



Independent Bookstore Day Bookseller Information Packet

INTRODUCTION

Independent Bookstore Day takes place on the LAST SATURDAY in APRIL.

This national celebration of indie bookstores, books, authors, and the entire bookish community is produced and coordinated by the American Booksellers Association (ABA) and Program Director Samantha Schoech.

Contact: Samantha Schoech, Program Director, IBD@bookweb.org,
indiebookstoreday.com

FAQs

Q: What is Independent Bookstore Day?

A: Independent Bookstore Day (IBD) is a celebration of books, readers, and indie bookselling that started in California in 2014; it is modeled after the extremely successful Record Store Day.

To show their support for indies and help drive customers into your stores on IBD, publishers produce unique, limited-edition books and literary art pieces that are only available at participating bookstores on Bookstore Day. You can't get them before. You can't get them online. And you most certainly can't get them at Target.

On Independent Bookstore Day, there are famous authors' books and literary art pieces you cannot get on any other day in any other place. There are readings, games, and things to eat and drink. But, more importantly, there is a giant, positive buzz around indie bookstores; it comes from the media, it comes from your customers, and it's there in the bottom line at the end of the day.

Q: Why should we participate?

A: You mean besides that fact that it's hugely fun and a great opportunity to celebrate indie bookstores across the country? Well, how about this: 80% of participating stores reported sales increases from the same Saturday the year before. **Stores are up an average of 100%.** Many stores were up more and some were up as much as 1,000%. Additionally, Independent Bookstore Day generates media attention, attracts new bookstore customers, breeds a lot of community goodwill, and helps to keep indie bookstores front of mind.

Q: Who can participate?

A: Any current, dues-paying member of the ABA and a regional independent booksellers association may participate. Because they handle all distribution and invoicing, your store must also have an account with Ingram.

Q: How do we sign up?

A: You can either place your order and sign the "rules of the road" agreement in February or simply use the order form to sign up without ordering.

Q: How do we keep up with what's going on?

A: To make sure you receive all the essential information, please [sign up to receive the newsletter](#). This is the MAIN way we keep in touch with bookstores. Please also follow up on social media.

Q: We may need a list of the items before we can commit to the event. Is that doable?

A: Yes! Our online catalog with as much detail about each item as possible goes live on our website on January 15 of each year.

Q: Do we have to order everything?

A: Nope. Ingram requires a minimum order of 15 total pieces for free shipping. You can order 1 copy of each item or 15 copies of one item. It's completely up to you. In 2021, we are not requiring any orders at all to participate, but you still must sign up using the order form.

Q: Why should we order exclusives if we don't have to?

A: First, they're cool and very limited. We also want stores to "buy in," so we know they have skin in the game. Please see the last Q&A on this list for a fuller explanation.

Q: Do IBD tote bags and T-shirts count toward this minimum?

A: No, they don't. The bags and other IBD merchandise we create help market and publicize the event. Bags must be paid for when you order. Bags can be ordered via our website and are shipped in early March. T-shirts can be ordered through Bonfire.com.

Q: What else do stores need to do to participate?

A: Bookstore Day is only as good as you make it, and creating a really great party around it is *the most important part*. The unique items are a draw and garner lots of publicity, but they do not make an event in and of themselves. Each bookstore needs to commit to publicity, displays, and events that make sense for their personality and location. The bigger and more creative, the better!

Our website offers tip sheets on how to make the most of the day with party ideas, event collateral like signs and bookmarks, national publicity, merchandising concepts, an online map listing all participating stores, and loads of other stuff.

Q: From whom do we buy the exclusive items?

A: All items will be ordered through Independent Bookstore Day via our online catalog and order form (available January 15). Orders will be fulfilled by Ingram, our wholesale and distribution sponsor. All participating stores must have an Ingram account in good standing.

Q: What are the discounts on the items?

A: Stores will receive discounts of **at least 45%**. In some cases, the discounts will be much deeper.

Q: Can bookstores continue selling the special items after the official event date?

A: By all means! We only ask that you do not sell them online for at least 1one week after IBD. Phone holds and orders are fine beginning the day *after* Bookstore Day.

Q: So, we *can* sell the items online?

A: Since 2020, stores can sell IBD exclusives online beginning ON BOOKSTORE DAY. This will continue for as long as COVID-19 is an issue. You may want to plan to keep some items back for in-store sales if you are open to the public.

Q: Why are the items non-returnable?

A: These items are produced only for Bookstore Day, and publishers are printing only what is ordered. The goal is for each store to sell out of their Bookstore Day stock on the day of the event or shortly thereafter, so stores should order only what they think they can sell on Bookstore Day. We don't want items hanging around for months because that lessens the incentive to show up at stores on the day of the event. Quantities are limited—that's why folks line up before opening at many stores.

Q: Can we discount items?

A: Stores are not permitted to discount the exclusives on the day of the event or for one month afterward. If you have unsold items after that, we hope that you will continue to sell at full price to preserve the value of the items. However, we appreciate that these items are purchased non-returnable and that there may come a point when sale pricing is necessary.

Q: Can an individual store produce something special for sale in that store only?

A: Yes. Some stores printed posters, stickers, or broadsides for sale or as giveaways for Bookstore Day. This is completely up to each store. Regional associations may also produce special items.

Q: Who pays for this?

A: Independent Bookstore Day publishes 5 or 6 exclusive items via IBD Publishing and sells tote bags and T-shirts to support Bookstore Day. Our fabulous industry sponsors are Penguin Random House and Ingram. Each store pays for its own events and promotions.

Q: Why can't we just throw a party and skip the special items?

A: Beginning in 2021, the answer is you can! That said, we still hope you chose to carry the IBD exclusives for the following reasons:

1. Publishers and authors go out of their way to support indies by developing and publishing stuff just for IBD. If bookstores don't express interest, they will no longer do this.
2. The IBD exclusives are the single cohesive factor of IBD. They are what we publicize and what makes IBD more than just a gathering in a bookstore. They give it a national message and show that as a community of fiercely independent stores we also work together. They also function as "rewards" to customers who shop indies.
3. By buying the IBD items, stores are making a commitment to really participate. We want IBD's reputation to be a must-attend event for readers and book lovers. To that end, we don't want watered-down versions at bookstores that either aren't really interested or for some other reason aren't as invested in making it great.

BOOKSTORE DAY'S IMPORTANT DATES

June 1-September 1: Publishers submit one or more ideas with as much detail as possible to IBD.

September 1-25: Ongoing discussions between IBD and publishers to refine ideas and determine price, packaging ideas, etc.

September 30: Our curating committee of booksellers decides on the 5-10 books and items that are going to sell the best and create the most buzz.

January 15: The Bookstore Day catalog goes live at indiebookstoreday.com and bookstores begin ordering.

February 5: Order deadline for participating bookstores.

February 15: IBD gives publishers final order numbers to help determine print runs.

April 1: All books and items arrive at Ingram's Tennessee warehouse.

April 7: All books ship to bookstores.

Last Saturday in April: Independent Bookstore Day.