How to use the Library



National Széchényi Library is Hungary's national library, the museum of Hungarian books. NSZL is not a lending library. Users can read its stock only in the Reading Rooms of the Library.

How to use the Library

NSZL's collection, comprising approximately 8 million library items, consists of a General Collection and of several other collections, organized according to various document or content types.

Detailed rules on the use of documents in the General Collection can be found in NSZL's Regulations on Document Distribution [1].

Further rules on the use of Special Collections Reading Rooms can be read in Appendix 1 to NSZL's Regulations on Document Distribution. Appendix 2 (Regulations on Reader Service of National Széchényi Library [2] (in Hungarian)), in addition to a separately published guide to Library use, contains regulations on the use of the Library of Book History, Library and Information.

The Reading Rooms of National Széchényi Library can be used only by those who own a valid Reader Pass.

Reader Pass entitles you to on-the-spot reading of books, periodical publications, textbooks, lecture notes, microfilms, electronic documents, video documents belonging to NSZL's stock as well as documents belonging to the stock of Special Collections, taking into consideration stock preservation aspects all the time.

Some library items kept by the Library of Book History, Library and Information can be borrowed.

Reader Pass owners are also entitled to use stock exploration tools (catalogues), and information guides, to use information provided about the services of Reading Rooms and their reference libraries, of the Library and the Library system, readers' professional workstations (Hungarian abbreviation: OPM), other terminals dedicated to Library users, the Internet, certain technical devices, to have copies made (with regard to stock preservation aspects), to visit NSZL's exhibitions, to attend lectures and Library events and also to receive education on Library use.

Certain services of National Széchényi Library and the visiting of exhibitions are not free; special fees are charged.

NSZL users under the age of 18 can use only distributable items of the General Collection and stock placed on free shelves in the Reading Room.

NSZL's staff area can be visited by readers and visitors only in the presence of NSZL staff members.

Entering the Reading Rooms

NSZL's check-in system checks the validity of reader's Reader Pass, so on arrival, readers have to insert their Reader Pass into a machine set up by the entrance of the Library. A reader can enter the Library only if a feedback on the validity of his or her Reader Pass is given.

No object can be taken into the building of NSZL that would endanger or disturb the usual operation of the Library. Coat, jacket, umbrella, briefcase or a bag, larger than size 30 x 20 cm, are requested to be placed in the cloakroom of National Széchényi Library. Use of the cloakroom is free.

The following objects are not allowed to be taken into the reading rooms: film- and video cameras, tape recorder, walkman, dictaphone, radio, television, copier and any other object which can damage Library documents or disturb the work of other readers. It is strictly forbidden to take food or drink into the reading rooms and to eat and drink there. A maximum of three books can be taken into the Library, with an entry permit issued at the Registering Desk.

Reader's own laptop (without a carrying case) can be brought into the Library with an entry permit issued on registering for a Reader Pass. It is forbidden to make a copy with a camera.

Reader Pass and documents brought in, together with the entry permit, have to be shown to NSZL staff on duty for checking, without any further notice, both on arrival and leaving the Library.

Library staff is entitled to check reader's bag and documents taken into the Library. National Széchényi Library does not take any responsibility for objects and valuables brought into the Library by readers, such as laptops, digital cameras or mobile phones, and for objects placed in jackets or bags left in NSZL's cloakroom.



Place number and reading place

Services related to General Collection can be used by readers in the Readings Rooms operating on Floor 7.

On arrival to Floor 7, Reader Pass has to be shown and handed over to Library staff at the Book Issue Station. After handing over one's Reader Pass, reader can choose from free reading places in any reading room, according to his or her entitlement and needs.

Readers can use only the reading place corresponding to the chosen place number. On reader's demand, NSZL staff will replace reader's place number to another one.

Desks of various Reading Rooms can be used only by place numbers with colors detailed below:

- General Collection Reading Room: yellow
- Research Reading Room: blue
- History Science Reading Room: green
- Literature Science Reading Room: red
- Periodicals Reading Room: black
- Microfilm Reading Room: pink
- Media Reading Room: brown

Desks of Research Room can be reserved and used only by readers holding a Reader Pass "A" to NSZL. Researchers can use storage cabinets to keep their materials and things there for a longer period of time. NSZL staff issuing books will give you detailed information about how to order a storage cabinet of your own.

Unnumbered reading places in the reference library can be used by readers only for the purpose of studying the documents placed there. After handing over his or her Reader Pass, reader must

present the place number in the public rooms of the Library, in order to verify that he or she is staying in the Library as a registered user. Place number must be preserved by reader until he or she leaves the Library. In case the place number is damaged or lost, a fee must be paid by the reader. The exact degree of this fee is included in Appendix 3.



The Reading Rooms

In the reading rooms and reference library of National Széchényi Library, books and periodical publications placed on free shelves can be used without any restriction or request form.

Volumes and unbound copies of periodical publications in NSZL's Periodicals Reading Room as well as volumes and copies requested from repository can be used only on these premises. If readers want to make a copy from them, a permit from the librarian on duty has to be asked for.

Reference books placed in the reference library can be used only there, these books can be taken over to other reading rooms only with a permit from the reference librarian on duty.

Volumes, originating from the material placed on the reading room's free shelves and already not in use by the reader, must be returned to the reference desk of the appropriate reading room or to one of the service desks used by NSZL staff. Reference library items, taken over to another reading room, must be returned to the original reading room where it came from.

NSZL's reading rooms are equipped with security cameras.



Request forms

NSZL documents stored in repositories can be ordered by way of filling in and submitting a request form.

- books and other printed monographic publications have to be ordered at the Book Issue Station.
- periodical publications can be ordered in the Periodicals Reading Room,
- microfilms in the Microfilm Reading Room,
- electronic documents (CD/DVD, floppy disks, etc.): at the Circulation Desk
- video recordings at the Photography and Audiovisual Reading Room

Submitting call slips: Monday and Saturday until 5 pm, Tuesday to Friday until 7 pm.

All of the columns on both sides of the request form have to be filled in completely, legibly and using a pen. Repository reference numbers have to be clearly and meticulously indicated on the request form.

One reader can submit a maximum of five request forms on one occasion. New documents can be requested only if the reader has already been served with the documents requested before.

One reader, on one occasion, can use documents issued on ten request forms tops. These restrictions are not valid for readers holding a Reader Pass "A".

Request forms ordering books, periodical publications, microfilms and electronic documents can be submitted until 7 p.m., while VHS documents can be ordered up until 2 p.m.

When the requested books or periodical documents arrive, the reader's place number will appear in the appropriate field of an electronic display board. The requested book can be picked up by the reader at the Book Issue Station, on presenting his or her place number. In Periodicals Reading Room, the reading room's own place number is needed to pick the requested periodical publication up.

Due to stock reservation reasons, the Library may make restrictions as to where certain parts or units of the stock can be used, e.g. only at the Book Issue Station or at any other appointed place in the Library.

More on the use of Library documents in the reading rooms are included in the Regulations on Document Distribution [3], where you can also find information about restrictions on the issue of certain parts of the stock or certain documents placed in repository.

Readers, holding a Reading Pass valid for 6 or 12 months, can order preparing, for a given day, a maximum of five books or periodical publications, by way of filling in an **online request form**. The fee of this service can be found in Appendix 3 of Regulations on Reader Service of National Széchényi Library [2] (in Hungarian).



Use of documents

Readers are obliged to use documents they got from the reference library or from repository with the utmost care.

It is forbidden to write on paper placed on open or closed Library documents, to make a copy of illustration by re-drawing, to turn the pages of a document carelessly or with a wet finger, to bend the pages of a document, to put a document down in an open state.

It is strictly forbidden to write into any Library document with any writing tool, to underline or highlight any line in any document. It is strictly forbidden to truncate Library documents, to remove pages, charts, images or appendices, to pull out anything from an unbound publication, to change the order of journals stored in a folder. Uncut volumes or copies can be cut only by NSZL's librarians.

Documents must not be placed on the floor, on a staircase or on a windowsill. Large-size books, bound or unbound journal volumes, items stored in a box or a folder, microfilms, video documents and electronic documents must be handled with special care. The use of the above-mentioned documents can be even further restricted by the Library.

Readers are responsible for documents ordered from repository until they return them. Documents ordered from repository can be forwarded to another reader only by the librarian who makes the necessary changes in the register. Readers are not allowed to take documents, neither from the reference library, nor from the repository, from the desk of another reader. Library documents cannot be taken by readers out of reading rooms on Floor 7.

No copy of documents from the reference library or from the repository can be made by a reader's photo camera.

Reader makes a declaration that he or she will not publish any shot, or he or she applies for a special permit to do so, and the reader also has to pay a publication fee determined by the Library.

If a document is damaged, the reader is obliged to reimburse for the losses by paying any fee related to the restoration of the document.



Returning and reserving documents from the stock

In order to let other readers work flawlessly, readers are kindly requested to return documents they do not use any more, at the earliest time possible. Reader can get back his or her reader Pass only if he or she returns every document ordered from repository and also gives his or her place number back.

If the reader is unable to return the ordered document on leaving, the librarian on duty will make a record, which has to be signed by the reader. At the same time, reader can state his or opinion about the case in writing.

Readers with a Reader Pass can reserve a document ordered from the repository for a period of one week. The range of documents, which can be reserved by NSZL's readers, is stated in Regulations on Document Distribution. Reservation of a document can be prolonged only if no other reader wants to use the given document. Such prolongation can be made only in person.

Documents will not be reserved by the Book Issue Station if there is no free room to do so. On one occasion, one reader cannot reserve more than five documents. Readers holding a Reader Pass "A" can reserve ten documents at the same time.

General liabilities and responsibility of readers

National Széchényi Library will not take any responsibility for its readers' lost objects or for any valuables placed in their jackets and bags stored in NSZL's cloakroom.

For the order of reading spaces, reading rooms, for providing the necessary conditions for the use of the Library, the librarians on duties carry the responsibility. These persons must be able to identify themselves by a card, pinned on their dress, stating their full name.

Librarians on duty can warn readers to keep themselves to the rules and regulations of National Széchényi Library. If they fail to do so, Head of the Department or Head of the Service Shift must be asked to cooperate and, in addition to withdrawing the Reader Pass, they will warn the reader to leave Library premises.

In case a reader seriously disturbs the order of the Library or refuses to cooperate, members of the Library's security staff will remove him or her from the building. Readers damaging Library stock are obliged to reimburse for the losses caused.

It considered making a damage to Library stock if someone underlines or makes notes in NSZL's documents or if a reader bends or breaks the pages of NSZL documents.

The truncation of Library documents – the removal of certain pages, images, charts, maps or appendices and the cutting out of details – is regarded as a criminal offence committed against public property. Therefore, anyone carrying out the afore-mentioned actions will be excluded from the use of National Széchényi Library. In really serious cases, the Library will commence infringement proceedings and even prosecution.

NSZL will make a record on any case of causing damage by a reader, about which the reader can state his or her opinion, and which record he or she is obliged to sign. Readers are obliged to reimburse for any losses caused, which includes, e.g. the fee of restoration. If no restoration is possible, the reader is obliged to pay for the replacement and binding of the missing or seriously damaged document.

Readers' Comments

Readers can communicate their opinion, comments and wishes to NSZL staff working at the Book Issue Station and to members of the Library's reference staff, as well as to librarians on duty in the various reading rooms.

With their comments on document and information services or the behavior of NSZL staff on duty, readers can turn to the Director, the Head or Deputy Head of Department, and outside opening hours, to the Head of Service Shift.

Readers can also make written comments, suggestions and complaints in the "Readers' Book" placed at the Registering Desk, at the document issue workplace and at the Central Information Service.

Examining these remarks and complaints and answering them are assigned to Head of the Department involved. However, in each case, the Director in charge also has to be informed. Readers' comments, which are of special importance or which relate to fellow directorates or the Library as a whole, have to be forwarded to NSZL's Director-General by the Director in charge.



Leaving the Library

On leaving the Library, readers may be called to present their notes, handbags and own documents brought into the Library with an entry permit, if Library staff finds it necessary.

On leaving the building, readers have to insert their Reader Pass into the check-in machine, in order to check out.

In order to preserve the security of Library stock, NSZL is equipped with an electronic security system.

If, on a reader's leaving, the security system signals, reader is obliged to undergo a personal control checking. Any intention to take a Library document out illegally will be recorded in minutes, about which the reader can express his or her opinion and which he or she is obliged to sign.

Such cases result in the withdrawal of Reader Pass, and NSZL will examine the circumstances of each case. If Library rules are violated by the reader, he or she will be excluded from among the members of NSZL user community. In the most serious cases, based on the Director-General's decision, the Library can in initiate infringement proceedings and even prosecution.

Readers excluded from the user community of National Széchényi Library can make a complaint against Library measures. At the same time with taking minutes, readers must be informed about this possibility. Any complaint, supported by a justification, must be submitted to the Director-General of National Széchényi Library in writing, within two weeks from the commencement of measures of exclusion. However, making such a written complaint to the Director-General of NSZL does not have a suspensory effect. Within two weeks following the arrival of the reader's written complaint, Director-General brings a decision in the matter, and the reader gets an official response, including this decision, in writing.



Related content

Regulations on Reader Service of National Széchényi Library [2] (in Hungarian)

Regulations on Document Distribution [4] (in Hungarian)
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