

## Year 9 English Reading List

There are lots of books out there, but here is a selection of books we, personally, recommend students to read in Year 9. We'd like all students to read a range of authors and styles of books as this will help prepare students for their exams and later in life.

**Note:** some of the books deal with challenging or mature issues and content.

| <i>Title</i>                | <i>Author</i> | <i>Description</i>   | <i>Genre</i>                          |
|-----------------------------|---------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| Burn                        | Patrick Ness  | <p><b>On a cold Sunday evening in early 1957, Sarah Dewhurst waited with her father in the parking lot of the Chevron gas station for the dragon he'd hired to help on the farm...</b></p> <p>Sarah Dewhurst and her father, outcasts in their little town of Frome, Washington, are forced to hire a dragon to work their farm, something only the poorest of the poor ever have to resort to.</p> <p>The dragon, Kazimir, has more to him than meets the eye, though. Sarah can't help but be curious about him, an animal who supposedly doesn't have a soul, but who is seemingly intent on keeping her safe. Because the dragon knows something she doesn't. He has arrived at the farm with a prophecy on his mind. A prophecy that involves a deadly assassin, a cult of dragon worshippers, two FBI agents in hot pursuit—and somehow, Sarah Dewhurst herself.</p> | Fantasy<br>Adventure<br>relationships |
| Children of Blood and Bone* | Tomi Adeyemi  | <p><i>They killed my mother.<br/>They took our magic.<br/>They tried to bury us.</i></p> <p><i>Now we rise.</i></p> <p>Zélie Adebola remembers when the soil of Orïsha hummed with magic. Burners ignited flames, Tiders beckoned waves, and Zélie's Reaper mother summoned forth souls.</p>   | Fantasy<br>Adventure<br>Relationships |

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|                    |               | <p>But everything changed the night magic disappeared. Under the orders of a ruthless king, maji were killed, leaving Zélie without a mother and her people without hope.</p> <p>Now Zélie has one chance to bring back magic and strike against the monarchy. With the help of a rogue princess, Zélie must outwit and outrun the crown prince, who is hell-bent on eradicating magic for good.</p> <p>Danger lurks in Orïsha, where snow leoponaires prowl and vengeful spirits wait in the waters. Yet the greatest danger may be Zélie herself as she struggles to control her powers and her growing feelings for an enemy.</p>   |         |
| Cinderella is Dead | Kalyrn Bayron | <p>It's 200 years after Cinderella found her prince, but the fairy tale is over. Teen girls are now required to appear at the Annual Ball, where the men of the kingdom select wives based on a girl's display of finery. If a suitable match is not found, the girls not chosen are never heard from again.</p> <p>Sixteen-year-old Sophia would much rather marry Erin, her childhood best friend, than parade in front of suitors. At the ball, Sophia makes the desperate decision to flee, and finds herself hiding in Cinderella's mausoleum. There, she meets Constance, the last known descendant of Cinderella and her step sisters. Together they vow to bring down the king once and for all—and in the process, they learn that there's more to Cinderella's story than they ever knew . . .</p> | Fantasy |

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|                    |                   | <p>This fresh take on a classic story will make readers question the tales they've been told, and root for girls to break down the constructs of the world around them.</p>   |                                   |
| Clap When You Land | Elizabeth Acevedo | <p><b>In a novel-in-verse that brims with grief and love, National Book Award-winning and New York Times bestselling author Elizabeth Acevedo writes about the devastation of loss, the difficulty of forgiveness, and the bittersweet bonds that shape our lives.</b></p> <p>Camino Rios lives for the summers when her father visits her in the Dominican Republic. But this time, on the day when his plane is supposed to land, Camino arrives at the airport to see crowds of crying people...</p> <p>In New York City, Yahaira Rios is called to the principal's office, where her mother is waiting to tell her that her father, her hero, has died in a plane crash.</p> <p>Separated by distance—and Papi's secrets—the two girls are forced to face a new reality in which their father is dead and their lives are forever altered.</p> <p>And then, when it seems like they've lost everything of their father, they learn of each other.</p> | Poetry<br>Family<br>Relationships |
| Divergent*         | Veronica Roth     | <p>In Beatrice Prior's dystopian Chicago, society is divided into five factions, each dedicated to the cultivation of a particular virtue--Candor (the honest), Abnegation (the selfless), Dauntless (the brave), Amity (the peaceful), and Erudite (the intelligent). On an appointed day of every year, all sixteen-year-olds must select the</p>   | Dystopian<br>Adventure            |

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|                                 |                | <p>faction to which they will devote the rest of their lives. For Beatrice, the decision is between staying with her family and being who she really is--she can't have both. So she makes a choice that surprises everyone, including herself.</p> <p>During the highly competitive initiation that follows, Beatrice renames herself Tris and struggles to determine who her friends really are--and where, exactly, a romance with a sometimes fascinating, sometimes infuriating boy fits into the life she's chosen. But Tris also has a secret, one she's kept hidden from everyone because she's been warned it can mean death. And as she discovers a growing conflict that threatens to unravel her seemingly perfect society, she also learns that her secret might help her save those she loves . . . or it might destroy her.</p> |                  |
| Djinn Patrol on the Purple Line | Deepa Anappara | <p><b>Three friends venture into the most dangerous corners of a sprawling Indian city to find their missing classmate.</b></p> <p>Down market lanes crammed with too many people, dogs, and rickshaws, past stalls that smell of cardamom and sizzling oil, below a smoggy sky that doesn't let through a single blade of sunlight, and all the way at the end of the Purple metro line lies a jumble of tin-roofed homes where nine-year-old Jai lives with his family. From his doorway, he can spot the glittering lights of the city's fancy high-rises, and though his mother works as a maid in one, to him they seem a thousand miles away.</p>  | Mystery Thriller |

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|                   |                 | <p>Jai drools outside sweet shops, watches too many reality police shows, and considers himself to be smarter than his friends Pari (though she gets the best grades) and Faiz (though Faiz has an actual job). When a classmate goes missing, Jai decides to use the crime-solving skills he has picked up from TV to find him. He asks Pari and Faiz to be his assistants, and together they draw up lists of people to interview and places to visit.</p> <p>But what begins as a game turns sinister as other children start disappearing from their neighborhood. Jai, Pari, and Faiz have to confront terrified parents, an indifferent police force, and rumors of soul-snatching djinns. As the disappearances edge ever closer to home, the lives of Jai and his friends will never be the same again.</p> <p>Drawing on real incidents and a spate of disappearances in metropolitan India.</p> |                                     |
| Grow              | Luke Palmer     | <p>Josh is an average football-playing 15-year-old with plenty of friends until his father is killed in a terrorist bombing on the underground.</p> <p>Struggling to cope with grief, Josh withdraws into his shell, but finds himself targeted by a white supremacist group as a potential recruit.</p> <p>Will he be drawn in or will he find the strength to resist, and, with the help of unlikely accomplice, plant something good in the space grief has left inside him?</p>   | Topical<br>Terrorism<br>Thriller    |
| I am the Minotaur | Anthony McGowan | <p>Matthew is 14 and is struggling to fit in - something that's</p>   | Growing up<br>Bullying<br>Easy read |

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|                                   |                     | <p>extra hard when you're taking care of your mum, being bullied at school, and have earned the nickname Stinky Mog because of your poor personal hygiene. On top of all that, he wants to catch the attention of one of the coolest girls in school, Ari. Ari doesn't walk: she floats, like mist on the water. And she's as sporty as she is cool. When Ari's brand new bike is stolen, Matthew spots his chance to make a good impression by getting it back for her... But will he just end up in even more trouble or is Matthew about to learn that friendship and heroes can be found in unlikely places? This is a gritty yet touching story of one teenager's struggles with bullying and isolation, written by Carnegie Medal Winning author Anthony McGowan, and is perfect for less-confident readers.</p> |   |
| <p>Knife of Never Letting Go*</p> | <p>Patrick Ness</p> | <p>Todd Hewitt is the only boy in a town of men. Ever since the settlers were infected with the Noise germ, Todd can hear everything the men think, and they hear everything he thinks. Todd is just a month away from becoming a man, but in the midst of the cacophony, he knows that the town is hiding something from him -- something so awful Todd is forced to flee with only his dog, whose simple, loyal voice he hears too. With hostile men from the town in pursuit, the two stumble upon a strange and eerily silent creature: a girl. Who is she? Why wasn't she killed by the germ like all the females on New World? Propelled by Todd's gritty narration, readers are in for a white-knuckle journey in which a boy on the cusp of</p>  | <p>Science Fiction<br/>Gender<br/>Adventure</p> |

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|                      |                  | manhood must unlearn everything he knows in order to figure out who he truly is.  |                                      |
| Life of Pi           | Yann Martel      | Life of Pi is a fantasy adventure novel by Yann Martel published in 2001. The protagonist, Piscine Molitor "Pi" Patel, a Tamil boy from Pondicherry, explores issues of spirituality and practicality from an early age. He survives 227 days after a shipwreck while stranded on a boat in the Pacific Ocean with a Bengal tiger named Richard Parker.   | Adventure<br>Fantasy                 |
| Maze Runner*         | James Dashner    | <p><b>If you ain't scared, you ain't human.</b></p> <p>When Thomas wakes up in the lift, the only thing he can remember is his name. He's surrounded by strangers—boys whose memories are also gone.</p> <p><b>Nice to meet ya, shank.<br/>Welcome to the Glade.</b></p> <p>Outside the towering stone walls that surround the Glade is a limitless, ever-changing maze. It's the only way out—and no one's ever made it through alive.</p> <p><b>Everything is going to change.</b></p> <p>Then a girl arrives. The first girl ever. And the message she delivers is terrifying.</p> <p><b>Remember. Survive. Run.</b></p> | Dystopian<br>Adventure               |
| Noughts and Crosses* | Malorie Blackman | <p>Two young people are forced to make a stand in this thought-provoking look at racism and prejudice in an alternate society.</p> <p>Sephy is a Cross -- a member of the dark-skinned ruling class. Callum is a Nought -- a "colourless" member of the underclass who were once</p>  | Racism<br>Dystopian<br>Relationships |

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|                         |                  | <p>slaves to the Crosses. The two have been friends since early childhood, but that's as far as it can go. In their world, Noughts and Crosses simply don't mix. Against a background of prejudice and distrust, intensely highlighted by violent terrorist activity, a romance builds between Sephy and Callum -- a romance that is to lead both of them into terrible danger. Can they possibly find a way to be together?</p>  |                         |
| One of us is lying*     | Karen M. McManus | <p>Pay close attention and you might solve this.</p> <p>On Monday afternoon, five students at Bayview High walk into detention.</p> <p>Bronwyn, <b>the brain</b>, is Yale-bound and never breaks a rule.</p> <p>Addy, <b>the beauty</b>, is the picture-perfect homecoming princess.</p> <p>Nate, <b>the criminal</b>, is already on probation for dealing.</p> <p>Cooper, <b>the athlete</b>, is the all-star baseball pitcher.</p> <p>And Simon, <b>the outcast</b>, is the creator of Bayview High's notorious gossip app.</p> <p>Only, Simon never makes it out of that classroom. Before the end of detention Simon's dead. And according to investigators, his death wasn't an accident. On Monday, he died. But on Tuesday, he'd planned to post juicy reveals about all four of his high-profile classmates, which makes all four of them suspects in his murder. Or are they the perfect patsies for a killer who's still on the loose?</p> <p>Everyone has secrets, right? What really matters is how far you would go to protect them.</p> | Thriller                |
| Patron Saint of Nothing | Randy Ribay      | <p>A coming-of-age story about grief, guilt, and the risks a</p>  | Family Mystery Thriller |



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|                  |                  | <p>Filipino-American teenager takes to uncover the truth about his cousin's murder.</p> <p>Jay Reguero plans to spend the last semester of his senior year playing video games before heading to the University of Michigan in the fall. But when he discovers that his Filipino cousin Jun was murdered as part of President Duterte's war on drugs, and no one in the family wants to talk about what happened, Jay travels to the Philippines to find out the real story.</p> <p>Hoping to uncover more about Jun and the events that led to his death, Jay is forced to reckon with the many sides of his cousin before he can face the whole horrible truth -- and the part he played in it.</p> |                                 |
| Rat              | Patrice Lawrence | <p>Revenge is always sweet. Isn't it?</p> <p>When his mum is sent back to prison, Al knows exactly who's to blame. Mr Brayker from downstairs has been making trouble for Al's mum ever since they moved in. Al is determined to get his revenge with a plan that involves the only two creatures he can rely on: his pet rats, Venom and Vulture. But things don't turn out exactly as he'd imagined ...</p>   | <p>Growing up<br/>Easy read</p> |
| The Bunker Diary | Kevin Brooks     | <p><i>I can't believe I fell for it.<br/>It was still dark when I woke up this morning.<br/>As soon as my eyes opened I knew where I was.<br/>A low-ceilinged rectangular building made entirely of whitewashed concrete.<br/>There are six little rooms along the main corridor.<br/>There are no windows. No doors.<br/>The elevator is the only way in or</i></p>  | <p>Thriller<br/>Challenging</p> |

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|                          |              | <p>out.<br/> <i>What's he going to do to me?</i><br/> <i>What am I going to do?</i></p> <p>People are really quite simple, and they have simple needs. Food, water, light, space, privacy. Maybe a small measure of dignity. A bit of freedom. What happens when someone simply takes all that away?</p>  |                                   |
| The Cruel Prince*        | Holly Black  | <p><b>Of course I want to be like them. They're beautiful as blades forged in some divine fire. They will live forever.</b></p> <p><b>And Cardan is even more beautiful than the rest. I hate him more than all the others. I hate him so much that sometimes when I look at him, I can hardly breathe.</b></p> <p>Jude was seven when her parents were murdered and she and her two sisters were stolen away to live in the treacherous High Court of Faerie. Ten years later, Jude wants nothing more than to belong there, despite her mortality. But many of the fey despise humans. Especially Prince Cardan, the youngest and wickedest son of the High King.</p> <p>To win a place at the Court, she must defy him—and face the consequences.</p> <p>As Jude becomes more deeply embroiled in palace intrigues and deceptions, she discovers her own capacity for trickery and bloodshed. But as betrayal threatens to drown the Courts of Faerie in violence, Jude will need to risk her life in a dangerous alliance to save her sisters, and Faerie itself.</p> | Fantasy                           |
| The Hate You Give – THUG | Angie Thomas | <p><b>Sixteen-year-old Starr Carter moves between two worlds: the</b></p>   | Racism<br>Relationships<br>Family |

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|                   |                 | <p>poor neighborhood where she lives and the fancy suburban prep school she attends. The uneasy balance between these worlds is shattered when Starr witnesses the fatal shooting of her childhood best friend Khalil at the hands of a police officer. Khalil was unarmed.</p> <p>Soon afterward, his death is a national headline. Some are calling him a thug, maybe even a drug dealer and a gangbanger. Protesters are taking to the streets in Khalil's name. Some cops and the local drug lord try to intimidate Starr and her family. What everyone wants to know is: what <i>really</i> went down that night? And the only person alive who can answer that is Starr.</p> <p>But what Starr does or does not say could upend her community. It could also endanger her life.</p> |                     |
| The Hunger Games* | Suzanne Collins | <p><b>Could you survive on your own in the wild, with every one out to make sure you don't live to see the morning?</b></p> <p>In the ruins of a place once known as North America lies the nation of Panem, a shining Capitol surrounded by twelve outlying districts. The Capitol is harsh and cruel and keeps the districts in line by forcing them all to send one boy and one girl between the ages of twelve and eighteen to participate in the annual Hunger Games, a fight to the death on live TV.</p> <p>Sixteen-year-old Katniss Everdeen, who lives alone with her mother and younger sister, regards it as a death sentence</p>  | Dystopian Adventure |

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|                                    |                      | <p>when she steps forward to take her sister's place in the Games. But Katniss has been close to dead before—and survival, for her, is second nature. Without really meaning to, she becomes a contender. But if she is to win, she will have to start making choices that weight survival against humanity and life against love.</p>  |                        |
| The Knife That Killed Me           | Anthony McGowan      | <p>Paul Vanderman could be at any normal high school where bullies, girls, and annoying teachers are just part of life. But “normal” doesn’t apply when it comes to the school’s biggest bully, Roth—a twisted and threatening thug with an evil agenda.</p> <p>When Paul ends up delivering a message from Roth to the leader of a gang at a nearby school, it fuels a rivalry with immediate consequences. Paul attempts to distance himself from the feud, but somehow Roth keeps finding reasons for him to stick around. Then one day Roth hands him a knife. And even though Paul is scared, he has never felt so powerful.</p> | Bullying Thriller      |
| The Smell of Other People’s Houses | Bonnie-Sue Hitchcock | <p>In Alaska, 1970, being a teenager here isn’t like being a teenager anywhere else. Ruth has a secret that she can’t hide forever. Dora wonders if she can ever truly escape where she comes from, even when good luck strikes. Alyce is trying to reconcile her desire to dance, with the life she’s always known on her family’s fishing boat. Hank and his brothers decide it’s safer to run away than to stay home—until one of them ends up in terrible danger.</p> <p>Four very different lives are about to become entangled.</p>   | Family Growing up Ever |

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| Twilight*            | Stephanie Meyer | <p>About three things I was absolutely positive.</p> <p>First, Edward was a vampire.</p> <p>Second, there was a part of him—and I didn't know how dominant that part might be—that thirsted for my blood.</p> <p>And third, I was unconditionally and irrevocably in love with him.</p> <p>Deeply seductive and extraordinarily suspenseful, Twilight is a love story with bite.</p>   | Romance<br>Relationships          |
| What we're scared of | Keren David     | <p>Evie and Lottie are twin sisters, but they couldn't be more different.</p> <p>Evie's sharp and funny. Lottie's a day-dreamer. Evie's the fighter, Lottie's the peace-maker. What they do have in common is their Jewishness - even though the family isn't religious. When their mother gets a high-profile job and is targeted by antisemitic trolls on social media, the girls brush it off at first - but then the threats start getting uglier. . .</p> <p>What We're Scared Of is a taut thriller, a tale of sibling friendship and rivalry - and a searing look at what happens when you scratch beneath the surface.</p> | Thriller<br>Perspective<br>Family |
| Zom-B*               | Darren Shan     | <p>Zom-B is a radical new series about a zombie apocalypse, told in the first person by one of its victims. The series combines classic Shan action with a fiendishly twisting plot and hard-hitting and thought-provoking moral questions dealing with racism, abuse of power and more. This is challenging material, which</p>   | Zombies<br>Horror<br>Adventure    |

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|  |  | will captivate existing Shan fans and bring in many new ones. As Darren says, "It's a big, sprawling, vicious tale...a grisly piece of escapism, and a barbed look at the world in which we live. Each book in the series is short, fast-paced and bloody. A high body-count is guaranteed!" |  |
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**Challenge Books – these are books we'd suggest students to read if they are wanting something challenging or demanding in Year 9**

| <i>Title</i>             | <i>Author</i>                   | <i>Description</i>   | <i>Genre</i>                         |
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| <b>Lord of the Flies</b> | <b>William Golding</b>          | At the dawn of the next world war, a plane crashes on an uncharted island, stranding a group of schoolboys. At first, with no adult supervision, their freedom is something to celebrate; this far from civilization the boys can do anything they want. Anything. They attempt to forge their own society, failing, however, in the face of terror, sin and evil. And as order collapses, as strange howls echo in the night, as terror begins its reign, the hope of adventure seems as far from reality as the hope of being rescued. Labelled a parable, an allegory, a myth, a morality tale, a parody, a political treatise, even a vision of the apocalypse, Lord of the Flies is perhaps our most memorable novel about "the end of innocence, the darkness of man's heart." | Social commentary<br>Power struggles |
| <b>Purple Hibiscus</b>   | <b>Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie</b> | Fifteen-year-old Kambili and her older brother Jaja lead a privileged life in Enugu, Nigeria. They live in a beautiful house, with a caring family, and attend an exclusive missionary school. They're completely shielded from the troubles of the world. Yet, as Kambili reveals in her tender-voiced account, things are less   | Growing up<br>Family                 |

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|                      |                     | <p>perfect than they appear. Although her Papa is generous and well respected, he is fanatically religious and tyrannical at home—a home that is silent and suffocating.</p> <p>As the country begins to fall apart under a military coup, Kambili and Jaja are sent to their aunt, a university professor outside the city, where they discover a life beyond the confines of their father's authority. Books cram the shelves, curry and nutmeg permeate the air, and their cousins' laughter rings throughout the house. When they return home, tensions within the family escalate, and Kambili must find the strength to keep her loved ones together.</p> <p><i>Purple Hibiscus</i> is an exquisite novel about the emotional turmoil of adolescence, the powerful bonds of family, and the bright promise of freedom.</p> |            |
| <b>The Outsiders</b> | <b>S. E. Hinton</b> | <p><i>The Outsiders</i> is about two weeks in the life of a 14-year-old boy. The novel tells the story of Ponyboy Curtis and his struggles with right and wrong in a society in which he believes that he is an outsider. According to Ponyboy, there are two kinds of people in the world: greasers and socs. A soc (short for "social") has money, can get away with just about anything, and has an attitude longer than a limousine. A greaser, on the other hand, always lives on the outside and needs to watch his back. Ponyboy is a greaser, and he's always been proud of it, even willing to rumble against a gang of socs for the sake of his fellow greasers--until one</p>   | Growing up |

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|                              |                      | terrible night when his friend Johnny kills a soc. The murder gets under Ponyboy's skin, causing his bifurcated world to crumble and teaching him that pain feels the same whether a soc or a greaser.  |                                   |
| <b>Things Fall Apart</b>     | <b>Chinua Achebe</b> | <p>More than two million copies of <i>Things Fall Apart</i> have been sold in the United States since it was first published here in 1959. Worldwide, there are eight million copies in print in fifty different languages. This is Chinua Achebe's masterpiece and it is often compared to the great Greek tragedies, and currently sells more than one hundred thousand copies a year in the United States.</p> <p>A simple story of a "strong man" whose life is dominated by fear and anger, <i>Things Fall Apart</i> is written with remarkable economy and subtle irony. Uniquely and richly African, at the same time it reveals Achebe's keen awareness of the human qualities common to men of all times and places.</p> | Conflict<br>Survival              |
| <b>To Kill a Mockingbird</b> | <b>Harper Lee</b>    | <p>The unforgettable novel of a childhood in a sleepy Southern town and the crisis of conscience that rocked it. "To Kill A Mockingbird" became both an instant bestseller and a critical success when it was first published in 1960. It went on to win the Pulitzer Prize in 1961 and was later made into an Academy Award-winning film, also a classic.</p> <p>Compassionate, dramatic, and deeply moving, "To Kill A Mockingbird" takes readers to the roots of human behavior - to innocence and experience, kindness and cruelty, love and hatred, humor and pathos. Now</p>  | Racism<br>Growing up<br>Prejudice |



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|  |  | with over 18 million copies in print and translated into forty languages, this regional story by a young Alabama woman claims universal appeal. Harper Lee always considered her book to be a simple love story. Today it is regarded as a masterpiece of American literature. |  |
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