

10 COMMON LITTLE FREE LIBRARY BUILDING MISTAKES (AND HOW TO AVOID THEM)

- ✓ **Building the Library too small.** Most Little Free Library stewards wish they had more space for books, so go for *at least* a 2-foot-square Library.
- ✓ **Forgetting about awkwardly-sized children's books.** Children's books are often very tall or oddly shaped. Make sure there is space inside the Library for these types of books.
- ✓ **Letting water puddle on top.** Don't have a flat roof! A slanted roof encourages snow or rain to slide off. Add asphalt roofing shingles, which are cheap and durable, for extra weather protection.
- ✓ **Using cheap or re-purposed wood that won't last outdoors.** Do not confuse interior and exterior-grade plywood! Go with exterior-grade plywood, cedar, or (if you don't care about budget) marine-grade plywood.
- ✓ **Leaving the door unprotected.** A roof overhang of 3 - 6" keeps snow and rain away from the door, where it could get inside and damage the books.
- ✓ **Putting on a door that doesn't seal tightly to keep out moisture.** The door should fit snugly within the frame of the box, and have a latch that keeps the door securely closed, such as a magnetic latch.
- ✓ **Setting the books directly on the Library floor.** Put down a plastic dish mat or small raised strips to elevate the books slightly. This allows for ventilation and protects the books in case a little water gets inside.
- ✓ **Forgetting the primer.** Before you paint, put on a coat of primer, which helps the paint stick to the wood, makes it last longer, and adds an extra level of protection.
- ✓ **Applying an interior paint.** Instead, look for house paints or deck paints which are designed for the outdoors. Either water-based or oil-based paints will do. You will want to reapply a coat every year or two.
- ✓ **Failing to protect the post.** A 4x4" wooden post is what many stewards use to install their Libraries. Go for pressure-treated pine, or at least an exterior-grade wood, because you don't want the post to rot!

