

Rules of the German Publishers & Booksellers Association on the use of book reviews [*Translation of the German "Regeln des Börsenvereins des Deutschen Buchhandels e.V. zur Verwendung von Buchrezensionen"*]

Unwritten rules have evolved over a long period with regard to the reviews of books and other publishing products in newspapers, magazines and online media that are based on striking a fair balance between the book, newspaper and magazine publishers and the broadcasters and Internet portals. Book and audiobook publishers regularly undertake personnel and resource-intensive press work, organise author contacts and provide the media with timely information and review copies free of charge. Print, online and broadcast media and the employed and freelance journalists working for them review and report on authors and their publications. This interaction between book publishers, media, and journalists is also undertaken with an awareness of the mutual promotional effect: Insofar as the use of brief excerpts of reviews and reports can be used to promote the book in question, by naming the source of the citation, the book also acts as a national and international advertising medium for the press medium.

The following rules document the recognised framework conditions governing the use of reviews for the purpose of promoting books and other publishing products and, at the same time, represent a voluntary commitment on the part of the signatory newspapers and magazine publishers, broadcasting companies and online providers as to their adherence. These rules are declared on behalf of all book publishers, booksellers and wholesalers towards the German Publishers & Booksellers Association, as the umbrella organisation of the book trade. Insofar as the declaration is submitted by freelance journalists, they commit themselves to informing their principal that they have received the reviewed book and possibly also associated press material based on the rules of the German Publishers & Booksellers Association.

With their acceptance of these standards, journalists and media declare their consent that excerpts from the reviews or reports they have written and/or published can be used free of charge and do not require explicit authorisation in the individual case and can be used by book and audiobook publishers under the following conditions:

1. The excerpt encompasses no more than five sentences. The summary of several unconnected text extracts is possible here, provided that this in total does not exceed the maximum length. The use of longer text excerpts and complete reviews always requires explicit permission.
2. The excerpt is rendered correctly and in verbatim and must not be shortened and thereby distorted. The selection of the excerpt must not contradict the tendency of the review.

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3. The excerpt shall only be used within the context of the promotion of sales and advertising of the respective title and/or one or more titles of the same author.
4. The permission encompasses the usual promotional activities and product information, offline and online, in all sales channels, including the use in product catalogues and databases from the distributing bookseller, the libraries and the German directory of books in print [VLB]. Use is also permitted in the context of press work, the licensing business (possibly also in faithful translation) and for events, such as readings and fairs.
5. The source shall be referenced when used. The source reference is the medium in which the review was first published and the reviewer shall be named as far as possible.
6. The provision of review copies on request is exclusively for the purpose of discussing the books. Resale is not permitted. Waiting periods specified by the publisher, before publishing the review, are to be observed.
7. Once these rules are accepted, they apply for an unlimited period. They can be withdrawn at any time for future reviews and discussions.