

eBook Cheat Sheet

There are two basic concepts that will help in the understanding of eBooks, how they work and why some eBooks are more compatible with libraries than others.

Filetypes

Filetype - how the file is created and processed by the computer.

Certain filetypes only work with certain programs. Think of Microsoft Word (.docx) and Excel (.xlsx). A file created in Word will not open in Excel because it is a different filetype.

The two most popular ebook filetypes are:

- .amz = used by Amazon and can only be viewed on the Kindle
- .ePub = open, XML based eBook standard, and is used by many eBook vendors

Digital Rights Management (DRM)

Think of DRM on an eBook as a lock, with your eReader having the key to open the lock and display the file. Without the lock, the eReader can't open the file at all...can't even see what it is. Different eBook vendors use different DRM mechanisms.

Amazon—uses both a proprietary filetype (.amz) and a proprietary DRM mechanism. This means in order to read an Amazon-purchased eBook, you have to have an eReader that can unlock the DRM and interpret the .amz filetype. Basically, you have to use a Kindle, or a Kindle app for Windows, Mac, mobile Apple devices, or Android devices to read an eBook purchased from Amazon.

Vendors that use the ePub format have chosen different sorts of DRM to lock up their content. **Apple** - and their iBook app use the ePub format, but use an Apple-specific DRM. This means that while the file itself would be readable by any device that can interpret an .epub file, without that particular key on their keyring, the eReader can't do anything because they can't unlock Apple's DRM. Any book purchased from iBooks can only be read on an Apple device.

Sony, Barnes & Noble (B&N), OverDrive - and other eBook vendors have chosen a shared DRM solution. They license their DRM from Adobe, and use Adobe to provide the keys to epub files that they sell. If an eReader has the key to one of those stores, it has the key to all of them...think of it as a shared master key. Because OverDrive supports the same type of Adobe DRM it works with Sony eReaders as well as the B&N Nook. You can read eBooks checked out via OverDrive on the Nook and Sony Reader.

Conclusion: Because of the different filetypes and DRM, Kindle is the least compatible eReader device for libraries. Apple products are a little more compatible. The Nook and Sony Readers products are the most compatible devices.

Adapted from <http://jasongriffey.net/wp/2010/08/25/ebooks-filetype-and-drm/>

Henrico County Public Library & eBooks

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Coming Soon! HCPL will have many more eBooks and other exciting digital content available for check-out through OverDrive. Please see back of this sheet for compatible devices that will work with OverDrive.



eBook Devices Cheat Sheet as of Nov. 1 - 30, 2010

eBooks from OverDrive-powered 'Virtual Branch' websites are protected using Adobe® Digital Rights Management (DRM). Here is a listing of devices and computers that are currently compatible with your library's eBooks:

eBook Readers



Barnes & Noble nook™



Sony Reader Pocket Edition™



Sony Reader PRS-700 with v1.1 (or newer) firmware



Sony Reader Daily Edition™



Sony Reader PRS-505 with v1.1 (or newer) firmware



Sony Reader Touch Edition™



Kobo™ eReader



PanDigital® Novel with firmware update

Computers

Windows® desktop, laptop & netbook computers with:

- * Windows 7
- * Windows Vista®
- * Windows XP SP2
- * Windows 2000 SP4



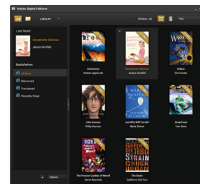
Mac® desktop & laptop computers with:

- * Mac OS® X v10.6
- * Mac OS X v10.5
- * Mac OS X v10.4.10



Software

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Notes

The display of Adobe® eBooks on eBook devices varies depending on the nature of the content and the eBook format.

Differences in device firmware (the software on which portable devices run) make it possible for two similar devices to have different results in regard to eBook compatibility. Manufacturers often release firmware updates that may expand or limit device functionality. Check with your device manufacturer for the latest information on device firmware and eBook format support.

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