



THE COMMUNITY BOOK BOX HANDBOOK

Share stories. Build community. Spread kindness



Thank You

Thank you for choosing a Community Book Box from HAVLYN Share™ and becoming part of a growing community of readers and neighbors.

By opening your library, you are not just sharing books—you are opening doors, sparking conversations, and inspiring a sense of community that goes beyond the walls of your home.

We at HAVLYN Share™ are grateful that you have chosen to bring this joy and connection to your neighborhood.

Introduction

A Community Book Box from HAVLYN Share™ may look simple, but it represents something much bigger. It is a symbol of community, creativity, and generosity.

Books carry stories, and stories bring people together. With every book exchanged, you are strengthening your community and offering new opportunities for connection.

This guide by HAVLYN Share™ is both practical and inspiring. It will help you install, maintain, and personalize your library, while also offering ideas to make it a vibrant community hub.



Begin your journey by taking a photo of your library once it's installed. Share it with your neighbors—it sets the tone that your library is a community project, not just a box of books.



Strengths of Our Libraries

When you choose a book box from HAVLYN Share™, you are not only getting a library—you are getting a product built to last, with details that make it stand out from the competition.

Key Features

-  **Extended Roof Overhang:** Protects books better by keeping rain away from the door and sides.
-  **Thicker Boards:** Made with stronger, thicker panels for better durability and stability.
-  The wood is protected by two coats of marine varnish, providing sufficient protection for two years outdoors.
-  **Screw & Dowel Assembly:** Assembled with both stainless steel screws and wooden dowels, making them stronger and longer-lasting than many competitors that rely on nails or glue alone.
-  **Adjustable Interior Shelf (7 Positions):** Customize your library with up to seven different shelf positions. Create two separate spaces.
-  **Stainless Steel Hardware:** All screws and hardware are made of stainless steel, which will not rust and ensures long-term resistance to weather.
-  **Natural Ventilation System:** Two ventilation holes: one inside the base (behind the doors) and another at the top of the front panel, discreetly protected by the roof overhang. Both are covered with protective grilles to keep out insects, rain, and snow, while allowing airflow to prevent mold and moisture damage.
-  **Secure and Intuitive Door Lock:** A simple locking system prevents the doors from swinging open in the wind, protecting both the structure and the books. Easy for all ages to use.

Tips for Installation

Check the Rules

Before installing your library, check local regulations, homeowner association rules, or city codes. Most communities welcome book-sharing boxes, but rules can differ.



A quick phone call or email to your city office can save you from issues later.

Learn from Nearby Owners

Talk to other Community Book Box owners in your area. Ask what steps they took (permissions, placement, fixing method) and what they'd do differently.



You can discover nearby book-sharing box stewards through local community boards, neighborhood apps, or social groups where book-sharing enthusiasts connect.

Call Before You Dig (USA)

If you're installing on a post, call 811 (utility locate service) before digging to mark underground cables and pipes.



HAVLYN Share™ is not responsible for injuries, accidents, or damages resulting from improper installation. Always follow local building regulations and use appropriate safety equipment.

Tip:
Schedule this a few days ahead so your installation day runs smoothly.

Mounting Options

On a wall

Installing your library on a wall can be a great option if your garage or home faces the street, but it requires proper support.

-  Your book box is quite sturdy and will become heavier once filled with books. Before installation, check that the wall structure (brick, concrete, or wood) is strong enough to safely support it.
-  Use a support system that holds the library from its base, not just the back panel, which isn't designed to bear the full weight once filled with books..
-  A recommended solution is to use metal brackets (L-shaped supports). Choose outdoor-grade brackets that are rust-resistant and strong enough for the weight of the library plus books.
-  Select brackets of the correct dimensions (they should match the depth of your library base) from your local hardware store.
-  When fixing the brackets to the wall:
 - Use wall plugs/anchors adapted to the wall material (concrete, brick, or wood).
 - Choose stainless steel screws to avoid rust and ensure durability outdoors.
-  Position the brackets so they evenly distribute the weight of the library. At least two brackets are recommended, one on each side, under the base.





If the wall is exposed to rain, consider adding a small strip of waterproof sealant between the bracket and the wall to reduce moisture infiltration.



For extra security, you can use four brackets (two on each side, front and back of the base) if the wall material allows it—this provides maximum stability.



Use screws long enough to hold firmly but short enough not to pierce the 0.6-inch back panel.



On a post

This is the most common and recommended option.

-  Purchase a standard 4x4 wooden post, 5 or 6 feet long, from a local hardware store (depending on the final height you want for your library).
-  Apply at least two coats of exterior varnish, or paint the post with durable outdoor paint, to extend its lifespan.
-  Dig a hole at least 2 feet deep to anchor the post.
-  For anchoring, you can choose between several methods:
 - Place the post in gravel + cement.
 - Use rocks + cement.
 - Or set it with cement only.
-  Many hardware stores offer ready-to-use cement that does not require mixing, making installation easier.
-  Make sure the post is perfectly level before the cement sets.
-  For best results, use a book box mount (mounting bracket for stability) designed to ensure perfect stability of your Community Book Box.



Ask the hardware store to cut the post to the right length—this service is often free, or very inexpensive (around \$0.50). When deciding the cut, remember to allow for 2 feet of the post to be buried in the ground for stability, plus the desired installation height of your library (for example, 4.5 feet).



Bring your book box mount with you when buying the post to ensure the post fits correctly. Standard 4x4 posts are usually closer to 3.5 inches, so it's important to check compatibility before purchase.



Pick a dry, calm day for installation. If you set the post in cement, allow proper curing time (check the bag; many set within minutes, but full strength takes longer). Brace the post while the cement sets, and re-check with a level after 10–15 minutes.



Whether you choose to install your library on a wall or on a post, the work can be done alone, but it will be much easier and safer with two people. One person can hold the library steady while the other fixes it in place—making alignment and stability much easier to achieve.



Register Your Library

If you'd like to join a worldwide map of book-sharing boxes, you can also explore optional registration services such as those offered by non-profit organizations.

One example is littlefreelibrary.org, which provides an independent registry of book-sharing boxes.



This product is not affiliated with Little Free Library®.



Registration dramatically increases visitors—many book lovers use the map to plan walks, bike rides, and even road trips.



This QR code links to an independent, third-party website not affiliated with HAVLYN Share™.

Make Your Library Durable

-  HAVLYN Share™ libraries come with two layers of marine varnish, protecting the structure for up to two years.
-  Apply an extra coat of varnish before installation, and reapply yearly.
-  If you must use varnish, choose the best marine finish you can afford—it offers stronger UV protection.
-  All HAVLYN Share™ libraries are assembled with both screws and dowels. For extra strength, apply wood glue on the dowels.
-  Place your library in a sheltered spot when possible.
-  Seal joints with silicone to prevent leaks.
-  A good exterior house paint is a durable, inexpensive, and widely available option.
-  Clear snow from the roof at the end of winter—snow itself is fine, but melting water can stagnate and damage wood.



Place a silicone mat on the bottom shelf—this protects books from water drops and improves airflow to prevent mold.



Ideas to Personalize Your Library



Paint it boldly: Use outdoor house paint—durable, inexpensive, and widely available. Add quotes or patterns to inspire readers.



Decorate inside: Use wallpaper, contact paper, or even small LED lights.



Add practical extras: If possible, install them on the post supporting your library rather than the library itself. Examples include a hook to hang a dog leash or a planter box. You may also add a pet water bowl nearby.



Replace the door handles: The standard handles provided are simple and elegant, but you can easily swap them for alternative styles found on Amazon or at hardware stores. You'll only need a Phillips screwdriver to make the change. Options are endless—vintage, modern, classic, gold or silver metal, plastic, or even ceramic. This small touch can make your library truly unique.



Create a space around it: A bench, chair, or parasol invites people to linger.



Decorate for Holidays & Special Occasions: Add lights for Christmas, pumpkins for Halloween, flags for July 4th, or hearts and notes for Valentine's Day.



Find inspiration online: Explore Pinterest, Instagram, or hashtags like #littlefreelibrary and #HavlynShare.



Use stencils for quotes or designs.



If you paint the doors, use painter's tape (a low-cost product available at hardware stores) to protect the acrylic windows from paint. This ensures a clean, professional finish.



Share a photo of your personalized library on social media using the hashtag #HavlynShare—it's a great way to inspire others and show off your creativity.



Paint or decorate the post to match your garden or stand out as part of your community's character—it adds a welcoming touch and integrates your library beautifully into its environment.



Invite local children to help decorate with handprints or small drawings—it builds a sense of shared ownership.



Attach a solar light above your library so it's visible and welcoming at night.



Manage Your Book Box

Keep a Healthy Variety



Balance genres: novels, biographies, cookbooks, children's books, poetry, and family-friendly DVDs/CDs.



Avoid overloading one type of book.



Regularly check for magazines, books, DVDs, or other media that may not be appropriate for all audiences, and remove them.



Dedicate a small section to local authors or books about your town.

Place Books Thoughtfully



Always place books with their spines visible.



Children's books go on the lower shelves so little readers can reach them easily.



Larger books (cookbooks, picture books) fit best on the bottom shelf.



HAVLYN Share™ libraries include an adjustable interior shelf with 7 positions, allowing you to create two separate spaces—perfect for organizing children's books below and adult books above.



A neat, bookstore-style display is more inviting than piles of books.

Handle Surplus Donations

-  Store extras at home and refill gradually.
-  If you can't store them, share with other free library box nearby.



Do not overcrowd your library. It is best to keep only one row of books on each shelf—this creates an open, inviting look that feels organized and encourages passersby to stop, browse, and open your library.

Care for Damaged Books

-  Remove books with missing pages, torn covers, or excessive writing.
-  Check local recycling programs for disposal.



Safety First

-  Remove unsafe or inappropriate items quickly.
-  Keep the library clean: wipe glass, clear dirt, and remove clutter.
-  Post a short friendly message like “This library is for books and family-friendly media only.”
-  Do not allow children to climb, hang, or sit on the library—it is not designed to support weight.
-  Avoid installing your library in risky areas such as right next to busy roads, in flood-prone zones, or on steep slopes.



A weekly five-minute check keeps everything safe, tidy, and welcoming.



Add a note reminding families that children are welcome users of the library—it reinforces the community spirit.



Add Fun Extras

-  Bookmarks (printed or DIY).
-  Puzzles & activities for kids (in resealable bags).
-  Seasonal goodies (candy canes, glow sticks, mini flags).
-  A guestbook for notes, reviews, or drawings.
-  Community messages (corkboard or chalkboard for announcements).



Rotate your extras with the seasons—it keeps your library fresh and engaging for repeat visitors.



Include a small sign that says “Leave a smile, take a story.” It encourages generosity and connection.



Interactive Ideas

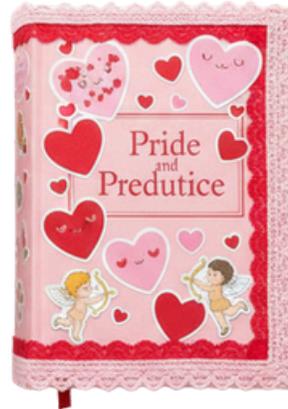
-  Book swap challenges (“Leave a novel, take a comic”).
-  Kids’ corner with low shelves and colorful books.
-  Recommendation wall with sticky notes.
-  Theme weeks/months (Mystery, Travel, Kids).
-  Community events (read-alouds, book clubs, World Book Day).
-  Seasonal fun (mystery-wrapped books, Halloween costumes, Valentine notes).
-  Shared creativity (recipe swaps, poetry, art).



Announce challenges or events on a small sign inside the library or on social media.



Use hashtags like #HavlynShare to share photos and keep your community engaged.



Conclusion

Thank you for building and caring for your Community Book Box. Every book you share is a gift to your community. Every visitor is a new connection. Every small action builds a stronger neighborhood.

Remember: little actions create big change. A single library can inspire reading, kindness, and community connection for years to come.

If you enjoyed this guide, we invite you to leave a review on Amazon. Your feedback helps us grow the HAVLYN Share™ and spread the joy of reading.

WHANT TO BE FEATURED?



Tell us your story – who you are, where your box lives, and what inspired you to create a place for sharing.

Add a photo of your setup to your review so we can celebrate real community moments. Each month, we highlight one installation on our website and share it as an inspiration for others.



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