

**GENRE:**

A type of story or novel.

**Crime Fiction:**

Crime fiction (or the crime novel) is probably the best description of the class of books that includes mystery and detective fiction. There are several requirements for a book to be classified as Crime Fiction:

- It must be fiction. Names, places, and events may be real, but the plot must be fictitious. Therefore, True Crime (a separate category where the story is based on historical fact) is not a subcategory of Crime Fiction.
- There must be a crime. Typically this is a murder, but in principle, it could be any crime.
- There must be an investigative process.
- There must be a solution to the crime (or a satisfactory conclusion to the investigative process).

Mystery and detective fiction are two broad categories within crime fiction. The difference between mystery and detective fiction are sometimes hard to tell, and there are many examples of books that can be both.

**Mystery:**

The Whodunit is a good example of a mystery. In the whodunit, the primary objective is to solve a puzzle by getting to the truth through a combination of logic, observation, deduction, and inference. Often there is a recurring character (in which case, these books might be classified as detective fiction).

The Mystery Novel has the story as its main purpose. The writing is often atmospheric and stylized and the reader often gets to know the character of the perpetrators of the crime as well as the investigators of the crime.

The Thriller can also be a mystery. Frequently preceded by an appropriate adjective (legal thriller, political thriller, etc.), the emphasis is often on action. The plot typically involves a hero and villain, with plenty of close calls before the hero prevails.

Psychological thrills rather than physical thrills typify the Suspense Novel. Often moody and disturbing, suspense novels may be considered crime fiction if all other conditions for the definition are satisfied.