

# A Graphic Novel Book Club of Your Very Own

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It helps if you have someone passionate on staff to be the lead. You can try to woo an interested customer into being the go-to though. Find a nerd and offer them 50% off book club titles (or list price or for free, you know your store better than anyone else.)

I read comics growing up, but I wasn't an expert when I started. The manager at the time wanted everyone to try and lead a book club and this was the one (of 2 I started) that really stuck around. The key was to give people a place to feel like they belong. We do that every day as booksellers, so this is almost identical to any other book club. Don't be scared!

## Quick Start Guide

1. Choose and order your books in before you start advertising. You and staff need to know enough about the titles to answer questions.
2. Make fliers for 3 months at a time. That way people can get a feel for the different kinds of books that will be showing up.
3. Choose two classics and then a more modern title. You won't sell as many copies of the first two months but you can build up attendance since your club base is likely to have read those. It's low investment for them but if they like the community being built they'll start buying the newer ones to keep up.
  - a. Example: V for Vendetta, Persepolis and Rat Queens vol 1+2
4. You can repeat this formula for a second quarter but after that you'll hopefully be having invested customers who want to help guide the group with new picks. We generally pick out 3 months worth of titles about one month before we run out. We get a commitment from club members and then add 1-2 more in case newbies want to join.
5. We've had good success with choosing a superhero trade to discuss at whatever club meeting is closest to the moving releasing and then organizing a group outing to see it.
6. Research the authors, the artists and get together discussion topics. This is probably an overshare, but our group smells new books because different companies use different paper and ink. If conversation lulls, you want to have some things to keep it going.
7. Be ready for discussion to veer off course though too. There is a big overlap between comics and general pop culture right now. People are going to talk about movies, shows, other things they've read. This is a good sign for this kind of group.
8. All of our book club titles get a discount and if you do that, put it on the advertising. Also include that you don't have to purchase the book to attend.
9. Where to advertise? Your local comic store might be willing, never hurts to ask. You'll have a lot more luck getting the info put up or added to the online resource list at public libraries. If you have a connection with your local high school(s), that's good too.
10. Obviously have fun. Graphic Novels contain a ton of different genres. Do Mystery Month, pair a food related one with a dinner, join your history club for one month with a nonfiction title.