

UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL 12 NOON NZT THURSDAY 18 DECEMBER 2025

Press Release



Lee Child's *Exit Strategy* is the New Zealand Christmas Number One, NielsenIQ BookData reveals

Auckland, 18 December 2025 — New Zealand's most beloved author Lee Child, alongside brother and co-author Andrew Child, has topped the Christmas charts for the 4th year in a row, with their latest thriller, *Exit Strategy*, to make it the official New Zealand BookScan Christmas Number One, selling just over 2,300 copies in the week ending 13 December. *Exit Strategy* is the 30th title to feature the well-known character, Jack Reacher.

It is the sixth time that Lee Child has taken the top spot at Christmas since BookScan tracking began in New Zealand, as well as the fourth year in a row, with previous number ones featuring in 2016: *Night School* (Jack Reacher 21), 2018: *Past Tense* (Jack Reacher 23), 2022: *No Plan B* (Jack Reacher 27), 2023: *The Secret* (Jack Reacher 28), 2024: *In Too Deep* (Jack Reacher 29) and now in 2025: *Exit Strategy* (Jack Reacher 30). This puts Lee Child in first place for the most number ones this Christmas week of book sales since BookScan began tracking sales in New Zealand, back in 2007. The only other author to come close with four Christmas number ones is Annabel Langbein, with her successful Free Range cookbook series from the early 2010s.

The top-selling New Zealand published title this Christmas week is *Lessons on Living* by Nigel Latta (published by HarperCollins New Zealand), having sold nearly 9,500 units

through the BookScan panel since its publication date on 30 September. It has been the overall number one selling title once since publication, and the number one non-fiction title six times so far this year.

Nevena Nikolić, NZ Territory Manager at NielsenIQ BookData, said: “*Adult Fiction has been the star-performing category across 2025, and for 6 years running, and is up 9% by volume on last year. However, this year both Non-Fiction and Children’s have bounced back with both broad categories showing uplift on 2024.*

Within the broad Fiction category, Genre Fiction, such as Crime & Thriller and Science Fiction & Fantasy, has performed particularly well. Lee Child is the most successful author in NZ across all genres (as well as in the Crime & Thriller category) with over 900,000 books sold since BookScan began tracking book sales in 2007 (including those co-authored with Andrew Child), so it is well-deserved he has taken the number one spot at Christmas for the sixth time in 17 years.”

Christmas is the key trading period in the New Zealand book industry, and this year is no exception, proving book sales have been resilient in the face of many on-going challenges in retail. In total, \$5.4m was spent on printed books in New Zealand in the seven-day period ending 13 December across 39k ISBNs or separate book titles, an uplift of 60% on the average unique weekly titles of 24k in 2025, showing the support New Zealanders have for buying a wider range of books in the lead up to Christmas.

In Australia, the new Jane Harper thriller, *Last One Out* tops the NielsenIQ BookScan’s 2025 Christmas bestseller list, having sold nearly 9,700 copies during the same week of 7 to 13 December. In the New Zealand bestseller chart, *Last One Out* features in 19th place at nearly 500 copies.

This year’s New Zealand Top 10 bestselling titles in the Christmas week includes two adult Fiction titles, five Non-Fiction titles and three Children’s titles. There is a stronger local presence this year with four out of the Top 10 books being published in New Zealand (up from two in 2024). These are number 3, *Lessons on Living* by Nigel Latta (HarperCollins New Zealand), number 5, *Nourish* by Chelsea Winter (Allen & Unwin New Zealand), number 7, *Nadia’s Farm Kitchen* by Nadia Lim (Nude Food) and number 10, *A Different Kind of Power* by Jacinda Ardern (Penguin Books NZ).

New Zealand BookScan Top 10 bestsellers List: ranked by copies sold in the week 07-13 December 2025*:

1. *Exit Strategy: Jack Reacher 30*, Lee Child & Andrew Child (Penguin Random House)
2. *Big Jim Believes: Dog Man 14*, Dav Pilkey (Scholastic)
3. *Lessons on Living*, Nigel Latta (HarperCollins New Zealand)
4. *The Last Love Song*, Lucinda Riley & Harry Whittaker (Pan Macmillan)
5. *Nourish*, Chelsea Winter (Allen & Unwin New Zealand)
6. *Partypopper: Diary of a Wimpy Kid 20*, Jeff Kinney (Penguin Random House)
7. *Nadia’s Farm Kitchen*, Nadia Lim (Nude Food)
8. *The Let Them Theory*, Mel Robbins & Sawyer Robbins (Penguin Random House)
9. *Santa & Son*, David Walliams (HarperCollins)
10. *A Different Kind of Power*, Dame Jacinda Ardern (Penguin Random House)

** Data sourced from NielsenIQ BookScan New Zealand Total Market measuring print book sales in New Zealand through its defined panel of retailers. Weekly data is for the period 07-13 December 2025. Year-to-date is to week ending 13 December 2025*

New Zealand Christmas Number Ones for the past 10-Years:

2025: *Exit Strategy: Jack Reacher 30*, Lee Child & Andrew Child (Penguin Random House)

2024: *In Too Deep: Jack Reacher 29*, Lee Child & Andrew Child (Penguin Random House)

2023: *The Secret: Jack Reacher 28*, Lee Child & Andrew Child (Penguin Random House)

2022: *No Plan B: Jack Reacher 27*, Lee Child & Andrew Child (Penguin Random House)

2021: *Go Tell the Bees that I am Gone: Outlander 9*, Diana Gabaldon (Penguin Random House)

2020: *Code Name Bananas*, David Walliams, illustrated by Tony Ross (HarperCollins)

2019: *The Beast of Buckingham Palace*, David Walliams, illustrated by Tony Ross (HarperCollins)

2018: *Past Tense: Jack Reacher 23*, Lee Child (Penguin Random House)

2017: *Bad Dad*, David Walliams, illustrated by Tony Ross (HarperCollins)

2016: *Night School: Jack Reacher 21*, Lee Child (Penguin Random House)

2015: *Dan Carter*, Duncan Greive & Dan Carter (Upstart Press)

Notes for editor:

Data should be sourced to **NielsenIQ BookScan New Zealand**. Printed book sales data comes from the NielsenIQ BookScan New Zealand Total Market panel of more than 275 book retail outlets throughout New Zealand.

#XmasBookNo1

Please email nevena.nikolic@nielseniq.com with any queries.

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For booksellers and libraries, we offer access to our database of over 53 million book records for title look-up, enriching websites, and managing internal systems. Our research services deliver retail sales analysis for both print and e-books across 17 territories, complemented by insights from our Books and Consumers Survey, as well as Country and Genre-specific reports.

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