

Independent Bookstore Day Publisher Information

Independent Bookstore Day is the last Saturday in April

Thank you for considering partnering with us on Independent Bookstore Day!

TL:DR - Books and freebies are highly desired

After consulting with our Advisory Committee of booksellers from across the country and reviewing the sell thru survey results, here are some wishlist items we feel could drive more exclusive sales:

- Pre-Order Campaigns
- Indie Exclusive Release the Saturday prior to Tuesday publication
- Special illustration for a tote bag, signed print, etc.

General merchandise (non-book) has shown a decline in sales the last few years.

WHAT TO KNOW: PUBLISHER SUBMISSIONS

Exclusives Deadline: June 23, 2025

All items are NON-RETURNABLE.

Print run average: 500–5,000

Price points: FREE–\$35

Delivery to Ingram: March 6, 2026

Independent Bookstore Day staff, along with an advisory committee of booksellers, will select the final exclusive items. The [form submission deadline](#) is **June 23**, but we are more than happy to get them earlier or discuss ideas informally at any time.

GENERAL SCHEDULE FOR PUBLISHERS

June 23: [All Indie Bookstore Day Exclusive Proposals](#) due

June 23: [Tote Bag Sponsorship Opportunity](#) due

June 23: [2025–2026 Indie Bookstore Author Ambassador Proposal](#) due

- Our announcement and posts on social media from this year's Ambassador (Trevor Noah) had a reach of 23,000 and averaged over 1,000 likes and reactions.

August 8: Final Indie Bookstore Day items confirmed

September 12: All bibliographic information and cover art due to Indie Bookstore Day

September 29: Indie Bookstore Day Catalog goes live

October 9: Indie Bookstore Day orders open

November 13: Ordering closes

November 21: All Indie Bookstore Day bookstore orders finalized

December, 2025: Ingram will place formal orders with publishers

January 16, 2026: [Bookmark and Other Sponsorship Opportunities](#) due

January 30, 2026: Bookmark and/or Sticker Artwork due

March 6, 2026: All exclusives must arrive at Ingram's Tennessee warehouse

Mid-March, 2026: Independent Bookstore Day Bookmarks arrive at bookstores

April 1–15, 2026: All social media collateral from authors and publishers to Indie Bookstore Day

April 25, 2026 (last Saturday in April): Independent Bookstore Day

IDEAS FOR BOOKSTORE DAY EXCLUSIVES

Big-name authors with a great social media presence are ideal.

1. **A new, SIGNED release with a special jacket or sprayed edges just for Independent Bookstore Day.** Can you get a designer or artist to create a book jacket for a BIG spring release? Signed by the author but with no new content required. Print run dictated by the author's willingness to sign.
2. **NEW Short story or repurposed work by a big-name author in an exclusive package.** Samantha Irby, Ocean Vuong, V.E. Schwab, David Sedaris, Sally Rooney, Jacqueline Woodson, Renée Watson, Barbara Kingsolver, Brandon Sanderson. This is all about name recognition, packaging, and exclusivity.
3. **Kids' books.** There is a high demand for these items. A book package with a favorite character? An original story from a popular series or character? An original comic book from a popular graphic novelist? An activity book with an item, i.e., a cookbook with a cookie cutter, a gardening book with a pack of seeds?
4. **Broadsides and prints** only work well if they are **signed** by popular authors. The custom-designed signed bookplate and deluxe limited edition signed and

numbered art print of *Pretty Perfect Kitty-Corn* was very popular in 2022, with a 86% sell thru.

5. **Free items.** Everyone LOVES these. They need to be exclusive, cool, and have value. In 2024, the THAT'S NOT MY® Coloring Booklet and Set of Roleplaying Dice from the Graphic Novel, *Table Titans Club* were hits. We Love Indies coloring book and *Warrior Girl Unearthed* metallic bookmarks were standouts in 2023.

A few things that haven't worked in the past: Boxed sets, blank books/journals, trinkets. Shrink wrapped YA books are difficult for stores to sell without copies for parents to review. Ceramic or glass won't work for shipping reasons.

To see the 2025 catalog of exclusive items, please visit [Exclusive Items for Independent Bookstore Day | IndieBound.org](#).

EXCLUSIVES FAQs

Q: How many bookstores participate?

A: In 2015, we had 365 stores. By 2024, we had 1,200 stores. We expect those numbers to continue to grow.

Q: Do publishers donate these items to Indie Bookstore Day?

A: It depends. Publishers set the retail prices as usual (after initial discussion with Indie Bookstore Day) and distribute them via Ingram at their usual discounts. All items are non-returnable.

Q: What kind of prices are we looking at?

A: Between \$0 and \$35. We have found that \$12–\$25 seems to be the sweet spot.

Q: How are print runs set?

A: Ideally, publishers print according to bookstore orders. But publishers can also set limited print runs beforehand.* There are no reprints or overruns.

**Note that if print runs are limited, stores will have a maximum quantity they can order so more stores are able to carry the exclusive.*

Q: How are the items distributed?

A: Ingram is our distribution sponsor. Each participating publisher will need to provide standard bibliographic information for each title.

Q: Can we reissue an Indie Bookstore Day item later?

A: The idea is that each item is exclusive for Indie Bookstore Day, doesn't already exist, and will not be produced in the future. However, there are exceptions. In those cases, we ask for a minimum six-month lead.

Q: Can we use Indie Bookstore Day to promote an upcoming title?

A: Yes, but the item created for Indie Bookstore Day still needs to be unique and special and not feel like a promotional giveaway.

Q: What about giveaways?

A: We love giveaways, but they should be pretty cool. Finished books are great. A beautiful broadside could be wonderful. We can distribute free items via Ingram or a publisher can distribute them directly.

Q: What are the other publisher commitments?

A: Just to meet the deadlines and work with your authors and staff to help promote Indie Bookstore Day.

Q: We can't make an exclusive. Are there other ways we can participate?

A: Ask your authors to set up events at local stores on Indie Bookstore Day (they don't have to be Indie Bookstore Day authors). Use your social media channels and newsletters to help us get the word out. Make a video about indie bookstores! Get creative! We love unique partnerships and opportunities.

Q: What about sponsorship opportunities?

A: Yes! Honestly, anything helps. Penguin Random House became our first publisher sponsor in 2015 with a gift of \$15,000. In 2019, Chronicle Books sponsored our tote bags, enabling us to print and distribute five times the number we produced in 2018. In 2021, Simon & Schuster originally sponsored 10,000 bags and an additional 2,000 were ordered because of the high demand. We are also sponsored financially by Ingram. There are bookmark sponsorships available each year for \$5,500 (for 75,000 bookmarks distributed to every participating store).

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Sponsor an Independent Bookstore Day BOOKMARK!

Independent Bookstore Day has sponsorship opportunities detailed below. Publishers unable to commit at these levels can still make a contribution to a general fund at any level. All contributors will be publicly acknowledged.

2026 Tote Bag Sponsorship, \$20,000 (one sponsor)

This level of contribution funds the creation and distribution of 9,000+ Indie Bookstore Day tote bags, which are important for both bookstore sales and publicity. Bags are distributed to participating stores nationally in March. We will work with you on design and acknowledgment. It should not be date specific or promoting a specific book.

Bookmark Sponsorships*, \$5,500 each (6 sponsors)

Reach readers where they shop by sponsoring 75,000 full-color Indie Bookstore Day bookmarks (approximately \$0.06 each). This is a great opportunity to promote indie-friendly title(s) coming out around Independent Bookstore Day. We distribute 450,000 bookmarks to participating Independent Bookstore Day stores for free via ABA's box mailing. Stores agree to hand them out instead of, or in addition to, their regular bookmarks for the entire month of April. One side promotes Independent Bookstore Day, the other side is yours to design.

**Bookmark Sponsorships should not include titles published by Amazon imprints.*

"I Visited an Indie Today" stickers, \$3,000 (one sponsor)

Fund 175,000 of these stickers, modeled after the "I voted" sticker. Bookstores will receive a roll of 250 to hand out to customers who show up to celebrate on Independent Bookstore Day.

Indie Bookstore Day General Fund, any amount (unlimited sponsors)

Contributions in any amount will help fund printed marketing materials for each store, underwrite the cost of our national publicity efforts and national gift certificate giveaway, and allow us to give stores deep discounts on all exclusive items. Every \$100 sponsors two stores.

- \$1,000 = literary scholar
- \$750 = bibliophile
- \$500 = bookworm
- \$250 = avid reader

If you'd like to become an Indie Bookstore Day sponsor or you have questions about Independent Bookstore Day, please contact me at courtneywallace@bookweb.org. To pledge immediately, [submit your sponsorship through our online form](#).

All sponsorships are negotiable and publishers can be involved in design and distribution decisions or leave them up to us. **We are accepting sponsorships through June 23 for tote bags and through January 16, 2026 for bookmarks, stickers, and the general fund.**

2024 INDEPENDENT BOOKSTORE DAY STATS AT A GLANCE:

- 1,216 participating stores
- 50 states
- 13 exclusive items + 11 free items
- 373,600 Indie Bookstore Day bookmarks distributed
- 7,450 Tote Bags ordered

SALES STATS:

In 2024, unit sales reported for the week of Independent Bookstore Day were 12.6% higher than the same week in 2023 and 30% higher than the same week in 2022.

TRADITIONAL & SOCIAL MEDIA:

- [Each year Indie Bookstore Day generates local and national media](#), including print, radio, TV, and digital coverage. In 2023, we landed a segment on *Good Morning America Weekend*.
- Our official hashtag, #IndieBookstoreDay, trends the week leading up to Indie Bookstore Day.
- In 2024, we utilized bookstagrammers across the country and promoted ads on Facebook and Instagram with the call-to-action of finding your local participating Indie Bookstore Day indie bookstore with a combined reach of over 350,000. The ads were clicked on over 9,000 times, leading to the [participating store map](#).