

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. Go for *at least* a 2-foot-square Library.

Forgetting about awkwardly-sized children's books. Children's books are often tall or oddly shaped. Make sure your Library can accommodate them.

Letting water puddle on top. Don't have a flat roof! A slanted roof encourages snow and rain to slide off. Add asphalt roofing shingles for extra protection—they're cheap and durable.

Using wood that won't last outdoors. If you're building out of plywood, be sure to use exterior-grade plywood. Cedar or marine-grade plywood are good choices, too.

Leaving the door unprotected. A roof overhang of 3 – 6" will keep 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. The door of your Library should fit snugly within the frame to keep out moisture. Use a latch that keeps the door securely closed, such as a magnetic latch.

Setting the books directly on the bottom of the Library. Put down a plastic dish mat or something similar to elevate the books slightly. This allows for ventilation and protects the books if some water seeps inside.

Forgetting the primer. Before you paint, put on a coat of primer. It helps the paint stick to the wood; it makes the paint last longer; and it adds an extra layer of protection.

Applying an interior paint. Look for house paints or deck paints that are designed for outdoor use. You'll want to reapply every year or two.

Failing to protect the post. Most stewards use a 4x4" wooden post as the base of their Library. Make sure your post is made of pressure-treated pine, or paint or stain your post to protect it from the weather.

