



Welcome to *On Track*!

Over the next seven weeks, you'll get going on your writing project – and you'll learn plenty of ways to stick with your writing. We'll be tackling common issues like overcoming your initial resistance to writing, progressing through subsequent drafts, and finding people to support you.

During the course, you will:

- Get started (or restarted) on a project. If it's a smallish one, you might well finish it.
- Learn tons of tricks for writing effectively, so that writing becomes easier and more fun.
- Make new friends – we'll have a bunch of fantastic writers for you to get to know.

In this introduction, I'm going to explain how the course works, so that you know exactly what to expect. You might want to print this out for easy reference.

### **Introducing ... Ali!**

You may already know me. Maybe you read my blog, *Aliventures*, or you've read my guest posts on one of many other blogs. You might well follow me on Twitter ([@aliventures](#))

But maybe you don't know me very well. Or maybe you'd like to know a bit more. (*If not, feel free to skip this section, I promise I won't be offended!*)

I'm Ali Luke, and I was writing as Ali Hale until I got married last September – so you might have seen posts by me under that name, too.



All through my teens, I wanted to be a writer – and I still have occasional moments when I don't quite believe that I really *do* get to do this for a living! It's a bit like waking up to the first day of the summer holidays, every single day.

As you might have spotted from the previous sentence, I'm British. I write "holidays" not "vacations", and I spell words the British way, when I'm blogging on my own site or writing my own courses and ebooks.

Given that I'm going to be teaching you about writing, you probably want to know a bit about my writing credentials. I've been a freelance writer since August 2008, working for a number of blogs, and I've been creating products aimed at writers since 2009. Last time I tried to add it up, I found I'd written well over a thousand blog posts in the past two and a half years.

I also coach writers, working one-to-one with them to help with specific pieces of writing, and bigger-picture aims.

I've been published in the UK magazines *Writers Forum* and *My Weekly*, and have won a couple of short story competition prizes with *Writing Magazine*. I'm going to be a speaker on Pace and Kyeli Smith's World-Changing Writing Workshop this summer.

I've got a degree in English literature from Cambridge University, and a Masters in Creative and Life Writing from Goldsmiths College, London.

Whew! I think that's enough about me... so let's get onto...

## How We'll Be Working Together

You'll get your course materials straight to your inbox. They are:

### Course Introduction

You're reading the course introduction. ;-)

### Course Ebook

You'll be able to download the exclusive ebook *Seven Pillars of Great Writing* as soon as you sign up!

### Weekly Lessons: Mondays

Every **Monday**, you'll receive the week's lesson. This will give you:

- Clear advice on the topic for the week, with plenty of different ideas on what you can do – because not all writers like to work in the same way
- An assignment for you to try out yourself, so you can make real progress

Just like this course introduction, you'll get:

- All the lesson content in the email itself, so you can read it straight away
- A PDF (attached) with snazzier formatting, so you can save it to your computer or print it out

It's totally up to you which you read – the content is the same!

At the end of the course, on May 30<sup>th</sup>, you'll get all the lessons bundled together in one handy pack.

### Group Updates: Thursdays

Every **Thursday**, we'll have a Group Update. This will come in the same format as the lessons. It'll have:

- News and updates from the group (we want to hear about how *your* writing is going!)
- A Q&A where I'll answer your specific questions

### Support and Encouragement: All Week, Every Week!

All week, we can stay in touch with one another:

- You can email me any time, with questions for the Q&A, or just to let me know how your writing's going. I'd love to have your tips and success stories for the Group Update, too!
- I'll be creating a Twitter list of members at <http://twitter.com/#!/aliventures/on-track-spring>. You'll get the option to join the list when you sign up for the course emails. If you want to join after that, just email or tweet me your Twitter handle.
- You can get in touch with other members by email. If you'd like to share your email address with the group, let me know when you sign up for the course emails ... or contact me and let me know.

### Course Wrap-Up: Monday 30<sup>th</sup> May

At the end of the course, I'll send you:

- All the course materials in one handy package that you can save to your computer or print
- Success stories for the course – share your own triumphs, and get inspired by others'
- A final round-up of email addresses/Twitter names, so we can all stay in touch!

**Important:** You're welcome to share the course materials with your business partner or with a close family member, and it's fine to quote a short excerpt if you're writing about the course (e.g. on your blog, on Twitter, or in a review).

Obviously enough, though, you can't post whole lessons on your blog, email them to all your friends, or put them into a book and sell it...

## The Course Outline

Here's what we'll be covering, week by week.

### Lesson 1: Make a Great Start – Monday 11th April

- An introduction to the course, so you're confident about what's coming up week by week
- Four ways to get past the first hurdle of getting started – so that you can get going with your project straight away
- A quick, simple (but important) assignment to get you writing – this only takes fifteen minutes

**Lesson 2: Setting Milestones That Work – Monday 18th April**

- Step-by-step guidance on how to split your work-in-progress into sensible milestones that'll keep you motivated
- Specific advice on what to do if your project doesn't seem to fit (for instance, if you're writing a blog that has no specific end point)
- Why deadlines matter – and how to set sane ones

**Lesson 3: Your Perfect Writing Routine – Monday 25th April**

- How to find your best writing time of day – this alone can double or triple how much you write in an hour
- The difference between setting time targets and word targets – there's no "right" way, so this lesson helps you figure out what works for you
- The advantages of short writing sessions – and of long ones. Again, this is all about finding the right pace for you

**Lesson 4: Planning Your Project – Monday 2nd May**

- Specific advice on planning different types of project – novels, blogs and ebooks – so that you can make sure you don't waste time scratching your head or running off on a tangent
- Different ways to plan (like mind-mapping and using index cards) so that you can figure out what you find easiest
- How to plan if you're already part-way through your project

**Lesson 5: Getting from First Draft to Final Piece – Monday 9th May**

- The difference between first drafts and final drafts, so that you don't get bogged down trying to achieve perfection on day one
- How to avoid distractions like doing too much research, or trying to edit too soon
- Step by step advice for each stage of the drafting process

**Lesson 6: Sharing Your Love of Writing – Monday 16th May**

- Four places to find writing support – including a couple of easy ones for when you don't have much time or energy
- Tips on sharing your work with a friend or a group – I know how daunting this can be, but also how rewarding it is, and how much it can help you grow
- How to critique other writers' work: if you're asking for feedback from fellow writers, there's a good chance that you'll end up returning the favour

### Lesson 7: All the Resources You Need – Monday 23rd May

- Why you have more resources than you think – a fresh look at your own skills and experiences
- The four crucial qualities which every writer needs, with specific tips on how to build them
- The three big external resources that matter, and how to gather and create these

### My Contact Details

You can get in touch with me whenever you want.

My email address is [ali@aliventures.com](mailto:ali@aliventures.com). Every course email (including this one) will be sent from that address, so you can just hit "reply" and your message will come straight to my inbox.

On Twitter, you'll find me at [@aliventures](https://twitter.com/aliventures).

And you'll be getting an email from me on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> April with your first lesson. Hope you're excited about getting started!

Ali x

Would you like to take part in On Track? You can join us by going to this page and clicking the "Join Now" button:

<http://www.aliventures.com/on-track>

*On Track* is just \$49 for the whole course – that's \$7 per week. You'll get weekly lessons with clear guidance, plus the chance to ask me as many questions as you want.

You need to join by **Friday 8<sup>th</sup> April**: we'll be kicking off on Mon 11<sup>th</sup>.