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## Organizing Your Home Library

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I am a bookworm and I live with a family of bookworms. I purposely encouraged them to be bookworms because reading is not only enjoyable but also educational. Reading takes us to many places right from the comfort of our favorite chair. Some of our books have traveled with us, adding yet another layer of memories to the story. For those of us who homeschool, having books within reach is often necessary for our school days, rainy days and lying around in the sun days.

But what to do with all of the books? How do we keep track of them all? Culling out the home library can be a daunting not to mention reluctant task -- isn't there some way around it? I wonder how many times I've loaned out a book only to never see it again, because I didn't keep track of who I loaned it to and it was never returned. On a couple of occasions I have purchased a book only to realize halfway through the first chapter that I have already read the book!

This topic came up recently at our support group meeting and it was delightful to listen to the ladies share about how they organize their home libraries. Here's a couple of helpful hints:

- Color code your books according reading level. A friend of mine shared that she uses colored dot stickers, a different color for each reading level, and places the stickers on the spine of the book. For example, Level 1 readers would get a blue dot, Level 2 another color. These are shelved according to dot color. When the Level 1 reader wants to read a book, she tells her to pick any book with a "blue" dot. She also helps them understand that once they have read through all those blue dot books, then they can move on to the "red" dot books and so on.
- If you have the room, consider allowing your older kids to have their reading books on shelves in their room. This would allow more room for other books on the main floor shelves.
- Once our family was done with the books from their earlier years, I went through them. I did keep some that were particular favorites and stored them away in a box. It was fun to listen to my two as they went through the box recently and reminisced about the books. The other books were shared with other homeschoolers -- it's a pleasure to give books to others to enjoy!
- There's an app for that! Did you know that there are apps for your mobile devices that allow you to scan the barcodes of your home library books and organize them? This topic got many of us excited. I haven't tried any yet but it's definitely on my list of things to research. A few of the ones I've looked at are Home Library, Book Crawler and Delicious Books\*. I can't give you any rants or raves about any of them but just wanted to toss a few out there to get you started. The great thing is that not only can you scan your books, which can be helpful for insurance purposes, etc. but you can also keep track of who you loan books to (or borrow books from). You can also have your home library at your fingertips while you shop, so you won't make the mistake I've made and buy a book you've already read.

**What do you do to organize your home library? Let us know.**

In the meantime, happy reading!

\*MACHE does not endorse these apps; my suggestions only.

Wendy Tuma  
MACHE Board Member

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