

Paul Dorset Q&As

- 1. Do you have any writing rituals?** – Whenever possible I write in my office at home with my ‘writing’ selection of music playing on my PC. It helps get me in the right frame of mind to write. But sometimes I write in other places and, as long as I can blot out the background noises, I’m fine.
- 2. What types of books do you like to read? Who are your favorite authors? Why?** – Nowadays I listen to more books than I read, but that’s the same thing, right? Because my drive to work is over an hour, I like to listen to books in my car. I get through about twelve hours a week, and that adds up to a lot of books. Generally I listen to fantasy books, although from time to time I mix it up a bit and throw in a classic or two. When I was young, I read books by C.S. Lewis, then John Wyndham, Isaac Asimov, and later Stephen King. Of course I read hundreds of other books, but these were the authors I returned to. Nowadays I read mostly fantasy. I have books by Kate Elliott, George R.R. Martin, Robin Hobb, Douglas Adams, Robert Jordan and of course Stephen King. I also have books by Jacqueline Carey, Neil Gaiman and many other authors.
- 3. If someone had the power to step into your creative mind what would they see?** – Please don’t step into my creative mind! I think my mind is constantly in a mess. There are a thousand different thoughts going on inside, about a thousand different topics. There are always bits of books, some scary characters, and other crazy plotlines. Writing takes up most of my waking day’s thoughts, so don’t go looking into my mind for anything deep and meaningful!
- 4. What is a typical day for you?** – I rise at 5:15am, go to my day job, get home around 4pm, have a snack, and then write and do all the other things I need to do. I spend most evenings and weekends in front of my computer – doing writing stuff.
- 5. Do you have a favorite character in each of your series, aside from the lead? If so, which one and why?** – I do have favorites. I think every writer has characters they love more than others. As to who they are, I’m not telling, just in case they have a little too much of me in them.
- 6. In all the years you’ve been publishing your work, what is the biggest mistake you made that you could share so others can avoid making it?** – Paying a ridiculous amount of money to a marketing company that promised the world and delivered a moldy peanut. Never again.

7. **How do you find the time to write?** – I make time to write. Life is about priorities. When I'm writing a book, I write for at least an hour a day (approx. 1500 words), but that's the easy part. Editing and all those associated things take much longer.
8. **What is one thing you hope I do not tell the readers?** – Please don't tell my readers that when I was about ten years-old I dressed up as a girl in a 'topsy-turvy' competition while on vacation (I didn't win).
9. **If you are self-published, what led to you going your own way?** – When I started writing, self-publishing didn't really exist, and I struggled, along with the rest of the world, to get an agent. In the end I published myself (quite an amateur attempt). My writing has since matured and stands up there with well-received traditional authors. The writing model has changed, too. So now I'm happy to be an 'Indie Author.' Could my writing be better if a publishing house took my work and applied a top-notch editor to it? I'm sure. But I use editors, too, and think I turn out pretty professional books.
10. **Do you plot your stories or do you just get an idea and run with it?** – I'm a plotter and not a pantsier. I usually plot around 80% of a book before I start writing it. However, the plot is really just a couple of hundred one word sentences (*Joe goes to store*), so there's lots of room for inspiration. The plot points just keep me on track and make sure the book doesn't escape from me as I'm writing it. It also gives me scope to incorporate new ideas, and I never get writer's block. The system works for me.
11. **Do you do a lot of editing or do you find that as time goes on your writing is more fully-formed?** – The simple answer? Way too much editing! The better and more complex the book, the more editing I do. Thankfully I have help from a myriad of beta readers, but there's no escaping the process.
12. **Do you have to do much research for your stories?** – I mostly write fantasy, and so you'd think there was no research, but actually there is. Religion, customs, monetary system, laws, people, cities – you name it, you need to have it all figured out before you start writing. Creating a make-believe world can be more difficult than writing in the present day. One of the most important things I do before I start writing is to get photos of all my main characters. I refer to these all the time as I'm writing. It keeps me in their persona.
13. **Do you also write any poetry, non-fiction or short stories?** – I enjoy writing poetry. I just wish I had more time to write it. Particularly I enjoy comedic poetry (and limericks). I also want to try my hand at some short stories and send them out to magazines.

14. **Do you have any pieces of work that will never see the light of day?** – I have a few! Maybe I'll get to editing them one day.
15. **How much marketing do you do for your published works or for your 'brand'?**
– Marketing. It's the thorn in my foot. I do what I can, but it's not enough. I do all the usual social networking stuff, but I need to spend more time getting book reviews and things. I just need more hours in the day, and twice as much energy. Or a FREE assistant!
16. **What do you do when you're not writing? Do you have any hobbies or party tricks?** – When I'm not writing, I like to travel and drink good wine with my wife. During the past few years, we've built a nice wine library, and it's always a pleasure to dip into it. As for party tricks, when I was younger I could knock a matchstick out of a person's mouth with my yo-yo. Would you let me try it on you?