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Kindle Owners Will Shortly Be Able To Lend And Borrow Kindle Books

Amazon has announced that [Kindle reader](#) users will soon have the ability to lend Kindle books to family and friends. The exact date is still to be confirmed – but it should be before the end of the year.

It's a very positive move which will help both e-books and e-book readers to become even more widely accepted. E-books seem to have been accepted by the public in a relatively short timespan. According to Amazon, sales of Kindle books are now higher than the sales of traditional hardback books – by a factor of 180 to 100. In all likelihood, it can only be a matter of time before e-books are outselling paperbacks.

The Amazon lending scheme will let Kindle users lend e-books to other Kindle owners for up to a fortnight at a time. For the period of the loan, the borrower will be able to access the book in exactly the same way as if they had bought it themselves. For the duration of the loan period, the original purchaser will be unable to access the book. Exactly the same as letting someone borrow a real book as a matter of fact.

Amazon has made a variety of free Kindle apps available which allow [Kindle books](#) to be read on other devices. These exist for the Windows PC, the Apple Mac, the iPhone, the iPad, any device which runs the Android operating system and the Blackberry smart phone. At first glance it may appear a little odd that Amazon has gone out of its way to make their best selling Kindle reader redundant in this way. At the moment, according to Amazon, non-Kindle devices account for 20% of all Kindle book sales. As ever more gadgets running the Android operating system are released, this percentage seems likely to increase.

Up until now, these free Kindle apps have worked only with Kindle books. Amazon will now make it possible to read newspapers and magazines using their various free Kindle apps. Again, the release date is yet to be confirmed – but Amazon has advised that they plan to start with the Apple devices and follow up with the Android devices and then the desktop applications in due course.

These changes may appear to be fairly minor. However, they bring e-books much closer to the functionality of traditional printed books, which could be an important consideration for anyone making a buying decision. Kindle readers can now do everything with an e-book that they would with a printed book – apart from marking their place with a dog-ear that is. It makes it easier for even the most conservative bibliophile to make the switch to electronic books.

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