

A Touch of Mischief

The books chosen for this list all have an element of mischief about them, but that's where the similarity ends. There's mischief that will make you laugh (in spite of your better judgement); mischief that teases and taunts; mischief that plays with your expectations as a reader; and mischief that will create an uncomfortable feeling deep in the pit of your stomach.

Use this list to bring an element of surprise into your reading life. Embrace the unexpected. You might find it's the most exciting thing that's happened to you in ages.

Read the introductions to each book and decide for yourself which to go for. Be generous, be daring – you can always swap the book for something else if it's not your cup of tea. But if you don't try... you'll never know!

The Reader by Bernhard Schlink

Set in post-war Germany, the story opens with a secretive affair between a young boy and an older woman. You've barely got to grips with the complexities of their relationship when the mischief kicks in. The scene changes, time moves swiftly on, and you're plunged into a haunting exploration of the terrible hold the past has on the present. An easy read, but the themes run dark and deep. This is one book readers never forget.

RNIB **NLB** **calibre** 

The Witch of Exmoor by Margaret Drabble

You'll be aware of a kind of mischief at work from the opening paragraph. The voice of the narrator is sharp, dominant and far from neutral – delighting in the exposure of the thoughts, words and deeds of Frieda Haxby Palmer's 'nearest and dearest'. This is a barbed look at family relationships and middle class values; and it may make you feel uncomfortable about certain aspects of your own life too.

RNIB **calibre**

Amsterdam by Ian McEwan

This is Ian McEwan's witty and mischievous exploration of morality in a modern world, a must-read for its sheer entertainment value. Consider the dilemmas and decisions facing Vernon Halliday and Clive Lindley. What would you have done in their shoes? Expect the unexpected; and watch out for the deliciously wicked twist to the tale.

RNIB **NLB** **calibre** 

The Waiting Game by Bernice Rubens

Hollyhocks is an old folks' home for a better class of OAP. But don't kid yourself that the residents are quietly and peacefully awaiting death. Far from it! Mischief abounds, and blackmail, suicide, four-letter words and falling in love are all part of the daily routine. If you're looking for a read that turns your expectation of old age well and truly on its head, then this is it!

NLB **calibre** 

A Touch of... Get a sneak preview of ten great reads

Stuck for what to read next? Maybe you fancy trying something new but don't know where to start. **A Touch of** is a great way for readers who use large print, Braille or audio books to find that good read everyone is looking for. Whether you're choosing for yourself or for someone else who can't get to the library, **A Touch of** gives you a sneak preview of tempting possibilities. There are ten different booklists in the series, including A Touch of Terror, A Sharp Touch A Ticklish Touch and Touching Infinity.

A Touch of Mischief features books available in large print and tells you which ones you can get in audio and Braille as well. If you prefer to start from what's available in audio or Braille, please ask for the ten **A Touch of** samplers which give you friendly introductions and a short extract from each book to listen to or touch read.

RNIB Available from RNIB Talking Book Service

NLB Available from NLB in Braille

calibre Available from Calibre Cassette Library

 Available in audio through public libraries

If you would like more information about the services to readers offered by these organisations please ask a member of library staff. If you have internet access, you can check out www.nlbuk.org

Fair Exchange by Michele Roberts

Louise Daudry thinks she's dying. She's only 38, but that's not a bad age for a woman of her social class in 19th century France. Her conscience is troubling her. She needs to confess something she did years ago, for which she was paid generously for her silence. This back to front read blurs the boundaries between fictional characters and real people; it teases, hints but does not reveal its secret until the final pages. Impossible to resist.

Emotionally Weird by Kate Atkinson

There's a lot of mischief going on here, and a number of literary send-ups as the author explores (tongue firmly in her cheek) the essence of stories and that blurry line between fiction and reality. The main story is told by Effie Andrews. It's a mad, often surreal tale of university life (Dundee – a pleasant change from Oxbridge), populated by a huge cast of crazy people, a yellow dog and a succession of hamsters all called McFluffy.



When We Were Orphans by Kazuo Ishiguro

The central character of this story is a quintessentially English detective called Christopher Banks, who would be perfectly at home within the pages of an Agatha Christie whodunnit. Set in the 1930s, the action moves between the salons of fashionable London and the privileged community of ex-pats living in Shanghai. The mischief is that this thoroughly British period piece is written by a Japanese author – and that there's much more to Banks and his past than his upper middle-class manners and upbringing might at first suggest.



Tulip Fever by Deborah Moggach

Dutch paintings of interiors are known for their calm and rich stillness. Deborah Moggach's mischief is to reveal the passionate dramas which could lie behind one such painting of a wealthy merchant and his young wife. Money, sex, deception – it's all here in a cliff-hanging story with more twists, disasters and discoveries than usually fit into one lifetime, let alone one book. Take the phone off the hook and enjoy.



Identity by Milan Kundera

translated by Linda Asher

This one is mischief big time. Short, accessible, it seems a fast read on the surface (and it is.) Two lovers meet in a hotel on the coast. There is an easy, relaxed relationship. But what happens if one, in a moment of panic, begins to doubt the other? You'll find your head spinning as Milan Kundera delicately probes the tricks the mind plays on us.



Heavy Water by Martin Amis

Martin Amis has been to fiction what Mick Jagger has been to rock and roll and the stories in this collection span 20 years of writing. They're all very different so if you don't get on with the first one, dip in somewhere else. Sharp, stylish, sick and slick – Amis can push a comic inversion as far as it will go, and then some more. You'll need a strong stomach and you won't know whether to laugh or wince!

A Touch of...

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A Touch of Mischief offers you a brief, but provocative, peep at ten very different books. You may be on for a swift kick in the perceptions or just in search of an alternative perspective. Either way, expect the unexpected...

A Touch of... Get a sneak preview of ten great reads