

# **BRAILLE AND TALKING BOOK LIBRARY SERVICE**

**INSTITUTION HANDBOOK:  
FOR LIBRARIES, HOSPITALS, SCHOOLS,  
AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS**



2022

California State Library,  
Sacramento

The Braille and Talking Book Library (BTBL) provides library services free of charge to residents of Northern California who are unable to read standard print because of visual or physical disabilities.

BTBL is part of the California State Library and is affiliated with the Library of Congress, National Library Service (NLS) for the Blind & Print Disabled.

# Braille and Talking Book Library

# 800-952-5666

Public Hours: 9:30-4:00, Monday-Friday

Voicemail: 24 hours a day

Local Phone: (916) 654-0640

Fax: (916) 654-1119

Address: (for books, machines, and packages)

900 N Street

Sacramento, CA 95814

Mail: (for letters, cards, and book orders)

PO Box 942837

Sacramento, CA 94237-0001

Website: [btbl.ca.gov](http://btbl.ca.gov)

E-mail: [btbl@library.ca.gov](mailto:btbl@library.ca.gov)

Phone Tips are on the reverse side of this page. You can cut this page out and keep it by your phone.



# **Braille and Talking Book Library**

Phone (Toll-Free in CA):

# 800-952-5666

**Public Hours:** 9:30-4:00, Monday-Friday

**Voicemail:** 24 hours a day

We have implemented a telephone menu system. Please be ready to leave a message in the event you do not reach a live person. Staff will address your service concern as soon as possible, including a return phone call if needed.

If you reach voice mail, please:

1. Leave the name of your institution
2. Leave your full name (spelling out last name)
3. Leave your phone number (with area code)
4. Tell us if you need a call back
5. Leave a detailed message of your service need, including detailed book orders

See reverse side for additional ways to contact us.



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# WELCOME

This handbook will help you understand and use our free library services at the Braille and Talking Book Library (BTBL). We appreciate the opportunity to serve you and hope you will enjoy your free service.

This handbook is available in electronic formats at [btbl.ca.gov](http://btbl.ca.gov). Audio recordings of additional information about our services can be accessed through our telephone menu system. Please be sure to read BTBL Policies at the end of this handbook.

## **Free Matter Postage**

Any book order forms or typed large-print correspondence (not handwritten) sent to the library via U.S. mail should ship postage-free. Any of the library's books, machines or equipment sent to the library via U.S. mail should ship postage-free. Simply write "Free Matter for the Blind" in the upper right-hand corner, where the stamp would go. Leave paper letters unsealed to comply with postal regulations.

# INSTITUTION ACCOUNTS

Libraries, schools, nursing homes, retirement centers, assisted living communities, hospitals, rehabilitation centers, public libraries, schools for students who are blind or have a visual impairment, public and private schools, and college or university disability centers and other institutions or organizations that serve eligible blind or print disabled readers may find it useful to establish an institution account with BTBL. There are two types of institution accounts: Institution (Community) Collections and Demonstration (Display) Collections.

## **Institution (Community) Collections**

Institutions may want to enroll in an Institution (Community) Collection with BTBL in order to keep a circulating collection of books and equipment on hand. Community Collections are great for recreation rooms, common areas, and to loan books to eligible individuals intermittently, and for patrons who are only going to be part of the institution for a short time. The Community Collection allows ready access to audio and braille books for eligible readers who can share equipment or who require temporary service until they can submit an application for individual service with BTBL. A typical Community Collection contains one or more playback machines, a rotating selection of books, and blank application forms for individual service with BTBL.



The number of books and playback machines in a Community Collection is, to a large extent, up to the institution.

Factors to consider are:

- Number of eligible readers using the books
- How often new titles are needed
- The amount of time available for general maintenance (mailing, ordering, paperwork, etc.)

The institution account requires staff, space, and accountability. In most situations, it helps to have a dedicated staff person responsible for the institution account; someone who can keep track of the materials and keep them circulating regularly between the library and institution, monitor what patrons need, contact us for new books and service questions, and in cases of personnel turnover, communicate with BTBL for the transfer of account responsibilities. Please let us know if you wish for your institution account to be an Institution (Community) Collection.

### **Demonstration (Display) Collection**

Some institutions may want to set up a Demonstration (Display) Collection with BTBL so they have the authority to keep demonstration materials on hand. A Display Collection will usually contain a single playback machine and book that can be kept on hand (indefinitely) for use in demonstrating BTBL services to potential eligible readers. Materials remain long-term at your facility and do not circulate between the library and institution except if materials need repair. Blank individual applications, as well as print brochures or catalogs may also accompany a Display Collection. Please let us know if you wish for your

institution account to be a Demonstration (Display) Collection.

### **Special Note for Schools**

Institution (Community) Collections may be used in public or private schools where disabled students are enrolled; however, the students must be certified as eligible for service on an individual basis and must be the direct and only recipients of the materials and equipment.

Annually, you will be contacted to supply:

- 1) A complete list of eligible student names, addresses, and indicated disability.
- 2) Certified applications for your individual students using the service if they have not already provided certification. Students who do not wish to receive the service individually must still have an application completed for certifying purposes if they have not done so before.

# WHAT CAN I BORROW?

This section describes the different formats of materials you may borrow from our library. You may sign up to receive any combination of these formats concurrently.

## **Braille (BR) Books**

Our collection of braille (BR) books is primarily in contracted (grade 2) braille, though we do have some uncontracted (grade 1) braille books for loan. The collection also includes combined print/braille picture books for young children, instructional braille books, and some hand-copied books.



BTBL ships braille book volumes in reusable boxes. Sometimes longer books will need two or more boxes to hold the entire book. Other times multiple book titles may be shipped in one reusable box.

BTBL now offers braille books in electronic format via internet download. For more information, please see the section on BARD.

### **Audio (Talking) Books**

For information on how to listen to audio books, please see the section "HOW DO I LISTEN?"

### **Digital Book (DB) Cartridge**



Digital book (DB) cartridges are about the size of a cassette tape, but to listen to them you need special equipment that BTBL will loan to you. The DB cartridge is made of plastic and is rectangular in shape with a finger hole in one side. Opposite the side with the finger hole is a USB flash memory device on which the digital book is stored.



BTBL ships DBs in plastic containers that hold only one DB cartridge. Keeping track of DB books is fairly easy since there is one book per container. However, please make sure you remember to put the DB cartridge back in its correct container before returning the container to the library. BTBL now offers digital books in audio format via internet download. For more information, please see the section on BARD.

### **Magazines**

BTBL provides access to a limited selection of magazine titles free of charge. Audio magazines are currently only available to institutions through online download (see the section on BARD). Individual patrons within institutions who are interested in receiving magazines on cartridge should contact the library.

### **Descriptive Video Service (DVS)**

A descriptive video is a movie or television program that includes special narration which provides an in-depth description of what is happening in the story, including key visual elements, such as character actions, gestures, costuming, facial expressions, scene changes, and onscreen

text. The narration occurs during the natural pauses in the film dialog. Our videos are in standard DVD format. The library does not loan televisions or DVD players - just the DVDs.

Videos may be loaned to institutions or groups, including nursing homes, libraries, schools or teachers **solely for viewing by individuals eligible for BTBL service**. Patrons or institutions may not charge fees for anyone attending a showing of any descriptive videos loaned by BTBL.

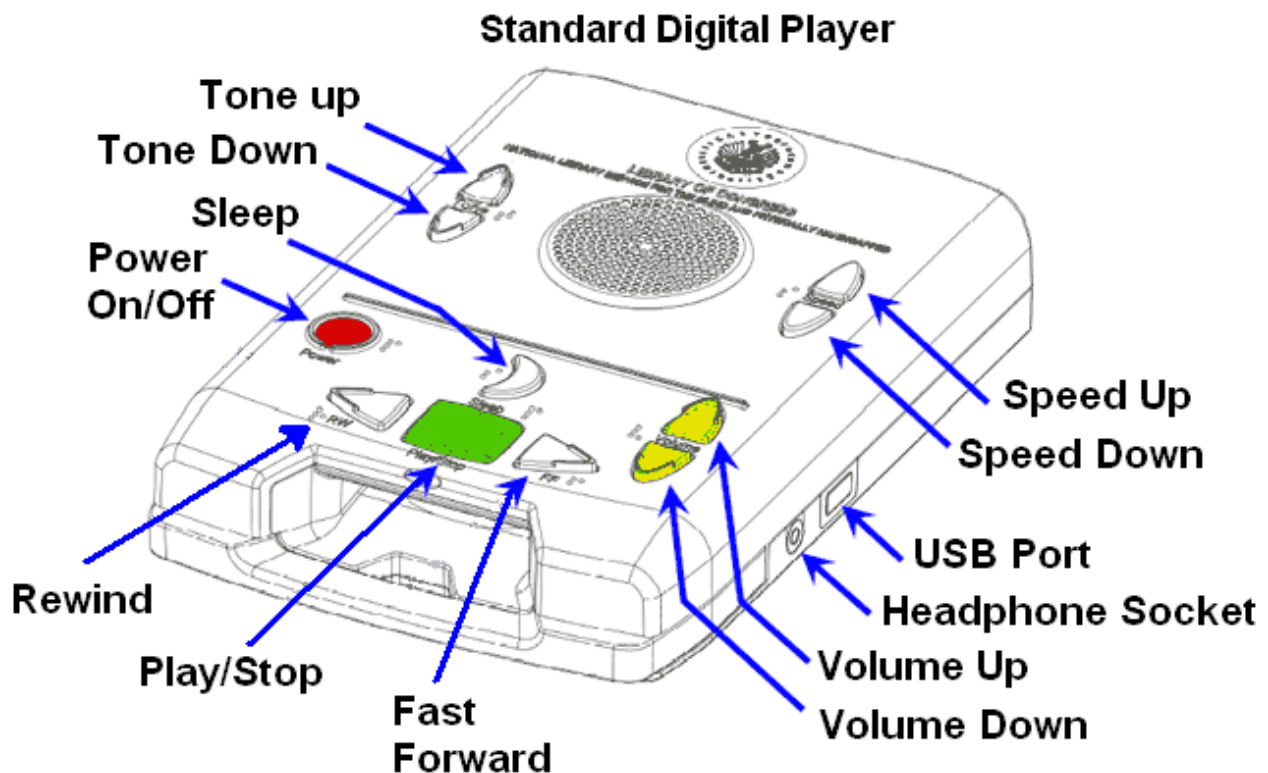
# HOW DO I LISTEN?

## Digital Book Machines

Digital books (DB) are recorded onto USB flash memory cartridges and require a special digital book machine to listen to them. BTBL loans the digital book machine to you free of charge. When you receive your digital book machine in the mail, **please save the box and packing material in which your machine arrives.** This packaging will be needed to return the machine for repair or if you cancel your service. You may keep your machine as long as you use our service.



## How to Use



Remove the power cord from the rear compartment and plug the machine into an outlet. The machine will turn on and you will hear "Player On." Do not yet insert a book. Press each button to hear a brief description of its purpose and use.

An audible, comprehensive user guide is built into the machine. If your machine has an "Information" button, press and hold down this button until the user guide begins to play. If your machine does not have an "Information" button, press and hold down the "Play/Stop" button until the user guide begins to play. For more information on the different machine types, please see the section "Advanced Digital Book Machines". Once you have explored the machine you are ready to listen to a book!



## **Listening to DB Books**

The digital book (DB) cartridge will only fit into the machine in one orientation. Hold the DB cartridge by the finger hole, with the braille label face up, and firmly insert it into the slot at the front of the machine directly below the "Play/Stop" button. If the machine is on, the book will start playing automatically. To stop playback, press the "Play/Stop" button. You can remove a DB cartridge at any time and the machine will automatically remember where you were in that particular book. When you have finished listening to a DB cartridge there is no need to rewind it before returning the book to the library.

## **Multi-Title DB Cartridges**

You may be sent a DB cartridge that contains more than one book or magazine title. It's fairly easy to move in sequential order from one book to the next on a multi-title cartridge. When you come to the end of the first book on the multi-title cartridge and you hear the "End of Book" announcement, simply press the Play/Stop button to start playing the next book on the cartridge. Repeat this step whenever you reach the "End of Book" announcement at the end of each book title on the cartridge to move sequentially from book to book.

## **Bookshelf Feature**

You may also use the Bookshelf feature of the digital machine to switch between multiple book titles on one cartridge. This feature is utilized when you do not wish to read the multiple book titles in the order they appear on the cartridge. For example, if you want to read the third

book on the cartridge first, you can enter the Bookshelf mode and select the third book to listen to.

The Bookshelf feature is used in 3 steps:

1. **Enter "Bookshelf" mode.** Press and hold the large square Play/Stop button until the machine says "Bookshelf" and announces the number of books found on the cartridge. You can then release the Play/Stop button.
2. **Navigate to book title.** Single tap (don't hold down) the Fast Forward button to navigate through the available book titles. After each tap of the Fast Forward button you will hear the machine announce a book title (for example "Book 1 Harry Potter and the Sorcerers' Stone"). You may tap the Rewind button to navigate backwards to a previous book title.
3. **Select book title.** When you hear the book title you want to listen to announced, tap the Play/Stop button to begin listening to that book. When your book has begun playing, you have exited the "Bookshelf" mode.

You can repeat Step 1 at any time if you wish to enter Bookshelf mode to switch book titles again. The machine will remember your reading position in each title.

## **Battery**

Your digital book machine is designed to play while plugged in or on a rechargeable battery for those times when you are not near an electrical outlet. Keeping the machine plugged in as often as possible (even when you are not using it) is recommended to avoid a dead battery. Playing the machine while it is plugged in does not recharge (or discharge) the battery.

To fully charge the battery the machine must be connected to an electrical outlet for approximately 2-3 hours without using the machine. Your digital book machine battery should hold a charge of at least 12 hours. Over time, as the battery ages it will start to hold fewer and fewer hours when you charge it. If a low battery charge (less than 12 hours) becomes inconvenient for your needs, please contact us for a replacement machine.

## **Advanced Digital Book Machines**

There are both standard and advanced digital machines. The advanced machine has five additional buttons: an "Information" button which tells your current reading position and is your access to the audible user guide; a "Mark" button for making your own bookmarks; and three navigation buttons ("Menu", "Previous", and "Next") to help you work your way quickly to a specific section of a book or to your bookmarks.

The advanced machine is helpful for reading books not meant to be read straight through (e.g. the Bible, craft or cookbooks, poetry, footnoted works). Navigation levels vary from book to book. If you have an advanced player, please refer to section 3.10 of the audible user guide to learn more about the advanced functions of your player. If you wish to trade your standard player for an advanced, please contact us.

## **Accessories for Book Machines**

Headphones, pillow speakers, remote control units, breath switches, USB port adapters, or High Volume Players may be available for patrons who require them to use our service. To request accessories, please contact us.

# WHAT ELSE CAN I BORROW?

## **BARD (Braille and Audio Reading Download)**

### **Institutions and BARD**

Books and magazines in audio and electronic braille formats are available for free download through the BARD website and through the BARD Mobile app for iOS and Android devices. Institution accounts\* may be granted access to BARD to download books and magazines for eligible readers, for demonstration purposes, or as exercises for colleagues who may be downloading for eligible patrons.

There is no limit on the number of downloads you may perform, downloads do not need to be returned to the library, and it is OK to download books and magazines for your eligible readers to read, or to demonstrate BARD to eligible readers, or as training exercises for colleagues who may be downloading for eligible readers. For more information on how to sign-up, equipment required, and how to download, please contact us or visit our website at [btbl.ca.gov](http://btbl.ca.gov).

\*Public library accounts are granted limited access to BARD for demonstration purposes only.

### **Californiana Collection**

Books in this collection are by California authors, about California —especially its history—, or of regional interest. The books are recorded by volunteers in BTBL's recording studio. A large-print catalog, "Californiana Collection", is available upon request.

## **Foreign Language Books**

A limited number of book titles are available in other languages besides English. There is also a limited selection of instructional materials for learning foreign languages. Please contact us for more information.

## **Newspapers**

### **NFB-NEWSLINE**

BTBL offers access to NFB-NEWSLINE, a touch-tone telephone service for patrons who cannot read a printed newspaper. The NFB-NEWSLINE text-to-speech computer voice reads aloud the text from newspapers (and some magazines) from across the country and around the world. This free service is available through local phone numbers statewide and now features online, email and Spanish language options. Institutions are not eligible for NFB-NEWSLINE accounts, but individual patrons within institutions who are interested in signing up for newspaper service should contact us.

### **Sacramento Access News**

Some local newspapers, magazines, and shopping circulars narrated by volunteers are available to our patrons through the Access News service run by Society for the Blind in Sacramento. These publications will be of most interest to residents of the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys. Please contact us for further information or for assistance with newspaper service.

## **Music**

The library does not have recordings of music. Musical scores and instructional materials are available in special

formats, including braille or audio music instruction, and braille, audio, or large print sheet music. Some music instruction materials are also available for download from BARD. For more information on music materials, please contact the Music Section of NLS at (800) 424-8567 or online at [www.loc.gov/nls/music/](http://www.loc.gov/nls/music/)

## **Reference**

If your Reader Advisor is unable to answer a more detailed question, they may refer you to a Reference Librarian. Reference Librarians can look for materials that may be outside the limits of our own library collection or which require more time or specialized knowledge to find. In our telephone menu system, there is an option which allows you to speak to or leave a message for a Reference Librarian.

## **HOW LONG CAN I BORROW?**

### **Loan Period for Books**

The loan period for books is 3 months. If you need more time to read a book, please contact us to renew the book title.

### **Loan Period for Descriptive Videos**

The loan period for descriptive videos is 5 weeks with no renewals. Patrons may borrow a maximum of four descriptive videos at a time.

### **Loan Period for Book Machines and Accessories**

BTBL provides book machines and accessories on extended loan. The equipment you receive from us will stay with you for the duration of your service. However, please remember

to keep equipment loaned to the institution separate from that loaned to individual patrons. Equipment and machines checked out to an individual patron are to remain in the possession of that individual, even if that individual moves away from your facility. Equipment must be returned if you become ineligible or have not used our service for 12 months.

## **Loan Period for Magazines**

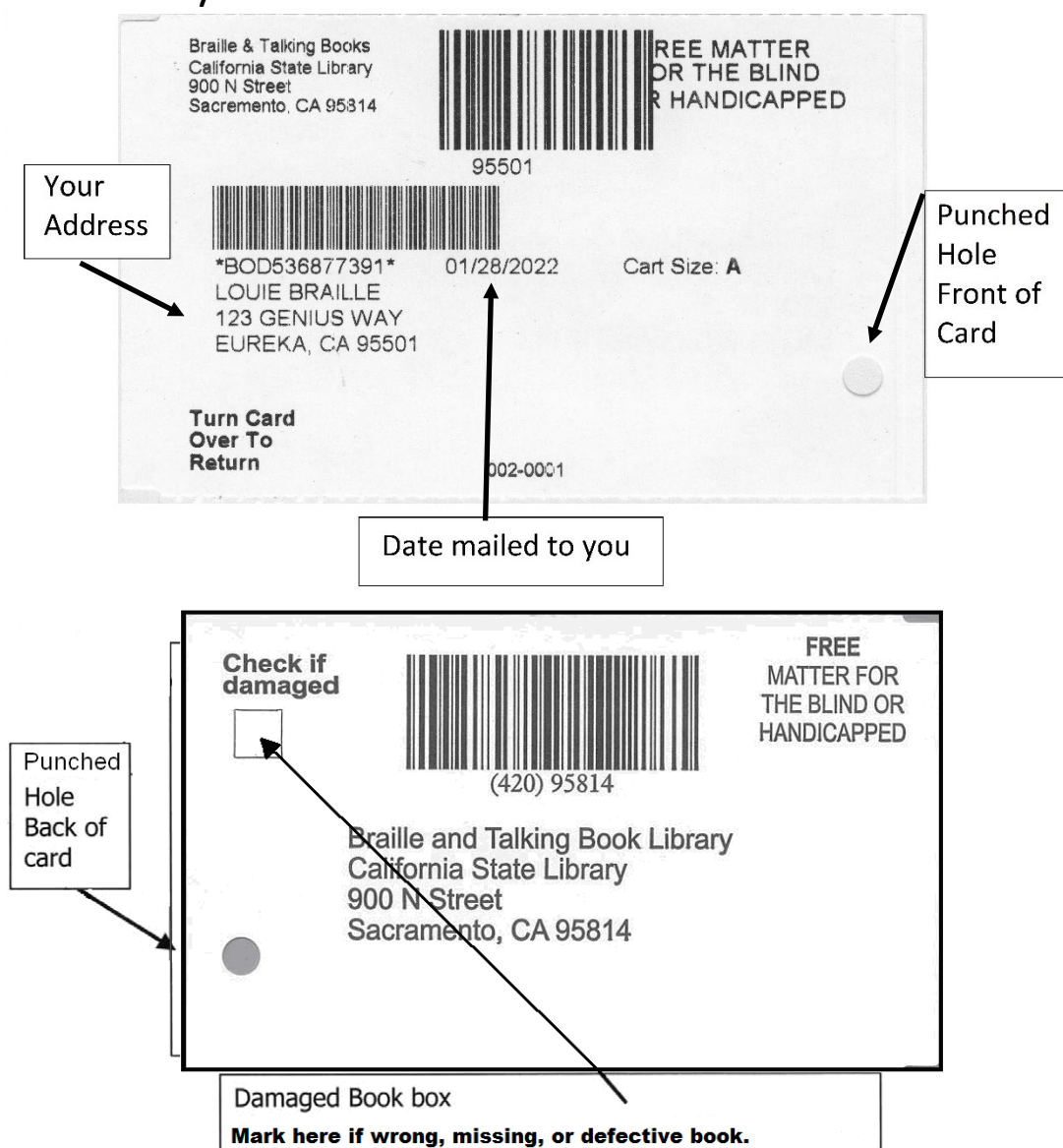
Magazines in braille, large print, or downloaded from BARD do not need to be returned to the library. Magazines on digital cartridge for individual patrons have a loan period of 3 weeks for weekly magazines and 7 weeks for monthly magazines. Failure to return magazines on digital cartridge in a timely manner can mean a disruption in magazine service.

## **Overdue Notices**

Although no fines for overdue or lost items are imposed, we do send overdue notices periodically. These are friendly reminders when you forget to return library materials. BTBL understands that occasionally items are lost in transit or are checked in incorrectly. These notices provide the chance for patrons' accounts to be updated. Please contact us if you receive a notice and you don't have the overdue items listed.

# HOW DO I RETURN?

Most items that eventually need to be returned to the library will arrive with a mailing card inserted into a label holder on the outside of the container. In the following illustration we have identified the key information on each side that may be useful to you. One side of the card has your address and the other side has the library's address. The side with your address also has the date the book was mailed to you.





The mailing card has a circular-punched hole. When you receive an item from the library, the circular-punched hole will be in the bottom right side of the mailing card. To return items, turn the mailing card over so that the circular-punched hole is on the bottom left side of the mailing card. The library's address will then be visible, and the container is ready to be returned in the mail postage-free.

When you return books to the library, please do not tape book containers together. If you are missing the container that an item is shipped in, simply put the item in an envelope or box and address to the library with "Free Matter for the Blind or Handicapped" written in place of postage.

### **Postal Mail Procedures**

Mail carriers are not required to pick up library materials at your facility. However, library materials are excluded from the weight restrictions established by the post office for placement in street corner mailboxes. If you cannot use street mailboxes, discuss it with your carrier or local post office. You may be able to hand materials directly to your carrier or they may request that you take them to your local post office.

### **Maintaining a "Flow" of Books**

Returning each book as soon as you finish it will help ensure that you have a constant flow of books. "Stockpiling" books and returning them all at once can result in longer periods without books. In most cases, when you return a book to us a new book will be sent to you. However it may take a week or more for the book to reach you through the mail. If you

are receiving too few or too many books, please contact us to adjust your account.

### **Multiple Part Braille Books**

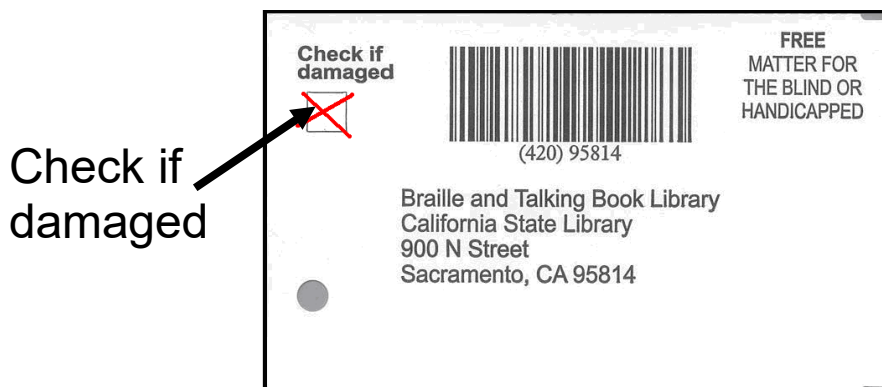
Some BR books are so long that they require two or more shipping containers to hold the entire book. When the library sends you such a book, all the containers are sent at the same time. When you send the book back to the library, please do the same.

## **Damaged Books or Malfunctioning Machines**

### **Damaged Books**

You may occasionally receive a damaged or defective book. This can include the wrong book in a container, books with contents missing, inaudible books, or braille books with missing or loose pages. If you have a damaged book:

1. Contact us if you would like to receive a replacement copy of the book.
2. Prepare the book to be returned as usual by inserting the mailing card so that the punched hole is on the bottom left side and the library's address is visible.
3. Mark an "X" in the box located in the top left corner of the mailing card above the circular-punched hole and place the container in the mail.



### **Malfunctioning Machines**

Please do not attempt to repair library equipment. If your machine is not performing properly, contact us to help you solve the problem or to initiate a replacement machine request. If the defective machine cannot be exchanged in person, a replacement machine can be mailed to you after you contact us. If the original machine box and packaging is

unavailable, the box in which the new machine arrives may then be used to return the defective machine.

Unfortunately, Free Matter postal regulations do not allow us to send empty boxes in the mail.

## **Caring for Books and Machines**

Please do not remove or deface the stickered labels attached to library books and equipment. To avoid dust and dirt, you can occasionally wipe machines down with a clean, dry cloth or keep them covered when not in use. Do not use cleaning solutions on machines, book containers, books or videos. Please keep food and beverages away from machines, books, and videos as spills can cause the equipment to fail. Direct sunlight and excessive heat can also cause problems for machines, books, and videos. Do not store them next to heaters, stoves, in hot cars, etc.

Damage or loss of equipment through intentional defacement, abuse, negligence, or carelessness may result in suspension of service.

# HOW DO I FIND?

For information on ordering, please see the section "HOW DO I ORDER?"

## **Bimonthly Catalogs**

Every 2 months NLS publishes 2 catalogs: *Talking Book Topics* (TBT) and *Braille Book Review* (BBR). TBT in the audio edition lists the newest produced audio (talking) books. BBR in the braille edition lists both the newest produced braille and audio books. Both catalogs also list available magazines and are available online in a variety of formats at [nls.loc.gov](http://nls.loc.gov)

## **BTBL Online Catalog**

Find books (including foreign language and Californiana collection) to order from BTBL online at [btbl.library.ca.gov](http://btbl.library.ca.gov)

## **NLS Online Catalog**

Find books (including foreign language) from all NLS libraries online at [nls.catalog.loc.gov](http://nls.catalog.loc.gov)

## **Magazines**

There are additional magazine titles available in special formats that are not listed in TBT/BBR. These magazines are usually offered through other organizations and may include publications from specific locales. Some of these magazine titles charge a subscription fee. Please contact us for more information about these special format magazines.

## **Descriptive Videos**

Find videos to order from BTBL online at [btbl.ca.gov](http://btbl.ca.gov) The library can also mail a catalog of videos to you.

## **Catalog Codes**

In our catalogs, you may find items listed with various letter codes, followed by an item's number (e.g. DB074147)

Here is a list of the more common letter codes in use:

BR = Braille Book

DB = Digital Book

DBC = locally-produced digital book

DBF = Foreign-language digital book

DVD = Descriptive Video DVD (specific to BTBL)

## **HOW DO I ORDER?**

**By Phone: 1-800-952-5666 Toll-Free in CA  
916-654-0640 Local Phone**

You can call in orders by phone. You can leave a message with your order or speak to your Reader Advisor.

**By Mail: PO Box 942837**

**Sacramento, CA 94237-0001**

Write orders on a piece of paper with your institution name and contact information. You can also send in completed order forms from *Talking Book Topics* (TBT) and *Braille Book Review* (BBR) with your institution name and contact information. Do not send order forms to Florida or Washington, D.C. as this will delay your order.

**By Fax: (916) 654-1119**

Fax orders with your institution name and contact information included.

**By Email:** [btbl@library.ca.gov](mailto:btbl@library.ca.gov)

Be sure to include your institution name and contact information.

**Online:** [btbl.library.ca.gov](http://btbl.library.ca.gov)

To place orders using the BTBL online catalog, you will need to initially contact us via telephone to set up your UserID and password.

**BARD:** [bard.loc.gov/CA1A](http://bard.loc.gov/CA1A)

Download books, magazines, and electronic braille via the internet. See the section on BARD.

**In Person: 900 N Street, Room 100  
Sacramento, CA 95814**

The library is open to the public by appointment only between the hours of 9:30-4:00, Monday - Friday. You must schedule an appointment 24 hours in advance. Audio recordings of directions to the library and public transit information can be accessed through our telephone menu system.

# YOUR SERVICE ACCOUNT

## Reader Advisors

You will be assigned a Reader Advisor to assist you with library services. Each Reader Advisor is responsible for several thousand readers. Therefore, your Reader Advisor's response to your call may happen in a few hours or up to five business days later. Every effort is made to respond to requests as quickly as possible.

Your Reader Advisor is here to serve you and enable you to get the best service BTBL can deliver. Please do not hesitate to contact your Reader Advisor if:

- You want to request books, braille magazines or videos
- You want books by preferred subject(s) or author(s)
- You want to read a book series in sequential order
- You need a replacement copy of a damaged book
- You are receiving too many or too few books
- You do not like the books you are receiving
- You wish to temporarily hold your service
- Your name, address, or phone number changes
- Your book machine does not work properly
- Your book machine is lost or stolen
- You have machines or accessories you are not using
- You have questions about downloading from BARD
- You need login information for the BTBL online catalog
- You wish to cancel your service
- You have any questions related to your service



## **After Ordering**

When you order a book, it will be put on either your Request List or your Reserve List.

### **Request List**

Your request list is made up of books that you have ordered for a future book shipment. When it is time for you to receive new books, the library will select available books from your request list. The library will select available books from the older requests before checking your newer requests. You can have an unlimited number of books on your request list.

### **Reserve List**

Your reserve list is made up of those special books that you want rushed to you as soon as they are available, even if you are not scheduled for a book shipment. Books placed on reserve are at the top of your reserve list. When ordering a book through the BTBL online catalog, to place the book on your reserve list, check the "Rush This Item" option at checkout.

## **Service Options**

You can control the number of books sent to you and how frequently they are sent. Work with your Reader Advisor to adjust these options until you find what works for you. This section explains the most common options of book service.

### **Library Selection**

With this option, the library will continually send you regular shipments of books. When you return a book to us, a new book will be sent to you. The library sends you books

first from your reserve/request list, and then books from your favorite authors or subjects. By telling us what you like and do not like, we are better able to send you appropriate books. For example you may tell us your favorite book subjects, favorite authors, or if you'd like to exclude materials that contain sex, violence, or strong language. Also, the library remembers which titles have been previously sent and will not automatically resend those titles.

### **Only Your Selection (List Only)**

With this option, the library will continually send you regular shipments of books. But you provide us with a list of specific books to send. The library will only send you books that you have ordered (put on your request/reserve list) or from authors that you indicate to us are your favorites. We recommend that you have at least 50 books on your request/reserve list to ensure that we can continually send books you have chosen. If you don't think you can maintain a request/reserve list please choose another service option.

### **On Demand Selection**

With this option, the library will **not** send you regular shipments of books. The library will only send you books when you order them to be put on your **reserve list**. When you have exhausted your book orders (no more books on your reserve list), the library will not send you any more books until you place a book order on your **reserve list** again. Please keep in mind that you must order (or download) at least one book or magazine per year to continue to use our services.

## **Address or Contact Changes**

### **Permanent Address or Contact Change**

Please notify us if your institution (or you on behalf of your institution) move(s) to a different address, gets a new phone number or email address, changes its name, if your name changes, or if another representative is taking over responsibility for the BTBL institution account you have been handling.

To avoid interruption of service, it is a good idea to have the post office temporarily forward your mail to your new address. But please do not rely on the post office to notify us of your new address.

### **Temporary Address Change**

Please notify us if you are moving temporarily (up to 6 months) to another address. We can send any material, excluding magazines, to that address during your stay. Please let us know when you return to your permanent address.

### **Moving out of BTBL Service Area (Northern CA)**

If you move permanently to another service area, you must transfer your account to the library serving that area. Please let us know as soon as possible so we can initiate the transfer of your account to your new library. No new application needs to be submitted. You may take your machine(s) with you to the new service area, but please return to us any books or videos loaned from BTBL in accordance with their loan period.

## **Holding Service**

If you go on vacation, become ill, receive too many books, or simply want to hold your book service for any reason, please contact us. If you can, provide us with a date to restart your book service. Otherwise we will re-start your service **only** when you contact us and say you are again ready for books.

*Magazines, Talking Book Topics (TBT), and Braille Book Review (BBR)* are handled differently than books. They cannot be put on hold temporarily. Have someone pick up your magazines or have the post office hold them so your subscriptions are not cancelled.

## **Cancelling Your Service**

You may cancel your service at any time. Please contact us to cancel your service and remember to return all books, videos, book machines, and accessories. You may reinstate your account at any time up to two years after the cancel date without having to fill out a new application.

## **Suspension of Service**

BTBL reserves the right to suspend your account in two cases: non-activity for 12 months or in the event any BTBL policies are violated. For suspension details, please see the section on BTBL Policies.

# **BTBL POLICIES**

- A. Overview
- B. Materials Definition
- C. Patron Responsibilities
- D. Loan Periods
- E. Good Standing
- F. BTBL Responsibilities
- G. Suspension Procedures
- H. Updates

## **A. Overview**

The following policies govern the circulation of materials to eligible blind, print-disabled, or reading-disabled patrons and the institutions who serve them who are registered with the California State Library's Braille and Talking Book Library (BTBL). Patrons who borrow materials from BTBL accept the following policies. Violation of these policies can result in suspension of library services. Some services to CDCR (California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation) patrons may be limited or restricted by CDCR policies or regulations.

## **B. Materials Definition**

Materials include braille books, books on digital cartridge, descriptive videos on DVD, digital book machines, braille eReaders, accessories, or any specialty items on loan from BTBL.

## **C. Patron Responsibilities**

### **1. Communicate with BTBL**

Patrons accept responsibility for notifying the library of any changes in address or other contact information, or to cancel or hold service. Discourtesy toward BTBL staff, including but not limited to the use of obscene, harassing, threatening, or degrading language or behavior may result in suspension of service.

# BTBL POLICIES

## **2. Return Materials**

Materials are on loan to the patron and remain property of the library. Patrons may borrow materials according to the loan periods listed in this policy. Patrons may not loan materials to other persons, regardless of their program eligibility. Materials must be returned to the library when they need repair; replacements will be issued as soon as possible. Materials being returned to the library must be placed into the hands of the U.S. Postal Service by placing the materials in a street mailbox or delivering materials to the post office. Under the Free Matter for the Blind program the USPS has no obligation to pick up parcels from blind or print disabled persons or from the libraries and organizations that serve such persons. It is sometimes possible, however, to make informal arrangements with local postal officials for mail to be picked up, particularly in hardship cases.

### **Care for Materials**

Patrons accept responsibility for using materials with reasonable care. Damage or loss of materials through intentional defacement, abuse, negligence, or carelessness can result in suspension of service. Please do not attempt to repair library materials. Materials must be returned to the library when they need repair.

## **3. Maintain Active Status**

To remain active with our service, patrons must order or download at least one book or magazine per year. If equipment is not being used to read library materials, the equipment must be returned.

## **D. Loan Periods**

### **Books**

The loan period for books sent via mail is 3 months.

### **Magazines**

Magazines in braille or large print format do not need to be returned to the library. Magazines on digital cartridge are available to individual patrons as circulating library items and must be returned regularly. Institutions are currently prohibited from subscribing to magazines on

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digital cartridge. However, eligible individuals within those institutions may subscribe to magazines on digital cartridge.

There are two types of magazines on digital cartridges: weekly cartridges, which hold **only** weekly magazines, and monthly cartridges, which hold monthly/bimonthly/quarterly (and sometimes weekly) magazines.

Weekly digital cartridges have a loan period of three weeks. Monthly digital cartridges have a loan period of seven weeks. Failure to return magazines on digital cartridge in a timely manner can mean a disruption in magazine service.

### **Descriptive Videos**

The loan period for descriptive videos is 5 weeks with no renewals.

Patrons may borrow 4 descriptive videos at a time.

### **Equipment**

BTBL provides book machines and other equipment on extended loan to patrons for the duration of their service. Equipment must be returned if a patron becomes ineligible, or does not use it to read library materials for 12 months.

### **Overdues**

Patrons will not be charged fines for overdue or lost materials; however, persistent failure to abide by the loan period may result in suspension of service.

### **Renewals**

Arrangements can be made for a renewal of the loan period if a book is needed for an extended period of time. Renewals may not be granted if there is a waiting list of other patrons who have requested the book.

There is a maximum of two renewals for any library book. There are no renewals for descriptive videos.

### **Maximum Limits**

Patrons in good standing may have a maximum of 10 DB cartridges, 10 braille book titles, and 4 descriptive videos checked out at any given time. An individual patron in good standing may have 1 digital book machine and 1 braille eReader machine checked out at any given time. In special or extenuating circumstances patrons may request to raise

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their borrowing limits; these requests will be handled on a case-by-case basis. The quantity and types of equipment provided to institutions will vary with their specific needs as determined in consultation with BTBL.

### **E. Good Standing**

A patron in good standing will have priority over other patrons in the assignment of materials. A patron in good standing:

- is in compliance with the maximum limits on materials
- has not had any books checked out longer than 6 months
- does not have excessive quantities of overdue or lost materials

### **F. Responsibility of BTBL**

1. The library will provide courteous, respectful, and timely service to patrons.
2. The library will keep records of all loaned materials.
3. The library will loan materials without charge.
4. No fines will be levied for materials returned after the loan period has expired. No fines will be levied for lost materials.
5. By law, the library gives preference in the loaning of materials to veterans that have been honorably discharged from the armed forces of the United States.
6. In compliance with state and federal laws pertaining to information privacy, the library will keep patron registration and borrowing records confidential.

### **G. Suspension Procedures**

BTBL reserves the right to suspend a patron's service in two cases: non-activity for 12 months or in the event BTBL policies are violated.

#### **Non-Activity**

1. BTBL will mail a letter to patrons who have had no activity in their account for at least 12 months, providing an opportunity for the patron to reply.
2. If the patron does not contact BTBL within 60 days, a second attempt to contact the patron (by phone or mail) will be made.



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3. If the patron does not contact BTBL within 60 days of the second attempt, their account will be suspended.
4. When an account is suspended, the patron can contact BTBL to reinstate the account for up to 5 years after suspension. After 5 years, a new application will need to be filled out to reinstate the account.

### **BTBL Policies Violated**

5. A BTBL staff member will make several attempts to discuss the policy violation with the patron by telephone or in person. A follow-up letter summarizing the discussion and violation will be sent providing an opportunity for the patron to reply.
6. If the same policy violation recurs, BTBL will send a written notice of suspension of service for a stated period (up to six months). Specific dates for suspension and resumption of service will be included in this letter. To avoid suspension, the patron must contact BTBL before the scheduled suspension date and be prepared to explain why the suspension should not take place.
7. When service is resumed, written notice of resumption will be sent, including a reminder that further recurrences of the same policy violation will result in another suspension of service.

### **H. Updates**

This policy is subject to change. For the most recent version of this policy, please visit our website at [btbl.ca.gov](http://btbl.ca.gov)

# CONTACT US

Phone: 1-800-952-5666 (toll-free within CA)

Local Phone: 916-654-0640

Public Hours: 9:30 am to 4:00 pm, Monday-Friday

Fax: (916) 654-1119

Mail: (For letters, cards, and book orders)

P.O. Box 942837

Sacramento, CA 94237-0001

Address: (For books, machines, and packages)

900 N Street

Sacramento, CA 95814

Web: [btbl.ca.gov](http://btbl.ca.gov)

E-mail: [btbl@library.ca.gov](mailto:btbl@library.ca.gov)

## Free Postage

Any book order forms or typed large-print correspondence (not handwritten) sent to the library via U.S. mail should ship postage-free. Any of the library's books, machines or equipment sent to the library via U.S. mail should ship postage-free. Simply write "Free Matter for the Blind" in the upper right-hand corner, where the stamp would go. Leave paper letters unsealed to comply with postal regulations.