

HUMOUR

PHOTO: **ORCHID CHAKMA**

The types of students at a university library

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Theoretically, the university library is supposed to be a quiet, distraction-free, and sacred space for focused studying and other academic work. However, in reality, it's like a *Hunger Games* arena where sleep-deprived 20-somethings fight over empty seats, working power outlets, and air conditioning vents.

Sure, somewhere in there, someone is quietly highlighting and reading textbooks as intended. But they're sharing the same space with students who've never quite managed to grasp the concept of an inside voice, those who are only there to take naps, and those who appear to have moved in permanently.

Let me walk you through the people you'll find in there.

THE DISRUPTIVE ONES

Libraries are built on one simple expectation: keep it down. Unfortunately, this group never got the memo.

They arrive with a gaggle of friends, settle at a table, and immediately start full-volume conversations. They may believe they're whispering, but everyone within five tables can follow their entire story. Even worse, every few minutes, the group bursts into uncontrollable giggles or uproarious laughter.

Nearby, someone else's headphones leak enough music to grace the room with an unsolicited preview of their playlist.

Another student's phone rings, and instead of rejecting the call, they answer it and start discussing plans at a volume typically reserved for metro announcements.

Others manage to be irritating by obnoxiously typing on laptops or aggressively mashing calculator buttons.

All these noises inevitably summon the self-appointed "librarian", who repeatedly hisses at anyone whose chair makes the slightest sound and shushes people before they've even unzipped their bags.

Not every disturbance is auditory, though. There's always someone who has smuggled in a lunch so fragrant you can smell it from across the room—and because the library is air-conditioned, that smell has nowhere to go. Additionally, as the cherry on top, you will hear every single crunch.

THE SLEEPERS AND CAMPERS

They are the ones who treat the library like a hotel.

Someone's face-down on an open textbook, using their folded arms as a pillow, hood up, snoring away. Someone else marked their seat ages ago with a laptop and a jacket and hasn't been seen since. For all anyone knows, they've already graduated.

Others use the library as a home base between classes. They charge their devices, refill their water bottles, reorganise their backpacks, text classmates, and occasionally do a little studying if time allows. The library makes more sense than heading all the way back home (even if said home is a five-minute walk away) or wandering around campus for hours.

THE PROCRASTINATORS

They arrive with the best of intentions.

Four minutes, one opened document, and one skimmed sentence later, they go down a doomscrolling spiral and end up accidentally liking someone's vacation photo from back in 2016. They keep one eye on the door in case anyone walks by and they must switch tabs to avoid judgement.

Their intense expression might suggest they're solving a complex engineering problem. Still, a closer look reveals they're actually fighting for victory in an online gaming match, promising themselves they'll definitely start working after just one more round.

THE PANIC-STRICKEN ONES

These students appear most often around midterms and finals.

Their desks are covered in empty coffee cups or energy drink bottles, notes scattered everywhere, countless highlighters, loose blank papers, and sticky notes with pep talks written on them.

You sit near one of them, and your own heart rate goes up for no reason. Everything about them screams urgency and desperation. Their eyes are bloodshot, their legs don't stop bouncing, and their hair looks like they've been electrocuted. They flip through lecture slides at alarming speed, whisper formulas under their breath, and repeatedly check the time.

Among them, someone's quietly having a moment, tears rolling as they keep typing, because the work has to get done whether or not you're mid-breakdown. Maybe they missed a deadline. Maybe they didn't get a desired grade. Whatever the reason, tears appear, tissues emerge, and nearby students suddenly become deeply engrossed in their work.

THE LEGITIMATE ONES

They arrive quietly, choose a seat with haste, put on noise-cancelling headphones, and get to work. They rarely lose focus or check their phones and somehow finish assignments days before the deadline.

When the sound of someone's keyboard hammering, cacophonous laughter, or ringtone erupts across the room, they don't complain. They simply remove their glasses, close their eyes, pinch the bridge of their nose, take a deep breath, and move on.

The truth is, on any given day, you'll find yourself drifting through almost every category on this list, maybe even in the same three-hour sitting.