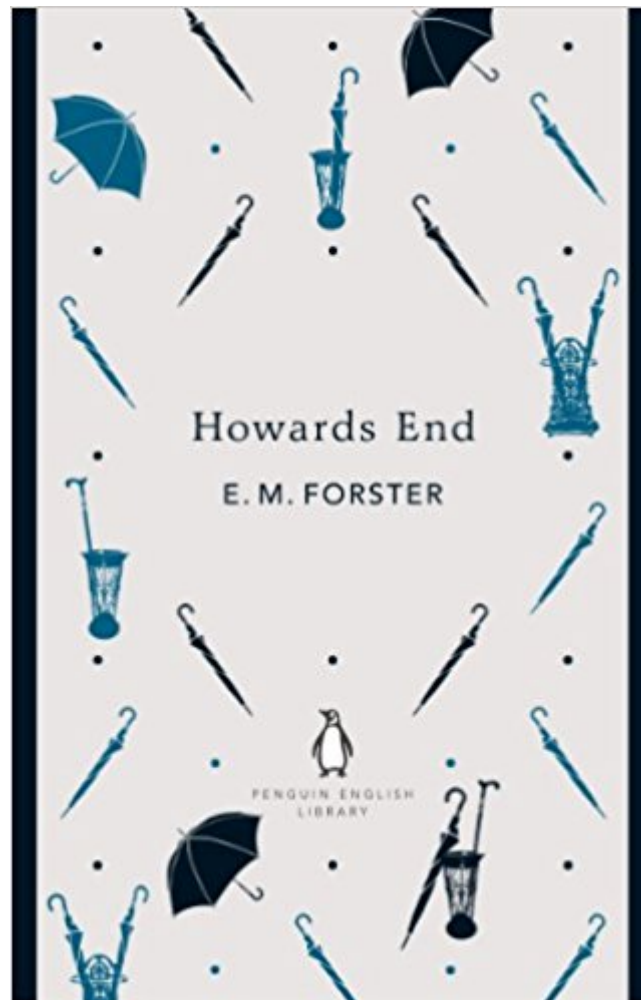


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# Penguin English Library Howards End (The Penguin English Library)



## Synopsis

The Penguin English Library Edition of *Howards End* by E. M. Forster 'The poor cannot always reach those whom they want to love, and they can hardly ever escape from those whom they love no longer. We rich can' 'Only connect.' is the idea at the heart of this book, a heartbreaking and provocative tale of three families at the beginning of the twentieth century: the rich Wilcoxes, the gentle, idealistic Schlegels and the lower-middle class Basts. As the Schlegel sisters try desperately to help the Basts and educate the close-minded Wilcoxes, the families are drawn together in love, lies and death. Frequently cited as E. M. Forster's finest work, *Howards End* brilliantly explores class warfare, conflict and the English character. The Penguin English Library - 100 editions of the best fiction in English, from the eighteenth century and the very first novels to the beginning of the First World War.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Margaret Schlegel, engaged to the much older, widowed Henry Wilcox, meets her intended the morning after accepting his proposal and realizes that he is a man who has lived without introspection or true self-knowledge. As she contemplates the state of Wilcox's soul, her remedy for what ails him has become one of the most oft-quoted passages in literature: Only connect! That was the whole of her sermon. Only connect the prose and the passion and both will be exalted, and human love will be seen at its height. Live in fragments no longer. Like all of Forster's work, *Howards End* concerns itself with class, nationality, economic status, and how each of these affects

personal relationships. It follows the intertwined fortunes of the Schlegel sisters, Margaret and Helen, and the Wilcox family over the course of several years. The Schlegels are intellectuals, devotees of art and literature. The Wilcoxes, on the other hand, can't be bothered with the life of the mind or the heart, leading, instead, outer lives of "telegrams and anger" that foster "such virtues as neatness, decision, and obedience, virtues of the second rank, no doubt, but they have formed our civilization." Helen, after a brief flirtation with one of the Wilcox sons, has developed an antipathy for the family; Margaret, however, forms a brief but intense friendship with Mrs. Wilcox, which is cut short by the older woman's death. When her family discovers a scrap of paper requesting that Henry give their home, *Howards End*, to Margaret, it precipitates a spiritual crisis among them that will take years to resolve. Forster's 1910 novel begins as a collection of seemingly unrelated events--Helen's impulsive engagement to Paul Wilcox; a chance meeting between the Schlegel sisters and an impoverished clerk named Leonard Bast at a concert; a casual conversation between the sisters and Henry Wilcox in London one night. But as it moves along, these disparate threads gradually knit into a tightly woven fabric of tragic misunderstandings, impulsive actions, and irreparable consequences, and, eventually, connection. Though set in the early years of the 20th century, *Howards End* seems even more suited to our own fragmented era of e-mails and anger. For readers living in such an age, the exhortation to "only connect" resonates ever more profoundly.

--Alix Wilber --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

With a new Introduction by James Ivory  
Commentary by Virginia Woolf, Lionel Trilling, Malcolm Bradbury, and Joseph Epstein  
"*Howards End* is a classic English novel . . . superb and wholly cherishable . . . one that admirers have no trouble reading over and over again," said Alfred Kazin. First published in 1910, *Howards End* is the novel that earned E. M. Forster recognition as a major writer. At its heart lie two families--the wealthy and business-minded Wilcoxes and the cultured and idealistic Schlegels. When the beautiful and independent Helen Schlegel begins an impetuous affair with the ardent Paul Wilcox, a series of events is sparked--"some very funny, some very tragic"--that results in a dispute over who will inherit *Howards End*, the Wilcoxes' charming country home. As much about the clash between individual wills as the clash between the sexes and the classes, *Howards End* is a novel whose central tenet, "Only connect," remains a powerful prescription for modern life. "*Howards End* is undoubtedly Forster's masterpiece; it develops to their full the themes and attitudes of [his] early books and throws back upon them a new and enhancing light," wrote the critic Lionel Trilling.

--This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This review applies only to the print of the book, not the novel. The print of the book with three trees on the cover is terrible - looks like the pages were Xerox copied. The font is awfully small and the margins are slanted. There is no information who the publisher.

From the picture it probably looks like this is a decent edition of the book. It's not. The cover is made of cheap material that looks like the image was scanned from a different book (it was) and printed on. The inside is completely unformatted and looks like someone literally printed the Gutenberg page and bound it - no end papers, no cover pages, nothing but text from the first page to the last. Worst of all, for less than this price you could have a real edition of the book.

This is a lovely book, a great read. This edition, however, is poorly done. There are a number of typographical errors (some of which are quite distracting, as I dislike finding erroneous punctuation marks inserted randomly) and the pages are not set well. The margins were badly formulated, leaving less than a 1/4" for the outer edges, which is both aesthetically unpleasing and impractical, as it makes taking marginal notes an impossibility. The paper quality is fine, but the book looks cheap nonetheless. I occasionally buy Dover Thrift editions of classics, as they are very cheap and fairly reliable, but I wanted a higher quality edition of this novel. I was wrong: the Dover Thrift edition might actually be about the same quality as this one, perhaps even better, and it is a much better buy.

Howard's End is a novel that transcends time, space, nation, or setting. It deals with what is most important in life: relationships. How we connect to our fellow human beings is what concerned EM Forster. And he dealt with the issue masterfully. Truly one of the greatest things ever written in the English language. Reading this book, I mean REALLY reading it, so that it gets into the dark crevices of your soul and enlightens it just a little, will make you a better human being to others. And that is the whole point of both being human and of literature.

I really loved this book in many ways. One of my favorite things about it was that when the characters were talking, it would make the pacing of the story a bit hectic, and then the author would begin to describe things in an almost philosophical way that was very soothing. I loved that continual back and forth of energy flow. One thing that I thought was really interesting about this book was the hindsight. In hindsight you could see at exactly what point the inevitable tragic end was set in

motion. All the way back to one casual comment, and then the characters were just acting true to their nature, being the only people they could be, the people they were. And the results led to a man's death. But just because something so terrible happens does NOT mean that people would not enjoy the book. It was a very compelling book, and one I'm sure I'll read several more times over the course of my life, and I highly recommend it.

Friend told me that Forster's writing style reminded her of Chechov's works. We both grew up with Russian classics and I had to try this one - I know it is a famous work, but I will probably never catch up with all "cultural gaps" I still have in English written literature. Actually, I have read one work by this author - "Maurice", so I was somewhat familiar with his writing, but nothing else. I loved it - I read a lot of genre fiction and mostly review romance books, but I had to say at least something about this one. Yes, it did remind me of Chechov a lot and mostly because author's look at his characters was so very sympathetic no matter how unsympathetic these people could act. It is a realistic book, that's pretty much sums it up in my opinion. Yes, it is also a portrayal of British culture at that time, but I did not grow up in that culture, so I cannot say how well it was done, I just enjoyed very well written story which felt like real life, but made sense.

This book has a symmetry that reminds me of that of *All the Light You Cannot See*, which makes it inherently satisfying. Sadly, its social commentary is still very relevant today, making it a great reading choice, but a disturbing one. The writing itself falls a little clumsily on the modern ear, and some of it is a little obtuse. All in all, it is a very interesting look at British aristocracy in its waning days of the Empire.

This is a beautifully written book about two unconventional sisters who outwit societal constrictions to find rich and satisfying lives. It's also a hell of a yarn. I read this during a trip, and picked it up and put it down along the way. It is stunning, as is a film of the same name.

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