

SANTA BARBARA PUBLIC LIBRARY

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

The Santa Barbara Public Library serves as a center for voluntary inquiry, the dissemination of information, the free expression of ideas, and informed public engagement in civic life. The Library's collection is a critical component in serving this mission.

I. Purpose of the Collection Development Policy

The Collection Development Policy defines the scope and standards of the various Library collections. It provides guidance, within budgetary and space limitations, for the selection and evaluation of materials which anticipate and meet the broad and diverse interests of the Santa Barbara community. It ensures the collection respects both the Library's autonomy and the community's specific needs, and it directly connects the Library's collection to its mission.

As community needs change, the Library will reassess and adapt its collections to reflect new and differing areas of interest and concern. The collection development policy will be reevaluated and revised as necessary to provide guidance for implementing changes in the collection.

II. Selection Philosophy

The Library upholds the right of the individual to receive access to a range of social, political, aesthetic, moral, and other information, ideas, and experiences. Library materials are provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people, and therefore present diverse points of view in the collection as a whole. The Library maintains that full and confidential access to information is essential in order for patrons to exercise their constitutional rights.

The Library is committed to maintaining a collection that reflects human creativity, knowledge, and expertise. As such, the Library defines authors as human beings, and materials that are primarily generated or written by artificial intelligence are not considered for selection.

The Library collection is organized, marked, and maintained in an effort to make it easy for patrons to find the materials they are looking for. Materials are not restricted, sequestered, altered, or labeled by the Library because of controversy about the author or the subject matter.

The Library does not stand in loco parentis. Parents and legal guardians, not the Library, have the responsibility to guide and direct the reading, listening, viewing, and internet browsing choices of their minor children.

III. Selection Responsibility

The responsibility for selecting and retaining materials is shared by qualified and knowledgeable staff who employ the criteria outlined in this policy. The final responsibility for materials selection and retention resides with the Library Director.

IV. Donations

The Santa Barbara Public Library accepts donations for the Library's collection that fall within subject and demand needs, at staff's discretion. Donated additions must meet the same selection criteria as purchased materials and are subject to the Santa Barbara Public Library [Donation of Money and Materials](#) Policy.

V. Scope of the Central Library

The Central Library serves the Santa Barbara community as a whole, in addition to serving as a resource for the branch libraries. It provides a comprehensive selection of circulating and reference materials to accommodate the diversity of tastes, reading levels, languages, and interests of users of all ages. The Central Library provides materials focused on the City and County of Santa Barbara.

VI. Scope of the Branch Libraries

The branch libraries serve the specific needs of the neighborhoods in which they are located. Budget and space limit each branch's collection to high interest materials. Library staff regularly evaluate the collection to ensure its relevance, and work to ensure that each unique collection reflects the community it serves. While each branch serves basic reference needs of its neighborhood, it does not duplicate the in-depth resources or special collections of the Central Library.

VII. General Criteria

- Suitability of format or physical form for public library use
- Cost relative to the value the item contributes to the collection
- Space required relative to the value the item contributes to the collection
- The extent to which the item supplements, expands on, or supports the existing collection, rather than duplicates it
- Relevance to observed and anticipated community needs and desires
- Reputation and qualifications of the author, creator, or publisher of the work as established through evaluation in professional journals, expert or local sources, or recent literary prize contests
- Local significance of the subject, author, or creator of the work
- Exceptions to the above criteria may be made if an item is of significant community interest, demonstrated by being a bestselling item for a sustained period of time and being requested by multiple members of the local community, at the discretion of the Library Director.

a. Content Criteria

- Comprehensiveness of treatment, including breadth and depth
- Skill and purpose of author or creator
- Consideration of the work as a whole, rather than specific passages
- Evaluation of the currency and accuracy of the information contained
- Representation of diverse points of view, cultures, identities, and lived experiences
- Balanced representation of important movements, subjects, genres, or trends of local, regional, national, or global significance
- Long-term or historical significance or interest
- Relevance of the information to immediate local requirements

b. New Format Criteria

The Library must continually assess new formats and evaluate the capabilities and enhancements that they offer over existing formats. When deciding whether to replace or augment existing formats, the following factors are considered:

- Ease of use
- User demand
- Equipment requirements
- Enhancement over the current format equivalent (if any) in terms of speed, flexibility, utility, accessibility, or availability
- Anticipated improvements in information storage and retrieval
- Continued access to retrospective information when necessary or desirable
- Staff and space requirements

VIII. Specific Selection Criteria

a. Adult Collection

- **Fiction**

The Library collects a wide variety of fiction in all genres. Materials are selected in response to the popular reading interests of the diverse Santa Barbara community, and balance the demand for works of the present and past.

- **Nonfiction**

The Library collects a range of nonfiction titles to support the informational and recreational needs of the Santa Barbara community. Materials contributing to a core collection of general information are prioritized. Additional materials are selected in response to the diverse popular reading interests of the community.

b. Audiobooks

Audiobooks are collected digitally. Selections prioritize patron demand, and include a core collection of materials maintained to provide accessible format options for all ages.

c. Book Club in a Bag Kits

Book Club in a Bag kits are created to offer easy access to popular titles for local book clubs. Titles are selected primarily by popularity, prioritizing fiction and paperback titles. Additional titles may be added as part of collaborations with partner organizations.

d. Children's Collection

The Library provides materials in a variety of formats and genres that engage children from infancy through the preteen years. The goal of the children's collection is to provide recreational, informational, and educational reading. The collection encompasses a full scope of materials, from those that introduce pre-literacy skills to those with increasing difficulty and complexity for children as they emerge into confident young readers.

e. Databases

Digital databases provide patrons timely and versatile access to information that complements the Library's print and digital collections. Selected databases: contain specialized information that is beyond the scope of the print collection, or does not exist in print format; provide accurate and vetted information not available through free sources on the internet; and are updated more regularly than print or ebook materials containing similar information. Database selection is prioritized on the basis of cost relative to value.

f. eLibrary Collection

The eLibrary collection includes digitally circulating items that complement physical library materials. Decisions regarding the selection of digital lending platforms, licensing models, and individual items leverage the budget to best serve the Santa Barbara community's needs. Selections follow the same general and content criteria as other materials, prioritizing expanding the accessibility of the Library's collection and focusing on titles and formats of popular demand.

g. Film and Television

The Library maintains a physical collection of video materials to meet the educational and recreational needs of all ages. Selections prioritize titles and formats of popular demand.

h. Government Documents

The Library is a selective depository for the State of California and collects current federal, state, and local government publications related to the Santa Barbara community in order to make information published by the government accessible to citizens. These materials are provided to the Library and are not actively selected by Library staff.

i. Graphic Novels and Manga

The graphic novel collection supports the textual and visual literacy of patrons of all ages. Titles are selected in each age category to fill the needs of the target audience, and to cover a wide range of interests, ideas, and artistic styles.

j. Large Type

The large type collection is selected to serve adults and teens with visual accessibility needs. Selection prioritizes popular fiction, along with high-interest nonfiction such as biographies and health-related materials.

k. Library of Things

The Library of Things consists of durable, reusable goods for completing tasks, learning skills, or creative making. Items are selected for the collection based on community interest, cost relative to value, and the Library's ability to maintain, store, and lend them. Items may fall in these broad categories: home improvement and assistive devices, audiovisual equipment, technology devices, educational manipulatives, toys that support developmental growth in young children, musical instruments, scientific instruments, and crafting tools. Use of some items may require a liability waiver or be restricted to adult use.

l. Local Author

The Library offers writers local to, or writing about, Santa Barbara County an opportunity to share their work with the community by donating it to the Library under the following conditions:

- The author is a Santa Barbara County resident, the book takes place in Santa Barbara County, and/or the title otherwise demonstrates a strong local interest and is appropriate for a popular collection
- Books will be accepted as donations from the author or publisher; however, at the discretion staff, a book may be considered for purchase if published reviews in standard sources are available or there is strong evidence of appropriateness for selection
- Materials donated to the local author collection are subject to the same Collection Maintenance standards as general materials
- Materials that are donated become the property of the Santa Barbara Public Library and as such cannot be returned to the donor

m. Local History

The Library actively collects works relating to the local history of Santa Barbara County. Effort is made to preserve access to these titles over time by collecting non-circulating copies in addition to any copies added to the circulating collection. Notable titles that are irreplaceable may be moved from the circulating collection to the reference collection as they become worn.

n. Periodical Collection

The Library's newspaper and magazine collection consists of a diversity of publications in fields which are of interest to patrons, providing current and retrospective information aimed at meeting the research and recreational reading needs of the community. Materials are collected physically or digitally as availability and budget allow.

o. Reference Collection

The Library maintains a small, non-circulating reference collection which is used to serve the informational needs of Library users. This collection complements the Library's database and local history collections.

In addition, the reference collection includes the Library's microfilm archives of local newspapers, Sanborn Maps, and Census records. Materials will be scanned and made digitally available to the public as time, budget, and copyright law allow. As materials are added to the Library's digital collection, the microfilm will be donated to institutions more suited to care for archival collections.

p. Spanish Language Materials

The Library curates and maintains a growing collection of Spanish language materials for all ages to serve the large and diverse population of native Spanish speakers and readers in Santa Barbara. Selections follow the same guidelines as the corresponding English-language collections, balancing the demand for popular titles, subjects of local interest, and materials of Latin American origin.

q. World Language Materials

The Library maintains a collection of world language materials aimed at meeting the interests and needs of patrons who read in languages other than English or Spanish. The collection encompasses a variety of formats. Selected languages are prioritized as follows: languages used by individuals in the community as reported through Census tracking and other statistical data; languages included in local school curricula; and languages requested by patrons. Selection of materials is influenced by cost and availability.

r. Young Adult Collection

The young adult collection reflects the needs of Library patrons in junior high and high school (approximately ages 12 - 18). Materials are selected based on general criteria, in addition to their specific appeal for teen readers and their representation of the diverse cultures and lived experiences of Santa Barbara teens. Fiction is emphasized with a selection of topical nonfiction.

The type of materials selected differs significantly from the children's collection because of the social, emotional, and intellectual maturity required to read them. Only an individual teen and their caregivers can decide what material is suitable for that teen to read.

IX. Collection Maintenance

The Library's collection is a living, changing entity that responds to the community's current needs. As items are added, others are reviewed for their ongoing value and sometimes withdrawn from the collection. Maintenance of the Library's collection through consistent reevaluation by the Library staff ensures its usefulness and relevance to the community.

This evaluation depends on the staff's professional expertise in assessing the needs of the community and the content of the collection, and follows industry standard guidelines for withdrawing materials from each unique collection. As such, staff maintain a working procedural manual for tracking the intricacies of specific collection use. The Collection Maintenance Plan serves as a guide for adjusting collection topics, budgets, and shelving in response to use and time-sensitive community demand.

a. Withdrawal of Library Materials

The following criteria are used in selecting materials for withdrawal:

- Obsolescence: subject matter is no longer timely, accurate, or relevant
- Damage, or poor condition
- Space limitations
- Insufficient use

b. Replacements

Replacement of lost or otherwise withdrawn materials is not automatic. The decision to replace items is influenced by:

- Availability of copies in the system
- Popular interest
- Adequacy of coverage in the subject area
- Significance in subject area
- Cost and availability

X. Reconsideration of Materials

Persons from the Santa Barbara Public Library communities wishing to recommend the removal of a particular item in the Library collection may submit a [Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials form](#), which will be reviewed by the Library Director and the staff in relation to the Library's mission statement and the selection criteria of this collection development policy. The Santa Barbara Public Library will only consider requests submitted by individuals residing within the Santa Barbara Public Library service area ([Zone 1](#)) as defined by the County of Santa Barbara. After evaluating journal reviews and other materials submitted by the patron and the staff, a response will be made by the Library Director within 30 days of receiving the formal request. Materials will remain available in the collection until a decision is made.

XI. Policy Review and Revision Statement

This collection development policy will be evaluated and revised as times and circumstances require, at least every three years.