

Librarian's Shelf by Karen Stuart

E-Reading at Columbus Public Library

With the Holiday Season in full swing, retailers are aiming advertisements of electronics at consumers. This is a great time of year to purchase new electronic equipment to take full advantage of sale pricing. Keep us in mind when you upgrade devices; we would love to reset your old device and let people try them out when they visit the library.

If you are not sure which devices are best for you the library can help! We subscribe to Consumer Reports magazine, which includes reviews for electronics in each issue. We also have the 2012 Consumer Reports Buying Guide. These items are in our Reference Department: next to the computer lab on the first floor of the east wing.

Reference staff can also assist in helping you decide between an e-reader and a tablet, and which e-reader is best suited to your reading needs. The differences between tablets and e-readers stem from the purpose of the device, or how they were intended to be used.

E-readers are not backlit; they do not provide their own light source. This means you can read them in the sun, but it also means you would need to turn on a lamp or utilize a book light to read at night. E-readers' main purpose is simple: use them to read! Some have the capability to browse websites but not with the ease of a tablet. The benefit of an e-reader is that they are easier on your eyes, because the screen mimics the paper of a print book, and they typically weigh less so you can hold them for longer lengths of time. Deciding which e-reader to get also varies depending on your plans for use. The Kindle is great if you plan to buy your e-books or download the free books from the Amazon Kindle store. Borrowing e-books from the library, through Overdrive, is more difficult with a Kindle due to publisher restrictions. If you plan to heavily use the library e-book service, then a Nook might be a better e-reader for you.

Tablets are backlit, like a desktop or laptop computer screen, which means you don't need a light source to use them, as they provide their own. They allow users to do much more than read, with full web browsing capabilities and an almost endless supply of apps to download, including numerous book reading apps. Kindle and Nook both have an app that can be downloaded on tablets and smartphones, as does the Columbus Public Library's e-book service, Overdrive. These apps make downloading e-books simple, whether you choose to read free books or buy your e-books. Tablets typically weigh more than an e-reader, depending on the size, however the Kindle Fire (tablet) still weighs less than the newest James Patterson novel.

Access to wireless internet is required to download to tablets and e-readers, although once an item is downloaded you can typically access it without an internet connection, unless it is a web-based app. If you don't have wireless internet at your home, you can always stop by the library and use ours- just come to the Reference Desk for a passcode.

Once you have completed the initial setup of your device by following the instructions included at the time of purchase, you can make an appointment with me and I will show you how to download items from the Columbus Public Library's e-book service, Overdrive.

To see what titles are available on Overdrive, or to check which devices are compatible with the service, follow the link from our website www.columbusne.us/library to the [Nebraska Overdrive Libraries](#).

If you have questions, please email library@columbusne.us or call 402-564-7116 and ask for Karen Stuart.