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04:06PM Thursday September 16, 2010

-- Edward B Butler

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## Library at home for the avid reader

By Sangeetha G. Sep 08 2010  
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A library at home—sounds like a Victorian concept? Not really, even in today's fast-paced life there are people who would like to have a room for spending time in the company of books.

There are people who dedicate a room purely for reading and computer browsing or double it up as a tuition room, guest room or office room, but the species of 'intellects' who love the smell of books are yet not extinct.

According to M Dameem Ansari, principal architect, Ansari Associates Architects and Interior Designers, libraries are generally set up in houses sized 3,000 sq ft and above. Mostly the residents of such larger houses will be able to set apart a room for pursuing some of their interests. While most of them would prefer a home theatre or a gym, at least 25 per cent of them would like to have a library and reading room at home.

"Auditors, lawyers and academicians who need to update their knowledge base at a regular basis are those who mainly prefer libraries. For those with space constraints, libraries can be squeezed into a cupboard or bookshelf in the children's room, living room or even bedroom," he said.

Typically a 12x8 ft room, which has a wall as long as 10 ft is generally chosen for a library. This long wall will accommodate a tall book-shelf and there should be a study table with provisions for computer and drawers. A chair for browsing and writing purposes and another reclining chair for leisurely reading are needed. "If a sofa-cum-bed can be placed in the room, it can also be used as a guest room," said Ansari.

A few racks of the shelf will have glass doors to display the books, while a couple of closed chambers at the bottom can be used for stacking newspapers and magazines. The writing table should be big enough to accommodate a computer. It can have additional drawers for keeping writing materials.

"False ceiling and diffused lighting can be used to give a different ambience to the room and this is preferred by people who would like to read and relax in the library. Some go for a traditional look while some others want the furniture and other accessories to be contemporary" he said.

A 10x8x10 wooden finish shelf can cost upto Rs 1.5 lakh. The writing table, tea table, sofa, false ceiling and diffused lighting altogether can cost around Rs 2.5 lakh.

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Maintenance of the room is also equally important. Termite-proof coating and pest treatments are done before the shelf is fixed. "The treatment has a life of five years. This will keep away most of the insects and pests that infest wood and paper," he said.



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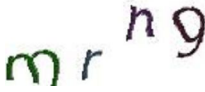
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