

Get a Book, Give a Book

How to lead a book exchange

The Book Exchange is a fun and interactive way to share books you've enjoyed and discover something new, all while sparking conversation and building community. Each participant brings a book they're ready to pass along—something they've read and think someone else will enjoy. Everyone leaves with a different book to take home!

How It Works:

1. **Bring a Book:**

Each person brings one book to give away. It can be fiction, nonfiction, a classic, a hidden gem—whatever you think someone else might enjoy.

2. **Present Your Book:**

When everyone arrives, each person takes a turn briefly introducing their book—just a minute or two to say what it's about and why you liked it (no spoilers!). Then the book is placed on a central table.

3. **Draw Numbers:**

Once all books are on the table, each participant draws a number. This determines the order in which people will select or “steal” books.

4. **White Elephant Rules:**

- Person #1 picks any book from the table.
- Person #2 can either pick a new book from the table **or** “steal” the book chosen by #1.
- If a person's book is stolen, they get to pick a new book from the table (or steal someone else's).
- A book can be stolen up to **two times**—after that, it's “frozen” and can't be taken again.
- The exchange continues until everyone has a book.

5. **Everyone Leaves with a Book:**

At the end, each person goes home with a new-to-them book, a few new reading ideas, and maybe a few new friends.

This exchange is a great way to recycle good reads, learn about others' interests, and add some surprise to your reading list!

Additional Ideas:

- A specific kind of book can be designated such as children's books, self-help books, books related to a particular area of ministry, etc.

- Book titles and authors can be submitted ahead of time so that the leader can provide a list of all the books that will be shared at the time of the gathering. This is very helpful to be able to take notes and keep track of which ones one might want to purchase. An Amazon wish list can also be created and the link shared after the gathering.
- During Step 2, if the group does not know each other, individuals are encouraged to also introduce themselves.
- Numbers can be drawn at the very beginning. In numerical order, each person presents their book. Then in reverse numerical order, the last person who shared gets to be the first person to select a book of their choice.
- Try this as an intergenerational activity.
- Include a snack or meal.

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