

Canadian Leisure & Reading Study



BOOKNET
CANADA

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Introduction

Now in its twelfth edition, the annual Canadian Leisure and Reading survey provides insight into the reading behaviours of Canadians in the previous year as well as over time when compared to previous surveys. This information can guide data-driven decisions in the Canadian book industry and beyond.

Methodology

This survey was fielded in January 2025 to 1,211 Canadians over the age of 18 (demographics in [Appendix B](#)). We surveyed Canadians until we had responses from 1,000 people who had read at least one book in 2024.

- Readers refers to the 1,000 respondents who had read or listened to a book or part of a book at least a few times a year in the past year.
- Buying refers to purchasing books from an online retailer (or retailing app for ebooks and audiobooks), a physical bookstore that primarily sells new books, a used bookstore or thrift store, a general retailer, or a subscription service.

Survey methodology:

- The survey was fielded online through an external provider, to their consumer panel of nearly two million Canadians. The survey was limited to those with internet access who were able and wanted to participate in our panel in exchange for non-monetary incentives as offered by our survey partner (e.g., loyalty reward “point” programs).
- Respondents were English-speaking Canadians, 18 years of age or older, located throughout Canada, and representative of the Canadian population based on age, gender, and geographical region. Selective sampling was based on demographic results from Statistics Canada.
- There is a margin of error of ± 3 percentage points at the 95% confidence level, meaning that statistics for this group could fluctuate about 3% in either direction if the survey was fielded to the entire Canadian population.
- The data is unweighted.
- In 2025, 211 people were screened out for not having read or listened to a book in 2024.

The study was prepared by BookNet Canada staff.

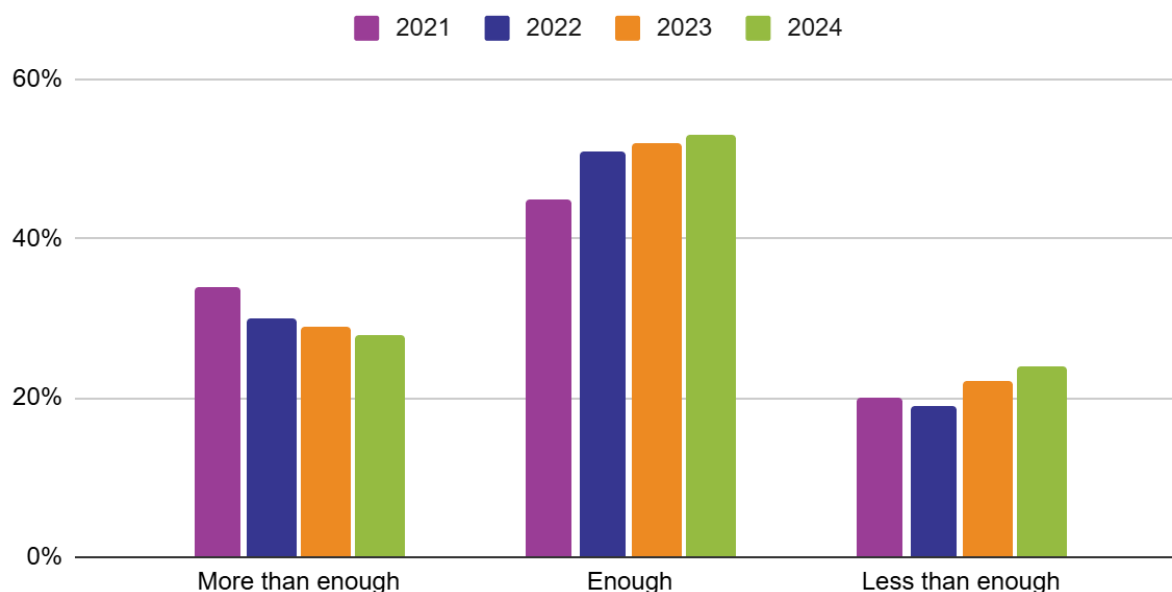
Highlights

- The percentage of readers who read at least once a day jumped 5% between 2023 and 2024 to 43% and moved ahead of exercising and working out on the list of leisure activities that readers do at least once a day.
- Just under half of all readers read between one and five books in 2024 (45%). Just under a third (29%) read or listened to 6-11 books, which was up 4% over 2023, and 19% read or listened to 12-49 books, up 4% compared with 2023.
- Canadian book readers continued making reading a shared experience: 45% read all or part of a book aloud to another person (a child, young adult, or adult) and 27% shared either the experience, the book, or a photo of the book with others.
- More readers said they chose books within their budget in 2024 (46%) than they did in 2023 (44%).
- The percentage of readers who prefer audiobooks continues to rise — from 8% in 2020 to 15% in 2024.
- Half of Canadian readers want to know where books are printed or shipped from (50%).
- The majority of readers prefer listening to a human narrator over synthetic (AI) narration (81%).

Canadians and their free time

The number of Canadians who said they had more than enough leisure time has dropped since 2021 when 35% of Canadians felt that way and is down to 28% in 2024. Canadians were most likely to feel as though they had enough leisure time for the third year running. And that has been steadily going up, from 45% in 2021 to 53% in 2024. The percentage of those who felt like they had less than enough leisure time also went up last year, from 22% in 2023 to 24% in 2024.

Canadians' leisure time, 2021–2024



Source: BookNet Canada

When we asked Canadians about their perception of how much leisure time they had as compared to the previous year, the bulk of Canadians said it had stayed the same (65%). Only 20% said their leisure time had decreased, and 19% said it had increased.

Canadians are using their leisure time in 2024 much the same as they did in 2023. The top 10 leisure and recreational activities done by Canadians at least weekly in 2024 were:

1. Watching videos/TV/movies (90%)
2. Cooking (88%)
3. Browsing social media/web (87%)
4. Listening to music (84%)
5. Spending time with family (70%)
6. Shopping (66%)
7. Exercising/working out (65%)
8. **Reading or listening to books (52%)**

9. Listening to radio shows (49%)
10. Playing video games (41%)

Most of these answers were within one or two percentage points of the answers in 2023. However, reading or listening to books moved up one spot and jumped from 49% in 2023 to 52% in 2024.

In terms of the activities Canadians do most frequently, here are the top 10 activities Canadians participated in at least once a day in 2024:

1. Browsing social media/web (78%)
2. Watching videos/TV/movies (76%)
3. Cooking (71%)
4. Listening to music (67%)
5. Spending time with family (49%)
6. Exercising/working out (38%)
7. **Reading or listening to books (34%)**
8. Listening to radio shows (33%)
9. Playing video games (26%)
10. Listening to podcasts (20%)

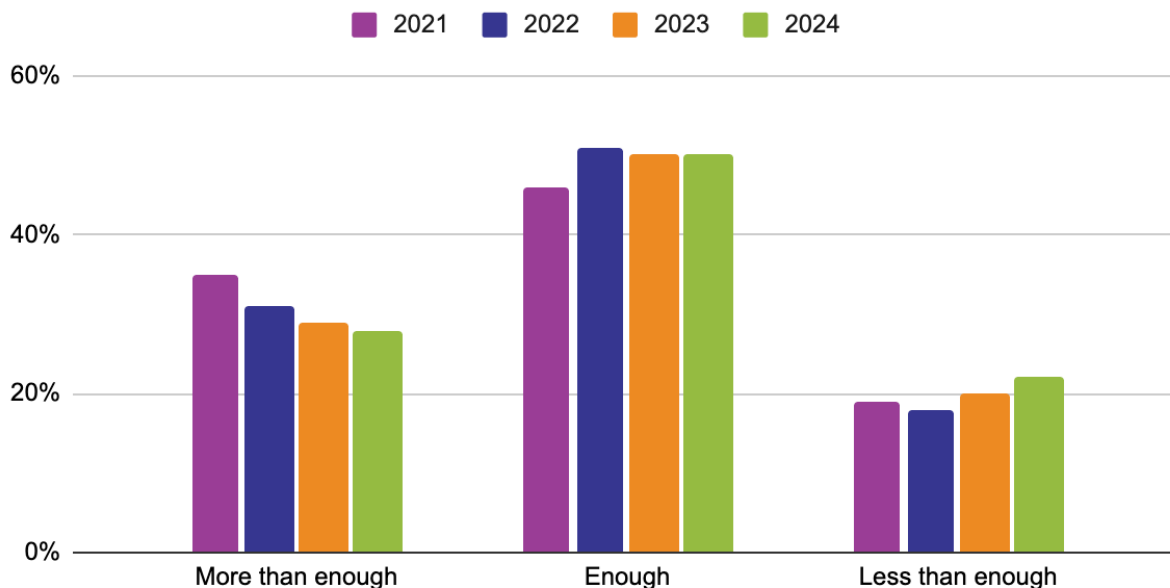
Here as well, reading or listening to books moved up a spot and increased 3% year over year. The remaining order of the list hasn't changed significantly from 2023.

If we drill down to just reading or listening to books, we find that 78% of Canadians chose to use at least some of their leisure time in 2024 with a book — this has been fairly steady over the last several years.

Readers and their leisure activities

The perception of leisure time for those 78% of Canadians who read a book in 2024 is very similar to the overall Canadian perceptions. Exactly half of readers said they had enough leisure time (50%), 28% said they had more than enough, and 22% said less than enough.

Readers' leisure time, 2021–2024



Source: BookNet Canada

Readers were less likely to say their leisure time had stayed the same in 2024 as compared with 2023 (59%), but just as likely to say it decreased (20%) or increased (19%) as Canadians overall.

How are readers spending their leisure time? Very similarly to all Canadians. The leisure and recreational activities done by readers weekly in 2024 were:

1. Watching videos/TV/movies (90%)
2. Cooking (88%)
3. Browsing social media/web (88%)
4. Listening to music (86%)
5. Spending time with family (73%)
6. Exercising/working out (69%)
7. Shopping (68%)
- 8. Reading or listening to books (66%)**
9. Listening to radio shows (52%)
10. Playing video games (43%)

More readers read or listened to a book at least once a week in 2024 (66%) than they did in 2023 (61%).

Leisure and recreational activities done by readers at least once a day in 2024:

1. Browsing social media/web (78%)
2. Watching videos/TV/movies (76%)
3. Cooking (71%)
4. Listening to music (68%)
5. Spending time with family (51%)
6. **Reading or listening to books (43%)**
7. Exercising/working out (40%)
8. Listening to radio shows (36%)
9. Playing video games (26%)
10. Listening to podcasts (23%)

These are also very similar to 2023, with the exception of reading jumping 5% and moving ahead of exercising and working out.

Browsing social media and the web continues to be the top daily activity for readers. However, only 10% of them viewed a book-specific social media post with that same frequency. If we expand the time frame, 21% saw a book-specific social media post at least once a week and half had seen one at least once in 2024 (50%).

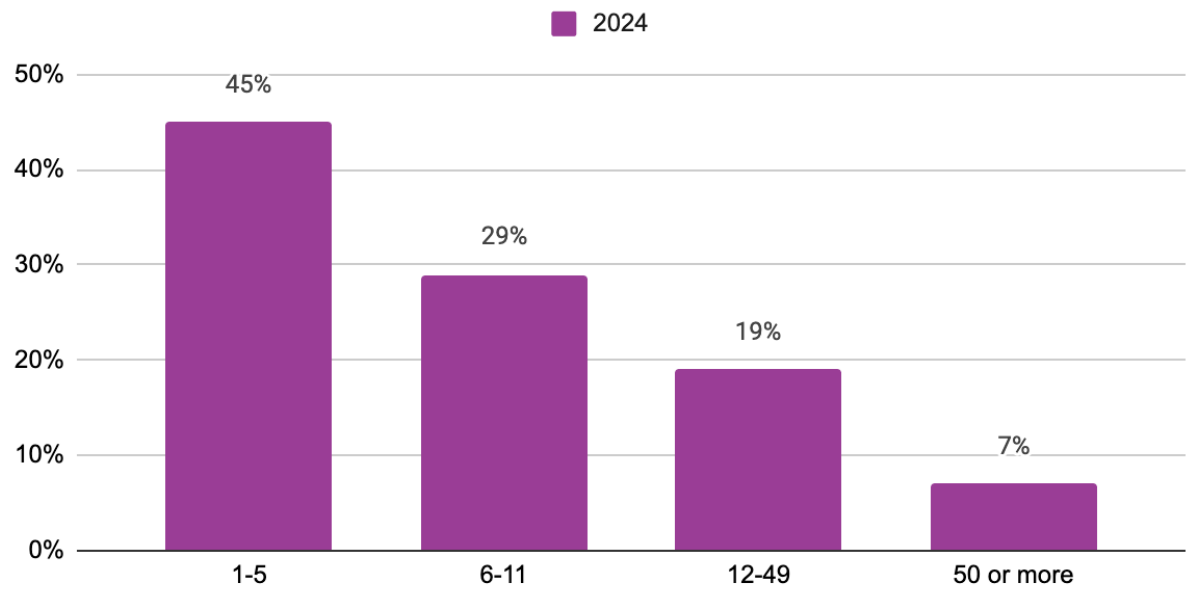
Other online activities for readers were visiting a book-specific social network site (e.g., Shelfari, Goodreads, 49th Shelf, Wattpad, FanFiction, Archive of Our Own, etc.) — 46% of readers had done so at least once in 2024, and 19% did so at least weekly.

Reading as a leisure activity

A third of readers prefer reading or listening to books over other leisure activities (33%). Though most said they sometimes prefer reading to other activities (40%) and 23% said they don't mind reading books, but would prefer doing other things instead.

Just under half of all readers read between one and five books in 2024 (45%). Just under a third (29%) read or listened to 6-11 books, which was up 4% over 2023, and 19% read or listened to 12-49 books, up 4% compared with 2023. Only 7% read or listened to 50 or more books in 2024.

Number of books read, 2024



Source: BookNet Canada

Readers 65 and over were again the most likely age group to have read 12 or more books in 2024 just as they were in 2023. Readers 18 to 29 were much less likely in 2024 to have read 1 to 5 books than they were in 2023 (41% in 2024 vs. 52% in 2023) and much more likely to read 6-11 books (37% in 2024 compared to 28% in 2023).

Number of books read by age, 2024

	18-29	30-44	45-54	55-64	65+	All readers
1-5	41%	48%	47%	45%	43%	45%
6-11	37%	28%	29%	30%	20%	29%
12-49	17%	17%	19%	20%	23%	19%
50 or more	6%	6%	5%	4%	14%	7%

Reasons for reading

We asked readers for their top three reasons that they generally choose to read or listen to books. When we put their responses all together, we found that the top five reasons readers read or listened to books in 2024 were:

1. For enjoyment / entertainment (53%)
2. To relax or for comfort (50%)
3. For brain health (improve memory, prevent diseases) (29%)
4. To learn things or improve things (for school/study/work or personal) (27%)
5. To become immersed in another world or to escape reality (26%)

These are all similar to the answers in 2023.

Reading activities

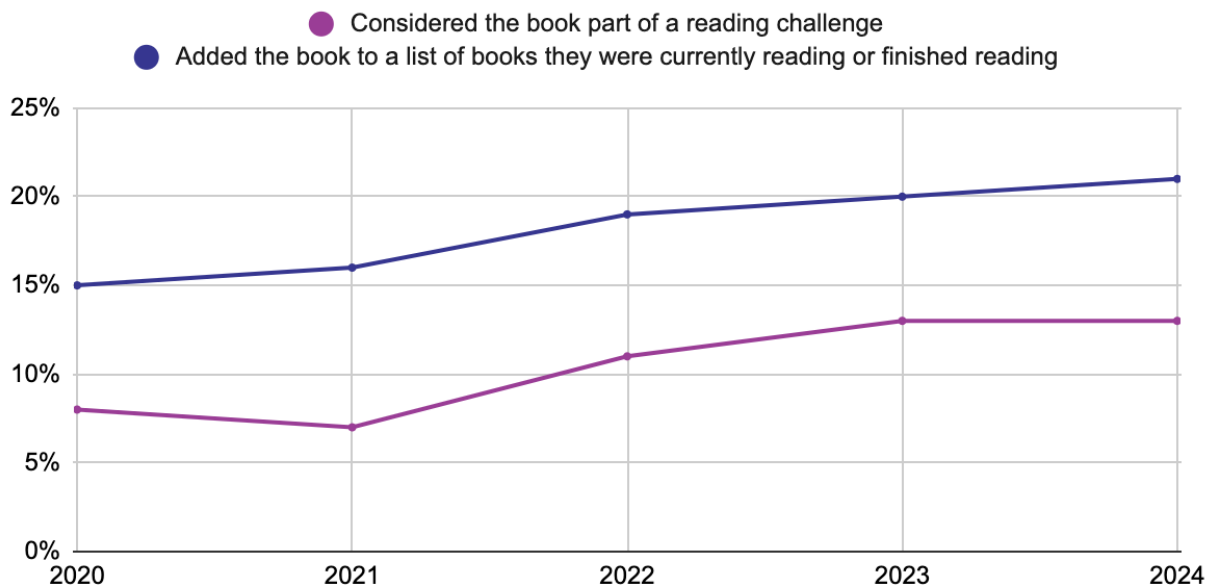
Audiobook listeners continued to multi-task while doing their reading; 78% of audiobook listeners said they listened to their books while doing other things (working, commuting/traveling, housework, etc.). Perhaps surprisingly, half of ebook and print readers also did other activities while reading (listening to music, watching TV, etc.) at least some of the time (54% of ebook readers and 49% of print readers).

In terms of other ways readers engaged with books and their reading, a majority of readers did at least one thing in the list below in 2024 (73%).

- Read all or part of a book aloud to another person (a child, young adult, or adult) (45%)
- Searched for other books by that author (38%)
- Shared the experience, book, or photo of the book with others (27%)
- Went online to read about the author or follow them on social media (21%)
- Added the book to a list of books you were currently reading or finished reading (19%)
- Took an action as a direct result of the book (14%)
- Considered the book part of a reading challenge (13%)
- Read or listened to the book in another format (12%)

Last year we noted that reading challenges and tracking books they read were trending upwards, but that seems to have plateaued in 2024, as shown in the graph below.

Reader engagement activities, 2020–2024



Source: BookNet Canada

Book club attendance has also levelled off after rising over the last several years. Similar to last year, in 2024, a third of readers attended an online book club (33%) and a third of readers attended an in-person book club or reading group (34%).

A similar trend emerges for book events, where we see similar percentages in 2024 as we did in 2023 after a notable rise. About a third of readers attended a book event online in 2024 (34%) and 34% of readers attended an in-person book event (e.g., book launch or reading, award show, festival, presentation, etc.).

Book discovery

Word-of-mouth continues to be the main driver of book discovery. Respondents were able to choose up to three main ways they generally discovered their books; the top five answers were:

1. Word-of-mouth (including book clubs or reading groups) (31%)
2. Public library (staff, browsing, displays, catalogue, reader list, newsletter, etc.) (26%)
3. Bookstore (staff, browsing, displays, newsletter, etc.) (25%)
4. Social media (TikTok, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram, YouTube, etc.) (21%)
5. Online book retailers (Amazon, Chapters, Kobo, Audible, etc.) (21%)

Awards in and of themselves did not drive much book awareness, only 6% of readers chose this as one of the main ways they discovered their books, however, 62% of readers were aware of at least one of the awards in the list below in 2024.

Awareness of Canadian literary awards:

- Scotiabank Giller Prize (30%)
- Governor General's Literary Awards (29%)
- Canada Reads (28%)
- Canadian Children's Book Centre's CCBC Book Awards (12%)
- Rogers Writers' Trust Fiction Prize (11%)
- Hilary Weston Writers' Trust Prize for Nonfiction (10%)
- Forest of Reading (8%)
- All of the above (3%)

Choosing which books to read

Most readers have long TBR lists, what influences their choice to read a specific book? Well in 2024, the top five reasons readers read the book(s) they did were:

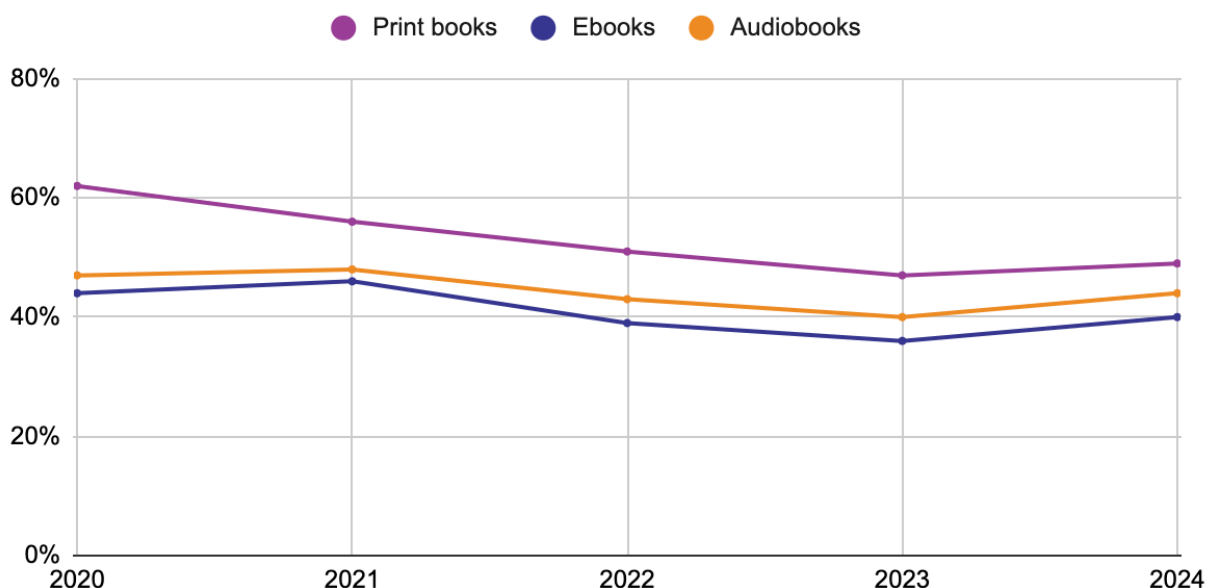
1. The subject/topic (40%)
2. The author (35%)
3. The book's description (31%)
4. Recommendations (25%)
5. The main character/series (17%)

Last year, we noted that authors, while still important in terms of choosing which book to read, were on a bit of a downward trend over the last couple of years — from 40% in 2021 to 33% in 2022 and 31% in 2023. This year it has bounced back a bit at 35%.

Acquisition by format

For the second year in a row, readers were acquiring books from free sources more than from paid sources. In 2023, 47% of print readers bought their books and 51% found a free source for their reading material. In 2024, there was an even split — 49% of readers got their print books for free and 49% purchased them. As for audiobook and ebook readers, 40% of ebook readers purchased their books in 2024 as did 44% of audiobook listeners in 2024.

Purchased books by format, 2020–2024



Source: BookNet Canada

Book acquisition from free sources

Ebook readers were the group most likely to get their books from a free source (57%) and the public library was their source of choice (22%). Free internet sites experienced a bit of a decline in 2024 at 16%, down from 20% at their peak in 2022.

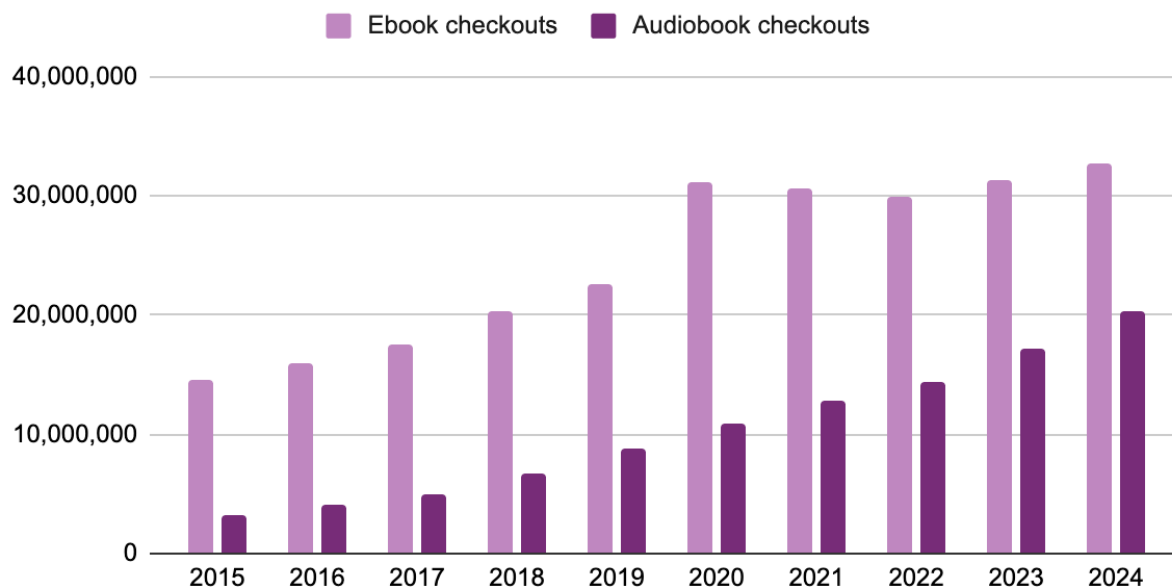
Just over half of audiobook listeners acquired their books for free in 2024 (55%). They were most likely to have found them at the public library (19%), on a free internet site (e.g., LibriVox, YouTube, public domain, etc.) (18%), or have received their audiobooks as gifts (7%). This breakdown was similar to 2023.

Print readers were least likely of all format readers to get their books for free. The public library was the most-used free source of acquiring books at 23% for print readers. Public library use has stayed within a percentage point since 2020 for print readers. Borrowing the book from

another person (9%), receiving as a gift (9%), or receiving them for free (e.g., freebie, Free Little Library, ARC, etc.) (8%) were the final three ways print readers acquired free books.

We asked OverDrive, the world's leading digital reading platform for libraries and schools, for a look at their data to compare. When we see their checkouts, we find that ebooks have remained relatively stable since 2020, but audiobook checkouts have continued to rise since 2015, up 18% in 2024 over 2023.

Canadian ebook and audiobook library checkouts, 2015–2024



Source: OverDrive

Buying books by format

Print readers were the most likely to purchase their books in 2024 at 49%. These books were mainly acquired from physical bookstores that primarily sell new books (12%), online retailers (12%), or from used bookstores or thrift stores (11%). General retailers (e.g., Costco, Walmart, Shoppers Drug Mart, grocery store, etc.) also accounted for 10% of print book purchases.

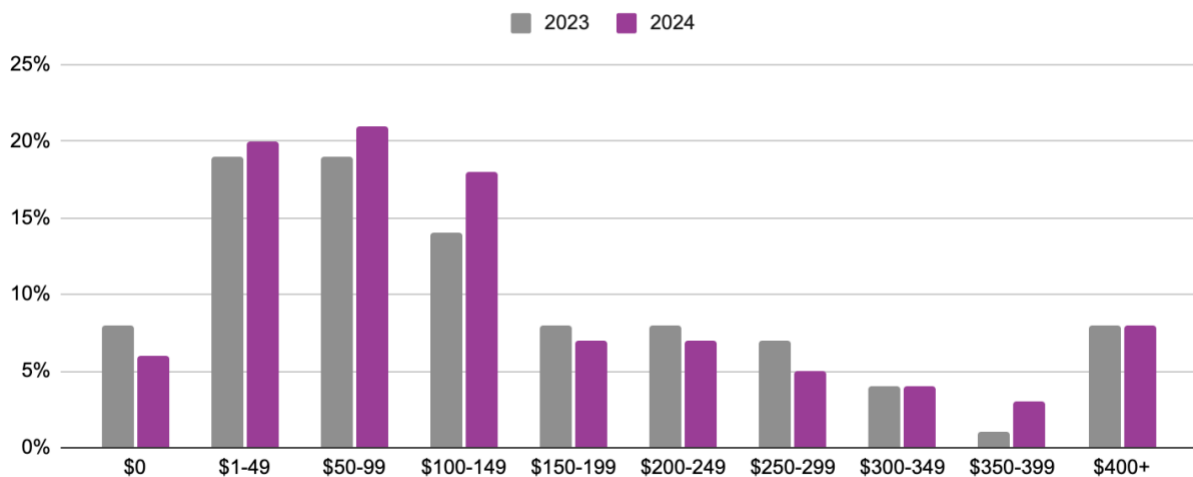
The 44% of audiobook buyers who purchased their audiobooks mainly did so from online retailers (e.g., Amazon/Kindle Unlimited, Audiobooks.com, iTunes, etc.) (18%), a subscription service (15%), a physical bookstore (6%), or a general retailer (e.g., Costco, Walmart, Shoppers Drug Mart, grocery store, etc.) (5%).

Ebook readers were the least likely to purchase their books at 40% in 2024. Ebook purchases were made from an online retailer or via a retailing app (20%), a subscription service (13%), or a general retailer (e.g., Costco, Walmart, Shoppers Drug Mart, grocery store, etc.) (7%).

Money spent on books and perception of value

In terms of spending on leisure activities in a given month, most Canadian readers spent between \$1 and \$49 (20%) or between \$50 and \$99 (21%). The third largest share spent between \$100 and \$149 per month (18%). In 2024, fewer Canadians spent nothing in a typical month than they did in 2023 and more spent between \$1 and \$149 as seen in the graph below. It's a notable shift in spending at a time when cost of living is rising. It will be interesting to see how this changes in 2025.

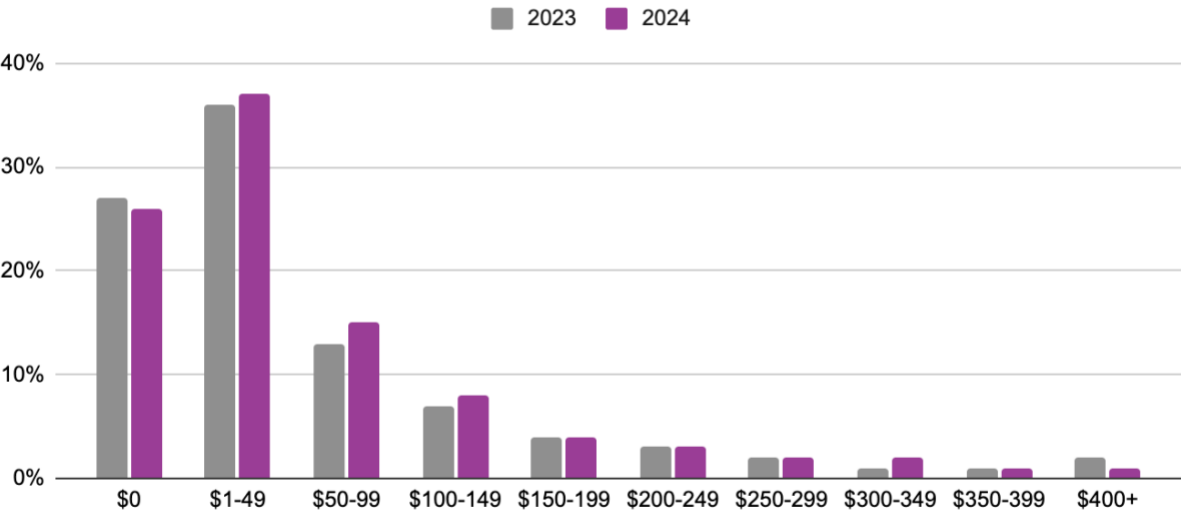
Amount spent on leisure activities by readers in a typical month, 2023–2024



Source: BookNet Canada

When we narrow down leisure spending to just book purchases, we found that readers are spending much the same amounts in 2024 as they did in 2023. The largest share of readers still spent between \$1 and \$49 per month on books (37%), 26% did not spend any money, and 15% spent between \$50 and \$99.

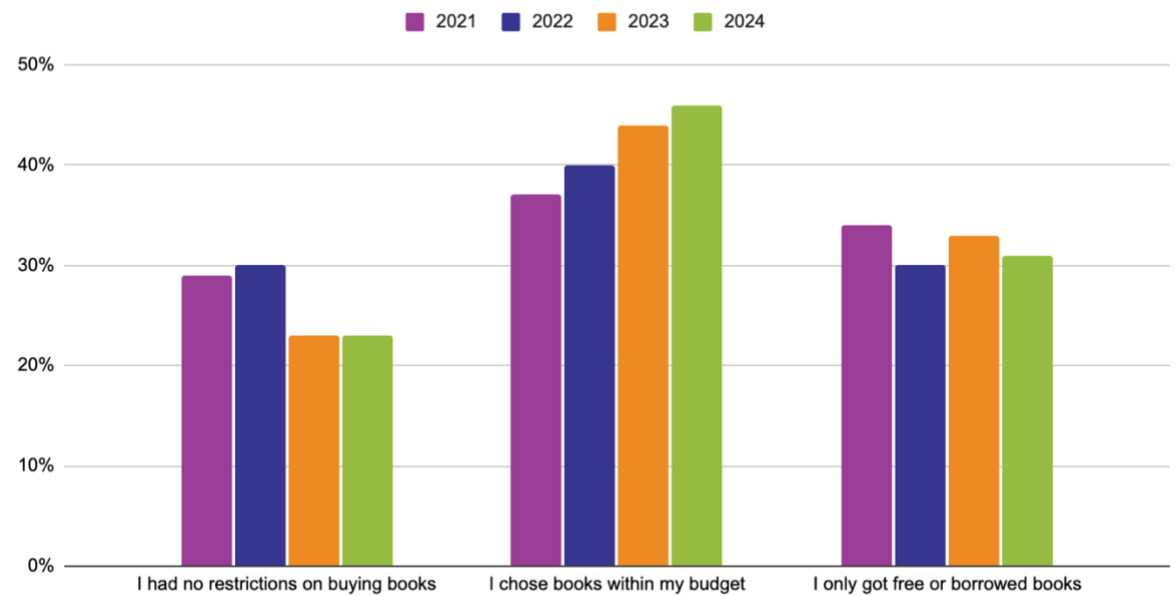
Amount spent on books by readers in a typical month, 2023–2024



Source: BookNet Canada

Though the changes in spending habits for readers in 2024 compared with 2023 were not big ones, we do see changes in how they answered questions about their budget for books. More readers said they chose books within their budget in 2024 (46%) than in 2023 (44%) or 2022 (40%), and fewer readers had no restrictions on the books they bought (23% in each 2024 and 2023 down from 30% in 2022).

Reader spending habits, 2021–2024



Source: BookNet Canada

Readers were likely to spend more on print books than other formats. Once the threshold was \$50 or above, print books either tied or came out ahead in each tier of spending. Readers were most likely to spend nothing on ebooks (17%) than other formats.

“Books have become so expensive that it is difficult to afford all the ones I want, so libraries need to increase their budgets.”

“Please always prioritize accessibility and affordability of books for the public, reading is one of the most important things humanity has access to.”

“In times like these it is important to keep book prices within reach of ordinary people.”

“I like having lots of options for ebooks, however, I find they can be expensive.”

Amount spent on books by format, 2024

	Print books	Ebooks	Audiobooks
\$0	3%	17%	15%
\$1-49	31%	31%	38%
\$50-99	25%	24%	17%
\$100-149	18%	12%	18%
\$150-199	7%	7%	4%
\$200-249	6%	6%	4%
\$250-299	3%	2%	1%
\$300-349	3%	1%	2%
\$350-399	1%	1%	1%
\$400+	2%	0%	0%

When we look at perceptions of value, we can see a bit of a shift from 2023 for print books. Readers were less likely to say they got good value for the price they paid in 2024 than they were in 2023 and were more likely to give a qualified yes by choosing “sometimes”. Ebook readers were slightly more likely in 2024 than in 2023 to see more value in their ebook purchases.

“I get good value at the price I pay” by format, 2023–2024

		2023	2024
Print books	Yes	41%	36%
	Sometimes	42%	45%
	No	10%	9%
Ebooks	Yes	38%	39%
	Sometimes	41%	42%
	No	11%	10%
Audiobooks	Yes	38%	39%
	Sometimes	43%	42%
	No	10%	11%

Format preferences and frequency of reading

Canadian readers continue to prefer print books over any other format. The majority of them would prefer to read print books (59%), followed by ebooks (17%), and audiobooks (15%). The percentage of readers who prefer audiobooks continues to rise — from 8% in 2020 to 15% in 2024. Those without a format preference rose slightly from 7% in 2023 to 9% in 2024.

“Modern poetry should be more widely available in audio format.”

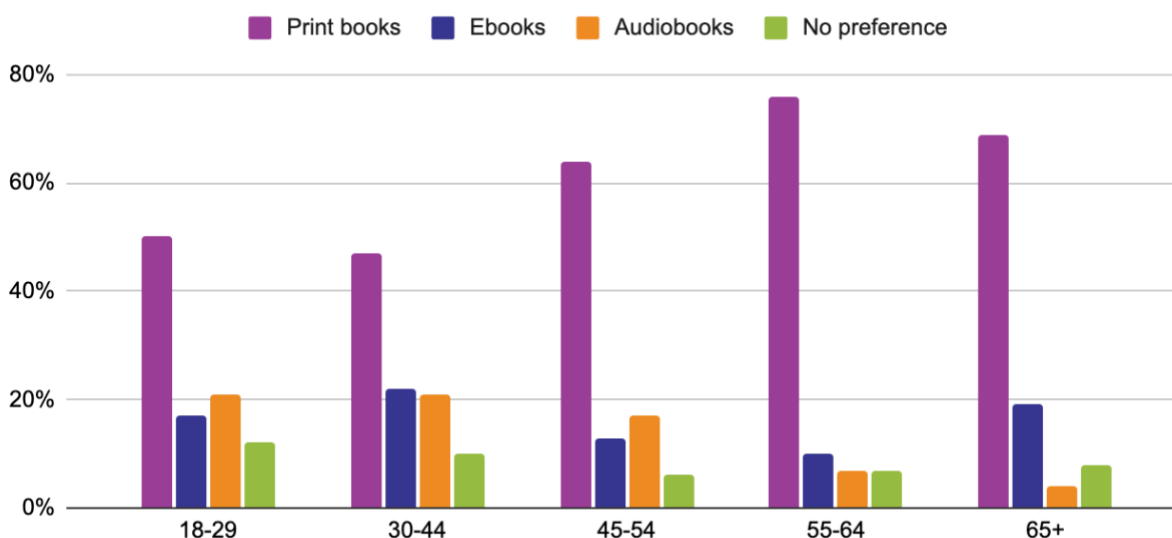
“[K]eep publishing print books as I don’t like ebooks or listening to audiobooks.”

“Increase the number of available hardcover books to ebooks please.”

Audiobook listeners were mostly, but not exclusively, listening to digital audiobooks. And this continues to rise as well. In 2023, 28% only listened to digital audiobooks and 64% listened to a mix of physical and digital. However, in 2024, 35% only listened to digital audiobooks and 66% listened to a mix of physical and digital.

Readers in the 55 to 64 age group were most likely to prefer print books at 76% and 30 to 44 year olds were least likely to prefer print at 47%. The group that most preferred ebooks were 30 to 44 year olds at 20% and they were tied with the 18 to 29 year olds for audiobook preference (21% for each group). Readers 18 to 29 were most likely to not have a format preference (12%).

Format preference by age, 2024

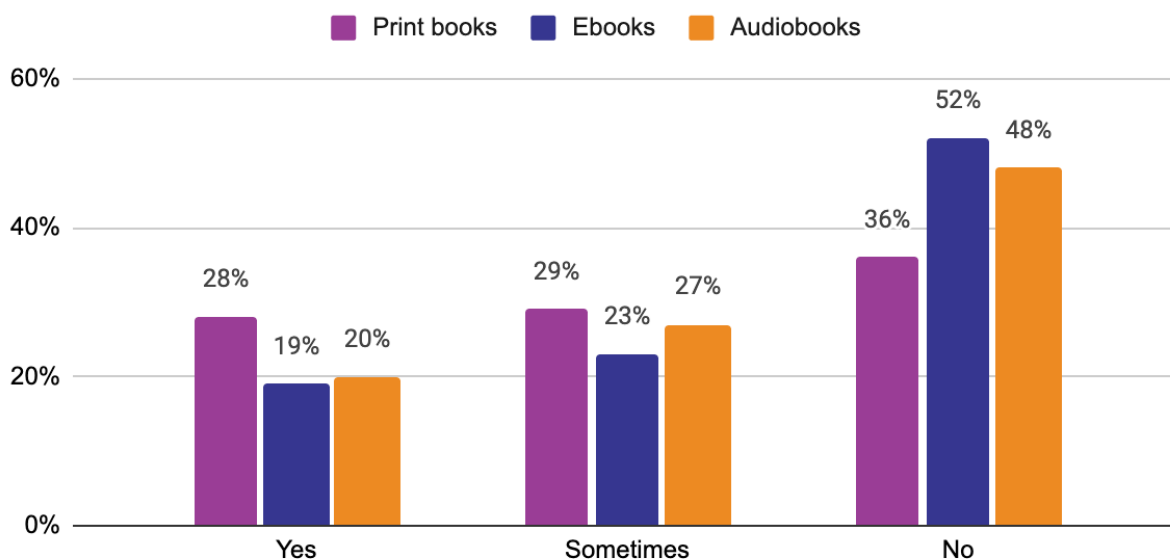


Source: BookNet Canada

Just under a quarter of readers will only read their preferred format (22%).

Print book readers are most likely to stick to their preferred format; 28% said that if they could not find the print version of a book, they would not read it in another format. Ebook readers were the most flexible, only 19% would forgo a book if they could not find that format. Ebook and audiobook readers became more flexible in 2024 than they were in 2023: 52% of ebook readers would read the book in another format in 2024, compared with 44% in 2023. Audiobook readers followed a similar trend in 2024, 48% would read the book in another format in 2024 if the audiobook version wasn't available, but only 39% said the same in 2023.

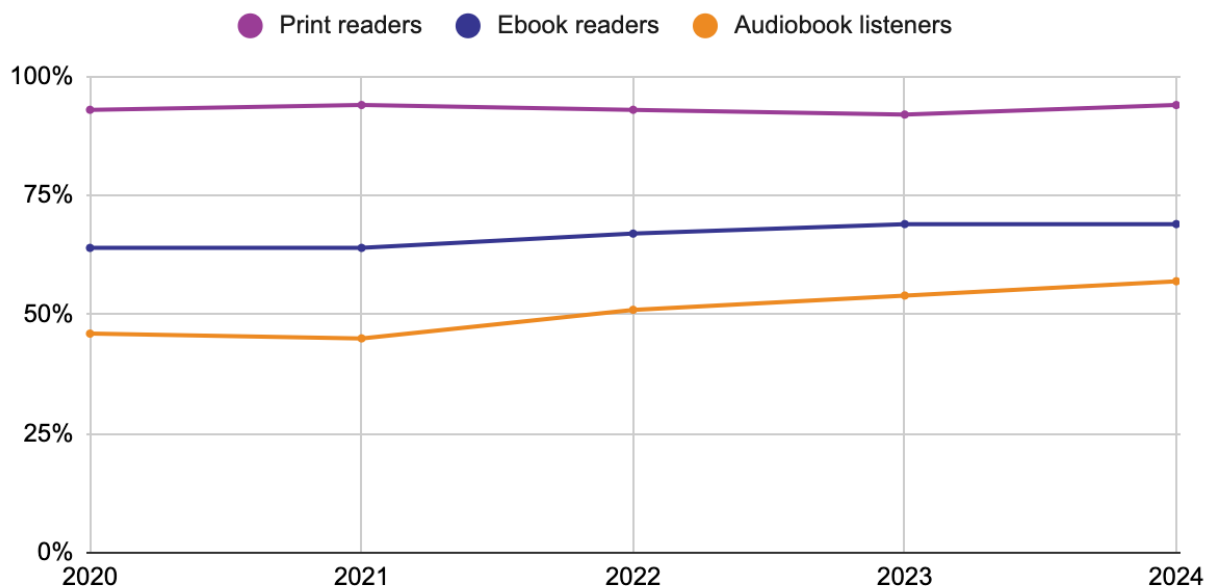
Readers' agreement with the statement "If I can't find the _____ version of the book, I won't read it in another format", 2024



Source: BookNet Canada

Whether it's their preferred format or not, the number of readers who listened to an audiobook at least once in 2023 continued to rise from 46% in 2020 to 57% in 2024. Readers who read an ebook at least once has also increased from 64% in 2020 to 69% in 2024. The vast majority of readers continued to read a print book at least once in 2024 (94%), This has remained fairly steady over the last five years.

Readership by format, 2020–2024



Source: BookNet Canada

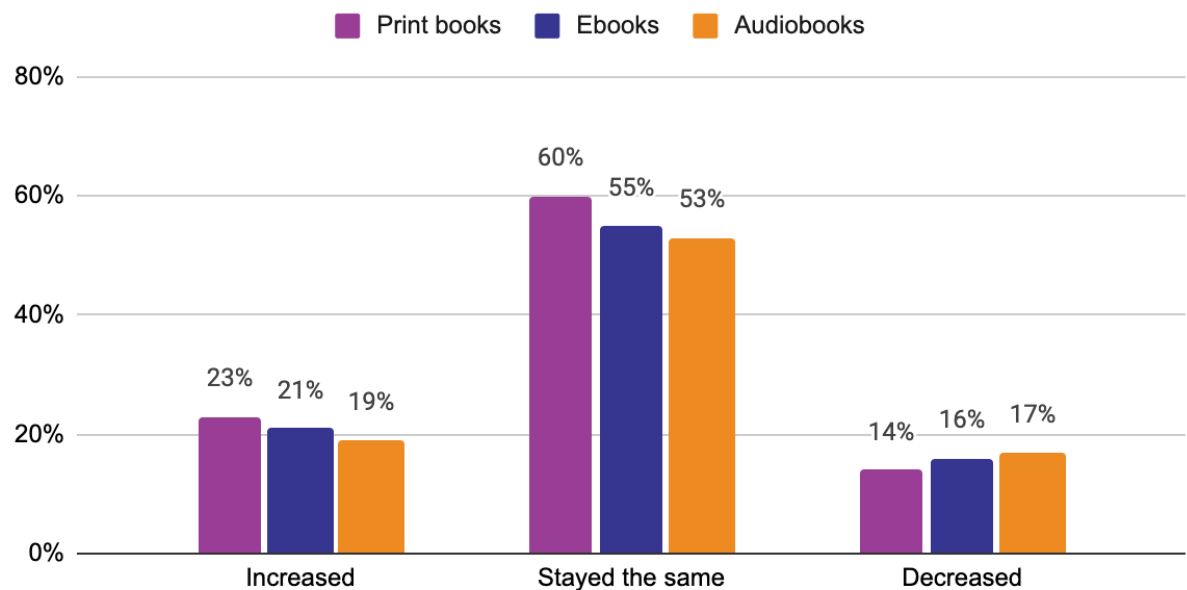
Across all formats, readers were most frequently reading once a week (print 23%, ebooks 17%, and audiobooks 14%).

Reading frequency by format, 2024

	Print books	Ebooks	Audiobooks
More than once a day	9%	6%	5%
Once a day	20%	12%	10%
Once a week	23%	17%	14%
Once a month	14%	13%	11%
Less than once a month	11%	10%	7%
A few times a year	16%	11%	11%
Never	6%	31%	43%

For the most part, readers reported that they had just as much time in 2024 to read as they did in 2023 and this is true across all formats as seen in the graph below.

Perception of time spent reading by format, 2024

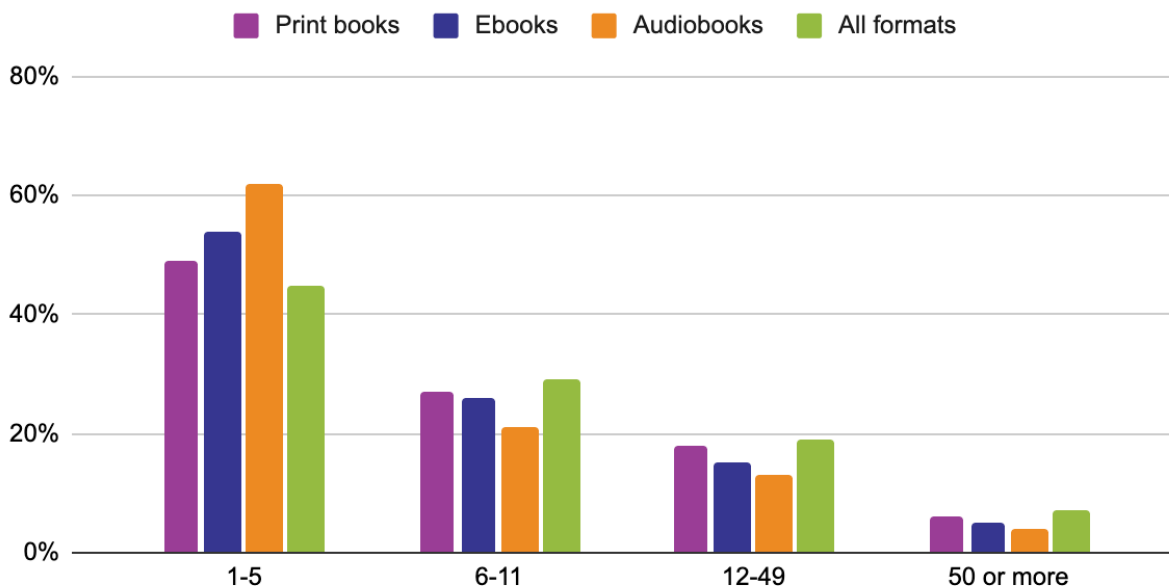


Source: BookNet Canada

Number of books read

Just under half of Canadian readers read between 1 and 5 books in 2024 (45%) which was down from 52% in 2023. The share of readers who read 6 to 11 books rose, however. From 25% in 2023 to 29% in 2024. Audiobook listeners were most likely to belong to the group who listened to five or fewer books in 2024 (62%).

Number of books read by format, 2024



Source: BookNet Canada

Reading behaviours and preferences

Most Canadian readers don't feel obligated to complete books they are not enjoying — 78% said they will not or sometimes will not finish a book they do not like. One in six readers only read or listen to sections of the book that they are interested in at least some of the time (57%).

Many readers also chose to skim or speed read the books they read. Over half of ebook readers did so at least occasionally (55%), as did 49% of print readers. A majority of audiobook listeners said that they changed the speed of their books to either be faster or slower (62%).

Print readers show strong preferences for environmental considerations around their books:

- I want books to be made from sustainably-sourced paper (71%)
- I donate or give away a print book after I finish reading it (69%)
- I want my books delivered in ecological-friendly packaging (67%)
- I want to know where books are printed or shipped from (50%)

These preferences have remained high since 2021 when we first started asking these questions in our survey. However, it will be interesting to keep an eye on the question about knowing where the books are printed or shipped from next year in light of the ever-evolving American tariff situation. While we conceived of this question in relation to environmental impact, the economic situation may bring another dimension to it in the future.

“Make books more sustainable for the environment and normalize borrowing books”

“Adopt sustainable printing and distribution methods to reduce environmental impact.”

“More environmentally friendly packaging and ink.”

Though last year we found that ebook readers showed more of a preference for embedded audio or video in 2023 than they did in 2022, that is not the case this year. In 2023, 37% of ebook readers sometimes preferred ebooks with embedded audio or video, 20% always preferred it, and 34% did not prefer these types of ebooks. In 2024, only 31% sometimes preferred embedded audio or video, 21% preferred it and 39% did not prefer it.

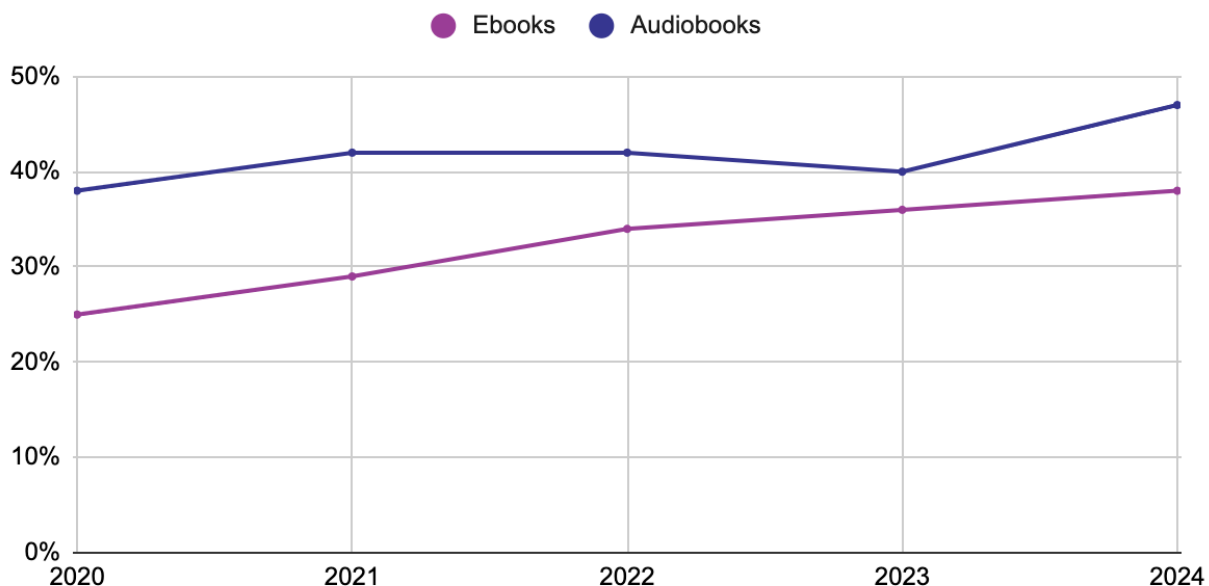
The percentage of audiobook listeners who at least sometimes preferred audiobooks with sound effects and/or music also fell a bit in our surveying this year; from 74% in 2023 to 69% in 2024.

Other audiobook preferences were:

- I prefer listening to a human narrator over synthetic (AI) narration (81%)
- I have stopped listening to an audiobook because of the sound of the narrator's voice (64%)
- I search for specific narrators when looking for audiobooks to listen to (62%)
- I listen to an audiobook while following along in a physical/print book or ebook (56%)

Reading devices and apps

Smartphones continue to be the most popular way for ebook readers and audiobook listeners to use for their reading.

Smartphone use for ebooks and audiobooks, 2020–2024

Source: BookNet Canada

The big jump in smartphone use for audiobooks in 2024 (from 40% in 2023 to 47% in 2024) might have come at the expense of downward swings for tablets (22% in 2023 to 20% in 2024) and computers (18% in 2023 and 14% in 2024).

Devices used to read ebooks and listen to audiobooks, 2024

	Ebooks	Audiobooks
Smartphone	38%	47%
Tablet	28%	20%
Computer	15%	14%
Dedicated e-reader	16%	5%
Smart speaker	-	6%
Car stereo	-	6%
CD/tape player	-	2%
Braille display/terminal	1%	-

For the sixth year in a row, YouTube is the most popular platform or app used to listen to audiobooks (30%) and Amazon Kindle is the most popular for reading ebooks (35%). Though Spotify (25%), Audible (23%), and Google Books (21%) are gaining popularity.

Most popular apps to read ebooks and listen to audiobooks, 2024

	Ebooks	Audiobooks
Kindle	35%	15%
YouTube	-	30%
Internet browser	23%	15%
Google Books/Google Play	21%	17%
Audible	-	23%
Spotify	-	25%
iTunes/Apple Books	16%	14%
Kobo	11%	8%
Adobe Reader or Digital Editions	12%	-
Audiobooks.com	-	15%
OverDrive/Libby	11%	11%

Accessibility and reading features

Print books

While not as many options for accessibility features are available to print readers, we did find that in 2024, 18% of print book readers preferred large print formats, 4% preferred Braille books, and 27% of print book readers used a magnifier to read their books. These numbers are consistent with what we found in 2023 as well.

Ebooks

Almost three quarters of ebook readers at least sometimes used the table of contents for navigating their book (73%). They were also likely to adjust the screen magnification/zoom to make the text larger (71%), adjust the font or spacing to increase the text size or space out letters/lines (70%), and turn on the night display feature (69%).

Ebook features used by readers, 2024

	Yes	Sometimes	No
I turn on the night display when reading in dim/low lighting.	33%	36%	26%
I use the reading mode on a tablet or smartphone.	32%	33%	29%
I use the Bookmark button.	31%	33%	30%
I adjust font size or spacing to increase the text size or space out letters/lines.	31%	39%	26%
I use the search function.	30%	36%	28%
I use the table of contents.	29%	44%	22%
I adjust the screen magnification/zoom to be larger.	29%	42%	25%
I change text or background colour(s) for a brighter contrast.	26%	34%	34%
I use reference page numbers or the percentage metric.	23%	33%	36%
I change the text orientation from portrait to landscape.	22%	33%	40%
I make notes or highlight text.	22%	31%	42%
I turn on the screen reader to use the text-to-speech feature or a Braille device.	20%	24%	50%
I use voice control, eye tracking, or switches.	18%	24%	52%
I don't know how to use most or all of these features.	22%	35%	36%

Readers under 45 were the ones most likely to use most of the accessibility features in the list above. With the exception of using text-to-speech features or Braille devices; using voice

control, eye tracking, or switches; or making notes. Overall though, this is similar to the breakdown by age groups that we saw from 2021 to 2023.

“As I’m getting older, my eyesight is fading. I still prefer reading physical books. Please make large print books more accessible/cost friendly.”

“Large print books need to be more readily available for popular books.”

“I have not been able to read books with Kindle on my phone since I cannot enlarge the words or change the image to landscape. No one has helped me with this.”

Audiobooks

Listeners were most likely to use speakers or hands-free features (78%), replay parts of audiobooks to re-listen to them (73%), or listen to a sample of an audiobook before listening to the whole book (69%). These top three features remain the same as in 2023, but each of them has decreased slightly.

Audiobook features used by listeners, 2024

	Yes	Sometimes	No
I use the speaker, Bluetooth, or hands-free feature.	39%	39%	19%
I replay parts of the audiobook to re-listen to.	32%	41%	22%
I listen to a sample of the audiobook before I listen to the full audio.	31%	38%	28%
I use the Bookmark feature.	30%	37%	29%
I reference the chapter or “minutes left” feature.	29%	39%	27%
I use the table of contents or chapter list to read ahead.	27%	37%	32%
I listen at an increased/faster or decreased/slower speed.	26%	36%	34%
I set a timer to stop listening after a certain amount of time.	22%	31%	43%
I don’t know how to use most or all of these features.	24%	36%	35%

Unlike 2023, where readers under 45 were most likely to use all of the features above, in 2024 we found a more even distribution across the age ranges.

Subjects and types of books

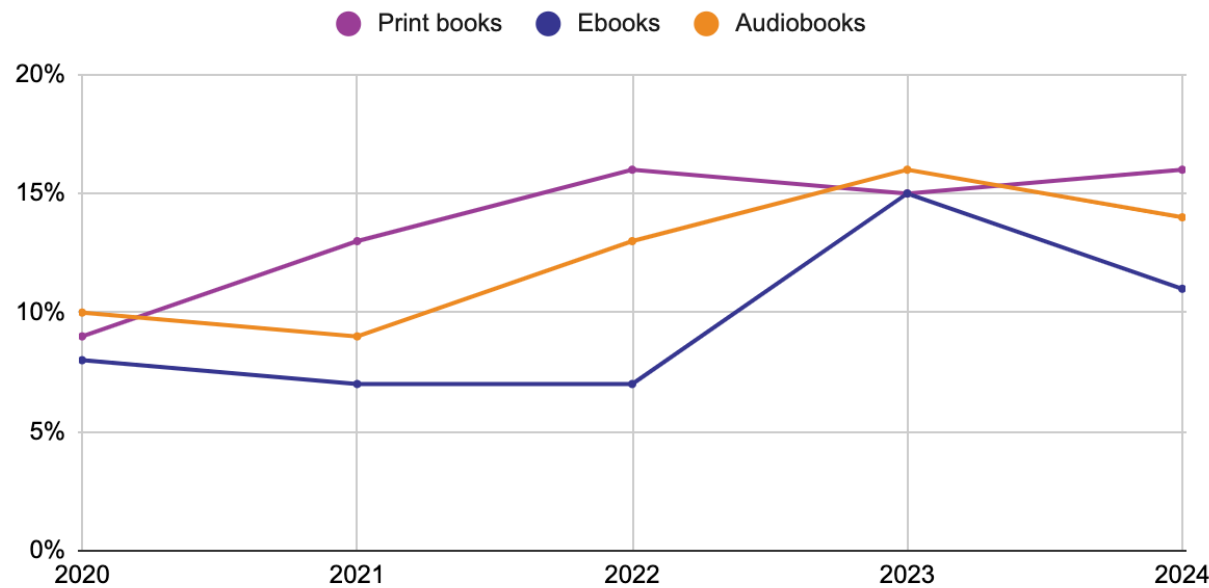
Readers across all formats were most likely to read adult fiction: 73% of print book readers, 70% of ebook readers and 65% of audiobook listeners read adult fiction in 2024. These were all up over 2023 numbers.

Subject breakdown by format, 2023–2024

	Print books		Ebooks		Audiobooks	
	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024
Adult fiction	68%	73%	68%	70%	62%	65%
Adult non-fiction	63%	62%	53%	54%	55%	56%
Young adult books	19%	17%	17%	16%	18%	15%
Children’s books	15%	16%	15%	11%	16%	14%

In last year’s report, we noted the rise of children’s and young adult books for readers of all formats starting in 2019. In 2024 the popularity of children’s books dropped off slightly.

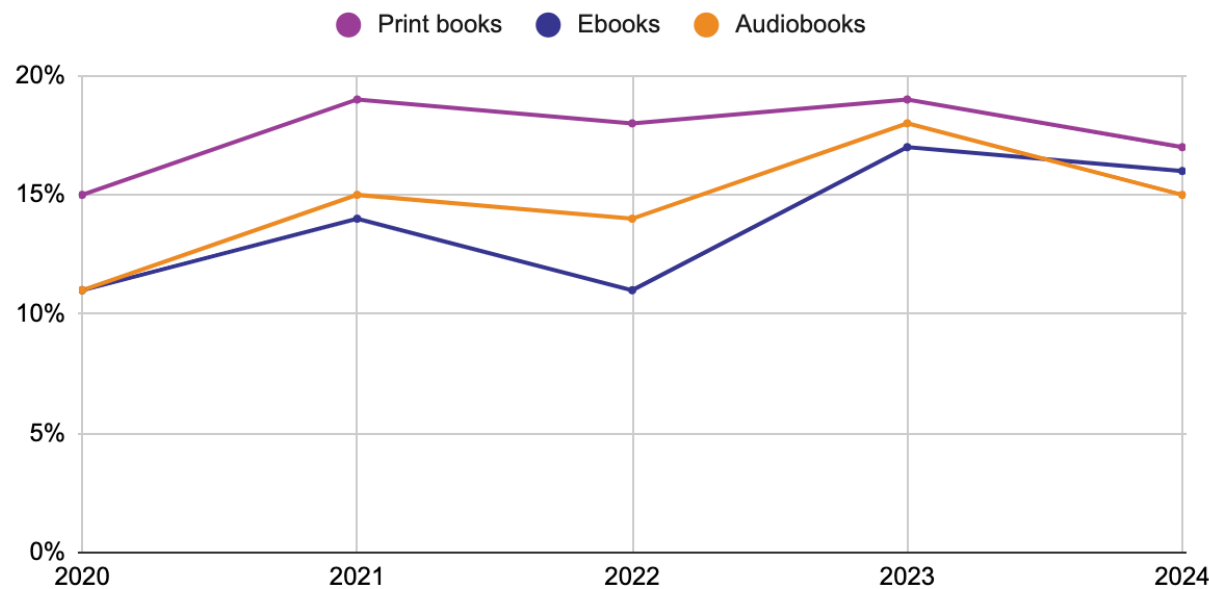
Reading by format for Children's books, 2020–2024



Source: BookNet Canada

Similarly, young adult reading has also decreased slightly from 2023 to 2024 for all formats.

Reading by format for Young Adult books, 2020–2024



Source: BookNet Canada

Breaking down the subjects into genres, we found that most fiction readers chose Mysteries and Thrillers across all formats (56% for print readers, 46% for audiobook listeners, and 44% for ebook readers).

Fiction genres read by format, 2024

	Print books	Ebooks	Audiobooks
Mysteries or Thrillers	56%	44%	46%
Romance	29%	31%	33%
Science Fiction	27%	29%	33%
Historical Fiction	32%	30%	25%
Fantasy	28%	29%	31%
Literary Fiction	22%	19%	22%
Short Stories	19%	18%	24%
Comics or Graphic Novels	16%	15%	-
Chick Lit	4%	7%	8%
Other fiction subjects	2%	2%	2%

As for the last two years in a row, history remained the most popular non-fiction genre for readers of all formats. True crime was the second most popular genre for audiobook listeners, but it has been growing steadily since 2019 when 27% of respondents listened to that genre to 32% in 2024.

Non-fiction subjects read by format, 2024

	Print books	Ebooks	Audiobooks
History	39%	33%	34%
Biographies or Memoirs	36%	29%	31%
True Crime	32%	25%	32%
Health or Fitness	25%	27%	30%
Self-Help	24%	26%	29%
Cookbooks	26%	24%	20%
Personal Finance	13%	22%	21%
Business	15%	18%	21%
Comics or Graphic Novels	11%	15%	-
Other non-fiction subjects	7%	5%	4%

For more on the performance of specific subjects, you can find a [subject spotlight series](#) on the BookNet blog where we take a deep dive into the Canadian sales and library circulation of a specific BISAC subject. Or watch our Tech Forum presentation, [On the rise: Book subjects on the move in the Canadian market](#) to learn more about the emerging trends in the types of books Canadians are buying.

Across all formats and across all subjects and genres, in 2024, Canadians read:

- Books that have been made into movies or TV shows (41%)
- Books with a sequel (duology, trilogy, series, etc.) (35%)
- Comics, manga, or graphic novels (19%)
- Books written in a language other than English (16%)
- Poetry, books in verse, or plays (16%)

This breakdown above is virtually the same as it was in 2023.

For the readers who had read a book in a language other than English, the top languages were French (28%), Spanish (15%), Arabic (13%) and Mandarin (13%).

Non-English languages read by Canadian readers, 2021–2024

	2021	2022	2023	2024
Arabic	3%	6%	5%	13%
Cantonese	5%	4%	6%	6%
French	28%	37%	30%	28%
Italian	4%	8%	6%	8%
Mandarin	9%	12%	8%	13%
Punjabi	7%	8%	10%	11%
Spanish	8%	10%	13%	15%
Tagalog	3%	6%	6%	6%
Urdu	5%	8%	10%	8%
Russian	6%	3%	8%	8%
German	4%	6%	6%	9%
Something not listed	30%	25%	31%	24%

Diversity and representation in books

The same proportion of readers as last year agree or sometimes agree that it is important that authors accurately represent their material through research, fact-checking, and/or hiring reviewers and sensitivity or beta readers (85%). Though for all items in the table below, there has been a shift from “Yes” to “Sometimes” when compared to 2023.

Reader opinions on diversity and representation in books, 2024

	Yes	Sometimes	No
Books should be representative of a variety of experiences.	51%	36%	3%
It is important that authors accurately represent their material through research, fact-checking, and/or hiring reviewers and sensitivity or beta readers.	45%	39%	7%
A greater variety of authors should be published and stocked.	39%	38%	9%
It is important that books about a group or culture should be written by people from that group or culture.	32%	37%	19%

Books about people who belong to religious minorities, people with immigrant status, and books about disabled people have been trending up with readers over the last five years.

Representation in books, 2020–2024

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Books by or about Canadians/locals	27%	28%	24%	28%	30%
Books by or about people who belong to religious minorities	8%	14%	14%	17%	17%
Books by or about Black, Indigenous, or person/people of colour	10%	19%	14%	16%	15%
Books by or about people with immigrant status	10%	13%	12%	16%	14%
Books by or about disabled people	6%	10%	10%	12%	12%
Books by or about LGBTQIA+ people	8%	8%	8%	9%	8%

“Publish more books from underrepresented authors, genres, and topics to cater to diverse reader interests.”

“The book industry should embrace innovation, prioritize diverse voices, and foster accessibility, ensuring equal opportunities for all authors, readers, and communities while balancing tradition with evolving digital platforms and formats.”

About BookNet Canada

BookNet Canada is a non-profit organization that develops technology, standards, and education to serve the Canadian book industry. Founded in 2002 to address systemic challenges in the industry, BookNet Canada supports publishing companies, booksellers, wholesalers, distributors, sales agents, and libraries across the country. Industry-led and partially funded by the Department of Canadian Heritage, BookNet Canada has become, as *The Globe and Mail* puts it, “the book industry’s supply-chain nerve centre.”

BookNet Canada’s operations are remote and our colleagues contribute their work from the traditional territories of the [Mississaugas of the Credit](#), the Anishinaabe, the [Haudenosaunee](#), the Wyandot, the Mi’kmaq, the Ojibwa of Fort William First Nation, the Three Fires Confederacy of First Nations (which includes the Ojibwa, the Odawa, and the Potawatomie), and the Métis, the original nations and peoples of the lands we now call Beeton, Brampton, Guelph, Halifax, Thunder Bay, Toronto, Vaughan, and Windsor. We endorse the [Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada](#) and support an ongoing shift from gatekeeping to spacemaking in the book industry.

The book industry has long been an industry of gatekeeping. Anyone who works at any stage of the book supply chain carries a responsibility to serve readers by publishing, promoting, and supplying works that represent the wide extent of human experiences and identities, in all its complicated intersectionality. We, at BookNet Canada, are committed to working with our partners in the industry as we move towards a framework that supports “spacemaking,” which ensures that marginalized creators and professionals all have the opportunity to contribute, work, and lead.

BookNet Canada’s services and research help companies promote and sell books, streamline workflows, and analyze and adapt to a rapidly changing market. BookNet Canada sets technology standards and educates organizations about how to apply them, performs market research, and tracks 85% of all Canadian English-language print trade book sales through BNC SalesData.

BookNet Canada has extensive research available on our [website](#), both free and for purchase.

- [Canadian Book Consumer Study 2024](#): New results from our quarterly survey of Canadians about their book buying, borrowing, and more in 2024.
- [The Canadian Book Market 2024](#) (Paid) is our annual comprehensive report on the Canadian market. Contains detailed information on more than 50 subject categories, including market share, weekly unit sales, average selling price, top 10 hardcover and paperback sellers, and public library lending information.
- [The State of Publishing in Canada 2023](#) offers a comprehensive look at the Canadian English-language publishing landscape and explores publishers' operations and staffing, revenue and sales, distribution, format-specific publishing programs, and more.

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