



Manchester

#ReadMCR

## Set up a community book swap

A book swap event brings together the community to share books they've enjoyed and take home new books for free. It can create a positive atmosphere and encourage more people to read for enjoyment, which can help to create a healthier, happier community.

A book swap is also a great way to encourage people who might not read a lot to pick up the habit by sharing recommendations and giving them new reading material.

Organising an event doesn't have to be time-consuming or expensive, and can be set up in a few simple steps.

### Decide on a venue and date

Choose somewhere that is easy for everyone to get to and has a table for you to lay out the books. You could host the event at a local café, community centre or someone's house if there's space.

When thinking about a date and time, you might want to consider the weekend or school holidays and you could tie your book swap in with a calendar hook like World Book Day (2 March) or Book Lovers Day (9 August).

### Start to gather books

Although people will be bringing books to the event, it's good to have a few ready on the table when they arrive. Ask a few people if they are able to share any books in advance.

**#ReadMCR tip:** If you think people in your community might not have any books to donate, make sure they still feel welcome to come and choose a book or two.

### Spreading the word

Start by inviting friends, family and neighbours to your book swap and ask them to help you invite other people in the community. There are posters you can print at [readmanchester.org.uk](http://readmanchester.org.uk) and fill in the details of your event – ask your book swap venue if they can display them and you could also put them up on local community boards.

### **Add a little extra**

Make the book swap more of a social occasion and encourage people to stay to chat about books over drinks and nibbles. You could ask them to bring refreshments along, or ask for a small donation. If there are children coming to the book swap you could set up activities like storytelling or arts and crafts.

**#ReadMCR tip:** Have card and pens available at your book swap so people can choose to put a note inside the books they're donating.

### **Leftover books**

See if the venue would be willing to keep any leftover books in a box or on a shelf for members of the community to continue to donate and help themselves to new titles. If that's not possible, you could also donate them to a charity shop or keep them for your next book swap event!

**#ReadMCR tip:** If you're considering setting up a reading group, a book swap is a great way to meet other people who share a love of reading who might be interested in joining.

**Share updates from your event on social media using the hash tag #ReadMCR**