

How to use Mail-A-Book

Mail-A-Book is an Arrowhead Library System service with a collection of books and audio-visual materials that can be ordered by and mailed to qualified patrons at no cost to them.

To Order Materials: Library materials may be ordered in the following ways:

MAIL with a letter, postcard, or an order card:

E-MAIL at: mailbook@alslib.info

PHONE CALL at 218-741-3840 or 800-257-1442 (ask for Mail-A-Book)

ONLINE FORM on our web page at: www.alslib.info/services/Mail-A-Book

ONLINE CATALOG (see directions below)

Filling out an Order Card or Online Submission:

- **PRINT your name, MAILING address, county & zip code on each order.** (Some patrons use printed mailing address labels.) Put your Arrowhead Library System Library Borrower's Card number on your order (14-digit number). If you do not have a library card, print "no card" and we will send you an application with your order. (Library Card Applications are available online.)
- **Select titles from one of our current catalogs, or an author, subject or series list.** We have many titles from older catalogs, as well. (If you would like something not listed in the catalogs, please let us know if you would like us to check other libraries for you. We always check our collection first.)
- **List the titles you would like to receive.** Adding the author, series and type of movie or book can be helpful.
- **Format** identifies what you are looking for: (If it is left blank we will send a BOOK.)

Book	Graphic Novel	Large Print book
Audio book on CD	DVD (movie, program or TV series)	
- **Substitute** indicates we should supply similar **books** if the material you requested is checked out to another patron.
- **Do Not Substitute** means we will send the books as they become available; you may not receive anything until then. During busy times, your wait time will vary depending upon the popularity of the titles you request.)
- **We do not substitute for Books on CD or DVDs.**
- **Send to another library or Send Away** indicates that you would like to request the materials from regional or state library collections. This is known as Interlibrary Loan or ILL (see information below).

Placing your own requests online:

- You can choose either the Mail-A-Book Online Web Catalog https://arrowhead.ent.sirsi.net/client/en_US/MAB or the General ALS Catalog at arrowhead.ent.sirsi.net.
- Search the Mail-A-Book online web catalog, (which shows materials owned by Mail-A-Book) or the General Catalog which will show materials from all of the regional libraries, including Mail-A-Book).
- Log in to your library account with your borrower card number and PIN.
- Search for a keyword, title, author, series or subject. Once your search results appear, you can scroll down through your options. (There are a number of ways to sort or limit results.)
- Click on the icon/picture of the material or the title to see more information. The details for that item will pop up in a text box (click the X in the upper right corner to close this).
- Below the description, you will find the individual copies for our entire region.
- You may select a specific copy from this list by clicking on the line in the **Request This Item** column. (Doing this will place a hold on that particular copy. If it is checked out, we will send the first available Mail-A-Book copy.)
- If you do not have a preference about which library the book comes from click the blue **Request an Item** button. This will allow the computer to choose the next available book for you regardless of location.
- Select **Mail-A-Book** as your pick up location. Click on the **Make Request** button.
- Mail-A-Book will mail the materials to you free of charge since you are eligible for our services. We send Mail-A-Book items in a zippered cloth bag with the return postage ready for the return trip by mail. (**The return postage slip is already in the outside pocket, just remove the slip with your name on it.**) Materials from other libraries fall under ILL instructions and come in a paper mailer.

When the materials arrive:

- Mail-A-Book materials will arrive in a zippered cloth bag. You will use this bag to return your order.
- Along with the materials you requested, will be a printed date due slip, and blank order cards.
- A pre-paid return postage card is located in the outer pocket of the bag, behind the card with your name on it.
- **There may also be notes regarding requests that you made, Reading Programs and Legacy Events.**

To return materials:

- Leave the pre-paid return postage label in the plastic pocket on the front of the bag.
- Please, do not toss out the return postage card. This is prepaid postage. We do not get a refund for unused postage. (If you are not returning your items by mail, you may leave it inside the bag for us to use for another mailing.)
- Place the materials you are returning in the cloth bag. (We do not need you to return due date slips. Our computer has due dates and patron/book checkout lists available to us.)
- Put your new order card in plastic sleeve so we can find it easily. Please **DO NOT** put it inside a book.
- Zip the bag closed. Put it in your mailbox, or drop it off at a Post Office, ALS Library Dropbox, or the Bookmobile.

Interlibrary Loan Instructions (ordering books not owned by Mail-A-Book):

- Give the complete author and title of the book. For subject requests, describe what you are interested in receiving.
- Check the box on your order card or online order form that states **Send request to another library, or I want it from another library.**
- You will be notified if the material requested is not available.
- The materials will be mailed to you in a padded envelope, or a canvas bag. You can return the material to any library in the Arrowhead Library System or the Bookmobile. You may also choose to return the material in our cloth bags or by using Mail-A-Book return postage. (We will not supply empty bags for this purpose.) If you choose to return the materials by mail, you may be responsible for the return postage (if so, you will need to visit the Post Office and pay for the postage).

Please Note:

- If you are concerned about privacy, you may limit the amount of information you fill out on the order card to just your library card number. **Please print your card number clearly.** We shred all order cards after use.
- If you plan to be away from home, please let us know so your requests can be suspended until you return.
- Please notify us if you have a change of address.
- The Arrowhead Library System is not responsible for any damage done to equipment by the materials it lends to its customers.
- We fill requests in the order we receive them. As we process your order, we will send all the available titles as soon as possible. If the materials are already checked out, you will be added to the request list. Once your name reaches the top of the list for that item, we will send it to you. There is no need to request it multiple times, but you can check in to be sure you are on the request list.)
- To keep a supply of books on hand, you can overlap your orders so your bags of books cycle to and from your home.
- Please call if you have any questions or concerns. 218-741-3840 or 800-257-1442 (ask for Mail-A-Book)

Who is eligible to use this service?

This tax-supported service from the Arrowhead Library System is available to rural residents, those who live in a city without a public library, and homebound residents living in a city with a public library. This service is available to residents of Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake, Lake of the Woods, & St. Louis Counties. Rural residents who live in the following Itasca County areas, are eligible for Mail-A-Book service only if they are homebound: Town of Arbo, Town of Blackberry, Town of Feely, Town of Grand Rapids, Town of Harris, Town of Sago, Town of Spang, Town of Wabana, City of Cohasset, City of LaPrairie, and the City of Warba. Residents who are homebound in the city of Duluth are served by the city library.