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70 Books and Novels That Everyone Should Read in Their Lifetime

By Kristina Wright

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24 min read



So many books, so little time! If you're looking for a master list of the best books everyone should read in their lifetime, this is a great place to start. Featuring iconic classics, timeless bestsellers, and life-changing nonfiction, these are books that will stay with you for



your entire life. Take a look at our recommendations for the best books to read — you might even find a new forever-favorite!

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Best Fiction Books That Everyone Should Read

From timeless classics like *To Kill a Mockingbird* to recent bestsellers like *The Kite Runner*, here's an ultimate list of fiction books everyone should read.

***To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee**

To Kill a Mockingbird

Harper Lee

[Buy From...](#)

Narrated by 10-year-old Scout Finch, *To Kill a Mockingbird* centers on her father, small-town lawyer Atticus Finch, and his fight against racial prejudice in the 1930s Deep South. You may have read this beloved coming-of-age story when you were in school, but it's worth revisiting this classic as an adult. Poignant and powerful, the central themes remain timeless and timely.

Pride and Prejudice

Jane Austen

[Buy From...](#)

Often imitated but never duplicated, Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* is a British classic and one of the most beloved books of all time. Detailing the social mores of 19th-century England, Austen crafts a novel that is amusing, timeless and utterly delightful. If you haven't met Elizabeth Bennet and Mr. Darcy yet, now is the time, for this is surely a book that everyone should read!

1984 by George Orwell

1984: 75th Anniversary Edition

George Orwell

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In *1984*, George Orwell envisions a grim dystopian future where Big Brother is always watching and free thought is forbidden. For Winston, the only hope of survival is joining the revolution intent on

and control will make you think about the freedoms we take for granted... and who might be watching.

A Tree Grows in Brooklyn by Betty Smith

A Tree Grows in Brooklyn

Betty Smith

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A Tree Grows in Brooklyn centers on 11-year-old Francie Nolan, who lives in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn with her Irish and Austrian immigrant parents and younger brother, Neely. When her father dies, the family reels, but Francie is determined to pursue her dreams of finishing her education and going to college. This poignant coming-of-age story is a beautiful and timeless tale of resilience and hope.

The Book Thief by Markus Zusak

The Book Thief

Markus Zusak

In this #1 *New York Times* bestseller, it's 1939 Nazi Germany and Liesel Meminger is a young foster girl who steals for her survival. Then she discovers books. Liesel learns to read and shares her stolen books with her neighbors and the Jewish man who hides in her basement. Markus Zusak, author of *I Am the Messenger*, has written a heartbreakingly beautiful tale of the power and joy books offer, even in the darkest days.

***Brave New World* by Aldous Huxley**

Brave New World

Aldous Huxley

[Buy From...](#)

Brave New World is a cautionary tale about the future that remains as relevant today as when it was first published in 1932. In this technologically advanced dystopia, author Aldous Huxley envisions a world where humans are controlled through genetic engineering and behavioral conditioning. When one man begins to question his carefully controlled world, he is forced to face the truth about the very nature and purpose of his life.

***The Underground Railroad* by Colson Whitehead**

The Underground Railroad

Colson Whitehead

[Buy From...](#)

Colson Whitehead's *The Underground Railroad* took the literary world by storm in 2016, earning the author the #1 spot on the *New York Times* bestseller list, as well as a Pulitzer Prize and National Book Award. Envisioning the Underground Railroad as an actual network of train tracks throughout the south, Whitehead weaves a complex saga that stretches from the days before the Civil War to contemporary life for African Americans. This compelling novel is unlike anything you've ever read and makes a thoughtful, conversation-provoking book club selection.

***Beloved* by Toni Morrison**

Beloved

Toni Morrison

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Toni Morrison's *Beloved* is a Pulitzer Prize-winning tale of a young



her eldest child. Born into slavery, Sethe escaped the home of her youth, but the past still haunts her. Brutal, suspenseful, and heart-wrenching, *Beloved* is a stunning novel from one of the finest writers in the last century.

***All the Light We Cannot See* by Anthony Doerr**

All the Light We Cannot See

Anthony Doerr

[Buy From...](#)

This *New York Times* bestseller centers on the lives of Marie-Laure, a blind French girl, and Werner, an orphaned German boy. Beautifully written and richly detailed, *All the Light We Cannot See* is a crowning achievement in historical fiction. Doerr captures the devastation of World War II and the ways in which good triumphs over evil in even the darkest circumstances.

***Catch-22* by Joseph Heller**

Catch-22

Joseph Heller

[Buy From...](#)

For over 50 years, Joseph Heller's *Catch-22* has been named to every major list of "best books," and for good reason. Set in Italy during World War II, it's a hilarious and critical analysis of the madness that is war. Told from the perspective of a young fighter pilot caught up in the insanity, it's a profound story about the human condition — flawed, sometimes broken, ever hopeful — and the very human need to make sense of the senseless.

***The Call of the Wild* by Jack London**

The Call of the Wild

Jack London

[Buy From...](#)

First published in 1903, *The Call of the Wild* remains the quintessential wilderness tale. Set during the Klondike Gold Rush, Buck is a mixed breed dog caught between domesticity and the wild. He bonds with a prospector but his survival depends on his primitive instincts. *Call of the Wild* is a harrowing adventure story for all ages!

***Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury**

Fahrenheit 451

Ray Bradbury

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Ray Bradbury's body of work is filled with memorable science fiction tales, with *Fahrenheit 451* representing the author at his best. This thought-provoking and important novel about censorship centers on Guy Montag, a young fireman who is having a crisis of conscience. Guy's job is to destroy books, and the homes of the citizens who are hiding the forbidden contraband, but a series of events makes him question the law he has pledged to uphold.

Love in the Time of Cholera by Gabriel García Marquez

Love in the Time of Cholera

Gabriel García Márquez

[Buy From...](#)

Gabriel García Marquez's sweeping tale of enduring love deserves a place on your shelf! Florentino Ariza and Fermina Daza loved each other in their youth, but Fermina married someone else. Even though

hundreds of affairs. They lead separate lives for decades — until the day they are reunited.

***The Lovely Bones* by Alice Sebold**

The Lovely Bones

Alice Sebold

[Buy From...](#)

A book club favorite since its release, *The Lovely Bones* is told from the perspective of a murdered young girl named Susie Salmon. The heart-wrenching story unfolds as Susie comes to terms with her new home in heaven while watching the events following her death unfold on earth. An incredibly suspenseful story about the hope found in the aftermath of tragedy.

***The Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho**

The Alchemist

Paulo Coelho

[Buy From...](#)

The Alchemist is one of those small books that leaves a profound impression. It's a story about following your heart and learning from experience. It's a book that forces you to reflect on your path in life and the choices you make. Told from the perspective of Santiago — an Andalusian shepherd boy who travels in search of treasure — *The Alchemist* is a wise, magical, and timeless classic that will stay with you for the rest of your life.

***The Joy Luck Club* by Amy Tan**

The Joy Luck Club

Amy Tan

[Buy From...](#)

Amy Tan's *The Joy Luck Club* is a tender and amusing familial story that every mother and daughter should read together. Tan explores the lives of four Chinese immigrant women who meet in San Francisco in 1949. Their relationships with their daughters bring them joy and pain, and reveal universal truths about mothers and daughters. Perhaps the best known of Tan's work, *The Joy Luck Club* is a contemporary classic about the bonds of family and shared culture.

***Siddhartha* by Hermann Hesse**

Siddhartha

Hermann Hesse

[Buy From...](#)

Siddhartha is the classic story of a young man looking for the meaning of life. He leaves his family, first to pursue a contemplative life, then for more base interests. Jaded by lust and selfishness, he moves on once again, coming to the ultimate turning point in his life. He learns that ultimately, suffering and loss lead to sacrifice and wisdom. This compelling book about the nature and meaning of existence will make you consider the philosophies that have carried you through your own life.

The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald

The Great Gatsby: The Authorized Edition

F. Scott Fitzgerald

[Buy From...](#)

Jay Gatsby loves money, notoriety, and the beautiful Daisy Buchanan and readers have loved *The Great Gatsby* since its 1925 release. A



novels of the 20th century and the crowning achievement of F. Scott Fitzgerald's impressive literary career. This finely crafted homage to 1920s America sparkles like a glass of the finest champagne, capturing the romance and beauty of the Jazz Age.

***The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini**

The Kite Runner

Khaled Hosseini

[Buy From...](#)

Keep the tissues handy when you read *The Kite Runner*. Published in 2003, this heartbreakin story is set during a turning point in Afghanistan's turbulent history and centers on the friendship between a wealthy young boy and the son of his father's servant. At its heart, this contemporary classic is a tale about the power of friendship and the bonds of love between fathers and sons.

***The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood**

The Handmaid's Tale

Margaret Atwood

[Buy From...](#)

The Handmaid's Tale is Margaret Atwood's best known novel — and for good reason. With vivid and brutal descriptions, Atwood envisions a dark world where women have lost their autonomy, as well as their rights to reproductive freedom. The story centers on the outcome of such restrictive oppression and is told from the perspective of Offred, one of the young handmaids in this new social order. One thing is for certain, you will never be able to forget Offred's story.

***The Color Purple* by Alice Walker**

The Color Purple

Alice Walker

[Buy From...](#)

Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* has earned a Pulitzer Prize and a National Book Award, and has been adapted for both film and theater. This is the story of Celie, a young African American woman who faces life's hardships with unwavering grit and determination. *The Color Purple* is more than an award-winning novel, it's a cultural touchstone and a literary masterpiece by one of the finest writers of our time.

The Little Prince

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

[Buy From...](#)

The Little Prince is a timeless fable of love and loneliness that has captured the imaginations of readers of all ages. The original French story is brought to vivid life through words and illustrations, conjuring up all the magic and whimsy of a little prince who has some things to say about adulthood. An enchanting story for both the young and the young at heart.

Their Eyes Were Watching God by Zora Neale Hurston

Their Eyes Were Watching God

Zora Neale Hurston

[Buy From...](#)

One of the most significant books of African American literature in the 20th century, Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God* captures evolution of Janie Crawford, a black woman

and a life highlighted by poverty, loss, and hardship, Janie claims her independence and makes her voice heard. This is Hurston's Southern literary masterpiece — poignant, powerful, and still as relevant as the year it was published.

***The Bell Jar* by Sylvia Plath**

The Bell Jar

Sylvia Plath

[Buy From...](#)

The Bell Jar is a standout of 20th-century feminist literature and the most celebrated work of Sylvia Plath's career. It centers on the life of Esther Greenwood, a brilliant, gifted woman whose world is falling apart. Esther's harrowing story is intense and realistic, revealing the slow and painful spiral into mental illness that consumes her life and sanity.

***Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* by J.K. Rowling**

Harry Potter and the
Sorcerer's Stone

J.K. Rowling

[Buy From...](#)

You're never too old for *Harry Potter*! If you haven't yet met Harry and his friends, Ron and Hermione, there is no time like the present to dive into the first book of J.K. Rowling's fantastical series about wizards, magic and muggles. This contemporary classic set a new standard for children's literature and has won fans of all ages from all over the world.

***Slaughterhouse-Five* by Kurt Vonnegut**

Slaughterhouse-Five: 50th Anniversary Edition

Kurt Vonnegut

[Buy From...](#)

One of the finest anti-war novels of the 20th century, *Slaughterhouse-Five* is the American classic that made Kurt Vonnegut a literary legend and a household name. The story centers on the life of Billy Pilgrim as he journeys through time from his early life to his experiences as an American soldier in World War II to his post-war years. The complex, nonlinear story is infused with elements of science fiction and fantasy and offers a profound and philosophical look at the events that shape a person's life.

The Left Hand of Darkness

Ursula K. Le Guin

[Buy From...](#)

Winter is an alien world whose inhabitants can change their gender at will. A human ambassador arrives to negotiate Winter's return to the larger intergalactic civilization, but how can he bridge the gap between his own beliefs and this strange new world? Le Guin's thoughtful exploration of human psychology, identity, and gender blends beautifully with her imaginative world-building, giving *The Left Hand of Darkness* a well-deserved place in the canon of classic science fiction.

A Little Life by Hanya Yanagihara

A Little Life

Hanya Yanagihara

[Buy From...](#)

Readers describe *A Little Life* as “absolutely breathtaking” and

“beautifully written.” It follows four friends: William, I.B., Malcolm,



they move to New York in search of their future. Jude remains the center of the story as he grapples with the demons from his past, and his relationship with his friends is put to the test multiple times by jealousy, addiction, and depression. This novel captures the nuances of human emotion, providing portrayals of compassion amidst tragedy and revealing how the capacity for kindness remains even in times of agony. Trigger warning: This book contains graphic content surrounding violence and sexual assault.

***The Goldfinch* by Donna Tartt**

The Goldfinch

Donna Tartt

[Buy From...](#)

Donna Tartt's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel is a story of loss, grief, and self-invention. Theo Decker is a 13-year-old boy who survives a bombing of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the same one that kills his mother. After such a traumatic event, Theo spends the rest of his childhood navigating through different homes. Throughout this journey, Theo grasps onto the only thing that makes him feel connected to his mother: her favorite painting, which he stole from the museum on the day of the tragedy. Tartt came back to reclaim her righteous place in the literary world as readers continue to praise her writing, calling this story "unforgettable."

The Remains of the Day by Kazuo Ishiguro

The Remains of the Day

Kazuo Ishiguro

[Buy From...](#)

Set in 1950s England, *The Remains of the Day* follows a butler named Stevens as he decides to take a trip through the West Country. What begins as a mere physical journey turns almost spiritual as Stevens reflects on history, society, and his own feelings. Nobel Prize winner Kazuo Ishiguro's prose is subtle, beautiful, and moving. With his novels, he fosters the need to look deeper into our surroundings and ourselves — and to establish a connection with the world. One of his earliest works, *The Remains of the Day* is also one of his most acclaimed novels.

East of Eden by John Steinbeck

East of Eden

John Steinbeck

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Nobel Prize winner John Steinbeck's *East of Eden* follows Adam Trask after he moves to California to farm and is left to raise his twin boys on his own. As they both get older, the book outlines the results of growing up surrounded by love — and the consequences for the lack of it. Commonly referred to as a modern retelling of the Genesis story of Cain and Abel, this family saga is said to be Steinbeck's greatest work.

***Americanah* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie**

Americanah

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

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When Ifemelu gets a precious opportunity to leave Nigeria and study in America, she leaves her boyfriend, Obinze, behind. Fifteen years later, they reunite and must reckon with what was done and what can never be undone in the time they've spent apart. *Americanah* is a heartbreakingly honest portrayal of conflicting and colliding identities, written by one of the most brilliant authors of this generation.

***The Giver* by Lois Lowry**

The Giver

Lois Lowry

[Buy From...](#)

In Jonas' perfect world, there is no pain and there are no worries — life has been arranged for everyone, including living situations, marriages, and occupations. Like other 12-year-olds in his community, Jonas is anxious to receive his chosen profession, but is given the unexpected role of Receiver of Memory. Through the community's Giver of Memories, Jonas learns the hard truths about his world and the people in it, and must summon the courage to escape.

Wuthering Heights by Emily Brontë

Wuthering Heights

Emily Brontë

[Buy From...](#)

The Brontë sisters — **Anne**, **Charlotte**, and **Emily** — shared both the family talent of literary genius and the tragedy of dying young.



the stark beauty of the Yorkshire moors in which live two families seemingly doomed to sorrow. The history of the Earnshaw and Linton families crosses with that of the Earnshaw's foster child, Heathcliff, in a gothic tale full of love powerful enough to defy death itself.

***Anna Karenina* by Leo Tolstoy**

Anna Karenina

Leo Tolstoy, Richard Pevear, and Larissa V...

[Buy From...](#)

Tolstoy's classic Russian masterpiece tells the tale of married St. Petersburg socialite Anna Karenina and her illicit affair with cavalry officer Count Alexei Vronsky. The lovers flee Anna's ex-husband and escape to Italy, even leaving behind her child, but although their relationship was passionate at its beginning, it is destined for a heartbreakin

***Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley**

Frankenstein

Mary Shelley

[Buy From...](#)

Many readers know that this chilling classic was born out of a storytelling contest held among a group of writers, including **Mary Shelley**, her eventual husband, **Percy Shelley**, and the infamous **Lord Byron**. But you might not realize that Mary Shelley was only 19 when she began **writing** this tale. When a group gathered at Lake Geneva in the summer of 1816, Shelley drew from several elements, including the men's conversations about reanimating corpses and the dismal weather, to craft a story of a scientist who creates life — with terrifying consequences.

Normal People by Sally Rooney

Normal People

Sally Rooney

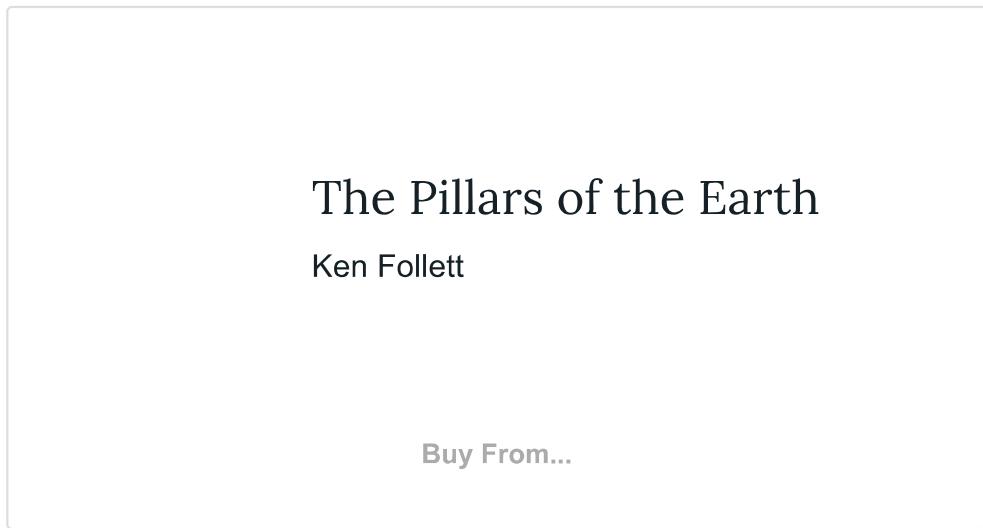
[Buy From...](#)

This moving novel delivers a story of two unlikely friends who grow



attending school together at Trinity College in Dublin. Loner Marianne may be the opposite of well-liked Connell, but their lives are intertwined through the years as they grow and change as individuals and as a pair. *The Washington Post* calls *Normal People* “a novel that demands to be read compulsively, in one sitting.”

***The Pillars of the Earth* by Ken Follett**



Don't let the 900-plus page count intimidate you — this epic work of historical fiction will have you riveted as the story unfolds. Filled with fascinating characters and set in 12th-century England, *The Pillars of the Earth* traces the building of a cathedral in a town called Kingsbridge. *Publishers Weekly* praises the novel's “impeccable pacing” that “builds suspense in a balanced narrative that offers action, intrigue, violence, and passion.”

***Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott**



Little Women

Louisa May Alcott

[Buy From...](#)

Louisa May Alcott's classic novel continues to resonate with readers more than a century after its first publication. Meg, Jo, Beth, and Amy are four fiercely-attached sisters living in Civil War New England. Alcott takes readers through the many stages, hardships, and joys of their lives throughout the decades. This is a book that everyone should read because it's a layered love story, at once about familial love, romantic love, and self-love; it's a novel you can read many times in your life, always finding something new to love.

The Shining by Stephen King

The Shining

Stephen King

[Buy From...](#)

Part of King's genius is how he roots his horrors in personal fears and flaws we all recognize. That makes it feel personal and possible.



psychic powers. In *The Shining*, Jack Torrance is a man struggling against his darker instincts and slowly going under the waves. After taking a job as a winter caretaker at an enormous hotel closed for the season, his despair and failure lead to unimaginable horrors as he gives in to the temptations of a truly evil place. With this book, King shows he doesn't need a big cast of characters to make his brand of horror work — he just needs your attention.

Best Nonfiction Books That Everyone Should Read

From inspirational memoirs like *When Breath Becomes Air* to tried and true self-help books like *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, don't miss this list of the best nonfiction books everyone should read.

When Breath Becomes Air

Paul Kalanithi

[Buy From...](#)

At the age of 36, Paul Kalanithi was diagnosed with stage IV lung cancer. After years of training as a neurosurgeon and treating dying patients, the doctor became the patient. He died while he was working on this book, but his words live on as his legacy and gift to others. Profoundly life-affirming, *When Breath Becomes Air* is a book about living with grace and dignity, even when death is imminent.

***Between the World and Me* by Ta-Nehisi Coates**

Between the World and Me

Ta-Nehisi Coates

[Buy From...](#)

Between the World and Me is a powerful letter from Ta-Nehisi Coates to his adolescent son. It explores the profound questions about what it means to be black in America and how the weight and shame of history lingers. In this compelling personal narrative unlike any other you've ever read, Coates explores his own awareness of his place in the world and the future that awaits his son. *Between the World and Me* will break your heart and elevate your conscience.

***Eat Pray Love* by Elizabeth Gilbert**

Eat Pray Love

Elizabeth Gilbert

[Buy From...](#)

You've seen the movie starring Julia Roberts, now read the book that started it all! For over a decade, *Eat Pray Love* has inspired and empowered millions of readers to pursue their own personal growth and self-enlightenment. Based on experiences from author Elizabeth Gilbert's life, this iconic and beloved memoir might just change your life!

***Braving the Wilderness* by Brené Brown**

Braving the Wilderness
Brené Brown

[Buy From...](#)

Are we experiencing a spiritual crisis as we become more disconnected from each other? This is the question at the heart of social scientist Brené Brown's *Braving the Wilderness*. Blending research and storytelling, Brown explores what it means to "belong" in today's media-driven world. True belonging, she says, involves a daily commitment to practicing integrity and authenticity. Find a way back to yourself – and your community – through this thoughtful, engaging book by one of the defining voices in contemporary culture.

***Tuesday with Morrie* by Mitch Albom**

Tuesdays with Morrie

Mitch Albom

[Buy From...](#)

Who inspired you to make your place in the world? Author Mitch Albom recounts how his professor, Morrie Schwartz, mentored and motivated him in his youth and profoundly changed how he viewed the world and his place in it. He reconnected with his mentor at the end of Morrie's life and chronicles those final lessons that Morrie passed along. This heartwarming classic is a testament to the importance of teachers and mentors — and how we can all serve that purpose in someone else's life.

The Glass Castle by Jeannette Walls

The Glass Castle

Jeannette Walls

[Buy From...](#)

Jeannette Walls's memoir about her quirky and extremely dysfunctional family is both heartbreaking and inspiring. Raised by a



mother, the Walls children learned to fend for themselves and look out for each other. This powerful story of survival, forgiveness, and a daughter's enduring love for her family will stay with you long after you finish it.

***Walden* by Henry David Thoreau**

Walden (Diversion Classics)

Henry David Thoreau

[Buy From...](#)

In 1845, Henry David Thoreau embarked on a retreat that would change his life and influence his writing in profound ways. The memoir of his two-year woodland experience is *Walden*, a compelling treatise on the importance of living among nature. Thoreau's essays represent the foundation of American transcendentalism and are a must-read for anyone who has ever longed to spend some time in introspective contemplation.

***I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* by Maya Angelou**

I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings

Maya Angelou

[Buy From...](#)

I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings is a memoir of childhood and a touching legacy of a remarkable spirit. Maya Angelou's powerful and enduring message of unwavering self-love has endeared her to readers and made her memoir one of the most beloved books of all time.

Into the Wild by Jon Krakauer

Into the Wild

Jon Krakauer

[Buy From...](#)

In 1992, Christopher Johnson McCandless left his privileged life behind and hitchhiked to Alaska. He disappeared into the wilderness with the intention of making a new life for himself, but only four months later his body was found by a hunter. The story of his short life, his idealistic vision, and his tragic death is one that



***The Diary of a Young Girl* by Anne Frank**

The Diary of a Young Girl: 75th Anniversary Edition

Anne Frank and Mirjam Pressler

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The diary of Anne Frank stands as a stark reminder of the horrors of the Holocaust and the millions of lives that were lost. Anne's diary is filled with the exuberance of her youth and the harsh and horrific realities of her experience. An unforgettable and profound memoir about the heartbreak life – and untimely death – of a young girl caught up in the Nazi occupation, *The Diary of a Young Girl* is a book everyone should read.

***A Walk in the Woods* by Bill Bryson**

A Walk in the Woods

Bill Bryson

[Buy From...](#)

After spending two decades abroad, author Bill Bryson decided to walk the Appalachian Trail, which stretches 2,100 miles from Georgia to Maine. His experiences became the hilarious, wise, and wholly entertaining, *A Walk in the Woods*. For anyone thinking of hiking the Appalachian Trail or spending any amount of time in nature, Bryson's travelogue is a must-read story of the beautiful and fragile wilderness that awaits.

***A Return to Love* by Marianne Williamson**

A Return to Love

Marianne Williamson

[Buy From...](#)

Marianne Williamson's spiritual guide, *A Return to Love*, is a life-changing, soul-expanding message of love and peace. She shares her wisdom of how love is the driving force for all miracles and how we can find fulfillment in our own lives by accepting God and practicing love. If you're looking for a bit of inspiration, then add this book to your reading list of books to read!

***Year of Yes* by Shonda Rhimes**

Year of Yes

Shonda Rhimes

[Buy From...](#)

From the gifted creator of shows like *Grey's Anatomy* and *Scandal* comes an inspiring memoir about the life-changing value of saying “yes.” For one year, Shonda Rhimes vowed to say “yes” to every invitation that came her way and then chronicled the surprising, inspiring, and transformative results. Say “yes” to this book — and it may make you say “yes” to a whole new perspective!

***On the Road* by Jack Kerouac**

On the Road

Jack Kerouac

[Buy From...](#)

Chronicling his years traveling across North America with his friend Neal Cassady, Jack Kerouac’s memoir has become the adventuring philosopher’s bible. Kerouac’s passion... and compassion... for the



On the Road is one of the finest pieces of literature to come out of the Beat generation and Kerouac's words offer a message of freedom and self-discovery.

***The Last Lecture* by Randy Pausch**

The Last Lecture
Randy Pausch

[Buy From...](#)

After being diagnosed with terminal cancer, computer science professor Randy Pausch was asked to give a lecture that would represent the culmination of his wisdom and stand as his legacy. *The Last Lecture* was his response. His message wasn't about dying, it was about living every moment to its fullest. Full of wisdom and humor, Pausch's story is one to be remembered and a testament to a life well-lived.

***Angela's Ashes* by Frank McCourt**

Angela's Ashes
Frank McCourt

[Buy From...](#)

Frank McCourt's memoir about his Irish Catholic childhood in Depression-era Brooklyn is often grim, sometimes funny, and a pure pleasure to read. Raised in poverty, Frank's life was one of constant hardship and small, priceless joys. An astounding story of the power of the human spirit to survive and even find ways to thrive, *Angela's Ashes* is a not-to-be-missed memoir.

***Tiny Beautiful Things* by Cheryl Strayed**

Tiny Beautiful Things

Cheryl Strayed

[Buy From...](#)

Before she wrote her bestselling memoir *Wild*, Cheryl Strayed was Sugar, the anonymous online columnist for *The Rumpus*. No matter the situation or question, Sugar dished up advice that was wise, witty, and always honest. *Tiny Beautiful Things* is the best of Strayed's *Dear Sugar* column.

***A Brief History of Time* by Stephen Hawking**

A Brief History of Time

Stephen Hawking

[Buy From...](#)

A Brief History of Time is the kind of science writing we all need. Written by one of the most brilliant minds of any era, it seeks to explain the most profound questions of the universe. Stephen Hawking's writing is accessible and easy to understand, allowing the reader to get excited about the big ideas he addresses. From the creation of the universe to the existence of a higher being, Hawking's writing is revelatory, inspiring, and imaginative.

Hidden Figures by Margot Lee Shetterly

Hidden Figures

Margot Lee Shetterly

[Buy From...](#)

You've seen the movie, now read the incredible true story of the African American women who worked as mathematicians for NASA and helped advance America's greatest achievements in space.



few of the stories of the unsung heroines of space exploration. Their lives, and accomplishments, make for a fascinating, inspiring reading.

***The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* by Stephen R. Covey**

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

Stephen R. Covey

[Buy From...](#)

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People became a cultural phenomenon with its release in 1989. It's one of those rare self-help books that has influenced people from all walks of life, including business leaders, educators, and politicians. Timeless in its approach, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* offers insightful lessons on the most effective ways to improve your live, both professionally and personally.

***The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* by Rebecca Skloot**

The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks

Rebecca Skloot

[Buy From...](#)

Scientists know her as HeLa, but she was Henrietta Lacks, an African American tobacco farmer whose cells were taken without her knowledge in 1951. That theft lead to scientific breakthroughs from the polio vaccine to gene mapping, while the woman at the center of these discoveries went unknown and uncompensated. This is a fascinating true story about ethics, race, and medicine.

***Unbroken* by Laura Hillenbrand**

Unbroken

Laura Hillenbrand

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Unbroken tells the story of Louis Zamperini: His rebellious childhood; his career as a runner that took him all the way to the Olympics; and his World War II military service, during which he was taken as a prisoner of war. Through his captivity, Zamperini faced horrific situations with ingenuity and humor. This moving biography is an ode to resilience, hope, and the will to overcome even the darkest of moments. Zamperini's unbreakable spirit will stick with you for years to come.



Outliers: The Story of Success

Malcolm Gladwell

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Nonfiction author Malcolm Gladwell is renowned for challenging traditional thinking and making readers uncomfortable (in the best possible way). In *Outliers*, Gladwell dismantles the term “luck” and argues that success is merely based on two things: your background and effort. This book analyzes various success stories – from The Beatles to Canadian hockey players – and uses a mix of research and anecdotes to provide a fresh perspective on their accomplishments. *Outliers* is a truly eye-opening read that will put your prejudice to the test.

Sapiens by Yuval Noah Harari

Sapiens

Yuval Noah Harari

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Yuval Noah Harari uses his extensive background in history to



the past 70,000 years. Harari draws from biology, anthropology, paleontology, and economics to further decipher humans as a species. This book is perfect for the curious, and for those with a need to understand the why. **Said** Bill Gates, “I would recommend this book to anyone interested in a fun, engaging look at early human history...you’ll have a hard time putting it down.”

I am Malala by Malala Yousafzai



I Am Malala

Malala Yousafzai

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The 16-year-old Nobel Prize winner who shook the world with her fearless passion for education tells her own story in this moving memoir. Malala Yousafzai’s hometown in Pakistan’s Swat Valley was taken over by the Taliban when she was 10. Soon after, they declared girls could no longer be educated. Fueled by her passion for learning and supported by her family, Yousafzai began her fight for justice – one that almost took her life, but ultimately led her to become a symbol of peaceful protest.

All That She Carried by Tiya Miles

All That She Carried

Tiya Miles

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Winner of the National Book Award for Nonfiction, Tiya Miles's *All That She Carried* is a deeply moving narrative on the power of maternal love. Using archival research, Miles uncovers the stories of countless enslaved women who were forced to part with their children. Miles examines both objects — tattered clothing, locks of hair, handfuls of pecans — and lost letters to show the heartbreakingly resourceful ways these mothers were forced to employ in order to preserve their family ties.

Cloud Cuckoo Land by Anthony Doerr

Cloud Cuckoo Land

Anthony Doerr

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Pulitzer Prize-winning author Anthony Doerr's third novel, *Cloud Cuckoo Land*, is a triumphant, imaginative telling. Doerr intertwines a

Combing history, surrealism, and a touch of science fiction, Doerr shows the ways in which hope and resilience can appear in even the darkest of times.

The Rabbit Hutch by Tess Gunty

The Rabbit Hutch
Tess Gunty

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Hailed by the *Guardian* as “inventive, heartbreaking, and acutely funny,” this 2022 winner of the National Book Award for Fiction centers on a low-cost Indiana housing complex that unites an unlikely group of people, including Blandine, a clever, beautiful young woman fresh from the foster care system who lives with a group of teenage boys. During one hot, stifling week in July, Blandine’s fate is transformed, and you’ll be absolutely riveted as you watch it unfold.

Poverty, by America by Matthew Desmond

Poverty, by America

Matthew Desmond

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Hailed as “provocative and compelling” by NPR, this book from the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *Evicted* will shift the way you think about poverty in the US. Along with outlining how widespread — and deadly — poverty is, sociologist Matthew Desmond shows how the rest of society benefits from maintaining current conditions for impoverished people. *Poverty, by America* is an eye-opening account and a wake-up call. *Esquire* calls it “a book that urges us to abandon old ways of thinking and dream a new path forward.”

Stay True by Hua Hsu

Stay True

Hua Hsu

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The *New York Times* calls this memoir from a *New Yorker* staff

writer “quietly unapologetic... To say that this book is about grief or



UC Berkeley in the mid-1990s, and his friendship with confident frat boy Ken. Both were Asian American but had little else in common: Hsu's family had recently immigrated from Taiwan, while Ken's Japanese American family had spent generations in the US. Ken would die less than three years after the two met, and in this powerful book Hsu explores their relationship.

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