

Frequently Asked Questions about Audio Books/Talking Books

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Question: How will I receive books?

Answer: Books are sent by U.S. Postal Service free of charge. [Minnesota Braille and Audio Reading Download](#) (MN BARD) is also available for registered patrons who have a computer or access to one. MN BARD can be used in addition to receiving books by mail.

Question: How do I return books to the library?

Answer: Recorded books and magazines are sent in reusable hard plastic containers. Braille, large print, Playaway books and descriptive videos are sent either in reusable black containers or purple cloth bags. Digital books are sent in blue or gray hard plastic containers. Each container includes a reversible pre-addressed paper mailing label. To return a library carton, remove the mailing label from the carton. Turn the label over. The library's address is printed on the label's yellow side. The round punch hole located on either the mailing label's upper left or lower right-hand side indicates the library address is visible. Please check that the title is complete before you return any library carton to a U.S. Postal Service mailbox or post office. Library materials are returned postage free.

Question: Does the library offer audio book titles in the compact disc (CD) format?

Answer: No. Patrons may find them at their local public library, or purchase them from bookstores.

Question: How do I know what is available in the library's (audio) talking book collection?

Answer: There are several ways to find out what is available...

1. *Talking Book Topics*, published six times a year, lists audio books recently received at the library. This publication is available in large print, audio (via [MN BARD](#) and mailed cassettes [or cartridges in 2013]), and online at the NLS's website ([visit their Talking Book Topics webpage](#)).

The annual catalog called *Digital Talking Book Plus* compiles a year's worth of *Talking Book Plus* issues. It is available in large print or on loan in audio format from the library. It is also available for download from [MN BARD](#).

2. The library has an [online catalog](#) available for anyone to search the collection by author, title, subject or keyword. Registered patrons can place book orders from their online account.
3. Patrons can also contact the library to inquire about specific titles.

Question: How long can audio books be checked-out?

Answer: Both digital books (DBs) and cassettes (RCs) can be checked-out for six weeks. Playaways have a three-week loan period. Patrons are asked to use library materials responsibly by respecting the loan periods. This collection is shared with approximately 10,000 Minnesotans, and library resources are limited.

Question: What happens if library materials are not returned?

Answer: MBTBL does not fine for overdue DBs or RCs, but if library materials are not returned, no additional ones will be sent. Books are to be returned in the same cartons in which they were received. If a patron loses or damages a Playaway book, he or she will be asked to pay its replacement costs.

Question: How many audio books can a person have checked-out?

Answer: The maximum title limits for each format is 25 digital books (DBs), 25 recorded cassette books (RCs), and two Playaway books.

Question: What kinds of books does the NLS select and produce as talking books?

Answer: The NLS strives to select classics and informational readings, along with popular recreational works that appeal to children, young adults, and older readers. Titles selected are similar to those often found in public libraries: fiction and nonfiction, bestsellers, current issues, history, biographies, health concerns, award-winning titles and Spanish language. Titles produced generally receive favorable reviews in reputable, nationally-distributed publications or are included in authoritative bibliographies. Textbooks, foreign language study or titles dependent on illustrations, charts or diagrams are rarely selected. Books of local or regional interest are generally left to network libraries, like MBTBL, for production.

Question: Can I suggest a book be recorded by the NLS as a talking book? If so, who do I contact?

Answer: Yes. Patrons should contact the MBTBL with their suggestions. The library will share suggestions with the NLS, but not all may be produced. The Communication Center (CC) in Saint Paul, Minnesota, provides custom audio recordings for eligible Minnesotans. [Visit the CC's website to learn more about their services.](#)

Question: Does MBTBL provide textbooks?

Answer: No. However, the CC provides custom audio recordings and braille transcriptions to eligible Minnesotans, including textbooks. [Visit the CC's website to learn more about their services.](#)

Question: Can I find Playaways outside of MBTBL?

Answer: Yes, Playaways can not only be purchased at some of the larger bookstores, and many public libraries have Playaways available for loan.