

Show off your books with a shelfie

This trend lets you flaunt your literary credentials.

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A co-ordinating book-shelving project by Banda Design Studio

One in ten people does not own a book, according to a survey by Aviva. The figure rises to one in five when looking at people aged between 18 and 24.

Lovers of literature and makers of bookshelves should not despair yet, because the survey also found that the sales of printed books have gone up for the first time in several years.

So while the number of households with no books has increased, those of us who are reading them are buying more.

The recent upturn in book sales has created the knock-on effect of an increase in the sales of bookshelves. John Lewis reported this week that sales were up 13 per cent on the previous 12 months. Home libraries are also making a comeback, according to this month's edition of *Elle Decoration*, and also judging by the communal library areas being installed in some high-end developments.

Urban Outfitters, the clothing company, recently published a blog on its website explaining how to create the perfect shelfie — a bookcase selfie — which, according to epicreads.com, is: “A tool for showing others that you have more books than they do, therefore allowing you to assert your bookish dominance.”

Some would say the competition for bookshelf dominance has been won by Karl Lagerfeld, the creative director of Fendi and Chanel. His Parisian flat, next door to a bookshop that he also owns, is shelfie heaven, containing thousands of horizontally placed books on shelves.

So, have there been any changes in bookshelf design? The biggest shift is the expectation that they hold more than just books. Ikea has introduced a version of its Billy bookcase with deeper shelves to accommodate objects as well as novels.



Create a reading nook by framing a window with bookshelves and adding comfy seating

And the books we are storing on shelves are more likely to be hardbacks, according to Jasper Sutcliffe, the head of buying at Foyles bookshop; novels are more likely to be bought and stored on eReaders.

Penny Mosgrove, the chief executive of the buying agency Quintessentially Estates, says she has seen bookshelves used to zone rooms — to split a kitchen and living area, for example. “We often see bookcases used as hidden doors on to rooms that no one would expect were there, even just a downstairs bathroom,” she says.

Ptolomeo bookcases, which house a tall tower of books, and Vitsoe shelving, the industrial-looking shelves created by the German designer Dieter Rams in the early 1960s, made of aluminium tracks that are attached to the wall, are popular.



Heritage Collection book shelves designed by Banda Design Studio

“Everyone still loves a bookcase,” says Mhairi Coyle, an interior designer. “They are brilliant in any room because of the multicoloured spines. They give a room character. We often put bookcases in Victorian houses where there isn’t much light.”

The new buzzword in literary interior circles is “reading nook”, which is, according to Victoria Harrison, the editor of the website Houzz, a little carved-out space furnished with a comfortable chair, cushions, good natural light and lots of books.

At the end of a hard week blinking at a computer screen, a “designated reading sanctuary” is exactly what we all need.



Karl Lagerfeld with his book collection

Bookshelf trends

Ikea has sold 41 million of its low-cost Billy bookshelf since 2009.

Christopher Foyle, the chairman of Foyles bookshop, has a purpose-built library in his home in the south of France containing the 12,000 books he has collected over 55 years.

According to the Urban Outfitters guide, an attractive setting for a successful shelfie has a combination of novels, plants, vinyl and candles. Another option is to combine vertical piles of books with horizontal ones.

Don't be tempted to colour-block your books — that is, group them together according to colour. This trend is over.

Bookshelves positioned next to baths are appearing in larger bathrooms — great for those who like a leisurely soak.

To read more, please visit: <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/show-off-your-books-with-a-shelfie-k975t8jl6>