

Little Free Library + Outreach Services

Starting a Little Free Library (LFL) network can be a wonderful complement to your larger library system. Goals and outcomes can include:

- Sharing more books and improving literacy in your community
- Extending your community outreach and library outreach services
- Raising public awareness for your library system
- Expanding volunteer engagement and recruitment

Once you have determined your key goals for starting a book-sharing box initiative, follow the steps below.

Step 1 - Select Your Locations

Choosing where your Little Free Library boxes will be placed is critical to the success of your program and will help you meet the goals you have set for your LFL network. Some things to consider:

- Is there good foot and/or bike traffic in the area?
- Will the Little Free Library be visible during the day to those that pass by?
- Is the area well-lit at night?
- Will patrons be safe from surrounding traffic while they visit the Little Free Library?
- If the library will not be placed on your own property, do you have the proper permissions to install the library? You may need to check with local municipalities for any zoning restrictions.
- Did you call 811 to check for buried wires before you dig a hole for the library post?

Step 2 - Choose Your Stewards

Now that you know where your libraries will be located, decide who will be the steward or stewards who will monitor and service the Little Free Libraries. Some of the basic responsibilities of stewards include:

- Attach the official Little Free Library charter sign to the library box
- Add the Little Free Library's location to the world map and include a photo
- Share the Little Free Library on social media platforms and/or in the community
- Stock the Little Free Library with books
- Perform maintenance, when needed

These are the basic tasks associated with stewardship, but library systems usually regard their Little Free Library network as part of their community promotion activity. The stewarding tasks can be shared depending on the size of the planned network and available resources. Some



library systems use staff, others recruit volunteers. And a few sources to consider when searching for volunteers to help steward your Little Free Libraries:

- Do you have a “Friends of the Library” organization that would have willing volunteers?
- Are there staff members inside your library system that would like to volunteer?
- Do you have patrons that are active members of the community that may like to assist?
- Other organizations in your community that would be interested in participating?
- Or businesses in the community that would be willing partners?

Step 3 - Book Supply and Maintenance

Once you have identified a Steward strategy you will need to define the process for book re-supply and maintenance. What to consider:

- For each LFL location, is there a Library Liaison from a local Library Branch to assist the Steward?
- When books run low, will the Steward contact the Liaison, and the library system provide more books to replenish the Little Free Library? Or is there another source to provide the books?
- Who will the steward contact if there is maintenance to be done on the library?

Now that you have your locations selected, your Stewards sourced, and your book supply in place, it is time to choose your products!

Step 4 - Choose Your Products

Libraries

In order to find the right library for you, you'll want to consider three aspects: Material, Style, and Size.

- Material
 - Wood libraries are more customizable (can be painted) and are usually less expensive
 - Composite libraries require little to no maintenance for years
- Style
 - Assembled libraries arrive built and ready for installation
 - Kit libraries can be assembled with a group of volunteers and are less expensive to ship
- Size
 - Two Story libraries can hold more books
 - One Story (Cottage) libraries are better for children's books



Recommendations: Double Door Cottage Unfinished (Personalization + large book storage) or any Composite Two Story Shed (low-maintenance).



Posts/Installations

You'll also want to consider *how* you'll be installing your LFL's. For most installations, we recommend our Post Kit, available in wood or composite material, which only takes minutes to assemble and install. We also have screw on legs, so libraries can be used indoors or for installations that are moved frequently. Or, you can fabricate your own method of installation!



Branding Options

We encourage you to add branding to your LFLs. If you'd like to display your library's logo and name on the libraries you choose to install, you can customize each charter sign with up to three lines of custom text.





Step 5 - Secure a Quote

Information that you will need to supply to Little Free Library:

- Products and Quantity Needed
- Shipping Address, Email, Phone
- Payment Method (CC, PO, Check, ACH)

Once we have received your information, we will provide you with a quote that can be used to secure the proper funding.

Step 6 - Installation and Setting up of Steward Accounts

When you purchase your Little Free Libraries, they will be automatically registered with our organization. Next you will want to set up your Steward Account(s) and then, after you have installed the libraries in your community, add your libraries to the Little Free Library world map.

- **Set Up Your Steward Account**

Within one to three days of registering your Little Free Library, you will receive an email prompting you to set up your steward account. This email is sent to the person who purchased the library or charter sign. Choose your username and password, confirm your email address, and you're ready to go! If you need to transfer stewardship of one or more libraries to someone else, follow these steps (LINK:

<https://littlefreelibrary.org/docs/how-do-i-transfer-my-library-to-someone-else/>)

- **Map Your Library**

Once you have set up your steward account, you have the option to add your library's location to the world map and manage all of its details in real time. **Your library will not appear on the map unless you add it.** To map your library, log in through the [Little Free Library app](#) or [steward web portal](#) using the email and password for the Steward Account, fill in your library's information, and set its **Map Status to Mapped**. You may remove your library from the map at any time.

- **Tips for setting up your account**

- Library Name and Charter Number - we recommend using the same naming convention for each of your libraries. This way, they will all show up when searched. (For example, Queen City Book Bank, a literacy organization in Cincinnati, OH, has installed 150 libraries in the Cincinnati area. They're all named "QCB #B" on the map, and all pop up when QCB is searched by library name.)
- Library Location and tricks to finding it, if required
- Brief description
- Photo

Now you are ready to build community, inspire readers, and expand book access for all!