How to Build a Sustainable Daily Reading Habit and Book Journ

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Make reading a regular, enjoyable part of your day and keep notes you will actually revisit. These 21 steps cover book choice, a low-pressure routine, active reading, recall, quotations, reflections, connected notes, and monthly habit reviews.

Things you will need

- A current book in a format that suits your needs
- A comfortable, well-lit reading place
- Notebook or simple digital journal template
- Pen, pencil, and removable page markers
- A short list of appealing future books
- Optional library account or discussion group

Designing a Reading Routine You Can Maintain

1. **Name what you want reading to give you**
   Define what you want reading to add to your life.
2. **Choose a book and format you want**
   Start with a book and format you genuinely want to read.
3. **Attach reading to an existing daily cue**
   Attach a small reading session to an existing daily cue.
4. **Put the book where your hands find it**
   Make the book easy to reach and distractions easier to postpone.
5. **List possible next books by mood**
   Keep a short, flexible list of possible next books.
6. **Track participation without worshipping streaks**
   Track participation gently rather than worshipping a streak.

Reading Actively Without Losing the Flow

7. **Preview the book and write two questions**
   Preview the book and write down one or two questions.
8. **Adjust your pace section by section**
   Read in manageable sections and adjust your pace deliberately.
9. **Annotate only with a reason**
   Annotate selectively with a reason for each mark.
10. **Recall the main idea after each section**
    Pause after a section and recall the main idea without looking.
11. **Look up words only when comprehension needs it**
    Look up vocabulary and background only when it improves comprehension.

Keeping a Useful and Personal Book Journal

12. Build a repeatable journal template

Create a small journal template that is easy to repeat.

13. Summarize sections in your own words

Summarize each section in your own words after reading.

14. Separate quotations from your commentary

Separate quotations, source details, and your own commentary.

15. Record connections and unanswered questions

Record connections, disagreements, and unanswered questions.

16. Save durable ideas as findable notes

Turn a few durable ideas into notes you can find again.

Reviewing Books and Adjusting the Habit

17. Revisit notes after a day and a week

Revisit your notes after a day and again after a week.

18. Finish each book with a short review

Finish each book with a compact personal review.

19. Allow yourself to abandon a book

Give yourself permission to pause or abandon an unsuitable book.

20. Share reading without performing it

Make reading social without making it performative.

21. Review the habit monthly, one fix at a time

Review the routine monthly and change only one obstacle at a time.

Sources

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Written as a checklist from https://www.howcompass.com/how-to/Build-a-Sustainable-Daily-Reading-Habit-and-Book-Journal. Corrections: https