

# INDEPENDENT BOOKSTORE DAY Planning Guide

  **2025**



# ABOUT

Independent Bookstore Day is a celebration of the culture of books, reading, and indie bookselling.

**In this guide, you'll find a road map for planning your Indie Bookstore Day, ideas and tips for how to celebrate, and strategies on getting the word out!** The goal is to plan so that every customer, no matter when or where they shop, feels like a part of the celebration!



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**Start Here: FAQs** ..... 4

**Your Road Map to Indie Bookstore Day:  
A Month-To-Month Planning Guide** ..... 8

- September
- October
- November
- December
- January
- February
- March
- April
- May

**New to Indie Bookstore Day? Tips and Refreshers** ..... 14

- Tips on inventory, managing crowds, and greeting people

**How to Throw An Indie Bookstore Day Party** ..... 16

- Party/Event Ideas
- Partnerships and Crawls
- Displays

**How to Spread the Word:  
Marketing your Indie Bookstore Day Event** ..... 20

- Social Media
- Content Creators
- Press Release and Local Media
- Marketing Assets
- Branded Exclusives/Merchandise
- DIY guides for merch: prints, bags, etc.



# START HERE: FAQs



## 2025 Independent Bookstore Day Bookseller FAQ's

To make sure you receive all the essential information, please [sign up for the Indie Bookstore Day Newsletter](#) through the Member Dashboard. This is the MAIN way we keep in touch with bookstores. Updates will also be added to the [Independent Bookstore Day BookWeb page](#).

### INDEPENDENT BOOKSTORE DAY

#### Q: What is Independent Bookstore Day?

**A:** Independent Bookstore Day is a national celebration of independent bookstores that takes place on the last Saturday of April. The day highlights the value of independent bookstores and the unique ways they contribute to their communities and it's a celebration of books, readers, and indie bookselling.

Indie bookstores energize their stores and their communities on Indie Bookstore Day, planning activities, hosting events, serving refreshments, creating scavenger hunts and bookstore crawls, conducting raffles, playing games, and more. And they ride a wave of positive publicity and social media buzz around indie bookstores.

To show their support for indies and help drive customers into your stores on Indie Bookstore Day, publishers produce unique, limited-edition books and literary art pieces that are only available at participating bookstores on Independent Bookstore Day. And ABA creates IBD-specific merchandise for stores as well. None of these items are available from Amazon, Barnes & Noble, or Target. They help highlight the uniqueness of indie bookstores.

#### Q: When is it?

**A:** Independent Bookstore Day takes place on the LAST SATURDAY in APRIL. This year, it's on April 26, 2025. (Stores that are unable to participate for religious reasons or due to conflicting events reschedule for another day and use many of the same ideas and resources to create their own special day.)

#### Q: Why should we participate?

**A:** You mean besides the fact that it's hugely fun and a great opportunity to celebrate indie bookstores across the country? In 2024, unit sales reported for the week of Independent Bookstore Day were 12.6% higher than the same week in 2023 and 30% higher than the same week in 2022. Additionally, Independent Bookstore Day generates media attention, attracts new bookstore customers, creates a lot of community goodwill, and helps to keep indie bookstores front of mind. We've heard from many stores that tell us it's grown into one of their biggest sales days of the year.

#### Q: Who can participate?

**A:** Any current, dues-paying member of both the American Booksellers Association (ABA) AND a regional independent booksellers association may participate. The regional associations are:

- [California Independent Booksellers](#)
- [Great Lakes Independent Booksellers](#)

- [Midwest Independent Booksellers](#)
- [Mountains and Plains Independent Booksellers](#)
- [New Atlantic Independent Booksellers](#)
- [New England Independent Booksellers](#)
- [Pacific Northwest Independent Booksellers](#)
- [Southern Independent Booksellers](#)

If your store is carrying the exclusive merchandise mentioned above, you must also have an Ingram account since Ingram supports Indie Bookstore Day by handling all distribution and invoicing for most of the exclusives. *Blackwing Pencils and Indie Bookstore Day T-shirts are purchased directly from the vendors and shipped separately.*

### Q: How do we sign up?

**A:** Stores who wish to participate without ordering exclusives can sign up through the Participation Form from October 11, 2024, until March 31, 2025. These stores will still receive marketing materials, be added to the Indie Bookstore Day store map, and be included in ABA’s media pitches for Indie Bookstore Day. Stores that don’t order exclusives will not be eligible to receive freebies like bookmarks, stickers, and/or activity books.

To purchase the exclusives and be included on the searchable map, sign ups are open October 11–November 8, 2024.

### Q: What is the timeline for planning and sign-ups?

The timeline is as follows:

- **October 4, 2024:** Indie Bookstore Day 2025 Catalog Available for Preview
- **October 11, 2024:** Indie Bookstore Day 2025 Order and Participation Form opens
- **November 8, 2024:** Indie Bookstore Day 2025 Orders close
- **March 31, 2025:** Indie Bookstore Day 2025 Participation Form closes. (Stores that don’t

want to order exclusive items can sign up to participate until this date.)

## INDIE BOOKSTORE DAY EXCLUSIVES

### Q: We may need a list of the items before we can commit to the event. Is that doable?

**A:** Yes! Our online catalog with as much detail about each item as possible goes live on our website on October 4.

### Q: When do exclusives need to be ordered by?

**A:** Orders close November 8, 2024 to allow for more flexibility with the supply chain.

### Q: Do we have to order everything?

**A:** Nope. Ingram requires a minimum order of 20 total pieces for free shipping. **You must purchase a minimum of 20 paid items (individually or bulk packaged – bulk packaged items count as 1) in order to receive the freebies like bookmarks, activity kits, and stickers.** If you select less than 20 paid items, you will not be able to order the freebies and will pay the \$6 flat shipping fee.

### Q: Why should we order exclusives if we don’t have to?

**A:** First, they’re cool and very limited. You can always throw a party without ordering exclusives. That said, there are important reasons for stores to carry the Indie Bookstore Day exclusives:

- Publishers and authors go out of their way to support indies by developing and publishing items just for Indie Bookstore Day. If bookstores don’t express interest, they will no longer do this. When indies support exclusives, we prove to publishers that indie bookstores can order and sell enough to make speciality items worth their while. This helps us with our requests for exclusives from them in the future.
- The Indie Bookstore Day exclusives are the

# FAQS

single cohesive factor of Indie Bookstore Day. They are what we publicize and what makes Indie Bookstore Day more than just a gathering in a bookstore. They give the day a national message and show that as a community of fiercely independent stores, we also work together.

- The exclusives function as “rewards” to customers who shop indies.
- By buying the Indie Bookstore Day items, stores are making a commitment to really participate. We want Indie Bookstore Day’s reputation to be a must-attend event for readers and book lovers. To that end, we don’t want scaled-back versions at bookstores that either aren’t really interested or for some other reason aren’t as invested in making it great.
- Exclusives give stores a focus point for Indie Bookstore Day displays and marketing.

## **Q: Do Indie Bookstore Day T-shirts count toward this minimum?**

**A:** No, they don’t. The T-shirts and other Indie Bookstore Day merchandise we create help market and publicize the event. T-shirts can be ordered through [Bonfire.com](https://www.bonfire.com) (2025 shirt designs will be available Winter 2025). T-shirts are the only items that can be sold to your customers ahead of time to serve as marketing for Independent Bookstore Day.

## **Q: How do we buy the exclusive items?**

**A:** All items will be ordered through Independent Bookstore Day via our online catalog and order form (open October 11, 2024). Orders will be fulfilled by Ingram, our wholesale and distribution sponsor, unless otherwise noted (i.e., Blackwing pencils and T-shirts). **All participating stores must have an Ingram account in good standing.** Setup an account at [Ingram](https://www.ingram.com)

## **Onboarding.**

### **Q: So, we can sell the items online?**

**A:** In 2020, stores received the option to sell Indie Bookstore Day exclusives online beginning on (not before) Independent Bookstore Day. This will continue for the foreseeable future. You may want to plan to keep some items back for in-store sales if you are open to the public.

### **Q: Why are the items non-returnable?**

**A:** These items are produced only for Independent Bookstore Day, and publishers are printing only what is ordered. The goal is for each store to sell out of their Independent Bookstore Day stock on the day of the event or shortly thereafter, so stores should order only what they think they can sell on Independent Bookstore Day. We don’t want items hanging around for months because that lessens the incentive to show up at stores on the day of the event. Quantities are limited.

### **Q: Can we discount items?**

**A:** Stores are not permitted to discount the exclusives on the day of the event or for one month afterward. If you have unsold items after that, we hope that you will continue to sell at full price to preserve the value of the items. However, we appreciate that these items are purchased non-returnable and that there may come a point when sale pricing is necessary.

### **Q: What are the discounts on the items?**

**A:** Stores will receive discounts of 45% on non-returnable exclusives.

### **Q: Can bookstores continue selling the exclusives after the official event date?**

**A:** By all means! We only ask that you do not sell them online until the day of Indie Bookstore

Day. Experienced booksellers suggest that you have phone holds and orders begin the day after Independent Bookstore Day.

(Tip: Experienced booksellers suggest that you have phone holds and orders begin the day after Independent Bookstore Day to ensure they have enough stock for customers who come in on Indie Bookstore Day.)

## WHAT ELSE?

**Q: What else do stores need to do to participate?**

**A:** Independent Bookstore Day is only as good as you make it, and creating a really great party or dynamic day around it is the most important part. The unique items are a draw and garner lots of publicity, but they do not make an event in and of themselves. Each bookstore needs to commit to publicity, displays, and events that make sense for their personality and location. The bigger and more creative, the better!

Make it visible! A balloon, sandwich board, flags, or posters out front get people's attention and let them know there's something special going on.

Prepare staff! Talk to them about what Indie Bookstore Day is and encourage them to

greet customers and wish them a Happy Indie Bookstore Day. Some stores offer raffle tickets or coupons to customers as they enter to increase excitement.

Our website offers tip sheets on how to make the most of the day with party ideas, event collateral like signs and bookmarks, national publicity, merchandising concepts, an online map listing all participating stores, and loads of other stuff. [Look back at what stores planned in 2024!](#)

**Q: Can an individual store produce something special for sale in that store only?**

**A:** Yes. Some stores printed posters, stickers, or broadsides for sale or as giveaways for Independent Bookstore Day. This is completely up to each store. Regional associations may also produce special items.

**Q: Who pays for this?**

**A:** ABA supports Indie Bookstore Day with its financial and staff resources to organize and promote the campaign. Our fabulous industry sponsors include Ingram, Penguin Random House, the Feminist Press at CUNY, and all of the regional independent bookselling organizations (CALIBA, GLIBA, MIBA, MPIBA, NAIBA, NEIBA, PNBA, and SIBA). Each store pays for its own events and promotions.

## IMPORTANT DATES

**October 4, 2024:** The Independent Bookstore Day catalog opens for preview [on the Indie Bookstore Day Website](#)

**October 11, 2024:** Indie Bookstore Day 2025 Order and Participation Form goes live

**November 8, 2024:** Indie Bookstore Day 2025 Exclusives Order Form closes

**March 31, 2025:** Indie Bookstore Day 2025 General Participation Form closes

**April 4, 2025:** Indie Bookstore Day Searchable Map goes live on IndieBound

**Mid-April, 2025:** All exclusives ship to bookstores

**April 21–25, 2025:** Indie Bookstore Day Spirit Week

**April 26, 2025, the last Saturday in April:** Independent Bookstore Day

# YOUR ROAD MAP TO INDIE BOOKSTORE DAY: A Month-to-Month Planning Guide

## HOW TO PARTICIPATE\*



To purchase the exclusives and be included on the searchable map, receive marketing materials, and be included in publicity, sign ups are open **October 11–November 8, 2024**.

**You must purchase a minimum of 20 items** (individually or bulk packaged – a bulk packaged item counts as one) in order to receive the freebies like bookmarks and stickers. *Blackwing pencils and T-shirts do not count towards the 20-item minimum.*

To only be included on the searchable map, receive marketing materials, and be included in publicity, without any purchases, sign-ups are open **October 11, 2024–March 31, 2025**. By completing the General Participation Form, your store is signing up to participate in Independent Bookstore Day. **Booksellers must be a logged-in ABA member to access the form.** *If you order exclusives, you do not need to complete the form again.*

*\*This event is for booksellers who are members of the American Booksellers Association and their regional independent booksellers association. Find regional contact information at the bottom of the [membership page](#).*

### NOW

If you have not already done so, [sign up for the Independent Bookstore Day Newsletter](#) to receive the order form as soon as it opens.

### SEPTEMBER

#### Mark your calendar: Key Dates to Know

- **October 4, 2024:** The Independent Bookstore Day catalog goes live [on the Indie Bookstore Day Website](#)
- **October 11, 2024:** Indie Bookstore Day 2025 Order and Participation Form goes live
- **November 8, 2024:** Indie Bookstore Day 2025 Exclusives Order Form closes
- **March 31, 2025:** General Participation Form closes
- **April 4, 2025:** Indie Bookstore Day Searchable Map goes live on IndieBound
- **Mid-April, 2025:** All exclusives ship to bookstores
- **April 21–25, 2025:** Indie Bookstore Day Spirit Week
- **April 26, 2025, the last Saturday in April:** Independent Bookstore Day

#### Check out the FAQs

- **Questions?** Contact Courtney Wallace, Independent Bookstore Day Program Director at [ibd@bookweb.org](mailto:ibd@bookweb.org).



## Get Ready To Order Exclusives

- If you are interested in ordering exclusives for your store, take note of minimums needed for freebies and free shipping. See “How to Participate” for more information.

## Sneak a peek at the exclusives

- We’ll be teasing some of the exclusives in *Bookselling This Week* and Indie Bookstore Day newsletters!

## Set up an Ingram Account

- If you plan to order exclusives, make sure to have an Ingram Account number ready. Set up your account at [Ingram Onboarding](#).

# OCTOBER

## Look through the Exclusives Catalog on October 4.

- Take note of which exclusives have limited quantities available. **Remember that 20 paid items are needed to add freebies and to receive free shipping.**

## Review the exclusives ordering process

### Order exclusives and/or sign up to participate

- Interested in participating but not in ordering exclusives? You can choose to complete the form by marking “No” when asked to order exclusives. This will register your store’s participation and have your store marked on the IndieBound map in April!
- **You do not need to complete the form again to register your participation if you order exclusives for your store.**
- If your store has multiple locations, you’ll need to fill a form for each store.
- Don’t see your store listed in the dropdown list? Contact [ibd@bookweb.org](mailto:ibd@bookweb.org).

**Looking to collaborate with other bookstores in your area on a passport, bookstore crawl, or something else? Start now!** Email [ibd@bookweb.org](mailto:ibd@bookweb.org) with the details by March 31, 2025 to be included on the IndieBound site!

- Here are some crawls from last year (see ***How to Throw An Indie Bookstore Day Party*** for more information on planning a crawl)
  - [Cape & Islands Bookstore Trail](#)
  - [Central Oklahoma Book Trail](#)
  - [Connecticut Book Trail](#)
  - [Chicagoland Bookstore Crawl](#)
  - [Georgia Indie Bookshop Hop](#)
  - [Southeast Nebraska Bookstore Crawl](#)

# YOUR ROAD MAP TO INDIE BOOKSTORE DAY: A Month-to-Month Planning Guide

## NOVEMBER

**Order exclusives before the form closes on November 8.**

- If you are not ordering exclusives, you can fill out the form as a general participant through March 31, 2025.

## DECEMBER

**If you've ordered exclusives, check your ipage account to confirm the order has been placed.**

- You can track your order by locating the **"Find My Order"** button at the top of ipage in your Ingram account and enter your Purchase Order Number or EAN/Product Code. For step-by-step instructions on tracking your order, locate "Ingram's ipage Enhancements" feature in the Bulletin Board on your account dashboard. **Stores whose accounts are not in good standing with Ingram will not have their order completed or shipped.**

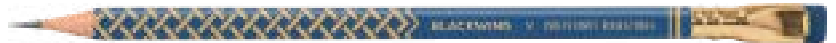
## JANUARY

**Start party planning.**

- Determine your displays, merchandising, food/drink, games, and events. [Check out the ideas shared from last year's events from participating bookstores!](#) We've also compiled a list in this guide to help.
- Line up authors, illustrators, and other guests (local artists, community organizations, etc.). The possibilities are endless!

**Be on the lookout for an invoice if you ordered Blackwing Pencils.**

- Stores who have ordered from Blackwing will be hearing from them either in January or in February. Each store will receive a phone call and email from a member of the sales team. They will be confirming the order and shipping address along with notifying stores on what to expect (i.e., invoice, shipping, timeline). **Blackwing orders must be paid prior to shipping.**
- If stores were interested in ordering Blackwing pencils but weren't able to during the ordering process in the fall, contact [annmarie@blackwing.co](mailto:annmarie@blackwing.co) to be added to a waitlist for any extra sets available.



**Work with Bonfire on a free custom design.**

- Want to offer custom designed Independent Bookstore Day T-shirts? **ABA members can claim a free custom design** (one-time only) from Bonfire, a free online platform where you can design, sell, fundraise with, and order custom products to build your bookseller brand. Email Taylor Soignoli at [taylor.soignoli@bonfire.com](mailto:taylor.soignoli@bonfire.com) to get started with your design and have your shirts ready to order before Independent Bookstore Day! Stores can choose to incorporate the Indie Bookstore Day logos if they wish.

- If wanting the general design, purchase the Indie Bookstore Day 2025 shirt directly from our Bonfire page, available December 2024.

**Continue to monitor your ipage account for any order updates.**

- See above in December's To-Do's.



## FEBRUARY

**Attend Bookseller Lightning Talks: Independent Bookstore Day Edition** to hear from three to four booksellers from across the country as they share more about what has worked for their stores.

**Line up authors, illustrators, and other guests** (local artists, community organizations, etc.).

**Put the finishing touches on your event plans.**

**Keep your staff informed and on board.**

**Create and finalize your marketing plan.**

- Check out this article: [Your Guide to Planning Marketing Campaigns](#).

**Start teasing Indie Bookstore Day in newsletters, online, and/or on social media.** (See *How to Spread the Word* for social media ideas and tips.)

**Keep an eye out for your Ingram Order on ipage.**

- **Exclusives will start shipping in early April.** When you receive your order, the label and invoice will have a PO Number with your Ingram Account (ie. Ingram Acct#\_IBD2025). You can track your order by locating the **"Find My Order"** button at the top of ipage in your Ingram account and enter your Purchase Order Number or EAN/Product Code. For step-by-step instructions on tracking your order, locate "Ingram's ipage Enhancements" feature in the Bulletin Board on your account dashboard. **Stores whose accounts are not in good standing with Ingram will not have their order completed or shipped.**

## MARCH

**Start marketing Indie Bookstore Day.**

- If you ordered the free Indie Bookstore Day bookmarks, they will arrive in your March Box Mailing.
- Mention the day and any details in your newsletter and on social media. Make your announcement using the digital assets and exclusive item images on BookWeb.org.
- List special events in your events calendar.
- Post images/graphics of exclusive items and other teasers on social media.

# YOUR ROAD MAP TO INDIE BOOKSTORE DAY: A Month-to-Month Planning Guide

## Submit your plans to ABA.

- We will compile a list of plans for a BookWeb article and link to your events on the IndieBound Indie Bookstore Day map, including bookstore crawls and passport programs.

## Add exclusives to your IndieCommerce or IndieLite sites.

- Join a member of the IndieCommerce team for a live, online, instructional webinar. They will cover how to manage the exclusive product listings and other content for the event, displaying on-hand quantities, adjusting the on-sale date and time for products, managing orders through your IndieCommerce/IndieLite site, and other resources available.
- A Help Document will be made available for adding exclusives as well.

## Send a Press Release to your local media.

- Download the template, enter your specific bookstore information (we provided examples!), and you're ready to send it off.
- Arrange for media sponsorship – radio, newspapers, websites – in your area if possible.

## Keep an eye out for your Ingram Order on ipage.

- See above in February To-Do's

## APRIL

Feel free to post unboxing videos and pictures of your displays using the hashtag **#IndieBookstoreDay**, so we can reshare on our social media platforms. *However, exclusive items may not be ordered, pre-ordered, or added to a cart until April 26.*

Stores can choose to sell this year's Tote Bag before Saturday, April 26. The Indie Bookstore Day tote bags and the T-shirts are the only exclusives that can be sold ahead of time.

## Join in on Spirit Week!

- Starting Monday, April 21, join fellow booksellers for Independent Bookstore Day Spirit Week! Feel free to share the digital assets, use the hashtag #BookstoreSpiritWeek, and take part in the daily themes leading up to Indie Bookstore Day on April 26. Here are the Spirit Week holidays:
  - **Monday, April 21:** [Silly Sock Day](#)
  - **Tuesday, April 22:** [Plaid Tuesday](#)
  - **Wednesday, April 23:** [On Wednesdays We Wear Bookstore Shirts](#)
  - **Thursday, April 24:** [Book Character Dress-Up Day](#)
  - **Friday, April 25:** YOUR store's Spirit Day



**Is your store being mentioned in local news outlets?** Email the story to [ibd@bookweb.org](mailto:ibd@bookweb.org) to be added to the [IndieBound Indie Bookstore Day Media Webpage](#).

There's still time to send an **Indie Bookstore Day Press Release** to your local media! **Download the template**, enter your specific bookstore's information (we provided examples!), and you're ready to send it off.

**Contact your Ingram rep to add any items from the 2024 and 2025 Exclusives Overstock Inventory to an order. The list will be made available in an Indie Bookstore Day newsletter.**

**Look for promotion details from our partners at Libro.fm and Bookshop.org.**

**On April 28**, stores that ordered exclusives will receive a separate email with the subject line, **"Submit your Indie Bookstore Day Sell-Thru Data!"**, with instructions to submit their sell-thru data. This information will help us work with publishers as we determine next year's exclusives.

## INDIE BOOKSTORE DAY



**Enjoy the party!**

**Tag @americanbooksellers on Instagram and @IndieBound on Facebook on Saturday using #IndieBookstoreDay** and we'll share on our channels. We encourage you to share other stores' celebrations as well. It's a national party after all!

Welcome your customers and thank them for celebrating Independent Bookstore Day in your store.

Afterwards, **thank your customers** for supporting your store on Independent Bookstore Day! **Keep the party going if there are exclusives remaining!**

## MAY

Have extra exclusives or want to make a trade with another store? We will have an **Indie Bookstore Day 2024 Trading Post** spreadsheet for stores to list what they have available to trade and what they are looking for. Feel free to connect with stores you would like to trade with or purchase their exclusives listed.

Additionally, if many items from this year's list of exclusives have an overage, available first come, first served. Note that some of these items also have limited inventory.

Have ideas for next year's Independent Bookstore Day? Each year, we have **openings in the Indie Bookstore Day Advisory Committee!** The Advisory Committee provides feedback on ideas for items proposed by publishers as well as promotional aspects of Indie Bookstore Day from May through next April. It is made up of one or two booksellers from each of the regional associations. Our first meeting will be mid-May! You must be a member of a regional association to participate.

# NEW TO INDIE BOOKSTORE DAY?:

## Tips and Refreshers

If this is your store's first Indie Bookstore Day and/or your store is just opening this year, here are a few tips on what to expect and how to manage!

From what we've seen and what stores have shared with us, this can be one of (if not THE) busiest days for indie bookstores, especially when the store has invested in planning, events, and marketing.



### CAPACITY AND CROWDS

- Station someone at the entrance to greet customers, manage the flow of people, and provide information about sales and special offers.
- If customers are waiting in line to enter or browse, is anyone providing updates? Is there something passive they can do while they wait?



### CHECKOUT

- What's the path customers should follow when ready to check out? Having a designated path can help eliminate confusion between who is in line and who is still browsing.
- Ensure that your checkout area is efficient and well-organized to minimize wait times.
- Have staff dedicated to bagging items or handling customer inquiries to keep the line moving.
- Consider setting up additional checkout stations if possible to reduce wait times.



### STAFFING

- Schedule additional staff for the day. Make sure everyone knows their roles and responsibilities as well as your store's plans for Indie Bookstore Day.
- Conduct a brief training session to prepare staff for the increased

customer flow and potential challenges.

- Rotate staff between different tasks (e.g., checkout, stocking shelves, assisting customers) to prevent fatigue and maintain energy levels.
- Ensure that everyone gets breaks to stay refreshed and focused.



## MANAGING INVENTORY

- If also using an online system for exclusives or items that are low in stock, think about how those will be managed. Limits can be set online (and you/your staff can have those set aside) so they aren't accidentally sold to in-store customers)
- Organize the store for easy navigation. Highlight special deals, Indie Bookstore Day exclusive, and high-demand books.
- Have a plan for managing out-of-stock items, such as offering rain checks or suggesting alternative products.



# HOW TO THROW AN INDIE BOOKSTORE DAY PARTY



We've included event ideas from booksellers to help you brainstorm, but none of these are requirements! Work with what makes sense for your community and is feasible for your store. [Check out the ideas shared from last year's events from participating bookstores!](#)

## PARTY/EVENT IDEAS

### GIVEAWAYS

- Whether freebies ordered from the catalog or [blind dates with books galley giveaway](#) or other store items, use these as prizes and awards for contests and games.
- Have a mystery wheel at checkout with the freebies as prizes.
- If participating in Indie Bookstore Day Spirit Week, customers who take part in the daily themes can be entered to win a prize.

### ENTERTAINMENT

- Hire balloon-animal makers, caricature artists, or a tarot reader (the [Future Is Indie Oracle Deck](#) might be a fun tarot reading!)
  - [Vroman's Bookstore printed the cards and did a reading.](#)
    - [RJ Julia selected a card and recommended a book related to that card!](#)
- Host a workshop
  - [Cafe con Libros and Chukaruka](#) hosted a Zine Workshop with a local artist
- Have storytimes throughout the day or host a Drag Story Hour
- The last few years, [Bookshop West Portal in San Francisco](#) has brought in llamas!
- [Bluestockings Cooperative](#) set up a free personalized book rec in time for Indie Bookstore Day.
- [Femme Fire Books](#) hosted a Book Club Fair showcasing local book clubs for readers to join.
- April is also National Poetry Month. Think about dueling poets, spoken word performances, poetry theater, blackout poetry stations, or one-minute custom poems.
- Think quirky author events! Invite authors to read and sign, but also invite authors to host trivia and be a bookseller for a day!





- [Astoria Bookshop](#) hosted an Indie Bookstore Bike Ride in collaboration with Transportation Alternatives

## PLAY

- Consider having more passive activities since you and/or your booksellers might be busy throughout the day! Or you may not have a lot of staff working.
  - [Books & Company](#) hosted a Resident Readers giveaway for 3 winners to spend time in the store all to themselves!
  - Have stations set up like [Betty's Books'](#) book plate/origami book corners crafting or make your own buttons.
  - Bingo
    - Help customers choose their next read with [these bingo board prompts](#) (thanks to designer @bookographic!)
    - Have a bookstore bingo board for customers to snap photos of what they find or take part in an activity in store.
  - Group Audiobook walk/run to promote purchasing books on Libro.fm
    - [The Book and Cover](#) made this a whole event to kick off the morning of Independent Bookstore Day.
  - Set up a photo booth with branded backdrop and/or props
    - [Browseabout Books](#) made a large Instagram frame for photos!
  - Have the young readers solve a mystery throughout the store with a scavenger hunt.
  - Have puzzles in your inventory? Have a puzzle competition!

## EAT

- Create themed free food and drink hours (like an F. Scott Fitzgerald cocktail hour or a kids' English tea).
- Partner with a local bakery, beer, spirit, or wine maker.
  - [Novel Neighbor](#) partnered with an ice cream sandwich shop!
  - [The Spine & Vine](#) popped up at a cookie company
  - [This House of Books](#) partnered with a local cafe for BYOM (Bring Your Own Mug) for free tea and coffee.



# HOW TO THROW AN INDIE BOOKSTORE DAY PARTY

## PARTNERSHIPS AND CRAWLS

### BOOKSTORE CRAWLS AND PASSPORT PROGRAMS

(See the [map from last year](#) of crawls and passport programs shared with us.)

- Reach out to local bookstores to see who is interested.
  - If you are going to do a state passport, or a large area passport, three volunteers would be best. One to contact the bookstores, another to run the social media, and the last to create the passport/graphics.
  - Let the bookstores know it's easy to participate, and bookstores can donate to a grand prize if they'd like, this is all a no pressure situation.
- Determine deadlines to move forward on graphics and maps. How often will you meet? What are the next steps after each meeting?
  - For the person contacting the bookstores, send a generic email in November to gather interest, then another in January to secure participating stores. If stores don't respond that you know would want to be involved, give them a call. If still no response, move on for now. Once the passport is released, if you hear from a bookstore that wants to be involved, kindly ask "What is the best email address?" Or, if you're able to go in-person, build that connection. The contact person and social media can go together since there's an opportunity for social media content too!
- Determine the budget and how much each store is contributing (ie. printing fees, prizes, ad placement, etc.)
- Prizes could include two \$25 gift cards and one book of each store's choice.
- Develop crawl/passport name and logo.
  - The passport/graphic creator should make sure the passport looks good in black and white, in case a bookstore can't spare color ink, or needs to print in a cheaper option. The graphics for social media should include any rules/information people might need. At the bottom of the passport, give the Instagram handle or website with a "Visit here for all the information you should need!"
- What printed items do you need? Bookmarks, maps, flyers, t-shirts, tote bags? In-house printing or sending off to a printer?
- Is there a separate crawl social media account or website? Who is creating and managing it before, during, and after the crawl?
- After, have a recap meeting and decide on when planning for next year begins!

### LOCAL BUSINESSES PASSPORT PROGRAM

- Involve other local/small businesses for a weekend of shopping within the community. Think coffee shops, cafes, stationary stores, home goods, etc. #ShopLocal
- [Two Rivers Bookstore](#) partnered with Weird Sisters Yarn Shop for Local Yarn Store Day!

## CONNECTING WITH LOCAL AUTHORS

- Announce a call for authors on the store's social media and newsletters.
- Talk to your reps and find out what authors might be interested.
- Collect those solicitations from new authors and invite them to participate in a group reading.

## BOOKS TO PRISONERS ORGANIZATIONS

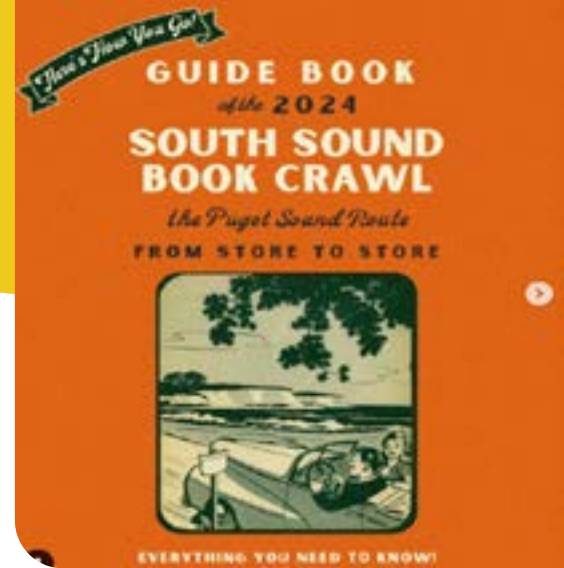
- [Tubby & Co's](#) partnered with [Louisiana Books 2 Prisoners](#) to create a wishlist and a donor matching program.
- [Several Bay Area bookshops](#) partnered with [Prisoners Literature Project](#) by doubling support over a two week period.
- There are restrictions state by state to be aware of, so do your research while planning.

## SILENT BOOK CLUB

- What better way to read the new books picked up on Independent Bookstore Day than participating in a local [Silent Book Club chapter](#)! Silent Book Club is a global community of readers and introverts reading in companionable silence at a local bar, bookstore, or online. Connect with chapters nearest to your store. Host the next meetup at the store, where readers can purchase books and then meet in the store or nearby to read for an hour!

## EXCLUSIVES, DISPLAYS, & SPECIAL SECTIONS

- Having a dedicated area for all the exclusives is ideal, potentially right at the entrance of the store, by the cash register, or in a prime spot on the mobile. Consider adding signage that stands out from other sections of the store.
  - [Harvard Book Store](#) set up a sign for the exclusive merch!
  - Be on the lookout for individual shelf talkers for this year's exclusives as part of our suite of assets!
- If setting up as a pop-up or mobile, post sneak peaks on social media leading up to the event. Unboxing videos are also encouraged!
- Examples:
  - [Beach Books, Seaside, OR](#)
  - [Tombolo Books, St. Pete, FL](#)
  - [The Next Chapter Bookstore, Hermiston, OR](#)

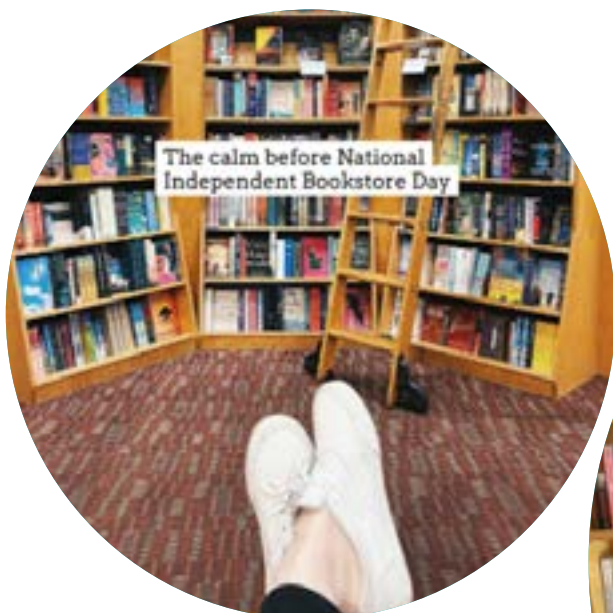


# HOW TO SPREAD THE WORD:

## Marketing your Indie Bookstore Day event

### SOCIAL MEDIA

- Use **#IndependentBookstoreDay** and **#IndieBookstoreDay** in your posts about Independent Bookstore Day.
- Tag **@IndieBound** on Facebook and **@AmericanBooksellers** on Instagram
- **Create teaser posts** to promote your store's event
  - Promote any of the unique day-of events, guest authors, speakers, games, etc. through a series of teaser posts on social media. Make sure to include photos (or videos!):
- **Post videos, graphics, and photos**
  - Give customers an idea of what they can expect at Independent Bookstore Day at your store by posting photos on social media accounts of:
    - Your store
    - Independent Bookstore Day items you're carrying
    - Authors who will be at Independent Bookstore Day
    - Other fun or exciting aspects of your store that make it unique (do you have a bookstore cat? A great front window display? Regular customers to feature?)
- Even the simplest BookTok and Instagram videos can drive sales and remind followers to visit your store. Even if you don't share videos on social media, in-store displays featuring books posted by others on BookTok and Instagram drive sales too.
- **Work with local authors/friends** of the bookstore to post about the day, like these posts by [Bonnie Garmus](#) and [Thao Thai](#)!



## EXAMPLES:

### Simple Display/Showing Off Exclusives

- [Bel Canto Books, Long Beach, CA](#)
- [Birchbark Books & Native Arts, Minneapolis, MN](#)

### Promotions and Programming

- [Brookline Booksmith, Brookline, MA](#)
- [Second Star to the Right Books, Denver, CO](#)
- [Cleary's Bookstore, Mount Holly, NC](#)

### Advocacy

- [Blue Willow Bookshop, Houston, TX](#)
- [Storyhouse Bookpub, Des Moines, IA](#)
- [Pressed Books and Coffee, Lakeland, FL](#)

### Behind-the-scenes Prep

- [Joseph Beth Booksellers, Cincinnati, OH](#)
- [Parnassus Books, Nashville, TN](#)
- [Kew & Willow Books, Queens, NY](#)

### Bookstore Crawl

- [Connecticut Book Trail](#)
- [South Sound Book Crawl](#)

### Day of Promotion

- [River Bend Bookshop, Glastonbury, CT](#)
- [Ruby's Books, Folsom, CA](#)
- [Books & Books, Coral Gables, FL](#)
- [Dog-Eared Books, Ames, IA](#)

### Wrap-Up/Thanks

- [Main Street Books, Davidson, NC](#)
- [The Nook, Cedar Falls, IA](#)
- [East City Bookshop, Washington, D.C.](#)



# HOW TO SPREAD THE WORD:

## Marketing your Indie Bookstore Day event

### LOCAL CONTENT CREATORS

- We work with a small group of content creators around the country to promote Indie Bookstore Day. Are there any local content creators that frequent your store who could help promote the event to their followers?
- Here are examples of creators we've worked with!
  - [Got my outfit picked out for Independent Bookstore Day tomorrow!](#)
  - [POV: You Grew Up In An Indie Bookstore](#)
- As with many content creators, it takes time, energy, and creativity to produce content. Consider what kind of compensation, discount, books, or gift cards you are able to offer.

### PRESS RELEASE AND LOCAL MEDIA

- Send an Indie Bookstore Day Press Release to your local media! Download the template, enter your specific bookstore information (we provide examples!), and you're ready to send it off.

### MARKETING ASSETS

- The exclusive product graphics are available as digital assets on BookWeb.org. Feel free to use these in your marketing if you are carrying exclusives.
- Incorporate the Indie Bookstore Day logo, posters, and additional assets into your marketing efforts such as social media posts, newsletters, flyers, and store signage.

### BRANDED EXCLUSIVES

- Stores can choose to sell this year's Tote Bag before Saturday, April 26. The Indie Bookstore Day tote bags and the [T-shirts](#) are **the only exclusives** that can be sold ahead of time.
- If you ordered the free Indie Bookstore Day bookmarks, they will arrive in your March Box Mailing. If you have a store stamp, there is space on the bookmark to add your store info. Distribute these at checkout and/or in shipped items if possible.

### DIY MERCHANDISE

Some stores create their own exclusive merchandise (prints, t-shirts, bags, bookmark, etc.) for the day! Whether it's you and your store's own design, a partnership with a local artist, or personalizing an existing template, there are opportunities for a store's own Indie Bookstore Day Merch!

- **T-Shirt:** [Raven Book Store, Lawrence, KS](#)
- **Print:**
  - [Twin Cities Bookstore Passport artwork from illustrator](#)
  - [Books of Wonder, New York, NY](#)

- **Tote Bag:**

- [Lansing, MI Book Crawl](#)
- [The Bookshop, Nashville, TN](#)



## DESIGN

### Templates

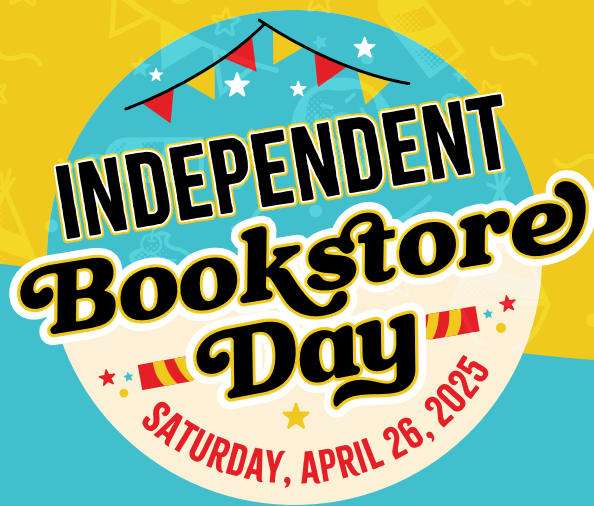
- Booksellers often use [Canva](#) to customize ABA's social media marketing assets, which can be found on BookWeb.org. Canva has an option to upload images into an Instagram-friendly template. Additionally, there are templates available for Facebook, Twitter, and more.
- Add the store's logo, contact information, and other important information. The typeface, size, and color for fonts can all be customized. The customized image can then be downloaded from Canva and uploaded to social media platforms.

## FROM SCRATCH

### Keep the following best practices in mind when creating a graphic:

- Keep font typefaces and sizes simple. Try to keep typefaces down to two kinds; more than that can get too busy.
- Use white space to help make designs look neater.
- When using a design element, be sure you have a reason for it. Less really can be more.
- Keep designs fully consistent across campaigns.
- Come up with a thoughtful layout. Using frames and a grid system can make graphics look more professional.





For all general questions about Independent Bookstore Day, contact Courtney Wallace, Independent Bookstore Day Program Director, at [ibd@bookweb.org](mailto:ibd@bookweb.org).

For billing and shipping questions, please contact your Ingram representative.