

Library Checklist

A complete checklist for setting up, running and maintaining a school or classroom library.

Library setup

- Choose a quiet, accessible location for the library.
- Arrange shelving, bins and comfortable seating.
- Plan clear sections for genres, levels or topics.
- Set up a circulation or checkout area.
- Add signage and a map of the library layout.
- Create a welcoming reading nook for students.

Cataloging the collection

- Choose a cataloging tool such as a spreadsheet or app.
- Record each title, author, level and category.
- Assign call numbers or shelf locations.
- Apply spine labels and barcodes if used.
- Note the condition and copy count of each book.
- Back up the catalog regularly.

A simple export to cloud storage protects your records.

Shelving and organization

- Sort books by your chosen system consistently.
- Label bins and shelf sections to match the catalog.
- Place popular and new titles where they stand out.
- Keep oversized and reference books in a set area.
- Shelf at heights students can reach safely.
- Teach students how to reshelve correctly.

Checkout system

- Choose a checkout method students can use themselves.
- Record the borrower, title and date for each loan.
- Set a clear loan period and book limit.
- Create a simple return and drop-off routine.
- Track overdue books and send reminders.
- Keep a waitlist or hold system for popular titles.

Daily operations

- Reshelve returned books to the correct sections.
- Straighten shelves and tidy reading areas.
- Process new checkouts and returns.
- Follow up on overdue and missing items.
- Restock displays and rotate featured books.
- Help students find and select books.

Maintenance and upkeep

- Inspect books for damage and repair as needed.
- Replace worn-out or heavily damaged copies.
- Weed outdated, inaccurate or unused titles.
- Audit the collection against the catalog periodically.
- Plan new purchases to fill gaps and interests.
- Keep shelves, bins and surfaces clean.