

A Touch of Tension

The books chosen for this list are all tense reads, but that's where the similarity ends. There are some cracking crime thrillers here but if you think crime is the only place to find fever-pitch plots, this list will bring some surprises. Tension in real life is usually an uncomfortable sensation – anxiety, panic – but in fiction it is a delicious pleasure. Tense books are the ones that really grip, that take you out of yourself completely. They're usually the ones you stay up late to finish, even when you didn't mean to!

Use this list to bring some excitement into your reading life. This is your chance to walk on the wild side, to try a faster pace of living without moving from the comfort of your armchair.

Read the introductions to each book and decide for yourself. Be generous, be daring – you can always swap the book for something else if it's not your cup of tea. But if you don't try... you'll never know!

A Place of Execution by Val McDermid

Val McDermid knows how to make her readers sweat with fear. She also knows how to keep them glued to a story, regardless of distractions, until the final, mind-blowing denouement. Here she takes possibly the most notorious child murder case ever, and uses it as a powerful backdrop to the disappearance of a teenage girl in a neighbouring county. If you like a read that is dark, disturbing and taut as tripwire, this tense psychological thriller might just fit the bill.



St Agnes' Stand by Thomas Eidson

This is one of the most gripping stories you'll ever come across. Three nuns and seven children are trapped in the desert, surrounded by Apache warriors, waiting to die. When Nat Swanson, an injured outlaw, stumbles across them, Sister St Agnes thinks he's been sent by God. The whole drama is played out over five agonising days. Be warned that after day two the rest of your life will come to a stop while you just have to finish!



Mangrove Squeeze by Lawrence Shames

Aaron Katz came to Key West to escape New York and a bad marriage. Suki Sperakis is looking for something more than selling ads in the local newspaper. Neither expected to find themselves taking on the might of the new Russian mafia, even with the support of a cast of glorious no-hopers, led by Aaron's senile dad. Enjoy this one for gentle suspense in a feel-good read.

Strip Jack by Ian Rankin

Popular MP, Gregor Jack, is caught in a raid on an Edinburgh brothel as this story opens, and the press has a field day. But what was he doing there – was it the obvious or is someone else out to strip Jack naked? If you like your crime with a bit of depth and grit to it, Ian Rankin's Inspector Rebus novels deliver the goods every time.

RNIB **NLB** **calibre**

A Touch of... Get a sneak preview of ten great reads

Stuck for what to read next? Maybe you fancy trying something new but don't know where to start. **A Touch of** is a great way for readers who use large print, Braille or audio books to find that good read everyone is looking for. Whether you're choosing for yourself or for someone else who can't get to the library, **A Touch of** gives you a sneak preview of tempting possibilities. There are ten different booklists in the series, including A Touch of Terror, A Touch of Mischief, A Ticklish Touch and Touching Infinity.

A Touch of Tension features books available in large print and tells you which ones you can get in audio and Braille as well. If you prefer to start from what's available in audio or Braille, please ask for the ten **A Touch of** samplers which give you friendly introductions and a short extract from each book to listen to or touch read.

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opening the book

The Lazarus Child by Robert Mawson

What would you do if your child went into a coma after a traffic accident? This is the starting point for an extraordinary tale of love, loss and redemption, which will take you to the very edges of human experience. Part medical thriller, part psychological drama, there's unbearable tension in the emotional relationships, the possibilities of the unconscious mind and in the real world of legal and financial problems. There's a three-hanky ending too – but it's not what you expect.



Bootlegged Angel by Mike Ripley

Roy Angel is a part-time private eye whose approach to investigation is unorthodox and downright slapdash. He's been employed by a small brewery to look into the cross-Channel beer smuggling racket that's pushing them out of business. Don't let the wisecracks fool you – this tale of amateur smugglers learning hard, dangerous lessons from the professionals will keep you gripped to the end.

Render Up the Body by Marianne Wesson

A convicted murderer/rapist awaits execution. His only hope is his habeas corpus appeal. This is being unwillingly pursued by Lucinda Hayes, an attorney who thought she had left the practise of law behind to run a Rape Crisis Centre. The case challenges not only her legal skills but also her personal beliefs. A strongly-plotted legal thriller that will grip you right till the shattering final twist.

Felicia's Journey by William Trevor

At the start of this gripping story, you might imagine you are in for a familiar tale – Irish girl flees oppressive family and escapes to England in search of the father of her unborn child. You couldn't be more mistaken. On her arrival, Felicia is befriended by an unlikely bunch of people. Danger lurks and the tension mounts as you begin to realise just what Felicia has fallen into. This is edge of the seat stuff to the very last page.



The Pilot's Wife by Anita Shreve

It's 3.24 am and there's a stranger knocking at the door; it can only mean one thing – bad news. As a pilot's wife, Kathryn Lyons knew this day might come; she steels herself for the first blow, but is totally unprepared for what follows. If your curiosity is aroused and you're itching to find out more about the mystery surrounding Jack Lyons' death, then you'll probably gobble this up in one sitting.



Fearful Symmetry by Morag Joss

This is a tense, psychological thriller set within the narrow confines of Bath society. The Circus Opera Group is planning a community musical extravaganza based on the life of one of Bath's most famous sons. The surroundings may be beautiful, and the characters well connected in the world of music and culture, but it's not as genteel as it sounds. There's trouble bubbling underneath this surface sophistication, and when it explodes the consequences will be far-reaching and devastating.



A Touch of...

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A Touch of Tension offers you a gripping encounter with ten very different books. You may be a sucker for a good suspense thriller or maybe you prefer the power of an emotional drama. Either way, this is your chance to turn up the heat and get those pulses racing...

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