

The mind and body benefits of snuggling up with a book

Reading is known to have a positive impact on both mental and physical health, and these benefits last a lifetime. Here we explain how regular reading leads to greater wellbeing.

Discover more about yourself and understand others

Reading exposes us to characters that we love and hate, and gives us the opportunity to consider our own beliefs and reactions by comparison. This helps us to develop emotional intelligence by seeing things from new perspectives and understanding the motivations of others.

Keep your mind active

Reading has been shown to stimulate neural pathways in the brain. As your reading ability matures the networks become stronger, more active and sophisticated.

Live for longer

People who read books were found to live for two years longer than those who didn't, while people who read for more than 3.5 hours each week were 23% more likely to live longer than non readers.

Good for mental health...

Reading helps you visit other worlds from the comfort of your armchair, while reading nonfiction in the form of self-help or improvement can give you strategies to cope with your problems.

Reading can engage your mind, which is important as you grow older to maintain and improve your cognitive function.

Reading for pleasure can improve confidence and self-esteem, and reduce feelings of loneliness.

And physical health too...

Just 30 minutes of reading has been shown to lower blood pressure,

heart rate and psychological distress as effectively as activities such as yoga.

To summarise

Reading improves brain connectivity, prevents cognitive decline and may help you to live for longer.

It reduces stress, lowers blood pressure and heart rate and helps to fight depression.

It's never too late to start!

The benefits of reading are cumulative so the sooner reading becomes a habit the better, but remember its never too late to start! ➤

Get started!

BBC 2 Between the Covers

Chat show about books, with reading recommendations
www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000n7sl/episodes/guide

Costa Book awards

Awards in five categories - First Novel, Novel, Biography, Poetry and Children's Book- with recommended reading lists for each
www.costa.co.uk/behind-the-beans/costa-book-awards/book-awards

Richard and Judy Book Club

For book recommendations visit
www.richardandjudy.co.uk

Reading Groups for Everyone

The UK's largest reading group network.
www.readinggroups.org.

Reading Well

Understand and manage your health through reading.
www.reading-well.org.uk

Source: www.bbc.co.uk/teach/why-is-reading-good-for-me;
www.healthline.com/health/benefits-of-reading-books