

Little Free Library

A Little Free Library® is a free community book exchange that helps promote literacy and a love of reading! The structure comes in all sorts of shapes and sizes and allows individuals to take a book or leave a book. They can be installed in a park, a neighborhood, or in front of schools, businesses, agencies, community organizations, or anywhere people pass by!



LITTLE FREE LIBRARY.ORG®
TAKE A BOOK • SHARE A BOOK

The first Little Free Library was built by Tod Bol of Hudson, Wisconsin in 2009. Today there are more than 80,000 registered libraries in more than 90 countries around the world.

Rotary International is a recognized partner and friend of Little Free Library! Many clubs have completed Little Free Library service projects and can be a resource for advice on how to set up one in your community. Visit LittleFreeLibrary.org for resources.



How Do Little Free Libraries Support Literacy?

Sixty percent of low-income families have no children's books in their homes. Children growing up without books are, on average, 18 months behind children who do have books at home when it comes to measuring literacy and language skills. For families who are unable to afford books and lack access to a public library, Little Free Libraries bring books to them so they, too, can read together every day and instill the language and vocabulary skills that lead children to proficient reading later in childhood.

Steps To Establish Your Club's Little Free Library

1. Visit LittleFreeLibrary.org for information
2. Establish a budget.
3. Select a location.
4. Decide on the design of your structure.
5. Build, install and officially register your library.
6. Host a ribbon cutting or opening ceremony.
7. Develop a plan for ongoing stewardship, maintenance and stocking of your Little Free Library.

Budget Items & Costs to Consider

- One-time Charter Fee (approximately \$40)
- Materials & labor costs for structure
- Cost of book stamp (if used)
- Cost of Little Free Library sign
- Books – to fully stock your library at opening and replenish over time
- Ongoing maintenance

Selecting a Location

Collaborate with community groups to determine the best place to build a Little Free Library. Is there a low-income housing complex in your community where a Little Free Library can be built? What about local businesses or service agencies where families frequently go? Other considerations as you select a location include:

- Will it be built to withstand weather? Consider if it's better placed indoors instead of outside.
- Will it be on private or public property?
- Are there liability issues with the location?
- Will it be accessible at all times? Or are there barriers to entry like locked doors or access cards?
- Will it be on a fence, wall, stand or in a garden?
- Will it be proximate to a common gathering place so that many people can get to it?
- Be sure to follow rules and regulations where applicable.
- Ensure people will be safe while standing at the Little Free Library when making their book selection.



Ribbon Cutting/Grand Opening Ceremony

- Create fanfare to announce your Little Free Library.
- Integrate **Together, We Read** resources and awareness materials and messages into the ceremony. One fun way to do this is to distribute bookmarks or reading tip sheets to attendees.
- Engage local media to cover your event.
- Wrap your Little Free Library so it can be unveiled to the community or place a ribbon in front of it for a ceremonial ribbon cutting.
- Invite special guests and community leaders to your event.
- Once open to the public, return to LittleFreeLibrary.org to add a photo, story and GPS location to the Little Free Library World Map.

Ongoing Maintenance & Stewardship

Maintenance is the most crucial element to ensuring the success of your Little Free Library

- Develop a plan to monitor your library and keep it stocked with excellent, child-appropriate books.
- Create a schedule to clean, paint and repair your library as needed.
- If your Little Free Library is outdoors, consider planting flowers or landscaping around your library. You can even add a bench to encourage reading close by!
- Consider special events throughout the year to keep a strong focus on your library – and to give community members reasons to come back time and time again!
- Remember to take photos and record your progress and creative ideas to share and inspire other Rotary Clubs participating in **Together, We Read**.