlie



STEP 1: A QUICK REVIEW OF 2014

Do this quickly, taking 10 minutes max. Think about your successes and failures, about times you were happy and proud or frustrated, and include notes about any writing goals you set last year.

What went well in your writing life last year? What did you achieve? What made you happy?

What wasn't so positive? What could you have done differently?

WHAT'S NEXT?

Now for the fun bit.

In an ideal world, what would you like to see when you look back on 31st December? What do you want to have achieved? What do you really want to write this year? What would be fun?

Make a list of all of the things you'd like to do this year using the headings that follow. Then pick the ones you like the look of most, the things that fill you with joy.

Then on the page after, **you'll turn them into actual goals** (specific and preferably measurable) before looking at how you're actually going to do it, or rather, look back from the end of 2015 at how you actually did it.

The **strategies and actions** section is where you define the choices you need to make and the things you need to do in order to reach your goals. Maybe you'll decide that the best way to write what you want to is to commit to writing 500 words every single day, or that to increase your audience you should do a blog tour and give book copies away. To improve your writing you might take a class, enter a competition each month, go to a writing group fortnightly. Write down everything you can come up with for each goal, and again try to be specific.

Then you'll look at the **milestones** you want to hit on the journey, the numbers or measures that will let you know you're on track. Work out some key progress markers and add in dates: if you want to have your novel with an agent by the end of the year, you might put in deadlines for when you want to plan, reach 10,000 words, 50,000 words, the end, find 10 great agents, etc. Then go back and check that your strategies will help you reach those milestones.

Once your goals are complete, move onto the **planner** and start filling in what needs to happen each month. Then take a look at it. Is it realistic? Does it look fun? If not, revise it.

Fill in weekly goals month by month with tiny action steps and weekly targets, so that you're allowing room to adapt your goals as you go. Remember, you're in charge of your writing (and of your plan).

STEP 2: WHAT DO YOU WANT?

What are the things (stories, ideas, subjects) that you want to write about, the things you want to say?

What do you want to write in 2015 or achieve with your writing? List anything and everything that comes to mind.

What would you like to do in your wider writing life? E.g. growth/learning, developing a steady habit, build website, etc.

STEP 3: GET SPECIFIC

Pick between one and three goals for the year, big things that you'd really love to do this year. Make them the things you want more than anything else, the things you hardly dare wish for.

Try putting them in this format (or something similar that works for you).

I want to _____ **. In 2015, I really want to write about** _____ **.**

I'm going to write _____ **, and then I'm going to** _____ **.**

Examples:

- I want to be a published author. In 2014 I really want to write about an aardvark called Boris who has lost his way home. I'm going to write a book for 5-8 year olds, and then I'm going to edit it and submit it to an agent.
- I want to learn to be a better writer. In 2014 I really want to write about love and the complexity of relationships. I'm going to write lots of short stories, and then I'm going to submit them once a month to competitions.

Goal 1:

Goal 2:

Goal 3:

Now for the sneaky superpower trick. It's 31st December 2015. You've achieved your goals. How did you actually do it? What daily habits got you there? How do you react when things go badly? What did you have to change to achieve your goals?

Circle the 2-3 habits or attitudes that will make most difference to your progress, or the things you're doing already that you know make a real difference to your creativity and productivity.

STEP 4: GOAL-SETTING

Remember, the more you can break this down into systems, ways of behaving and small actions, the easier your job will be. Setting milestones that are measurable and have dates will help you to see where you're going and have something more manageable to aim for along the way.

Goal 1:

Strategies & actions

Milestones & dates

Goal 2:

Strategies & actions

Milestones & dates

Goal 3:

Strategies & actions

Milestones & dates

2015 WRITING PLANNER

January	February	March	April
May	June	July	August
September	October	November	December

WEEKLY PLANNER

Month:

Goal:

Week starting	Actions	Milestones/weekly targets
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THE QUICK & DIRTY VERSION

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Examples:

- I want to be a published author. In 2014 I really want to write about an aardvark called Boris who has lost his way home. I'm going to write a book for 5-8 year olds, and then I'm going to edit it and submit it to an agent.
- I want to learn to be a better writer. In 2014 I really want to write about love and the complexity of relationships. I'm going to write lots of short stories, and then I'm going to submit them once a month to competitions.

Bingo! Quick and easy goals, done.

If you have a few more minutes, why not go back to page 10 and fill in how you're going to achieve them? You can make a mini map for yourself in just a few more minutes.

ABOUT URBAN WRITERS' RETREAT

You want to write, really you do, but sometimes life just... gets in the way.

I'm Charlie. I provide time and space dedicated to your writing without distractions.

Being around other writers is both lovely and creates a productive working environment, and I've been running [writing retreats](#) in London (UK) since 2008.

One-day retreats take place in a little haven in the heart of the city, while residential writing breaks in Devon are made up of days on end of blissful writing time interrupted only by country walks and cake breaks.

I also provide writers with structures to help them find that space and time in their own lives, including an online bootcamp for stalled writers and the [Six Month Novel](#).



Email: hello@urbanwritersretreat.co.uk

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/urbanwriters>

Facebook: <http://facebook.com/UrbanWritersRetreat>

Web: <http://www.urbanwritersretreat.co.uk>