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Posted by Ryan S. on Feb 24, 2014 [Ryan S.'s blog](#) [Add new comment](#)



Proper care and feeding of your DVDs, CDs and BluRays.



When compact discs first came out they were proclaimed to be almost indestructible. I still remember watching the Today Show and being amazed as the new media storage for music was demonstrated. Part of the demonstration was taking a small hammer and hitting the CD disc with it. A wonder of wonders; the disc still played. Looking back on this event today I wonder if the disc would have played all the way through. The idea that digital disc storage was indestructible has been more than a little overblown. Digital discs need the same care and sometimes greater care than the old vinyl recordings. I would like to share with you some guidelines for caring for your digital discs. " [Read more »](#)

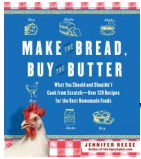
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Posted by Keith C. on Sep 10, 2012 [Keith C.'s blog](#) [Add new comment](#)





Make the Bread, Buy the Butter



When enthusiastic home cook, Jennifer Reese lost her job she wondered if making homemade staples would be more cost effective. Is homemade mayonnaise cheaper than the tub you buy in the store? And just as important, does it taste better? Her book, *Make the Bread, Buy the Butter* has over 120 recipes for the from-scratch cook - looking for both cost savings and taste improvements.

Reese's journey to make and taste homemade versions of cupboard regulars like peanut butter and bread and the more exotic like camembert and prosciutto includes helpful input from her family. She makes it sound like making your own ginger ale isn't crazy -- but actually fairly easy, cheaper than store bought, and delicious. Her voice throughout the book is casual and often really funny. The best part of the book is her interest in the highly practical and includes a 'hassle factor' for each item. Every recipe has a realistic cost comparison with store bought and an indication of how difficult each item is to make. Right there in bold print is a verdict on each item: Make it or Buy it. A few items get a warning. Make or buy cream cheese? Reese says to make it once and then decide. Make or buy English muffins? Depends on whether you are eating them plain or as a base for eggs benedict.

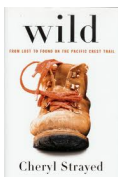
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Wild & Other Hiking Related Books



The [Pacific Crest Trail](#) is a 2,663 mile long trail reaching from the Canadian border in northern border in Washington, through Oregon, to the Mexico border in southern California. Hiking this trail can take 4-6 months and it purposefully avoids civilization. The Cascade and Sierra Nevada mountains make for both difficult hiking and beautiful unspoiled scenery.

After a trying few years after the death of her mother, author Cheryl Strayed started her PCT trail hike despite her outdoor inexperience. Her book, *Wild: From Lost to Found on the Pacific Crest Trail* chronicling her hike came out this past spring and was well reviewed. I promptly put this book on my to-read list as doing a long hike lingers at the bottom of my life to-do list.

Looks like I will have to wait to read this memoir a little bit longer as this past week Oprah selected *Wild* as the first title of her new [Oprah Book Club 2.0](#). As of this morning there were quite a few holds on this book, but I'm thinking the wait just might be worth it. **Read more »**

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Altered Books



Amazon's blog [Omnivoracious](#) is a great read to keep up with not only what is happening at Amazon, but also generally in the publishing world, complete with reviews of reviews, author interviews, and other literary minded topics. [Today's post](#) was exceptionally astonishing and beautiful. Profiled is Chicago based artist, [Brian Dettmer](#), who sculpts old books into amazing works of art. Check out both the blog entry and his website to see the images. I don't want to generally advocate cutting up books, but his end result is truly extraordinary.

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