I don’t do labels

BILLY, 40

February 2019
BILLY is 40 years old...

In IKEA terms, BILLY is quite a well-known piece of furniture. With 40 years of history behind it, there’s been a BILLY bookcase (or two) in millions of homes. Now we can read on our smartphones an encyclopedia that would once fill a large bookcase.

Which begs the question: if your books are just ones and zeroes in a “cloud” – is BILLY out of date?

BILLY bookcase/BOTTNA display shelf combination $105 80x202cm. Yellow/green
...With millions of identities

There have been regular refinements as well as new colours and more options. Yet the BILLY bookcase formula has been much the same for more than a generation.

And that might be why BILLY fits so comfortably into many people’s lives. We spend so much time online, yet we still need to store an “offline profile” too. Those physical reminders, of who we are and what we know, need their version of a “homepage”. Even in this digital age, a BILLY bookcase is often the most convenient place to start.
Some people buy a piece of furniture for the history and identity that come built-in. If you adapt or personalize such an item, that reduces the value. Its character is off-the-shelf and is always the same.

On the other hand, BILLY is more about what’s on the inside. Not the designer label or the fashion status. BILLY is storage furniture that’s functional, flexible and modest. And that’s the point. The personality that people see is what you add.

BILLY makes a simple yet important statement: “Look inside before you define me.”
And who is BILLY anyway?

Gillis Lundgren named his design after a colleague, Billy Liljedahl, who had expressed his desire for a “proper” bookcase.

Actually, as Lundgren intended, BILLY can belong to almost anyone and everyone.

Age, gender, interests, beliefs – BILLY crosses boundaries because it only makes one very basic assumption about you. That you have important books or other meaningful items that you want to keep neatly close at hand.
You can’t judge a book by its cover

For the 40-year birthday, BILLY has a new yellow colour choice and optional additions such as display shelves and bookends. Which makes BILLY even more adaptable to the ways that people want to live today.

Even as the face of BILLY grows and changes, the original principles hold true. BILLY was always meant to serve its owner without prejudice. What you read didn’t matter – only that you could store it “properly”.

So, whatever BILLY may look like on the surface, you can’t really know a BILLY owner until you look a bit deeper.
The famous designer you never heard of

BILLY may not have the label of a famous designer. But the designer is very famous in the IKEA world.

Gillis Lundgren was one of the first handful of employees and company founder, Ingvar Kamprad, backed the BILLY idea. Lundgren’s affordable bookcase would suit many different people and many types of living spaces.

Lundgren knew that people might also want to add to BILLY as their book collections grew. So he made a timeless product that could rise above changing fashions and remain a cornerstone of the IKEA range.

Even if it were the books that went out of fashion.
For February, you can more easily display, hide and organize your treasures with the blue, red and green BOTTNA range of inserts. These complement BILLY and include display shelf and bookend options.

BILLY usually tries to blend in but from February 2019, the new yellow BILLY makes your valued items really "pop".
In the past, BILLY was quite private and reserved. More and more, BILLY is public and proud of it, as people share their personalities with the world. On social media, the hashtag #shelfie is a glimpse into the remarkable ways that the humble bookcase finds a starring role in everyday life.

IKEA.ca/BILLY #IKEA #BILLY #NoLabels #Shelfie
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PE584186
BILLY bookcase with glass doors $199
Foil finish and particleboard. Designer: Gillis Lundgren. W80xD30, H202cm. Beige

PE692337
BILLY bookcase with glass doors $199
Foil finish and particleboard. Designer: Gillis Lundgren. W80xD30, H202cm. Dark red

PE710604
BOTTNA book-end dark lilac blue 2-p $4.99
Powder-coated steel

PE710597
BOTTNA book-end bright green 2-p $4.99
Powder-coated steel

PE710610
BOTTNA book-end bright red 2-p $4.99
Powder-coated steel

PE711182
BOTTNA display shelf bright green $20
Powder-coated steel. W76xD32cm

PE711180
BOTTNA display shelf bright red $20
Powder-coated steel. W76xD32cm

PE711179
BOTTNA display shelf dark lilac blue $20
Powder-coated steel. W76xD32cm
PE711116
BILLY/BOTTNA bookcase with display shelf yellow/blue $105
Foil finish and powder-coated steel. W80×D28, H202cm

PE711118
BILLY/BOTTNA bookcase with display shelf yellow/green $105
Foil finish and powder-coated steel. W80×D28, H202cm

PE711117
BILLY/BOTTNA bookcase with display shelf yellow/red $105
Foil finish and powder-coated steel. W80×D28, H202cm
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