**Audio book resources for blind or disabled people**:

**RESOURCES FOR UNITED STATES CITIZENS**:

Pamela Brown has provided this writeup on the service provided by the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Disabled at the Library of Congress. Pamela lives in San Miguel and serves as a volunteer to help people apply for the program. Her email address is below. Here is the writeup:

“If you have difficulty reading standard-print books or the newspaper due to impaired vision, you are eligible to receive FREE talking books from the US National Library Service.  If you cannot hold a book or turn a page due to a physical disability, you too are eligible to receive free talking books.

The National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped mails audio books to US Citizens living anywhere in the world...FREE.  Over 50 San Miguel residents are already enjoying this service.

The equipment and the audio books are mailed directly to your mail-service in San Miguel.  But If you prefer you may download audio books to an ipad, a Smartphone or to a flashdrive / memory stick and not wait for the mail!

Each application for the service must be signed  by a professional who has met the client and is recognized by NLS as qualified to certify the presence of low vision or physically disability.

Pamela Brown is retired from NLS and is a volunteer with the National Library Service.  She can explain the program, demonstrate the equipment, and can certify and register new clients.  If you or someone you know needs this free service, contact Pamela at [pamelajean.brown@gmail.com](mailto:pamelajean.brown@gmail.com) “

More information on the USA National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Disabled is available on their web site: <https://www.loc.gov/nls/> . You can browse the online catalog to select the books which you would like to “read”.

US people who have a current library card for a US public library generally also have access to downloads for books, as so many public libraries offer this service.

**San Miguel Low Vision Support Group**: Pamela is also the contact for the Low Vision Support Group.  This group started with the people who use the National Library Service, but it has expanded to include various others including helpers or family of people with low vision.  Pamela maintains an email distribution list to remind the participants of the next meeting.   She will add to this list the name of anyone who expresses an interest in attending.  The group has decided to meet once every TWO months, for two hours in an afternoon.

**RESOURCES FOR CANADIAN CITIZENS**:

The website of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind at <https://www.cnib.ca> is a good starting place for resources for the blind in Canada. It has a link to the website of CELA (Centre for Equitable Library Access) which works with public libraries across Canada to assist blind or physically disabled patrons.

For the basic CELA program with public libraries, you must have a library card for a participating Canadian public library. With that, you can sign up on the CELA website and self certify that you are blind or physically disabled. You can then download books in various formats from the CELA website. Within Canada it is also possible to have materials mailed.

A program called BookShare provides access to over 700,000 titles, but it requires that applicants submit proof of their blindness or physical disability. CELA manages the proof of disability process, and accepts a valid CNIB card as proof of blindness. Once in the program you can download from the wide assortment of books available.

**Purchase of audio books**:

For those who are not eligible for the services described above or prefer not to use them, audio books can be downloaded online at [www.audible.com](http://www.audible.com) upon payment of a monthly subscription fee.

**LibriVox**

LibriVox offers free audio books of public domain works via their website [www.Librivox.org](http://www.Librivox.org) . The readers are, for the most part, non-professional volunteers so the quality varies widely. They do have offerings that you can't find in professionally produced audio books.  Their list includes lots of classic fiction - Jules Verne, HG Wells, PG Wodehouse, etc. - as well as public domain non-fiction.  There are some non-English offerings as well.