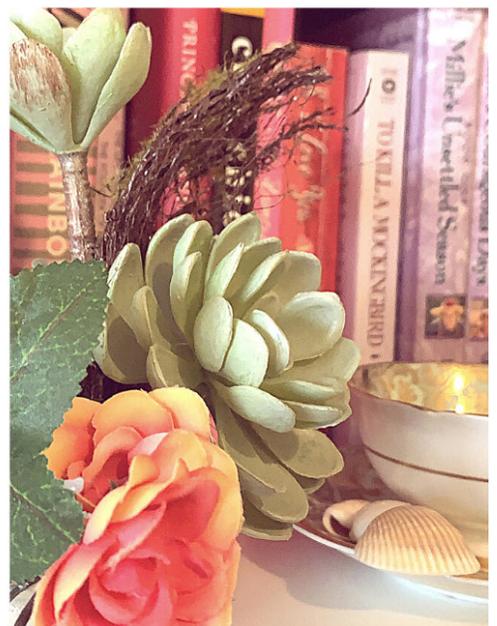


# How To: Book Club!





## **A Book Club Is A Wonderful Way To Meet New People**

I've been a part of a few book clubs and really love them. Because of my love for book clubs, I wanted to put together a sweet, colorful booklet filled with the benefits of being a part of a book club, ideas for how you can start your own, how to plan it, and what to do once you've invited your friends and before you have your first meeting. This guide will be your go to when deciding what kind of book club you want to have.

I believe that reading is a total act of self love. Here you are giving yourself a special moment whenever you pick up a book to read. When you're a part of a book club, it's special to be able to meet with other bibliophiles who are also reading the same book. Sometimes it's just nice to lament on a book after you've finished it, ask questions and talk to others about what you loved and maybe also about the things that troubled you and why. You'll have fun reading new books and making new friends. Everyone needs new stories (Hey, I think of stories like oxygen.), encouragement and inspiration, as well as new friends.

There's something so special about having and taking part in a book club. Through reading you can experience new things, travel anywhere in the world (or to other worlds) without leaving your home, and learn new things.

My husband and I recently moved to a little town in the country, which we love. Love how quiet it is here.

Because of Rona' and how she shut down our world in 2020 (we all know who she is. What a disastrous conniving beep... amiright?) But because of her, we haven't been able to really get to know many people in our small town, until now. I just got involved in a book club.

I'm an introvert by trade, so I do great with a cup of tea, my cats, husband, my notebooks, and books. Of course I enjoy getting out and meeting up with "real" people too. So I'm glad we've been able to start getting to know more people around our new home.



Have you ever been a part of a book club? Whether you have or haven't you're going to love this booklet on how to create your own. If you haven't been a part of one, you're going to want to. Let's jump in!!

## What Kind Of Book Club Do You Want To Have?

This depends on what you'd like to do, what kind of people you're going to invite, and what kind of books you'll all want to read.

There are a few different kinds of book clubs that you can aim at having.

### 1. You can host it at your home, at a library, or even a local coffee shop.

I really love having it at peoples homes. There is something so soothing and lovely about sitting on a comfy couch curled up in a throw blanket next to the fireplace with the book on your lap. Just add the warm drinks and a lovely conversation and you'll be set for a great night. It's so much fun. That's what I love about in-person gatherings is that you can make it something special. You could make it something that everyone could enjoy with a themed dinner, delectable drinks, decorations, games, little gifts or prizes, and an aesthetic that creates relaxation.

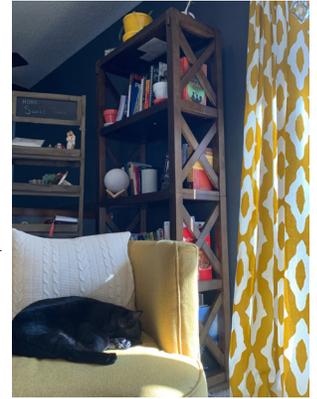


If it's anything that I've learned in the last year, it's so important to find relaxation because our world doesn't really offer that calm rest and rejuvenation that all of us strive to experience. Think of book club as your little escape from reality. The one time a month (or if you have it more than once a month) you can get away from your responsibilities and just enjoy yourself. Draw inspiration from the book you're reading. Each person from the book club can bring something to share. I'll talk more about this later.

## 2. Online Book Clubs & Buddy Reads -

In 2020, things changed dramatically from gathering in person to online. Finally things are opening up again so people are meeting in person again. I experienced fun online events as well such as buddy reads In 2020.

These are great if you have people from all over that want to be involved in the book club, but you can't all meet in person, because everyone lives far away from each other. For this kind of book club, you can do this on Zoom. I'd definitely recommend Zoom.



### Who Should I Ask To Be In My Book Club?

I'd recommend keeping your book club to an intimate number of people, maybe no more than 10. Once you start getting above that number, your group will begin to feel too large.

Think about that feeling you get when you're gathered with your best gal pals around the coffee table. A few ladies are sitting next to the fireplace, one or two are sitting on the carpet, and the rest are on the couch. This creates a warm and cozy atmosphere for a wonderful conversation especially since the space won't be too full and will also encourage everyone to speak. Sometimes when there are too many people, it encourages quieter people not to speak.



### **Questions to get you thinking about who to invite to your book club:**

1. Who do you enjoy spending time with?
2. Do they enjoy reading? (This is a MUST.)
3. Have you moved to a new town and want to get to know people? Where could you reach out to people to get one started or see if one is already up and running? Does your community have a Facebook group or another group elsewhere on the internet that you could reach out to people on.
4. Want to do an online book club? (Think about your online friends who love to read.)



### **In-Person Book Club - Where Should We Meet?**

When you host your book club, you can have it:

- At your home (Switch to other book club member's houses every week so no one is stuck hosting every week)
- A local coffee shop.
- A restaurant.
- The library.
- A park. (If it's nice out.)
- A walk (Some companies do walking meetings, so if you wanted to do something similar you could all meet and then go for a walk while talking about the book.)

My favorite is still in person at homes, but that's the great thing about having your own book club. You can

make it your own and do what you want.

### **What Kind Of Books Should We Read?**

In most of the book clubs that I've been a part of, we've read fiction and nonfiction. I really love getting my toes wet in different genres.

I just want to go over this as a reminder, but fiction books are books that are made up, untrue stories (either in our world or a fantastical world) while nonfiction is a story from someone's life (like a memoir or creative nonfiction) or something where the author is trying to teach something or help the reader improve on something like in a self improvement or personal development book. Many people know this already, but I know that some people get confused between the fiction and nonfiction. Being a writer, I figured I'd go over that quick since they are words I use all the time.

#### **Types of Fiction:**

- Contemporary (realistic) fiction
- Historical fiction
- Fantasy
- Mysteries/Crime/Police Procedurals
- Science Fiction
- Graphic Novels
- Thrillers
- Chick Flick or Romance
- Action Adventure
- Young Adult/New Adult

#### **Types of Nonfiction:**

- Memoirs
- Biography
- Self Help
- History books
- Philosophy
- Spirituality/Religion
- Politics/Science
- Essays
- Business
- Healthy Living
- Creativity
- Guides
- Cookbooks
- Parenting/Family

Oh and then of course you have poetry, but that's kind of in it's own category. Now that we've gone through those lists of all the different kinds of books you could read, you'll be able to look up the types of books under those genres that you enjoy in nonfiction and fiction as well.

### **Once You've Decided Who You Want To Invite**

It's now time to reach out and invite people to your book club. Here are some ideas for what you could say as well as a reminder script for reminding people about book club meetings.

### **Message Scripts To Send Out To Those Who Might Be Interested In Book Club**

#### Asking People To Be A Part Of A Book Club:

"Hello \_\_\_insert name\_\_\_! How've you been doing? I want to start a book club, and I was wondering if you'd be interested in joining?"

**(After they respond that they are interested, figure out a time that works for everyone to meet up and talk about which books you'll want to read together.)**

#### Monthly Book Club Invite/Reminder - Send The Day Before To Remind Them:

"Hey!! I'm so excited! Book club is tomorrow! We are going to be chatting about \_\_\_insert what you'll be chatting about\_\_\_."

### **Some Tips For Setting Up The First Meeting:**

Send them this message:

1. "Hello \_\_\_NAME\_\_\_, would week days or week-ends work best for you, for our book club?"

**Once you have those texts back, send them a text with options for dates. I'd aim at having three or four dates for them to choose from.**

2. "Hello \_\_\_insert name\_\_\_! Hope you're having a great day! I am trying to figure out what day we should meet for book club. Would DATE and TIME, DATE and TIME or DATE and TIME work best for you?"

**Once you have the majority picked date and time, send them a text and invite for the first meeting:**

3. "Hello Name, I am so excited! We figured out a date that would work for everyone! It will be on DATE. Let's meet at \_\_\_place you want to meet\_\_\_ at TIME. Be sure to bring a list of the books that you'd love to read in the next few months. I can't wait to see you! We will have a blast! Hope you can make it."

### **The First Meeting & How To Decide Which Books To Read**

Once everyone gets to the place where you are having the first meeting, introduce everyone. Maybe have everyone go around the table to introduce themselves. You could even have everyone answer some fun icebreaker questions like:

1. Name?
2. Something most people don't know about you?
3. Your favorite book ever?
4. What you look forward to most about the book club?

The icebreaker will be a fun way to get to know them and their personality as well as the books they love and what they look forward to most for the bookclub.

### **Having Trouble Coming Up With Which Books To Read?**

At the book club's first meeting (planning meeting) while everyone is eating, you can ask what they had listed as books that they'd like to read. Have every person read their list.

If people start saying "Oh, that's on my list too." Or "Oh yeah, I heard about that one. Heard it

was good.” Add that to a list in your notebook. Once everyone has gone through their list, bring up some of the books that got good reactions and ask them if they want to read those books. Then they will say yes or no, or they might even bring up books they want to add. This is the best way to decide which books.

### **Other Things To Figure Out At The Planning Meeting**

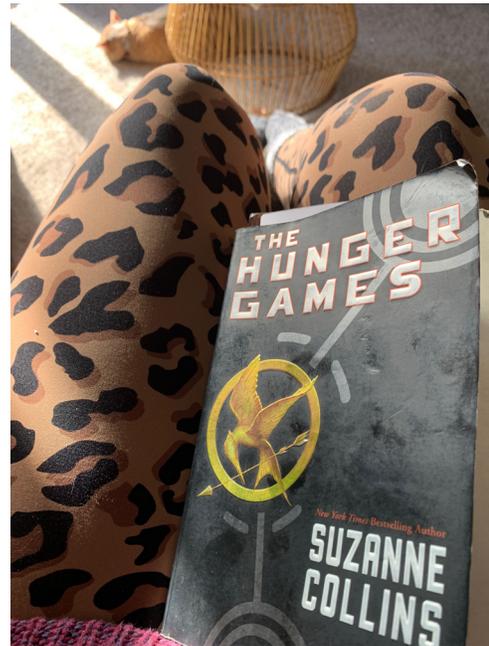
1. When do we want to meet? (Set the dates up ahead.)
2. How often do we want to meet up? (I’ve been a part of book clubs that meet weekly and others that meet monthly. So you can do which ever you like.)
3. Where do we want to meet? (You can meet at your house and then alternate to different people’s houses every time you meet.)
4. Which books do we want to read?
5. If you plan on meeting at different people’s homes but want to have a foodie book club, decide on dishes (main course, salad, side, drinks, and dessert.) Ask everyone to bring one dish. Have everyone sign up then for which item they will bring.



### **If You Are Still Struggling To Come Up With Book Ideas (At Any Point)**

- You can use this list to come up with some ideas:
- What are some books that you currently own but haven’t read?
  - A series?
  - Graphic novel?
  - Historical fiction?
  - Published this year?
  - A classic or retelling?

- Local author? (With this, you could even ask that author if they’d be interested in joining to chat about their book one time? Or make a special day for them to come and talk about their book?)
- A book with a number in the title?
- More than 400 pages?
- Set in another country?
- Set in another world?
- A purple cover?
- Less than 200 pages?
- Poetry book?
- Fantasy?
- Dystopian? (These are still fun, even though we sorta lived through that in 2020.)



- Set in high school
- How about something you’ve read already that you loved?
- One-word title?
- Something that’s been made into a movie. (With this you could read all the books and then have a movie night another night.)
- There’s a sword on the cover?
- Award winning?
- Are there animal or non-human characters?
- Banned books?
- A love story
- Self-Improvement book
- A book you borrowed?
- Written by two authors?
- A mystery?
- Translated from another language?
- Book you haven’t read by an author you love?

- A book that will make you smarter?
- A book on history?
- Debut novel?
- Something your librarian recommended?
- A play?
- Something by an indie author
- Something from the 50 states reading list (Google this)

### Day Before Book Club

Text your book club friends and remind them. Also include who is bringing what so it's a reminder as well.



### It's The First Night Of The Book Club

It's the day of your book club. So exciting. You'll want to make sure you have the place cleaned up and ready for your friends.

If you're having your book club in the houses of your book club members, aim to make it a fun and exciting night out. People work hard during the week and it's nice to have something to look forward to. So you can add special touches. Here are some ideas.



### Special touches you can add:

Having special touches like yummy food, fun games, and excellent prizes will help encourage and inspire everyone. It will make it a destination and not just another thing you have to do on the to-do list.

#### Yummy Food:

- You can have a calendar theme (Where you choose the upcoming holiday, or if it's almost summer you can decorate with summery things like flowers, or have a beach book club.)

- Cook through a recipe book you love (Everyone picks a recipe for a main course, side dishes, salad, drinks, and dessert) So that you'll have everything.

- Cook Through The Countries (With this you can travel through the world each month.) You can either make a list of countries and then put them into a hat and draw. Each time have different book members draw.

- Bring a food-item from the book you're reading that month. Maybe it's a food that was mentioned in the book or is based in the setting of the book. Everyone can do this so you have an entire meal to enjoy together.



#### Games & Prizes & Favors:

- Have games that fit with your theme and book.
- Have fun gifts as prizes for winners.
- You could even have a glass jar with small slips of paper and ask for book recommendations.



#### Favors:

- A small bag of gummy worms sectioned into a fancy cellophane bag with a cute tag reading “Bookworms For Your Eating Pleasure”
- A cellophane bag of popped popcorn, caramel popcorn with a cute tag reading “Pop Open A Good Book”
- Cute bookmarks

#### **Housekeeping:**

- Picking new books after you’ve run out? Everyone bring a wrapped book and then open them to see what books will be read next.
- Discussion Questions: Pick a person to be the moderator. Change this up every month so everyone gets a chance. The moderator will be in charge of looking up questions and discussion points for that book club night for the book you’re reading.
- If you loved a book a lot, invite an author to come speak at your book club. If they can’t make it in person, many times an author will love hopping on Zoom for a book club.
- Share the responsibility of hosting so no one gets burned out.

- Designate a moderator for the meeting conversation. This person will look up questions and keep the convo moving? Maybe the host or last month’s host?
- When you do games and have gifts, alternate every month so the host plans the gifts, games, and may also do the decor. But the best thing is that everyone takes part in making the food, so that makes it easier.

#### **Decorations:**

- A banner with book club written on it.
- Themed decorations (example: if you are reading Harry Potter, you could set up a witch hat for a sorting hat, candles, and then you could also let the witch and wizard theme inspire you all for the supper as well. It just adds a fun touch!)
- Colorful balloons on your mailbox.
- Fresh flowers or candles.
- Fun little gifts for everyone welcoming them.
- Exciting Themes: Scottish Outlander Theme, Harry Potter, or Pick a country

### **Hostess Tips:**

- Set a cozy and relaxing atmosphere.
- Stock up on pretty paper plates when you see them on sale. Makes dishes much easier.
- Host the book club in an area of the house that's cozy, comfy, and quiet. Fill the area with warm throw blankets and pillows. Make sure to chat with your kids that they stay in a certain room, let grandma and grandpa take them, or have your husband or older children watch them.
- Turn some music on in the background.
- Get dressed up for yourself.
- Have your food item ready to go so it's ready to eat when the others bring their food over.
- Light a candle.
- Enjoy it.
- If people offer to help clean up, accept the help. You don't need to wear yourself out.

### **Other Ideas:**

- Have A Book Swap Night: Bring books that you've read and want to pass on to other book club members and the other book club members will do the same. This is always fun.
- Blind Date With A Book: Take books that you've read and want to pass on. Wrap them in brown paper. Write keywords and hints on the brown paper like "Set In World War II France. True love. Heart Touching." Or "Dystopian America."
- Christmas Book Exchange/White Elephant Exchange: Go out and buy a copy of your favorite book EVER and wrap it all pretty. Bring it to the party. And someone will receive your book and you'll receive someone else's book.

### **Ideas For Book Discussion Questions:**

1. If you could choose three words to describe this

book, what would they be?

2. What was your favorite moment in this book?

3. Did you have a least favorite moment in the book?

4. If you were the person in charge of casting a movie for this book, who would you cast for the characters?

5. If you could invite a character to dinner at your house, which would it be and why?

6. If you had to switch places with a character from this book, which would it be? And why?

7. What was the thing that surprised you most while reading this book? And why?

8. Why do you think the author chose to write the story from the point of view/perspective that he or she did?

9. If you were the author who would you have chosen to be the narrator?

10. How did the setting (time period or location) impact the story?

11. Do you think there was a lesson that the author was trying to teach us within this story? What do you think it was?

12. Who was your favorite character? And Why?

13. Are there any other books that this story made you think of?

14. If you could write one last chapter that would go after the ending, what would you write?

### **At The End of Book Club**

- Set up the next book club meeting and time
- Pick the next book on the list
- What's the theme for the dinner?
- Who is hosting?
- Who is bringing what for supper. Remember have everyone bring something so no one is stuck with all the cooking. (Main course, drinks, sides, salad, and dessert)