

# ASA Guidelines to Comics Rates and Conditions



# ASA Guidelines to Comics Rates and Conditions

➤ These rates can be used by publishers, organisations such as teaching institutions, the corporate sector and individuals wanting to commission comics creators to produce comics work, including comic books, web comics and cartoons/comic strips, and Manga.

➤ For graphic novels you would be offered rates of pay as you would a picture book with advances weighted in favour of the artist in recognition of the hours of work involved.

➤ The ASA recommends that comic creators who create original work do so under an exclusive licence whereby they retain the copyright. However, if the work is produced for a pre-owned project, brand or character where the copyright resides with another person or entity, then the comics creator may need to assign copyright in the developed work.

➤ You may be offered two payments for the one work: (1) pages rates; plus (2) royalties for copies sold over a certain threshold. It will be up to you to negotiate the best offer you can achieve in your experience and circumstances. For example, assume that a publisher releases 10,000 copies of a comic book containing 24 pages of art and story with a recommended retail price (RRP) of \$20. The writer will receive a page rate of \$100 per page, totalling \$2,400; and the artist will receive a rate of \$100 per page for pencilling and also \$100 per page for inking, totalling \$4,800.

Once sales exceed 7,500 copies, for example, then the writer and artist could ask for up to 5% each of RRP; That is, 0.90 cents (exGST) each per copy sold over 7,500 copies.

➤ Where publishers or other commissioners want to bundle jobs with one particular artist (e.g. pencilling, colouring and lettering), then ASA recommends the commissioner to pay out the rates for each individual job component or negotiate a reasonable package rate with the artist that does not undercut the total of all job components by more than 15%.

➤ Please note the ASA recommends these rates apply as minimum Australian rates. Overseas companies may pay different rates. There will also be variations in pay scales for emerging talent as opposed to established brand-name creators, or those who have amassed a large backlist of titles and many credits.

➤ Rates are exclusive of Goods and Services Tax (GST).

NB: This is a general summary only and not intended as financial advice. They are intended as a minimum & creators are encouraged to negotiate the best deal that can be achieved. Inevitably rates will need to be tailored to your individual circumstances.

Contact the ASA on 02 9211 1004 or email [asa@asauthors.org](mailto:asa@asauthors.org) if you have any queries regarding this information.

We encourage you to read the Australia Council for Arts report - [Graphic Storytellers at Work](#) which includes a section on making a living as a graphic storyteller.

© Australian Society of Authors Limited, 2021

Categories	ASA Minimum Comics Freelance Page Rates	Application
<b>Concept sketches / Storyboards</b>	B & W: \$55-\$65 per piece Colour: \$85-\$100 per piece	These rates can be used when artists are employed only to produce concept art or model sheets for a project.
<b>Thumbnails / Roughs / Layouts (Comics page / panel)</b>	\$35 - \$50 per page	Layout artists can be attached to a project to work exclusively on storyboards (rough sketches in a panel layout usually on an A5 page). The panel layout artist focuses on design of panel points-of-view on each page, using the script as a guide.
<b>Pencilling (traditional or digital media)</b>	\$100 - \$200 per page	Applies to clean pencilled artwork
<b>Inking or Line Art</b>	\$75 - \$150	Includes shading / cell-shading
<b>Colouring (digital colouring)</b>	\$100 - \$150 per page Covers (digital): \$250 - \$500 per cover	
<b>Painting (traditional media)</b>	\$200 - \$350 per page Covers (traditional media): \$500 - \$1000 per cover	
<b>Lettering (Traditional or digital media)</b>	\$35 - \$50 per page	This job involves creating print-ready caption boxes, sound effects, thought and speech balloons and titles.
<b>Writing (story and script)</b>	\$75-100 per page	Writing involves creating the story outline, page breakdowns and script.
<b>Cartoon / comic strip (print and webcomic)</b>	\$150 - \$195 spot cartoon or comic strip	For additional cartoon/comic strips rates, please consult the recommended rates at <a href="#">Australian Cartoonists Association Professional Rates</a> , November 2020.
<b>Zines</b>	\$50 - \$75 per page	Zines are low-circulation self-published mini-comics or mini-magazines using original or appropriated text and images, which can include sequential art (comics content). They can be hand-made or digitally produced and are usually photocopied.

Categories	ASA Minimum Comics Freelance Page Rates	Application
<b>Convention sketches</b>	Up to individual artist	We recommend artists charge for convention sketches, as some recipients collect free sketches then trade them for profit (e.g. sell them online). Make sure all pieces are signed and dated. For more information and tips on pricing convention sketches, check out this <a href="#">article</a> by Julie Ditrich, 2014
<b>Original finished comics pages for sale (pencilled, inked and/or coloured)</b>	Up to individual artist	We recommend artists rank their pages in the following groups: Covers and A, B and C pages and work out rates on a descending scale according to grouping, popularity of the published work and reputation of the artist. Make sure all pieces are signed and dated. For digital files, Non-Fungible Tokens (NFT's) are usually sold via auction through an agency. Beware of any agency charging greater than a 20% fee and seek further professional advice.
<b>Commissioned artwork (one character piece or landscape or object sourced from comics properties)</b>	Up to individual artist	For artwork rates, please see the ASA's Book Illustration <a href="#">rates</a> or the National Association for the Visual Arts <a href="#">Practitioner Rates</a>
<b>Editing / Script Assessment</b>	\$55 - \$75 per hour or \$15 - \$25 per page	Increase rates by 20% or more if doing a written script assessment. Refer to the Institute of Professional Editors for more editing rates and advice.
<b>Project Management / Mentoring / Consultancy</b>	\$75 to \$120 per hour	Consultancy can include talent scouting

Advocacy . Support . Advice

**AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY OF AUTHORS**

Suite C1.06/22-36 Mountain St, Ultimo NSW 2007  
(02) 9211 1004 | [www.asauthors.org](http://www.asauthors.org) | [asa@asauthors.org](mailto:asa@asauthors.org)