

>> Make your reading corner comfortable by using cushions



READY TO READ

Want to cosy up with a good book this weekend? **Rhea Dhanbhoora** tells you how to create the perfect reading nook at home

In between the hustle and bustle of your daily life, when was the last time you sat down, uninterrupted and read a book, cover to cover? Reading a good book instead of watching a movie or spending time with your friends may seem a little isolated, but it's a great way to de-stress after a hard day. Finding a good spot to read in is as important as finding the perfect book to read. While you may be able to read in the midst of chaos, having a reading nook is the best way to truly relax. You need a spot that's airy, well-lit, calm and peaceful. While some people are blessed with houses that are big enough to accommodate a library or study, most of us are fighting for space in smaller flats, so dedicating an entire space to reading seems like a distant dream. But, here are a few ways to create a nook for your hobby, no matter how cramped your house is.

FIND YOUR SPOT

The first thing you should do is find the quietest spot in your home. Whether it's in a corner of your bedroom, on your balcony or even near a window, pick an unused corner that's far removed from the hustle and bustle of the television, cooker and doorbell.

FIND A SEAT

Not everyone has the luxury of being able to have a dedicated reading chair, so while

a lounge-chair or window seat does sound tempting, it's not necessary. You can pile a few pillows on top of one another, buy a bean bag that suits your needs or just get some floor cushions or a mattress and place it on the floor.

KEEP IT SECLUDED

It's not going to feel like a private space if it blends in with the rest of your home. An easy way to keep it private is to put a barrier between your reading nook and the rest of the room. You can pull up a dresser there to save space as well as create a division. However, the best way to segregate the area is to use makeshift curtains. All you need is a hook where you can hang curtains in the form of a canopy around your reading space. This will make it seem cut off from the rest of your house even if it is in a room filled with people.

GET RID OF DISTRACTIONS

If you have a boisterous family, make sure they know that once you step into your 'reading zone,' no one can talk to you or disturb you till you step out. Set aside electronics such as your phone (make sure it's on silent so the ringing doesn't disturb you at all), tablets and laptop and use ear plugs if you're easily distracted. Reading on a tablet is great, but try and get a physical copy of your book so that you're not distracted by all the other applications.

GET A TABLE

Even if it's an upturned cardboard box, a pile of books or a plank of wood, get a coffee table to keep things such as beverages or snacks and a bottle of water. This way, you won't need to get up for anything but the occasional bathroom break, making sure you're de-stressing.

GET LIGHT

You need adequate light to ensure that you're not interrupted by the setting sun either. If you don't have light where you're reading, think about picking up a lamp or a reading light. Daylight can be a little harsh and if you've got curtains, this will soften it just the right amount.

USE COLOUR

While you do want your reading nook to be secluded, you don't want it to be dull and gloomy. Add a pop of colour, a hint of pattern and texture to make sure you're comfortable. If you like cosying up, keep a blanket with you. Make sure you're getting enough air or keep a table fan around for ventilation. If you're not using curtains or a blanket, you could throw a colourful cloth over your table for a hint of colour and warmth. Use warm colours like yellow and orange but add a splash of blue and green to keep yourself calm and peaceful.

« KNOW MORE: WHEN EVEN SAREES CONVEY PROTEST

Provoke/Protect is an exhibition that speaks out for and supports women's rights.

Surabhi Nijhawan tells us more about the quote embroidered saris

The Delhi gang rape has become a turning point in the life of every Indian woman. From prime-time television debates to editorial pieces, there has been a lot that has been written about, spoken of and heard about this case.

The NGO Sneha, involved ten women from Dharavi, who got together to come up with an exhibition of sarees that take their inspiration from the Nirbhaya rape case and speak out for all women. They are called 'Sarees against rape' and consist of embroidery and patch worked slogans against rape.

Called Provoke/Protect, the collection, if it can be called that, is on exhibit at the



>> Some of the slogans used to adorn the sarees that the women of Dharavi have designed

Artisan's Centre in Rampart Row at Fort in downtown Mumbai.

The women of Dharavi worked with two textile artists, who guided them through the entire process of making these sarees. The workshop was followed by a photo shoot, where the designers modelled the textiles in a show that was held before other members of their communities.

"We put in a proposal to do this workshop in response to the Delhi rape. We didn't design the sarees, the women did. The workshop was about two weeks long and involved discussion on various symbols of protection and warning," said Suzie, textile artist who worked with the women.

"Artisans is a space where art, design and craft emerge so in that sense these saree's are works of art and they are also designed because they are vehicles of more important messages," said Radhi Parekh, founder director of Artisans Centre. Part of the exhibition was also a panel discussion during which people associated with Sneha spoke to the women on issues like empowerment and domestic violence.

Art has always been a form of expression. Through this workshop, the women have raised their voice in protest of crimes against women.

When Up to March 29, from 11am – 7pm

Where ARTISANS' 52-56 Dr VB Gandhi Marg, Kala Ghoda

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