

Some definitions of e-books

From PC Magazine:

(**Electronic-BOOK**) The electronic counterpart of a printed book, which can be viewed on a desktop computer, laptop, smartphone or e-book reader. When traveling, a large number of e-books can be stored in portable units, dramatically eliminating weight and volume compared to paper. Electronic bookmarks make referencing easier, and e-book readers may allow the user to annotate pages.

Although fiction and non-fiction books come in e-book formats, technical material is especially suited for e-book delivery because it can be searched. In addition, programming code examples can be quickly copied, which is why CD-ROMs that contain the entire text of the work are often packaged inside technical paper books.

E-Book Formats

The major problem with e-books is the many formats competing for prime time, including Adobe PDF, Microsoft Reader, eReader, Mobipocket Reader, EPUB, Kindle and iPad.

All e-book formats have a search capability, but most do not support a direct dictionary lookup, which means if a person looks up the term "network," all the definitions that contain the word "network" are retrieved rather than the single definition of that term. The results are akin to the mountain of results retrieved by a search engine.

Amazon's Kindle and Apple's iPad

In late 2007, Amazon.com revolutionized the e-book market with the introduction of its Kindle e-book reader and e-book inventory. The Kindle was the first e-book to offer free, wireless access to download e-books and search the Web (see [Kindle](#)).

In early 2010, Apple introduced the iPad tablet, featuring "iBooks" downloadable over a Wi-Fi or 3G connection (see [iPad](#)). See [PDF](#), [iPad](#), [EPUB](#), [Open eBook](#) and [Mobipocket](#).

An eBook is an *electronic* version of a traditional print book that can be read by using a personal computer or by using an eBook reader. (An eBook reader can be a software application for use on a computer, such as Microsoft's free *Reader* application, or a book-sized computer that is used solely as a reading device, such as Nuvomedia's [Rocket eBook](#).) Users can purchase an eBook on diskette or CD, but the most popular method of getting an eBook is to purchase a downloadable file of the eBook (or other reading material) from a Web site (such as Barnes and Noble) to be read from the user's computer or reading device. Generally, an eBook can be downloaded in five minutes or less.

Although it is not necessary to use a reader application or device in order to read an Ebook (most books can be read as PDF files), they are popular because they enable options similar to those of a paper book - readers can bookmark pages, make notes, highlight passages, and save selected text. In addition to these familiar possibilities, eBook readers also include built-in dictionaries, and alterable font sizes and styles. Typically, an eBook reader hand-held device weighs from about twenty-two ounces to three or four pounds and can store from four thousand to over half a million pages of text and graphics. A popular feature is its back-lit screen (which makes reading in the dark possible).

Some eBooks can be downloaded for free or at reduced cost, however, prices for many eBooks - especially bestsellers - are similar to those of hardcover books, and are sometimes higher. Most eBooks at Barnes and Noble, for example, are comparable in price to their traditional print versions.

1. A small, portable device onto which the contents of a book in electronic format can be downloaded and read.

2. A book whose contents are in an electronic format.

From the Wall Street Journal:

An electronic book (also e-book, ebook, digital book) is a text- and image-based publication in digital form produced on, published by, and readable on computers or other digital devices. E-books are presented visually or aurally, with the *audio book as a precursor to, and limited exemplum of, electronic publishing's potential. Components other than text have been considered enhancements, including multimedia (sound, images, film/video/animated graphics).
