allcorrect

FREE CHECKLIST

The Indie Publisher's Pre-Localization Checklist

Everything worth preparing before you send your game to a localization vendor: your file kit, your reference materials, and the details that keep a project on schedule. Companion to our guide, How Game Localization Works: A Guide for Indie Publishers.

01
Your lockit, ready to send

02
Reference materials that help the most

03
What to flag before you start

1 Before you request a quote

The more complete your request, the more accurate your quote, and the less likely you'll need to revise it later.

- [ ] Target languages — Every language you plan to launch with, not just phase one.
- [ ] Approximate volume — The word or string count, even a rough estimate.
- [ ] File format — Google Sheets, .xlsx, .txt, .json, or .po (Unreal Engine).
- [ ] Platform — Mobile, PC, or console; formatting rules can differ by platform.
- [ ] Deadlines — The release date and any milestones tied to it.

2 Your lockit file

This is the single biggest lever you have over localization speed and quality.

- [ ] Right format — Table formats (Google Sheets or .xlsx) work best; .txt, .json, and .po are also fine.
- [ ] Logical order — Strings follow in-game order, not alphabetical by ID, key, or speaker.
- [ ] IDs and keys included — So nothing gets lost or duplicated on import.
- [ ] Character limits flagged — Added before localization starts, not discovered after.
- [ ] Speaker and context info — Who's talking in each dialogue line, and any notes on tone or setting.

> Why it matters: Fixing a character limit after translation often means changing a term everywhere it appears in the game, since consistency matters to players.

3 Reference materials that help the most

You don't need all of these—a build plus a character guide already removes a lot of guesswork—but the more you share, the fewer questions come back.

- [ ] A playable game build
- [ ] Character guide/bible with images
- [ ] In-game item list with reference images
- [ ] Art or reference images for locations
- [ ] A lore document
- [ ] A design document
- [ ] A style guide (if you have one)
- [ ] A glossary (if you have one)

> No style guide or glossary yet? That's normal for a first localization project. We can help build both during pre-production. See our notes on style guides and the glossary paradox.

4 Before you hit send, flag these

Almost every localization delay comes down to one of these getting missed, not translation quality.

- ☐ Text outside the lockit — Hard-coded strings or anything not included in the file.
- ☐ Voice-over status — Tell us if any part of the text has ongoing or completed VO.
- ☐ Project milestones — LQA dates, VO dates, QA dates, and the release date, shared up front and kept updated.
- ☐ Extra requirements — Any style rules for proofreading or localization, suck as punctuation preferences.
- ☐ One point of contact — Someone who can answer linguists' queries quickly once production starts.

> Why it matters: Query turnaround time—more than translator speed—is usually what determines your project's timeline.

5 What happens next

Once you're ready, here's the process this checklist feeds into:

- ☐ Request and quoting, based on the details from section 1
- ☐ Pre-production: file analysis and team assembly
- ☐ Kick-off meeting with your developer and our team
- ☐ Specs confirmation, after which production begins

> Every one of our 1,200+ shipped projects started with a checklist like this one. Work through it once, and the rest of localization gets a lot less stressful, for you and for us.

GOOD LUCK OUT THERE

Ship it, localize it, and let players everywhere meet your game in their own language.

We've helped 1,200+ studios make that jump. Prep your lockit, send it our way, and we'll take care of the rest, so your game speaks fluent player, wherever they're playing from.

Want the full breakdown of how each stage works? Read How Game Localization Works: A Guide for Indie Publishers for the complete process.

Read the guide →