



ASK LEWIS

Tracking the Borrowing Habits of the Nation

LEWIS (Loans Enquiry Web Information Service), PLR's sophisticated database, provides us with fascinating information, across hundreds of subject categories on exactly which books are being read where, and with it, a snapshot of our national, and regional preferences.

Here is just a taster from LEWIS, relating to borrowings for 2009-10:

Cookery

The UK's favourite cookery book was Delia Smith's *How to Cheat at Cooking*. However, borrowers in Northern Ireland preferred Rachel Allen's *Food for Living*, whilst in Scotland the most borrowed cookery book was Delia Smith's *Frugal Food*. In the West Midlands borrowers favoured Jamie Oliver's *Ministry of Food*. Nigella Lawson's *Nigella Express* came out top in the South-East.

Holidays

Greg Ward's *Rough Guide to France* was the most borrowed travel and holiday book nationally. Readers in the East Midlands also went for the *Rough Guide to France* while library borrowers in the West Midlands preferred Juliet Clough's *Scotland*. Top for borrowers in the North-West was Mike Smith's *The Best of Lancashire* while Yorkshire and Humberside library users preferred *Seaside: Discover the Best of Britain's Beaches*.

Pets

Across the UK John Grogan's *Marley and Me* came top. Welsh and London readers preferred *Dewey: The Small-town Library Cat* by Vicki Myron. But doggy books prevailed in the South-East with Barrie Hawkins's *Twenty Wagging Tales: A Year of Rescuing Large Dogs* and in Scotland where *Teach Your Puppy to Be the Dog You Want* by Clarice Rutherford and David Neil proved most popular. In the Insects as Pets category, Ted Hooper's *Guide to Bees and Honey* takes the top spot for the UK and for most regions. The East and North-East chose to differ with *Keeping Stick Insects* (Dorothy Floyd) and *Tarantulas and other Arachnids* (SD Marshall) coming top.

Humour

The most borrowed book across the UK in the humour category was Matt Groening's *Dollars to Donut\$*. But there was much regional variation in taste. In London Jeremy Clarkson's *For Crying Out Loud* came top. In the South-East Philip Glenister's *Things Ain't What They Used to Be* led the way, while in Scotland it was the *Loose Women Girls' Night In*. Maureen Lipman's *Past-it Notes* was top in the North-West and for North-East readers Ricky Tomlinson's *Reading My Arse* proved most popular.

Health

Across the UK, the most borrowed book in the complementary medicine category was Jan de Vries's *Emotional Healing*. In London *The Complete Idiot's Guide to the Pilates Method* by Karon Karter came top. Cherry Chappell's *Grandma's Remedies* was most popular in Yorkshire and Humberside, while Scottish readers preferred *Suckers: How Alternative Medicine Makes Fools of Us* by Rose Shapiro.

[If you would like to ask LEWIS a question, please contact the Press Team \(contact details below\):](#)

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