

2024 Independent Bookstore Day Bookseller FAQ's

To make sure you receive all the essential information, please [sign up to receive the Indie Bookstore Day Newsletter through the Member Dashboard](#). This is the MAIN way we keep in touch with bookstores. Updates will also be added to the [Independent Bookstore Day BookWeb page](#).

Independent Bookstore Day

Q: What is Independent Bookstore Day?

A: Independent Bookstore Day (Indie Bookstore Day) 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 Indie Bookstore Day, publishers produce unique, limited-edition books and literary art pieces that are only available at participating bookstores on Independent Bookstore Day. Customers can't get them before. Customers can't get them online. And they most certainly can't get them at Amazon or 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. Stores plan activities including 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: When is it?

Independent Bookstore Day takes place on the LAST SATURDAY in APRIL. This year, it's on April 27, 2024.

Q: Why should we participate?

A: You mean besides the fact that it's hugely fun and a great opportunity to celebrate indie bookstores across the country? In 2023, unit sales reported for the week of Independent Bookstore Day were 15.8% higher than the same week in 2022. Additionally, Independent Bookstore Day generates media attention, attracts new bookstore customers, creates 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 both the ABA and **A REGIONAL INDEPENDENT BOOKSELLERS ASSOCIATION** may participate. The regional associations are:

- [California Independent Booksellers](#)
- [Great Lakes Independent Booksellers](#)
- [Midwest Independent Booksellers](#)
- [Mountains and Plains Independent Booksellers](#)
- [New Atlantic Independent Booksellers](#)
- [New England Independent Booksellers](#)
- [Pacific Northwest Independent Booksellers](#)
- [Southern Independent Booksellers](#)

Because Ingram handles all distribution and invoicing for most of the exclusives, your store must also have an account with Ingram. Blackwing Pencils and Indie Bookstore Day T-shirts are purchased directly from the vendors and shipped separately.

Q: How do we sign up?

A: Orders will be confirmed before the winter holidays to allow for more flexibility with the supply chain and more options for exclusives. Stores who wish to participate without ordering exclusives can still sign up through the form until March 31, 2024.

The timeline for all Indie Bookstore Day sign-ups is as follows:

- ~~October 20, 2023~~ October 23, 2023: Indie Bookstore Day 2024 Order and Participation Form opens

- ~~November 10, 2023~~ November 13, 2023 Indie Bookstore Day 2023 Orders close
- March 31, 2024: Indie Bookstore Day 2023 Participation Form closes. (Stores that don't want to order exclusive items can sign up to participate until this date.)

You must purchase a minimum of 20 paid items (individually or bulk packaged — bulk packaged items count as 1) in order to receive the freebies like bookmarks, activity kits, and stickers. If you select less than 20 paid items, you will not be able to order the freebies and will pay the \$6 flat shipping fee.

All stores who sign up will receive marketing materials and be included on the searchable map.

Indie Bookstore Day Exclusives

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 October 13.

Q: Do we have to order everything?

A: Nope. Ingram requires a minimum order of 20 total pieces for free shipping. We are not requiring any orders to participate. If you will not be placing an order, there will be an option on the Indie Bookstore Day 2024 Order and Participation Form to only be included on the Indie Bookstore Day map and receive digital marketing assets.

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. You can always throw a party without ordering exclusives. That said, we still hope you chose to carry the Indie Bookstore Day exclusives for the following reasons:

1. Publishers and authors go out of their way to support indies by developing and publishing items just for Indie Bookstore Day. If bookstores don't express interest, they will no longer do this.
2. The Indie Bookstore Day exclusives are the single cohesive factor of Indie Bookstore Day. They are what we publicize and what makes Indie Bookstore Day more than just a gathering in a bookstore. They give the day 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 Indie Bookstore Day items, stores are making a commitment to really participate. We want Indie Bookstore Day's reputation to be a must-attend event for readers and book lovers. To that end, we don't want scaled-back versions at bookstores that either aren't really interested or for some other reason aren't as invested in making it great.

Q: Do Indie Bookstore Day T-shirts count toward this minimum?

A: No, they don't. The T-shirts and other Indie Bookstore Day merchandise we create help market and publicize the event. T-shirts can be ordered through [Bonfire.com](https://www.bonfire.com) (2024 shirt designs will be available Winter 2024). T-shirts and tote bags are the only items that can be sold to your customers ahead of time to serve as marketing for Independent Bookstore Day.

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 (open ~~October 20, 2023~~ October 23, 2023). Orders will be fulfilled by Ingram, our wholesale and distribution sponsor, unless otherwise noted (i.e., Blackwing pencils and T-shirts). All participating stores must have an Ingram account in good standing. Setup an account at [Ingram Onboarding](#).

Q: So, we can sell the items online?

A: In 2020, stores received the option to sell Indie Bookstore Day exclusives online beginning on Independent Bookstore Day. This will continue for the foreseeable future. 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 Independent Bookstore Day, and publishers are printing only what is ordered. The goal is for each store to sell out of their Independent Bookstore Day stock on the day of the event or shortly thereafter, so stores should order only what they think they can sell on Independent 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: What are the discounts on the items?

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

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 until the day of Indie Bookstore Day. Experienced booksellers suggest that you have phone holds and orders begin the day *after* Independent Bookstore Day.

What else?

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

A: Independent 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. [Check out what stores planned in 2023!](#)

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 Independent 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 Indie Bookstore Day Publishing and sells tote bags and T-shirts to support Independent Bookstore Day. Our fabulous industry sponsors include Ingram, Zibby Books, and HarperCollins. Each store pays for its own events and promotions.

IMPORTANT DATES

October 13, 2023: The Independent Bookstore Day catalog goes live [on the Indie Bookstore Day Website](#)

~~October 20, 2023~~ **October 23, 2023:** Indie Bookstore Day 2023 Order and Participation Form goes live through the Member Dashboard

~~November 10, 2023~~ **November 13, 2023:** Indie Bookstore Day 2023 Exclusives Order Form closes

March 31, 2024: General Participation Form closes

April 5, 2024: Indie Bookstore Day Searchable Map goes live on IndieBound

Early- to mid-April: All exclusives ship to bookstores

April 22–26, 2024: Indie Bookstore Day Spirit Week

April 27, 2024, the last Saturday in April: Independent Bookstore Day

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