

TOO MANY BOOKS

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Books can make a room feel warm and cosy, create a personal study space or add colour and texture to shelving

But they will easily distract the eye and become a source of clutter if they are randomly stacked, lying horizontal on top of each other or bursting off the shelves

Before you start buying Billy bookcases from Ikea or ordering yards of shelving take a good look through your book collection and ask yourself these questions:

- If I gave it away now would I be able to find another copy easily if I needed to?
- Is the information in this book up-to-date
- Could I find this information on the internet?
- Will my children/grandchildren really want to look through these books?
- Are paperbacks worth keeping?
- Am I ever going to have time or want to spend the time reading all these books?
- Would someone else really benefit from this book as a gift?

Sort your books into categories

- Here and now.** A small pile you are reading at the moment. One or two on the bedside table and a couple by an armchair
- Reference books** for the whole family. Maps, information, recipes
- Books relating to research, study or work**
- Novels**
- Gorgeous coffee table books** (don't keep more than three on the coffee table)
- Non-fiction, hobby books, facts and figures**



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Books around the house

Too many books in the living areas of the house will make it look overcrowded and cluttered, keep only good quality books that reflect the style of the room

Keep recipe books in the kitchen, reference books in the study areas, children's books in their rooms and coffee table bookson the coffee table!

Only have one or two current reads on your bedside table. You don't want to feel overwhelmed or guilty (for not reading enough) when you go to bed

If you are selling your house

For purposes of home staging, thin out the collections of books to suit the storage units

Leave open spaces on the shelves for a vase or ornament

Piling books up on the floor makes the room look smaller

Have you heard of Altered Books?

It's a massive art/craft craze sweeping across the world from America (had you guessed?) over the past eight years or so

This is not for the squeamish. If books are sacrosanct for you then you might find this hobby a little hard to take!

The aim is to recycle a book which might otherwise have been scrapped, and alter the structure to create a piece of art or sculpture, rich with paint, collage, rubber stamping, fibres, etc. Or to alter the structure by cutting into it, removing pages, adding pages, constructing niches and hidden messages and little treasures....

"Altered Books: 18 Creative Techniques for Self Expression by Bev Brazelton



Emma Powell
www.weloveyourbooks.com

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Creating a 'library'

If you are filling a shelf unit to the brim, stacking books to the ceiling or creating a library then keep it in a separate area like a study, a landing or hallway

A little used dining room could be successfully used as a library. Books create a warm atmosphere for cosy dinners

Be creative with your bookcases

- Paint the walls at the back of the shelves a different colour. You can afford to use rich, deep colours like aubergine, olive or even black. Alternatively, line the backs with rich patterned wallpapers
- Use the space above or around a doorway to build mini-library shelves
- A passageway can be lined with narrow bookshelves providing there is ample space to walk through. Keep it well lit to avoid claustrophobia
- Keep recipe books in the kitchen where they will be used
- Place antiquarian books together and use them as a decorative feature in the living room. Their subtle colours of the linen or leather covers give an appearance of warmth and opulence
- Look for different sized units to house books. Some coffee tables or small side tables have shelves for books and magazines
- Reserve a high shelf in the children's room or play room for old collections of books from your own childhood
- Position a low bookcase behind, or along the side edge of a sofa. Low shelves can also be used as area dividers
- A tall bookcase can be used as a room divider or screen
- Place bookshelves back-to-back to create a 'wall' across a large room
- Put children's reading on the lower shelves to stop them from climbing up to reach a favourite book
- For people who love visual order: put all the same coloured spines together on the shelves

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Disposing of surplus books

If you are ready to release some of your books into the world here are a few places where you might feel they would be appreciated:

Local Community Book Fairs - Raise funds for church halls, community projects

Primary Schools – for children age 5-11, books for the library, books with illustrations, maps etc for art projects. Phone first to check that they will be appropriate

Secondary Schools – for students age 11-18, reference books and novels as well as educational books. Drop them in at the school reception

The Oxfam Bookshops - a specialist book shop often serving the student population – anything goes! Including records, tapes, CDs and DVDs

Auctioneers - If you think a book or collection of books may have some value. It costs nothing (but patience) to ask one of the auction houses to give you a valuation. They may send them away to specialists who will put them in fairs all over the country or you may have to wait until their specialist is in the area



I hope you have enjoyed swotting up on clearing your book pile. Now is the time for ACTION! Start with something small like getting rid of tattered paperbacks or books with grim and lifeless black and white photography

One step at a time you will **make space for life**

Angie

If you are feeling overwhelmed and would like some help to organise your home, your business or your life contact us at - office@spaceorganising.com or visit the website to find out how we can help over the phone or by email

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