

My Rules for Reading

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Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested: that is, some books are to be read only in parts, others to be read, but not curiously, and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention.

- Sir Francis Bacon

- Only read about subjects that you are interested in
- Read original texts and books that you think will be relevant 50 years from now
- Bad books are less readable than good ones
- Reread the really great books
- Be an active reader
- Read only physical books
- Stop reading a book once you are bored
- The idea is to be bored with a specific book rather than the act of reading
- Ask any smart person you interact with if they have any book recommendations
- People who read a lot aren't speed readers
- People who read a lot just spend a lot of time reading because its important to them
- Have no set periodicity for reading

Why I read

- Chances are whatever problem you are going through right now, someone else went through it before you and they probably wrote it down
- Books are the way that we access that knowledge

Here's a great passage from 'How to Read a Book' by Mortimer J. Alder & Charles Van Doren:

“When you buy a book, you establish a property right in it, just as you do in clothes or furniture when you buy and pay for them. But the act of purchase is actually only the prelude to possession in the case of a book. Full ownership of a book only comes when you have made it a part of yourself, and the best way to make yourself a part of it – which comes to the same thing – is by writing in it.

Why is marking a book indispensable to reading it? First, it keeps you awake – not merely conscious, but wide awake. Second, reading, if it is active, is thinking, and thinking tends to express itself in words, spoken or written. The person who says he knows what he thinks but cannot express it usually does not know what he thinks. Third, writing your reactions down helps you to remember the thoughts of the author.

Reading a book should be a conversation between you and the author. Presumably he knows more about the subject than you do; if not, you probably should not be bothering with his book. But understanding is a two-way operation; the learner has to question himself and question the teacher. He even has to be willing to argue with the teacher, once he understands what the teacher is saying. Marking a book is literally an expression of your differences or your agreements with the author. It is the highest respect you can pay him.”