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The rise of e-reading

21% of Americans have read an e-book. The increasing availability of e-content is prompting some to read more than in the past and to prefer buying books to borrowing them.

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Summary of findings

One-fifth of American adults (21%) report that they have read an e-book in the past year, and this number increased following a gift-giving season that saw a spike in the ownership of both tablet computers and e-book reading devices such as the original Kindles and Nooks.¹ In mid-December 2011, 17% of American adults had reported they read an e-book in the previous year; by February, 2012, the share increased to 21%.

The rise of e-books in American culture is part of a larger story about a shift from printed to digital material. Using a broader definition of e-content in a survey ending in December 2011, some 43% of Americans age 16 and older say they have either read an e-book in the past year or have read other long-form content such as magazines, journals, and news articles in digital format on an e-book reader, tablet computer, regular computer, or cell phone.

Those who have taken the plunge into reading e-books stand out in almost every way from other kinds of readers. Foremost, they are relatively avid readers of books in all formats: 88% of those who read e-books in the past 12 months also read printed books.² Compared with other book readers, they read more books. They read more frequently for a host of reasons: for pleasure, for research, for current events, and for work or school. They are also more likely than others to have bought their most recent book, rather than borrowed it, and they are more likely than others to say they prefer to purchase books in general, often starting their search online.

The growing popularity of e-books and the adoption of specialized e-book reading devices are documented in a series of new nationally representative surveys by the Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project that look at the public's general reading habits, their consumption of print books, e-books and audiobooks, and their attitudes about the changing ways that books are made available to the public.

Most of the findings in this report come from a survey of 2,986 Americans ages 16 and older, conducted on November 16-December 21, 2011, that extensively focused on the new terrain of e-reading and people's habits and preferences. Other surveys were conducted between January 5-8 and January 12-15, 2012 to see the extent to which adoption of e-book reading devices (both tablets and e-readers) might have grown during the holiday gift-giving season and those growth figures are reported here. Finally, between January 20-February 19, 2012, we re-asked the questions about the incidence of book reading in the previous 12 months in order to see if there had been changes because the number of device owners had risen so sharply. All data cited in this report are from the November/December survey unless we specifically cite the subsequent surveys. This work was underwritten by a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Key findings:

A fifth of American adults have read an e-book in the past year and the number of e-book readers grew after a major increase in ownership of e-book reading devices and tablet computers during the holiday gift-giving season. A pre-holiday survey found that 17% of Americans age 18 and older had read an e-book in the previous 12 months and a post-holiday survey found that the number had grown to

¹ American adults age 18 and older, as of February 2012.

² Americans age 16 and older, as of December 2011.

21%. This coincides with significant increases in ownership of e-book reading devices and tablet computers over the holiday gift-giving season. Ownership of e-book readers like the original Kindle and Nook jumped from 10% in December to 19% in January and ownership of tablet computers such as iPads and Kindle Fires increased from 10% in mid-December to 19% in January. In all, 28% of Americans age 18 and older own at least one specialized device for e-book reading – either a tablet or an e-book reader.

The average reader of e-books says she has read 24 books (the mean number) in the past 12 months, compared with an average of 15 books by a non-e-book consumer. Some 78% of those ages 16 and older say they read a book in the past 12 months. Those readers report they have read an average (or mean number) of 17 books in the past year and 8 books as a median (midpoint) number.

Those who read e-books report they have read more books in all formats. They reported an average of 24 books in the previous 12 months and had a median of 13 books. Those who do not read e-books say they averaged 15 books in the previous year and the median was 6 books.

For device owners, those who own e-book readers also stand out. They say they have read an average of 24 books in the previous year (vs. 16 books by those who do not own that device). They report having read a median of 12 books (vs. 7 books by those who do not own the device).

Interestingly, there were not major differences between tablet owners and non-owners when it came to the volume of books they say they had read in the previous 12 months.

Overall, those who reported reading the most books in the past year include: women compared with men; whites compared with minorities; well-educated Americans compared with less-educated Americans; and those age 65 and older compared with younger age groups.

30% of those who read e-content say they now spend more time reading, and owners of tablets and e-book readers particularly stand out as reading more now. Some 41% of tablet owners and 35% of e-reading device owners said they are reading more since the advent of e-content. Fully 42% of readers of e-books said they are reading more now that long-form reading material is available in digital format. The longer people have owned an e-book reader or tablet, the more likely they are to say they are reading more: 41% of those who have owned either device for more than a year say they are reading more vs. 35% of those who have owned either device for less than six months who say they are reading more.

Men who own e-reading devices and e-content consumers under age 50 are particularly likely to say they are reading more.

The prevalence of e-book reading is markedly growing, but printed books still dominate the world of book readers. In our December 2011 survey, we found that 72% of American adults had read a printed book and 11% listened to an audiobook in the previous year, compared with the 17% of adults who had read an e-book.

- **There are four times more people reading e-books on a typical day now than was the case less than two years ago.** On any given day, 45% of book readers are reading a book in one format or another. And there has been a shift in the format being used by those who are reading on a typical day. In June 2010, 95% of those reading books “yesterday” were reading print books and 4% were reading e-books. In December 2011, 84% of the “yesterday” readers were reading print books and 15% were reading e-books.

- **Those who own e-book readers and tablets are avid readers of books in all formats.** On any given day, 49% of those who own e-book readers like the original Kindles and Nooks are reading an e-book. And 59% of those e-reader owners said they were reading a printed book. On any given day, 39% of tablet owners are reading an e-book and 64% were reading a printed book.

E-book reading happens across an array of devices, including smartphones. In our December survey we found that e-book readers age 16 and older were just as likely to have read an e-book on their computers as had read e-book reader devices specifically made for e-book consumption. Cell phones are reading devices, too:

- 42% of readers of e-books in the past 12 months said they consume their books on a computer
- 41% of readers of e-books consume their books on an e-book reader like original Kindles or Nooks
- 29% of readers of e-books consume their books on their cell phones
- 23% of readers of e-books consume their books on a tablet computer.³

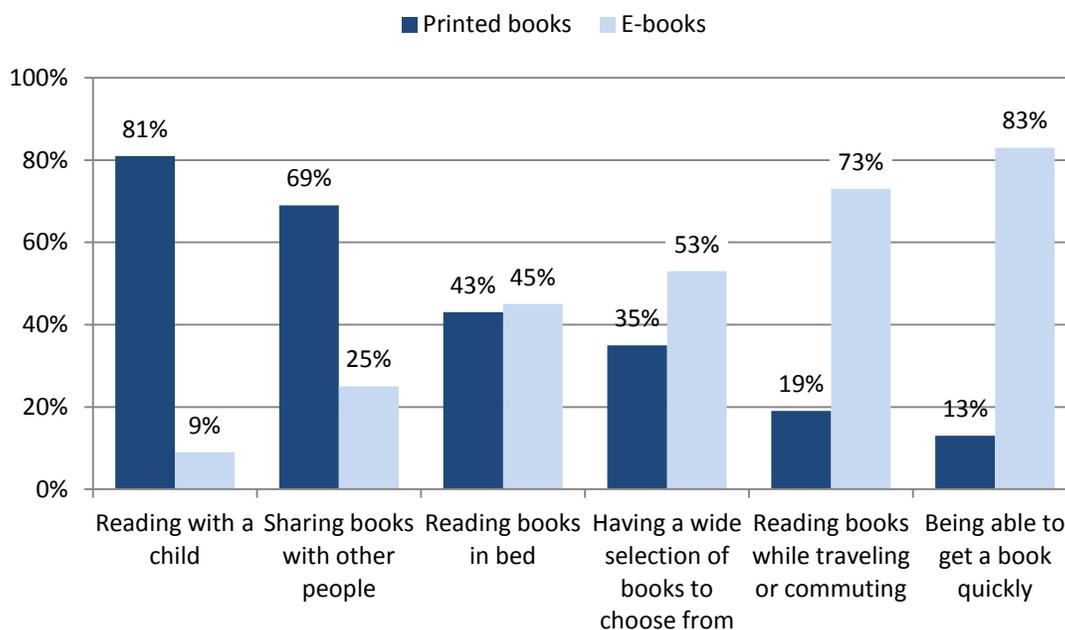
In a head-to-head competition, people prefer e-books to printed books when they want speedy access and portability, but print wins out when people are reading to children and sharing books with others. We asked a series of questions about format preferences among the 14% of Americans age 16 and up who in the past 12 months have read both printed books and e-books.

As a rule, dual-platform readers preferred e-books when they wanted to get a book quickly, when they were traveling or commuting, and when they were looking for a wide selection. However, print was strongly preferred over e-books when it came to reading to children and sharing books with others. When asked about reading books in bed, the verdict was split: 45% prefer reading e-books in bed, while 43% prefer print.

³ Many people said they consumed e-books on several devices, so these numbers add up to more than 100%.

Which is better for these purposes, a printed book or an e-book?

% of those who have read both e-books and printed books in the last 12 months who say that this format is better for these purposes



Source: Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Reading Habits Survey, November 16-December 21, 2011. N=2,986 respondents age 16 and older. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cells. N for those who have read both printed books and e-books in the past 12 months is 701.

The availability of e-content is an issue to some. Of the 43% of Americans who consumed e-books in the last year or have read other long-form content on digital devices, a majority say they find the e-content is available in the format they want. Yet 23% say they find the material they are seeking “only sometimes,” “hardly ever,” or never available in the format they want:

- 20% of e-content consumers say the material they want is **always available** in the format they want.
- 50% of e-content consumers say the material they want is **available “most of the time.”**
- 17% of e-content consumers say the material they want is **available “only sometimes.”**
- 3% of e-content consumers say the material they want is **available “hardly ever.”**
- 4% of e-content consumers say the material they want is **never available.**

The majority of book readers prefer to buy rather than borrow. A majority of print readers (54%) and readers of e-books (61%) prefer to purchase their own copies of these books. Meanwhile, most audiobook listeners prefer to borrow their audiobooks; just one in three audiobook listeners (32%) prefer to purchase audiobooks they want to listen to, while 61% prefer to borrow them. Those who own e-book reading devices and tablet computers are more likely than others to prefer to purchase.

As for the most recent book people read:

- 48% bought it. Owners of e-book readers and tablets were much more likely than others to have bought it.
- 24% borrowed it from family, friends, or co-workers.
- 14% borrowed it from a library.
- 13% got it from another source.⁴

For internet users who read e-books, online bookstores are the first stop. Asked where they start their search for an e-book they want to read, 75% of e-book readers start their search at an online bookstore or website. Some 12% start at the library.

Overall, people read for a variety of reasons. Americans cite a range of motives for their reading and it is often the case that people point to multiple reasons for reading. As a rule, technology users, and especially tablet owners and those who own e-book readers, are more likely than non-owners to read for every purpose.

- 80% of Americans age 16 and older say they read at least occasionally **for pleasure**. Some 36% read for pleasure every day or almost every day.
- 78% say they read at least occasionally **to keep up with current events**. People read most frequently for this reason: 50% say they do it daily or almost every day.
- 74% say they read at least occasionally in order to **do research on specific topics that interest them**. Some 24% read for this reason daily or almost every day.
- 56% say they read at least occasionally **for work or school**. Some 36% read for work or school daily or almost every day.

Why people like to read. Asked to tell us what they like most about book reading, those who had read a book in the past 12 months gave a host of reasons that ranged from the highly practical to the sublime.

⁴ We did not press them for further details about those other sources.

Portrait of e-book readers – 29% of those who read books in the past year

The % of the book readers ages 18+ in each group who read an e-book in the past 12 months

*Asterisk denotes statistically significant difference with other rows

% of the book readers who read an e-book in the past 12 months	
All those age 18 and older	29%
Gender	
Male	29
Female	28
Age	
18-29	34*
30-49	34*
50-64	23
65+	17
Race and ethnicity	
White, non-Hispanic	29
Black, non-Hispanic	22
Hispanic	23
Educational attainment	
High school grad or less	19
Some college	34*
College graduate	35*
Household income	
Less than \$30,000	20
\$30,000-\$49,999	25
\$50,000-\$74,999	35*
\$75,000+	38*

Source: Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Winter Tracking Survey January 20-February 19, 2012. N=1,377 of adults who read a book in the past 12 months. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cells. N for number of readers who had read an e-book in past 12 months=321.

Those who own e-book reading devices stand out from other book readers and there are sometimes differences among device owners in their reading habits.

Our December 2011 survey found that those age 16 and older who own tablets or e-book reading devices are more likely than others to read for every reason: for pleasure, for personal research, for current events, and for work or school.

- Some 89% of e-reading device owners say they read at least occasionally **for pleasure**, compared with 80% of all Americans 16 and older. Some 49% read for pleasure every day or almost every day (vs. 36% of all those 16 and older).
- Similarly, 89% of e-reading device owners say they read at least occasionally in order to **do research on specific topics that interest them** (vs. 74% of all those 16 and older). Some 36% read for this reason daily or almost every day, compared with 24% of the general population.
- Some 88% of e-reading device owners (vs. 78% of all those 16 and older) say they read at least occasionally **to keep up with current events**. People read most frequently for this reason: 64% say they do it daily or almost every day (vs. 50% of all 16 and older).
- Some 71% of e-reading device owners say they read **for work or school** (vs. 56% of all 16 and older); almost half (49%) do so daily (compared with 36%).

Device owners read more often. On any given day 56% of those who own e-book reading devices are reading a book, compared with 45% of the general book-reading public who are reading a book on a typical day. Some 63% of the e-book device owners who are reading on any given day are reading a printed book; 42% are reading an e-book; and 4% are listening to an audio book.

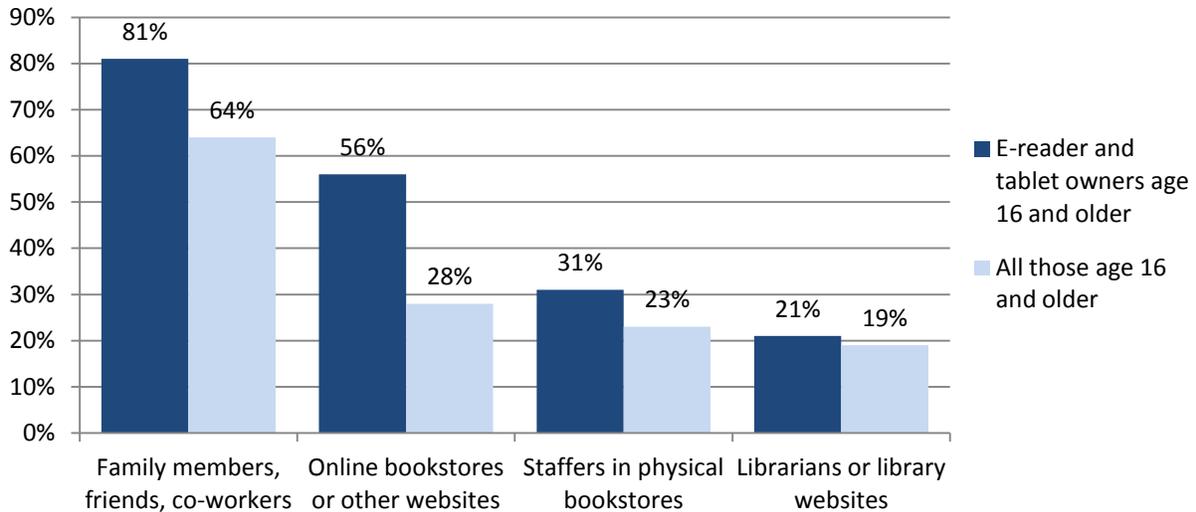
Device owners are more likely to buy books. Some 61% of e-reading device owners said they purchased the most recent book they read, compared with 48% of all readers. Another 15% said they had borrowed their most recent book from a friend or family member (vs. 24% of all readers), and 10% said they borrowed it from a library (vs. 14% of all readers).

Asked their preference for obtaining books in all formats, e-book reading device owners were more likely to say they prefer to purchase than to borrow books in any format – print, digital, or audio. In related fashion, they are also more likely to say they start their searches for e-books at online bookstores.

Book recommendations. Overall, owners of e-reading devices are more likely than all Americans 16 and older to get book recommendations from people they knew (81% vs. 64%) and bookstore staff (31% vs. 23%). In addition, compared with the general public, owners of e-reading devices who use the internet are also more likely to get recommendations from online bookstores or other websites (56% vs. 34%).

Where do you get recommendations for reading material?

% of Americans age 16+, as of December 2011. For instance, 81% of e-reader and tablet owners say they get recommendations for reading material from family members, friends, and co-workers.



Source: Dec. 2011 results are from a survey of 2,986 people age 16 and older conducted November 16-December 21, 2011. N for number of those owning e-book reader or tablet=1,132. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. The margin of error is +/- 2 percentage points. N for the number of owners of either an e-book reader or a tablet device=1,132.

Other key findings:

- Amazon's Kindle Fire, a new tablet computer introduced in late 2011, grew in market share from 5% of the market in mid-December to 14% of the tablet market in mid-January. This change also grew as the overall size of the tablet market roughly doubled.
- Among those who do not own tablet computers or e-book reading devices, the main reasons people say they do not own the devices are: 1) they don't need or want one, 2) they can't afford one, 3) they have enough digital devices already, or 4) they prefer printed books.

Acknowledgements

The Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project is an initiative of the Pew Research Center, a nonprofit "fact tank" that provides information on the issues, attitudes, and trends shaping America and the world. The Pew Internet Project explores the impact of the internet on children, families, communities, the work place, schools, health care and civic/political life. The Project is nonpartisan and takes no position on policy issues. Support for the Project is provided by The Pew Charitable Trusts. More information is available at www.pewinternet.org

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Part 1: Introduction

This is the first comprehensive examination of the reading habits of the general population since e-books have come to prominence.

The emergence of e-books has disrupted industries and institutions that have enjoyed relatively stable practices, policies, and businesses for decades. Widespread consumer interest in e-books began in late 2006 with the release of Sony Readers and accelerated after Amazon's Kindle was unveiled a year later. By the end of 2011, there were widespread reports about the exploding demand for e-books, both for purchases and for borrowing from libraries.

In the year ending in January 2012, the American Association of Publishers reported that e-book sales had risen more than 49.4% in the adult books category, 475.1% in the children's and young adult category, 150.7% in the religious publications category.⁵ We at the Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project reported that ownership of e-book readers among adults age 18 and older had nearly doubled from 10% of the population to 19% over the holiday gift-giving season at the end of 2011, and ownership of tablet computers had surged a similar amount.⁶ In the final week of 2011 the e-book version of 42 of the top-selling 50 books on USA Today's best-seller book list was outselling the paper version of the same book.⁷

All this ferment is changing the way many people discover and read books.

About this research

To understand the place e-reading has in Americans' evolving reading habits, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has given the Pew Internet Project a grant to study this shifting digital terrain. That would include exploration of gadgets like e-book readers and tablet computers, applications that allow people to consume books and other media in new formats, mobile connectivity that facilitates access to media anywhere and anytime, and the evolving role of libraries in their communities. We hope this work will be useful to library patrons and librarians in discerning how libraries can serve their constituents in a world where "books" are becoming very different from what they have traditionally been; newspapers draw bigger audiences online than they do in print; maps are becoming multimedia productions; magazines and journals are structured to facilitate conversations; historical artifacts can be understood in new ways; digital databases can be accessed on the fly from smartphones and tablets; and knowledge-creation itself is becoming a crowdsourced activity of aggregating networked information. Libraries have traditionally played a key role in the civic and social life of their communities, and this work is aimed at understanding the way that changes in consumer behavior and library offerings might affect that unique relationship between libraries and communities.

This report is part of the first phase of that Gates Foundation-funded research: an analysis of the way people read in the digital era – especially the way they read books.⁸ Subsequent reports will cover how

⁵ See <http://publishers.org/press/62/>

⁶ See <http://pewinternet.org/Reports/2012/E-readers-and-tablets.aspx>.

⁷ "E-books make their mark." USA Today. <http://www.usatoday.com/life/books/news/story/2012-01-09/ebooks-sales-surge/52458672/1>

⁸ Later in this first phase of the work, we will survey librarians and library patrons about the role of e-books in libraries. In the second phase of the work later in 2012, we will conduct focus groups with librarians and patrons

librarians and patrons perceive the situation with e-books and other digital content, and how people in different kinds of communities (urban, suburban, and rural) compare in their reading habits. Further down the line, this research will cover the changing landscape of library services.

The Pew Internet Project conducted several surveys to complete the work reported here. The first was a nationally representative survey of 2,986 people ages 16 and older between November 16 and December 21, 2011. The sample was conducted 50% on landline phones and 50% on cell phones and in English and in Spanish. In addition, the survey included an oversample of 300 additional tablet computer owners, 317 e-book reader owners, and 119 people who own both devices. The overall survey has a margin of error of ± 2 percentage points.

A modest number of questions about tablets and e-book readers were asked in two surveys conducted in January on an “omnibus” survey. These surveys involved 2,008 people and were fielded between January 5-8 and January 12-15. Those surveys were conducted on landline and cell phones and were administered in English. We fielded them to determine if the level of ownership of tablets and e-book readers had changed during the holiday gift giving season – and in fact it had. We reported that the level of ownership of both devices had nearly doubled in a month – from 10% ownership for each device in December to 19% in January.⁹ The margin of error for the combined omnibus survey data is ± 2.4 percentage points.

Finally, we asked questions about book reading and ownership of tablets and e-books in a survey fielded from January 20-February 19, 2012. In all, 2,253 adults (age 18+) were interviewed on landline and cell phone and in English and Spanish. The margin of error for the entire sample is ± 2 percentage points.

about the changing scope of services being offered and being contemplated in libraries. We will supplement that work with a national survey of the general public about the evolving role of libraries in communities. In the third phase of the work in 2013, we will conduct a large national survey of library users and non-users.

⁹ The results of the omnibus surveys were reported here: <http://pewinternet.org/Reports/2012/E-readers-and-tablets.aspx>

Tech timeline of e-readers & tablets

- November 2001: iPod released along with iTunes, which later became a major platform for e-book offerings.
- **April 2004:** Sony LIBRIé e-book reader released in Japan. First e-ink e-book reader.
- **November 2006:** Sony Readers released. Cost: \$349. E-ink, supports PDF and ePub. (Borders had an exclusive contract for the Reader until the end of 2006.)
- **June 2007:** iPhone released. Cost: \$499 (4GB) and \$599 (8GB)
- **November 2007:** Amazon Kindle released. Cost: \$399. E-ink, wireless EV-DO delivery.
- **November 2009:** Barnes & Noble Nook released. Cost: \$259. E-ink, 3G, supports ePub and PDF (as well as B&N's Nook DRM).
- February 2009: Kindle 2 becomes available. Can now read PDFs. Original price: \$359
- **April 2010:** iPad released by Apple. (Announced March 2010). Cost: \$499 to \$829
- March 2010: Kobo e-reader announced, will sell for \$149 through Borders bookstores. Builds off the existing Kobo e-reader app/format.
- **November 2010:** Nook Color released. Cost: \$249. Wi-fi.
- **April 2011:** Amazon announces a partnership with OverDrive to allow library patrons to borrow Kindle e-books via the Kindle Library Lending program.
- **September 2011:** Kindle Library Lending becomes available.
- October 2011: Kobo's tablet, the Kobo Vox, released. Cost: \$199.99.
- **November 2011:** Kindle Fire and other new Kindles released. (Announced September 28, 2011. According to Amazon, the biggest ordering day ever for Kindle.)
 - Latest Kindle (version 4): **\$79 for wi-fi ad-supported**, \$109 for wi-fi "without special offers"
 - New Kindle Touch: \$99 for wi-fi, \$149 for 3G
 - New Kindle Fire: \$199 for touchscreen tablet (no e-ink), wi-fi only
- **November 2011:** Nook Tablet introduced.

Part 2: The general reading habits of Americans

Reading trends have fluctuated during the decades that polling organizations have been asking questions about Americans' reading habits, especially when it comes to books. Our survey introduced several new dimensions of this exploration by asking about people's purposes for reading, by looking at new technology formats, and by paying particular attention to the role of libraries and librarians in people's reading lives.

The basic reasons why people read

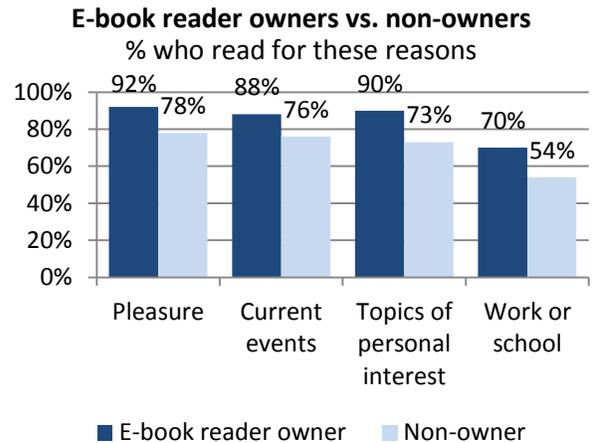
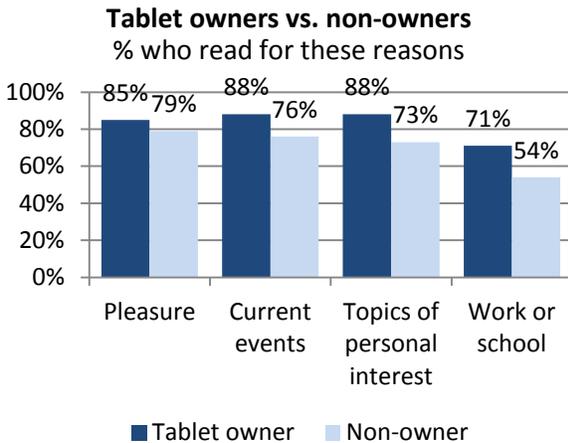
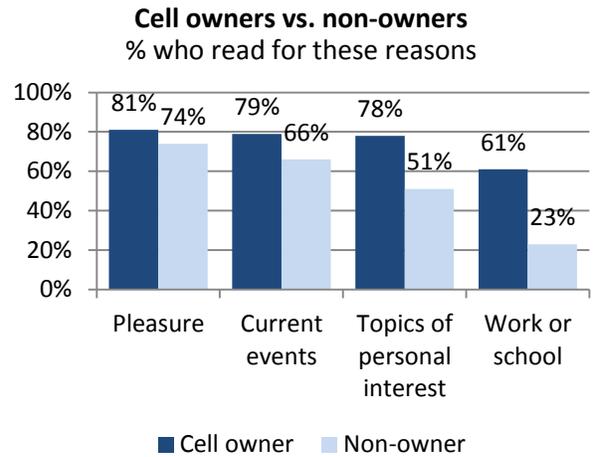
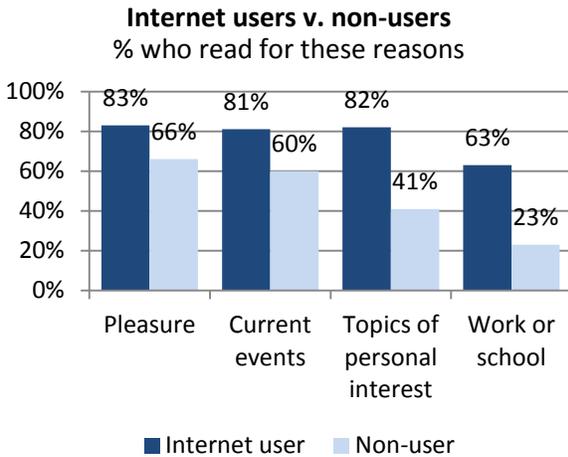
Americans cite a variety of motives for their reading, especially when it comes to long-form content like books or magazine articles. It is sometimes the case that different people cite different motives. Generally, better educated Americans who have gone to at least some college and better off Americans who live in households earning over \$50,000 are more likely than the less educated and Americans living in poorer households to read for all the reasons we queried:

- 80% of Americans 16 and older say they read at least occasionally **for pleasure**. Women (84%) are more likely than men (75%) to cite this motive.
- 78% say they read at least occasionally **to keep up with current events**. Those over age 30 are more likely than those 16-30 to say they read for this reason.
- 74% say they read at least occasionally in order to **do research on specific topics that interest them**. Those under age 65 are more likely to cite this reason, compared with seniors. This is partly tied to the fact that proportionally fewer senior citizens are in the workforce. Parents with minor children (80%) are more likely than non-parents (72%) to say this is a reason they read.
- 56% say they read at least occasionally **for work or school**. Workers and students dominate this category but there are some surprises in the data. Fully 23% of full-time workers say they *never* do reading related to work or school. Those who have lower levels of household income and education stand out in this group who do not read often for work or school. Some 50% of full-time workers say they read every day or just about every day for their jobs or schooling; another 16% read job or school-related material a time or two per week; another 10% say they do such reading less often than that.

Men (58%) are more likely than women (53%) to say they read for work or school-related reasons. Those under age 65 are considerably more likely to cite this reason, compared with seniors. This, too, is partly tied to the fact that proportionally fewer senior citizens are in the workforce. And parents (68%) are more likely than non-parents (48%) to say they read for this reason.

Technology users are uniformly more likely than non-users to be readers for all of these reasons. That applies to internet users, cell phone owners, tablet owners, and e-book reader owners.

Technology owners read more



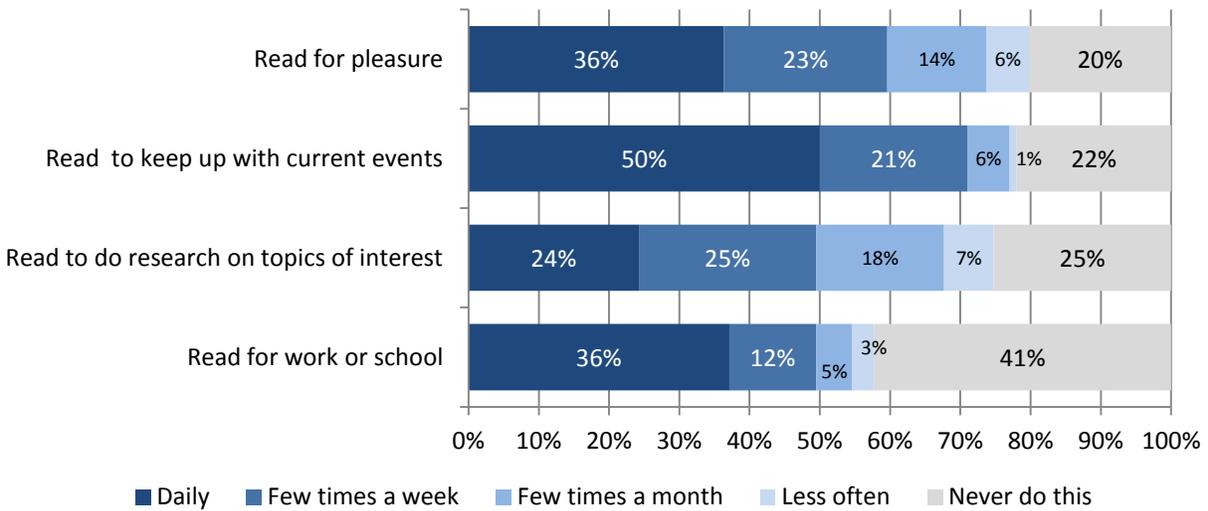
Source: Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Reading Habits Survey, November 16-December 21, 2011. N=2,986 respondents age 16 and older. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cells. The margin of error for the sample is +/- 2 percentage points. N for internet users=2,249. N for cell owners=2,598. N for tablet owners=638. N for e-book reader owners=676.

The frequency with which people read for different reasons

There is considerable variance in the frequency with which people read for these reasons. People read most frequently to keep up with current events. Pleasure reading and work/school reading follow next.

How often people read for different purposes

% of those age 16 and older who read this often



Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Reading Habits Survey, November 16-December 21, 2011. N=2,986 respondents age 16 and older. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cells. The margin of error for the sample is +/- 2 percentage points.

Across the board, people who use the internet and other digital devices – such as cell phones, tablet computers, and e-book readers – are more frequent readers than non-users for each of these purposes. In addition, those who are relatively well-educated and have relatively higher incomes are more likely than others to be frequent readers in each realm.

Still, the survey shows that the most frequent readers in each area can be diverse. For instance, those who read frequently – daily or almost daily – for pleasure are more likely to be female, white or black (compared with Hispanics), over age 50 and non-parents of minors. On the other hand, in current events reading, men are more likely than women to be daily readers (53% vs. 46%). Older adults are considerably more likely than younger ones to follow current events. Some 59% of those over age 50 read to follow current events every day or almost every day, compared with 38% of those ages 18-29. In contrast, when it comes to doing reading for research on topics that interest people, those ages 18-29 are much more likely to do that daily (30%) than those who are 65 and older (14%).

If the reading is for work or school, it is not surprising that those under age 50 are more likely than those who are older to say they read for this purpose with the greatest frequency. Similarly, those with higher levels of education and income are more likely than others to read frequently for work or school. At the same time, it is notable that men (38%) are more likely than women (33%) to read almost daily for work or school. Additionally, blacks (42%) are more likely than whites (34%) to read daily or almost daily for work or educational purposes.

Book consumption in any format: Print books still dominate, but e-books have a notable audience now and audiobooks have fans too

Book-reading habits have changed over time. In broad strokes, fewer people are reading books now than in 1978, but the data have fluctuated over time. The Gallup organization’s surveys of adults age 18 and older over the decades highlight those shifts. In the first Gallup survey in the summer of 1978, 12% of adults said they had not read a book in the previous 12 months or refused to answer a question about book reading. That compares with 22% who told us they had not read a book in the previous 12 months or didn’t answer a book-reading question in December 2011. During the span of polling about book reading, the most dramatic shift occurred between the 1978 Gallup poll and a similar one in 1990, as the table below shows:

Book reading trends over time

% of adults (age 18+) who say they have read this number of books in the past 12 months

	Pew Internet 12/2011	Gallup 5/2005	Gallup 12/2001	Gallup 9/1999	Gallup 12/1990	Gallup 7/1978
None	19%	16%	13%	13%	16%	8%
1-5 books	32	38	38	30	32	29
6-10 books	15	14	16	16	15	17
11-50 books	26	25	23	31	27	29
>50 books	5	6	8	7	7	13
Don't know - refused	3	1	1	2	3	4
Mean	17	14.2	14.5	17	11	n/a
Median	8	5	5	7	6	n/a

Source: Gallup surveys and Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Reading Habits Survey, November 16-December 21, 2011. N=2,986 respondents age 16 and older. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cells. The margin of error for the sample is +/- 2 percentage points.

Our question was somewhat different from Gallup’s in that we asked respondents whether they had read any books in the past 12 months in print, via audiobook, or an e-book. We also asked 16- and 17-year-olds. Some 78% of those 16 and older had read at least one book in any format in the previous 12 months, compared with 88% in the 1978 Gallup survey of adults. In our December survey, looking at the general population, 72% of Americans age 16 and older read at least one book in the past year in print; 16% read at least one e-book; 11% listened to at least one audiobook. The figures for adults 18 and older in that survey were the same, except it was 17% who had read an e-book.

When we re-asked the question of adults 18 and older in a survey from January 20-February 19, 2012, the number of readers of e-books in the previous year had increased to 21%.

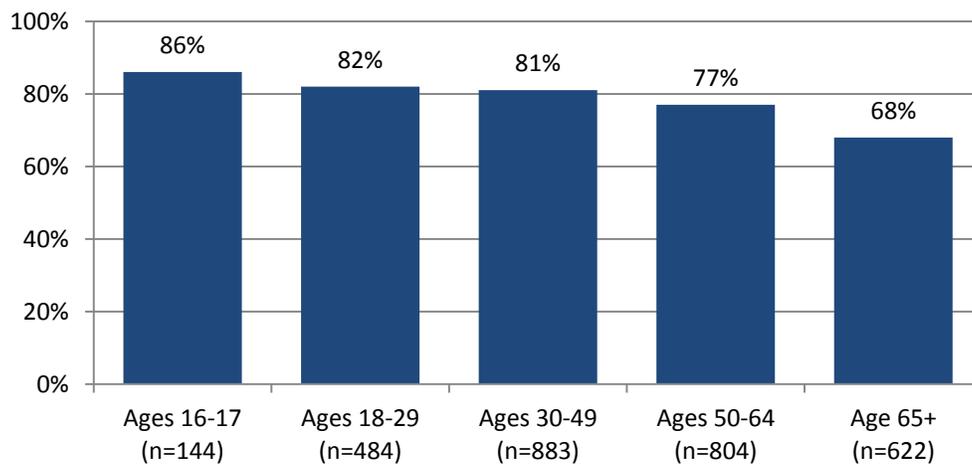
A full description of the readers of e-books, the gadgets they use, and their habits is covered in Part 4 of this report.

In our December 2011 survey, women were more likely than men to have read a book in the previous 12 months. Those with college educations and higher household incomes were more likely to be book readers than less educated and less well-off people. Hispanics who preferred to take the survey in Spanish were less likely than English speakers of all races to be book readers in the past year. Urban (80%) and suburban (80%) residents were more likely than rural residents (71%) to have read a book in the past year.

The overall number of book readers in various age cohorts also decreased by age: 82% of those ages 18-29 read a book in the past year, compared with 68% of those age 65 and older.

Book readers by age

% who have read a book in whole or in part in the past 12 months



Source: Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Reading Habits Survey, November 16-December 21, 2011. N=2,986 respondents age 16 and older. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cells. The margin of error for the sample is +/- 2 percentage points.

Interestingly, though, the oldest readers are the most avid book consumers. The table below shows the average (mean) figure was 17 books that a typical American read in the past year. The median number (the midway point) was eight books. And those ages 65 and older who were readers had read the most books, on average.

How many books Americans read

The mean and median number of books each group read in the past 12 months, among all Americans age 16 and older.

* Asterisk denotes statistically significant difference with other groups

	Mean number of books read (average)	Median (midpoint)
All those age 16 and older	17	8
Gender		
Male (n=1,408)	15	6
Female (n=1,578)	19*	10
Age		
16-17 (n=144)	18	10
18-29 (n=484)	17	7
30-49 (n=883)	14	6
50-64 (n=804)	18	8
65+ (n=622)	23*	12
Race/Ethnicity		
White, non-Hispanic (n=2,147)	19*	10
Black, non-Hispanic (n=316)	12	5
Hispanic (n=316)	11	5
Education		
High school grad or less (n=1,134)	15	6
Some college (n=692)	19*	8
College graduate (n=1,142)	19*	10
Annual Household Income		
Less than \$30,000 (n=660)	17	6
\$30,000-\$49,999 (n=492)	18	10
\$50,000-\$74,999 (n=401)	16	8
\$75,000+ (n=684)	18	10

Source: Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Reading Habits Survey, November 16-December 21, 2011. N=2,986 respondents age 16 and older. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cells. The margin of error for the sample is +/- 2 percentage points. N for those who have read book in past 12 months=2,474.

The differences among readers

The distribution between frequent and less frequent readers was relatively even. Among those who had read a book in the past 12 months:

- 8% said they had read 1 book
- 17% had read 2-3 books
- 16% had read 4-5 books
- 19% had read 6-10 books

- 18% had read 11-20 books
- 22% had read more than 20 books

We divided these readers into three segments for a more detailed examination of who they are, their motives for reading, and their devices. Infrequent readers (31% of the population) are those who read between 1-5 books in the previous 12 months. Medium readers (29% of the population) are those who read between 6-20 books in the previous 12 months. Frequent readers (17% of the population) read 21 or more books in the previous 12 months.

Those with the greatest frequency of book reading are women, whites, and those with high levels of education.

Book reading patterns for different groups vary

% of Americans in each group and the number of books they read in the past 12 months

** Asterisk denotes statistically significant difference with other groups*

	Infrequent readers (1-5 books in past year) N=877	Medium readers (6-20 books in past year) N=948	Frequent readers (21+ books in past year) N=649
All those age 16 and older	31%	29%	17%
Gender			
Male	32	27	14
Female	31	30	20*
Age			
16-17	28	40*	18
18-29	35	28	19
30-49	36	31	14
50-64	40	30	19
65+	25	21	21
Race/Ethnicity			
White, non-Hispanic	28	31*	20*
Black, non-Hispanic	42*	23	11
Hispanic	36	22	11
Education			
High school grad or less	32	24	12
Some college	26	28	21*
College graduate	30	38*	24*
Annual Household Income			
Less than \$30,000	35	19	16
\$30,000-\$49,999	32	29*	19
\$50,000-\$74,999	30	38*	18
\$75,000+	29	40*	20

Source: Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Reading Habits Survey, November 16-December 21, 2011. N=2,986 respondents age 16 and older. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cells. The margin of error for the sample is +/- 2 percentage points. N for those who have read book in past 12 months=2,474.

In their technology profiles, these different categories of readers have somewhat different ownership and use levels. Medium and frequent readers are more likely than infrequent readers to own e-book readers. Medium readers are also a bit more likely than infrequent or frequent readers to be internet users, and slightly more likely to own cell phones.

In their reading habits, frequent readers are more likely than others to read for pleasure: 74% of frequent readers read for pleasure every day, compared with 43% of medium and 23% of infrequent readers who read for pleasure that often. Medium readers are more likely than others to read frequently for work or school. At the same time, frequent and medium readers are equally as likely to read every day to keep up with current events and to read for purposes of researching specific topics they are interested in.

Some 45% of book readers say they read a book in the past day – and the number of adults reading e-books on any given day has jumped dramatically since 2010

In our full sample from December 2011, including 16- and 17-year-olds, 45% of the book readers said they were reading the book the day before we contacted them in the survey. We often say that survey results like this present a picture of a “typical” or “average” day. If we only include those ages 18 and older in the sample, 44% of adults who read books were reading a book on a typical day – a figure that has changed little from the figures collected among book readers by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press since 1994.¹⁰

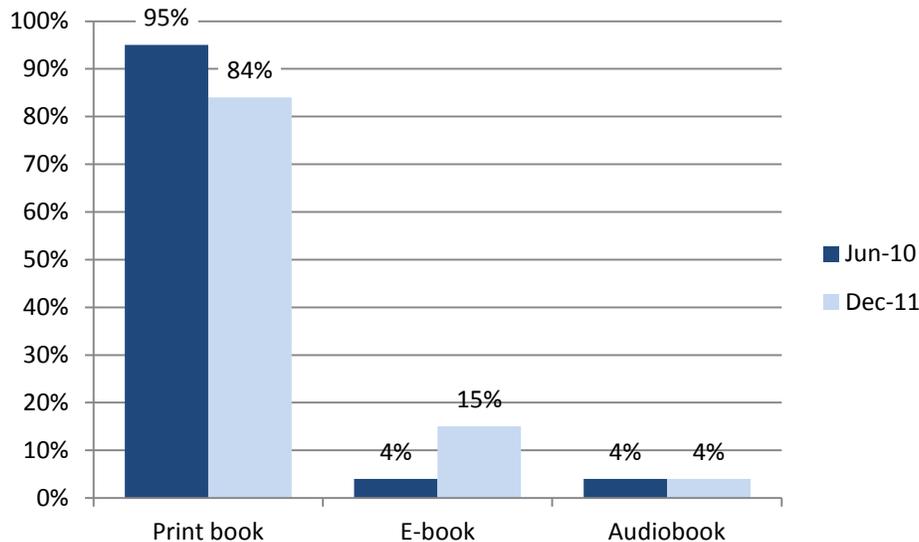
Still, there has been a noteworthy change in the formats of the books being read on any given day.¹¹ In June 2010, 95% of the book readers “yesterday” were reading print books and 4% were reading e-books. By December 2011 in our survey, 84% of the “yesterday” readers were reading print books and 15% were reading e-books. The shift toward e-book reading on a typical day is being driven by those who are college educated, those living in higher-income households, and those ages 30-49. Those groups disproportionately report they were reading e-books yesterday.

¹⁰ The latest figures were collected in a June 2010 survey. Pew Research Center for the People and the Press. Question wording for book readers was “There are different ways people read books these days. Yesterday, did you read a printed book, an electronic or digital book, or listen to an audiobook?” Available at: <http://www.people-press.org/2010/09/12/section-3-news-attitudes-and-habits/>

¹¹ Data in this paragraph is for adults age 18 and older.

The book format used by readers on any given day is changing

% of adult book readers (age 18+) using this format on an average day, as of June 2010 and December 2011



Source: Pew Research Center Surveys.

The joy of reading

Asked to tell us what they like most about book reading, those who had read a book in the past 12 months gave a host of reasons that ranged from the highly practical to the sublime. Several strands of answers stood out: The joy of reading to people comes from entertainment, enjoyment, education, enrichment, escape, and the way it eases life in a stressful world. Overall, their answers broke down this way:

- 26% of those who had read a book in the past 12 months said that what they enjoyed most was learning, gaining knowledge, and discovering information.
- 15% cited the pleasures of escaping reality, becoming immersed in another world, and the enjoyment they got from using their imaginations.
- 12% said they liked the entertainment value of reading, the drama of good stories, the suspense of watching a good plot unfold.
- 12% said they enjoyed relaxing while reading and having quiet time.
- 6% liked the variety of topics they could access via reading and how they could find books that particularly interested them.
- 4% said they enjoy finding spiritual enrichment through reading and expanding their worldview.
- 3% said they like being mentally challenged by books.

read at least one print book in the past 12 months and 39% said they consumed e-books. And they consume a lot of books. Audiobook listeners consumed an average (mean) of 25 books in all formats in the previous 12 months and a median (midpoint) of 12 books. Both figures are far higher than those who do not listen to books. As book consumers, those who listen to books are more likely than non-audio consumers to read for pleasure, to read to do research on specific topics, and to read for work or school.

Demographically, audiobook listeners are more likely to have had at least some college education and to be the parent of a minor child. There are no differences across gender, age, and races. Audiobook listeners are much more likely to have technology in their lives – that is, use the internet, or be a tablet or e-book reader owner.

Non-book readers

A fifth of Americans (18%) said they had not read a book in the past year. This group is more likely to be: male than female (23% vs. 14%), Hispanic than white or black (28% vs. 17% and 16%), age 65 or older (27%), lacking a high school diploma (34%), living in households earning less than \$30,000 (26%), unemployed (22%), and residents of rural areas 25%. Those who did not read a book last year also tended not to be technology users.

In addition, 18% of those 16 and older said they had physical or health conditions that made reading difficult or challenging. This group tilted toward older Americans: 25% of those over age 50 said they had such a physical or health issue; 27% of those who are unemployed said the same; and 29% of those in households earning \$30,000 or less said so.

Interestingly, there was *not* substantial overlap among the non-book reading group and those who have health or physical conditions that made reading challenging. Just 25% of the non-book readers cited health-related issues for making reading difficult. And only 28% of those with health-related issues said they had not read a book in the past year.

Readers of news and newspapers; magazines and journals

In addition to asking respondents about their book-reading habits, we also asked people about other kinds of reading and found that 58% of those 16 and older say they regularly read news or a daily newspaper and 48% say they regularly read magazines and journals.

Portrait of news/newspaper readers and magazine/journal readers

The % of those ages 16+ in each group who read this kind of material

* Asterisk denotes statistically significant difference with other groups

	Regularly read daily news or newspapers (n=1,847)	Regularly read magazines or journals (n=1,587)
All those age 16 and older	58%	48%
Gender		
Male	59	45
Female	56	51*
Age		
16-17	34	38
18-29	42	44
30-49	56*	48
50-64	65*	52*
65+	72*	49
Race/Ethnicity		
White, non-Hispanic	61*	50*
Black, non-Hispanic	55*	47
Hispanic	46	41
Education		
High school grad or less	53	40
Some college	57	49*
College graduate	67*	62*
Annual Household Income		
Less than \$30,000	48	38
\$30,000-\$49,999	59*	46*
\$50,000-\$74,999	64*	50*
\$75,000+	68*	64*

Source: Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Reading Habits Survey, November 16-December 21, 2011. N=2,986 respondents age 16 and older. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cells. The margin of error for the sample is +/- 2 percentage points.

Tablet and e-book reader owners are much more likely than non-owners to do both types of reading. In addition, internet users and cell phone owners were more likely than non-users to read magazines and journals. Frequent book readers were also notably more likely than infrequent- or non-book readers to be news and magazine readers.

We followed up that general question with a query about whether those readers had read news or a daily newspaper "yesterday," the day before we reached them in the survey. Some 75% of them said

they did. On a “typical day” those more likely than others to be reading news are male, white, over age 30, college educated, living in a household earning more than \$50,000, and e-book reader owners.

In addition, 46% of those who regularly read magazines and journals said they read that type of publication yesterday. On a “typical day” those more likely to be reading magazines and journals are over age 30 and college educated. Technology owners and users are no more likely than non-users to be reading magazines and journals.

Part 3: Americans and their e-readers and tablets

Overview

Ownership of both e-book readers and tablet computers has been growing slowly but steadily for the past few years. But during the most recent holiday season, we saw a major spike in ownership.¹² In mid-January, we reported that 19% of adults ages 18 and older owned an e-book reader, and 19% owned a tablet computer, up from 10% ownership for each device in mid-December.¹³

E-book reader and tablet ownership are strongly correlated with income and education, and are also most popular with adults under age 50. In addition, women are more likely to own e-readers than men, and more parents own tablet computers than non-parents. The tables below show how the ownership population of each device has changed over time – the most recent data come from our surveys in January.

¹² Lee Rainie, “Tablet and E-book reader Ownership Nearly Double Over the Holiday Gift-Giving Period” (2011). <http://pewinternet.org/Reports/2012/E-readers-and-tablets.aspx>

¹³ Most of the data in this chapter come from surveys of adults age 18 and older in 2012. We note when we draw on material that was collected in the December 2011 survey.

Who owns tablet computers

% of adults in each group who own a tablet computer

	% of each group who owned a tablet computer in Nov 2010	% of each group who owned a tablet computer in mid-Dec 2011	% of each group who owned a tablet computer in mid-Jan 2012
All adults in the U.S.	5%	10%	19%
Gender			
Male	6	11	19
Female	4	10	19
Race/Ethnicity			
White	4	10	19
African American	4	9	21
Hispanic	7	10	21 [^]
Age			
18-29	6	10	24*
30-49	6	14	27*
50-64	4	8	15
65+	2	5	7
Education			
Some high school	4	7	5
High school	3	6	15
Some college	4	10	18*
College graduate	8	17*	31*
Household income			
< \$30,000	4	4	8
\$30,000 - \$49,999	3	8	16*
\$50,000 - \$74,999	3	10	20*
\$75,000+	9*	22*	36*

[^]Previous surveys included Spanish interviews. The January surveys were only conducted in English.

* Denotes statistically significant difference with other rows in that category

Source: The Dec. 2011 and Jan. 2012 results shown here are from three new surveys by the Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project. The Dec. 2011 results are from a survey of 2,986 people age 16 and older conducted November 16-December 21, 2011. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. The margin of error is +/- 2 percentage points. The Jan. 2012 results are from a combination of two surveys, one conducted January 5-8, 2012 of 1,000 adults age 18 and older and the other conducted January 12-15, 2012 among a sample of 1,008 adults. The overall margin of error in the combined Jan. 2012 dataset is +/- 2.4 percentage points. The January surveys were conducted on landline and cell phones. They were conducted only in English.

Who owns e-book reading devices such as original Kindles or Nooks

% of adults in each group who own an e-reader

	% of each group who owned an e-reader in Nov 2010	% of each group who owned an e-reader in mid-Dec 2011	% of each group who owned an e-reader in mid-Jan 2012
All adults in the U.S.	6%	10%	19%
Gender			
Male	6	9	16
Female	6	11	21*
Race/Ethnicity			
White	6	12	18
African American	5	5	20
Hispanic	5	6	19^
Age			
18-29	6	7	18
30-49	5	12	24*
50-64	9	11	19
65+	4	8	12
Education			
Some high school	5	5	6
High school	4	6	14
Some college	6	12	19*
College graduate	8	16*	30*
Household income			
< \$30,000	4	3	8
\$30,000 - \$49,999	3	9	19*
\$50,000 - \$74,999	6	13	19*
\$75,000+	12*	21*	31*

^Previous surveys included Spanish interviews. The January surveys were only conducted in English.

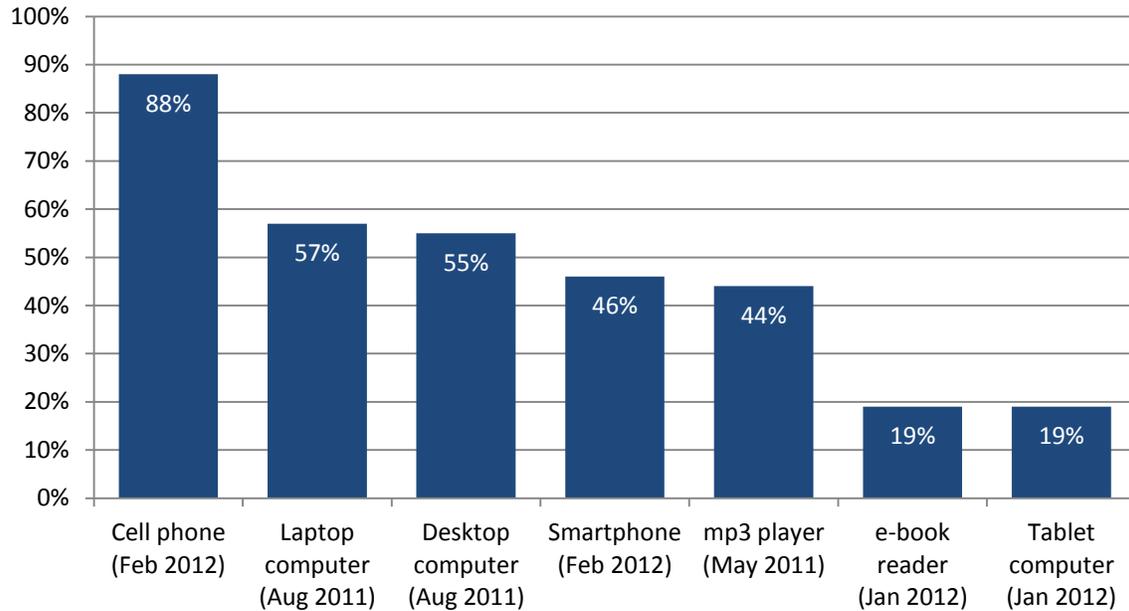
* Denotes statistically significant difference with other rows in that category

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The chart below shows how e-book reading devices and tablets fit into the general mix of device ownership among adults age 18 and older. Overall, tablet users and e-reader users are more likely to own cell phones, desktops, tablets, and e-reading devices.

Gadget ownership snapshot for adults age 18 and older

% of American adults age 18+ who own each device



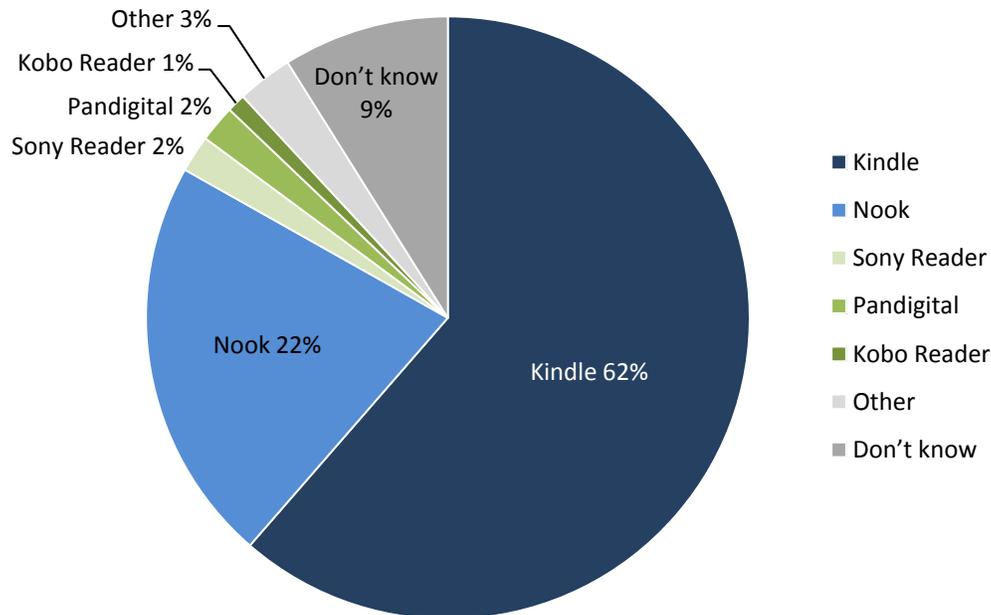
Source: The Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project surveys.

The contours of the e-book reader and tablet markets

Kindles are the most popular type of e-reading device, and are owned by 62% of those who own e-readers. Another 22% own a Nook, making it the second most popular type. The distribution of types of e-book readers that we saw in our February survey has barely shifted from December 2011, when 63% of e-reader owners age 18 and older owned a Kindle and 23% owned a Nook. The full breakdown of the different types of e-reader devices owned in February 2012 is shown in the pie chart below.

What kind of e-reading device do you own?

% of American adult e-reader owners age 18+ who own each type of e-book reader



Source: The Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project Winter Tracking Survey, conducted from January 20-February 19, 2012. N=313 e-reader owners age 18 and older. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish, by landline and cell phone. N for number of e-book reading device owner=676.

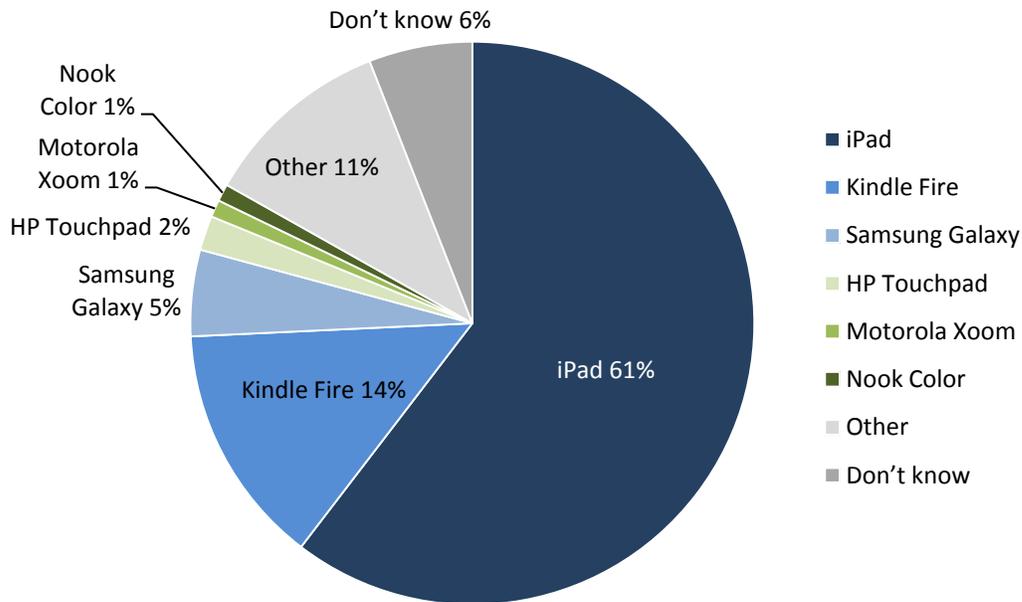
In the tablet market things did shift between December and February. The marketplace for tablet computers saw two important additions in late 2011 with the introduction of Amazon's Kindle Fire and Barnes & Noble's Nook Tablet, both of which were offered at considerably lower prices than other tablets. The Kindle Fire in particular proved popular over the holiday period. According to *Computer World*, an analyst at Barclays said 5.5 million Kindle Fire tablets were sold in the fourth quarter (Amazon itself has not released specific data regarding Kindle sales).¹⁴

As a result, the Kindle Fire's popularity among tablet owners age 18 and older grew over the past few months. The Kindle Fire grew in market share from 5% of the market in mid-December to 14% of the tablet market in mid-January. This change also grew as the overall size of the tablet market roughly doubled.

¹⁴ http://www.computerworld.com/s/article/9223535/E_book_library_borrowing_hits_record_pace

What kind of tablet computer do you own?

% of American adult tablet owners age 18+ who own each type of tablet computer



Source: The Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project Winter Tracking Survey, conducted from January 20-February 19, 2012. N=302 tablet owners age 18 and older. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish, by landline and cell phone. Total may exceed 100% due to multiple responses. N for number of tablet owners=638.

Who intends to buy either device

In our December 2011 survey of Americans age 16 and older, we asked those who do not own these devices whether they are planning to purchase them at all in the future. Some 13% of those who do not currently own e-book readers said they intended to buy one or were considering it – 8% said they hoped to buy one in the next six months and the rest said they were considering it further down the line. Those most interested tend to fall between ages 30 and 64 and have higher levels of education. They are also more likely to be library patrons, readers of e-books on other devices such as their computers, and heavier readers who have read at least six books in the previous 12 months.

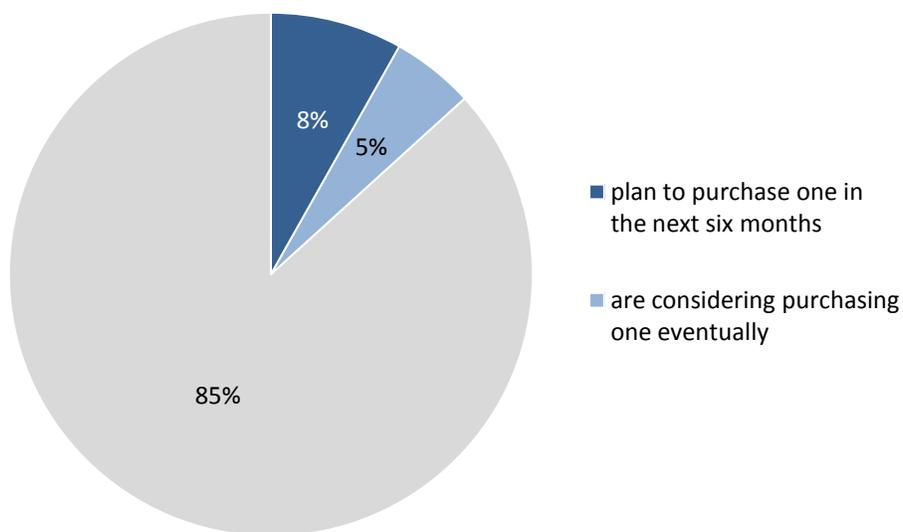
At the same time, 18% of non-tablet owners said they intended to buy a tablet or were considering it – 10% said they hoped to buy one in the next six months and another 8% said they were considering it further down the line. Those close to purchasing one were more likely to be under age 50, to be African-American or Hispanic, college graduates, and parents of minor children. They were also generally tech owners – 18% of those who said they owned an e-book reading device also said they planned to purchase a tablet in the next six months. And library card holders were also more likely than non-holders to say they will be buying a tablet in the coming months.

Why people don't own these devices

In our December 2011 survey, the majority of those who did not currently own an e-book reader or tablet computer said they did not intend to buy them.

Plans of adults who do not own e-book reading devices

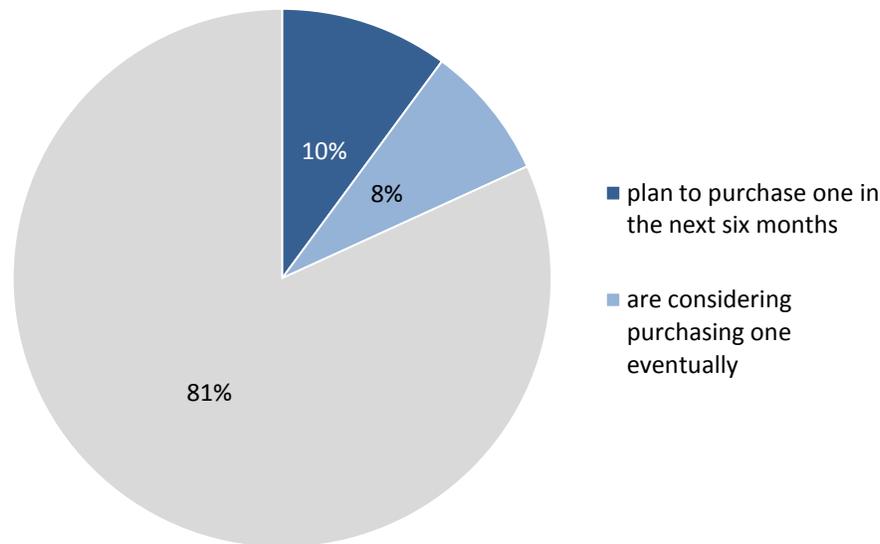
% of American adults age 16+ who do not own an e-book reader and their intentions about buying one



Source: Dec. 2011 results are from a survey of 2,986 people age 16 and older conducted November 16-December 21, 2011. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. The margin of error is +/- 2 percentage points. N for number of non-owners of e-reading devices=2,290.

Plans of adults who do not own tablets

% of American adults age 16+ who do not own a tablet computer and their intentions about buying one



Source: Dec. 2011 results are from a survey of 2,986 people age 16 and older conducted November 16-December 21, 2011. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. The margin of error is +/- 2 percentage points. N for number of non-owners of e-reading devices=2,290.

Whites who did not own a tablet were more likely than minorities to say that they were not considering purchasing a tablet in the future, while blacks and Hispanics were more likely to say that they were considering purchasing a tablet in the next six months. Adults age 65 and older were far and away the age group most likely to say that they were not considering purchasing a tablet at all in the future, while adults ages 18-49 were generally more likely to say they were planning on purchasing a tablet in the next six months. College graduates and parents were somewhat more likely than other groups to be considering purchasing a tablet computer in the future. E-reader owners were more likely to say they were planning on purchasing a tablet in the next six months than non-e-reader owners.

We asked those who did own the devices to tell us the main reason why they did not have one. In our December 2011 survey, the two main reasons non-owners said they did not have a tablet computer or e-book reading device were their lack of need and the high cost of the devices. Beyond those two main reasons, the next most commonly cited reason among people who didn't own e-readers was that they preferred print books to e-books, while those who didn't own tablets were likely to say that they had enough gadgets or were content with their current array of devices.

What is the main reason you do not currently have an e-reader?

% of American adults age 16+ who do not own an e-book reader

Just don't need one/don't want one	24%
Cost/can't afford it	19
Prefer books/print	16
Don't read/no time to read	10
Don't know what an e-reader is	5
Don't want to learn tech/don't know how to use it	4
Have enough other devices/use other devices	3
Plan to get one/waiting for better features	3
Have iPad/tablet	3
Lack of time in general	2
I'm too old	2
Vision/health problems	<1
Other	3
Don't know/refused	5

Dec. 2011 results are from a survey of 2,986 people age 16 and older conducted November 16-December 21, 2011. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. The margin of error is +/- 2 percentage points. N for number of non-owners of e-reading devices=2,290.

Among those 16 and older who did not own an e-book reader, whites were more likely than minorities to say that they didn't have one because they prefer books or printed material, while African Americans and Hispanics were more likely than whites to say the main reason they didn't have an e-reader was because of the cost or because they couldn't afford it.

Among those who did not own a tablet computer, older adults (age 65+) were more likely to say the main reasons were that they "just didn't want one" or because they didn't know (or want to learn) how to use one. Teens and younger adults, particularly adults ages 30-49, were more likely to say that they couldn't afford one or were happy with the devices they already had. E-reader owners were more likely than non-owners to say that they didn't own a tablet because they had too many devices.

What is the main reason you do not currently have a tablet computer?

% of American adults age 16+ who do not own a tablet computer, as of December 2011

Just don't need one/don't want one	35%
Cost/can't afford it	25
Have enough devices/happy with current devices	20
Don't want to learn tech/don't know how to use it	7
Don't know what a tablet computer is	2
Plan to get one/waiting for better features	2
I'm too old	2
Lack of time in general	1
Don't read/no time to read	<1
Vision/health problems	<1
Prefer books/print	<1
Prefer to use library	<1
Other	2
Don't know/refused	3

Dec. 2011 results are from a survey of 2,986 people age 16 and older conducted November 16-December 21, 2011. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. The margin of error is +/- 2 percentage points. N for number of non-owners of e-reading devices=2,290.

Part 4: The state of e-book reading

Introduction

Altogether, 43% of Americans age 16 and older have read long-form writing in digital format as of December 2011 – either e-books or newspaper or magazine material in digital form. We get that figure by combining those in the December survey who have read e-books with the 31% of those who regularly read news content and have read that content in digital format and the 16% who read magazines and journals and have read that content in digital format.

Those who have taken the plunge into reading e-books stand out in almost every way from other kinds of readers. They read more books than other readers. They read more frequently and are more likely than others to read for more purposes. They consume books in all formats, including print and audio: 88% of those who read e-books in the past 12 months also read print books. But they are also more likely than others to have bought their most recent book, rather than borrowed it, and they are more likely than others to say they prefer to purchase books.

Demographically, as of February 2012, the adults age 18 and older who read e-books are disproportionately likely to be under age 50, with higher levels of education and income.

Portrait of e-book readers – 29% of those who read books in the past 12 months

The % of the book readers ages 18+ in each group who read an e-book in the past 12 months

* Asterisk denotes statistically significant difference with other rows

	% of the book readers who read an e-book in the past 12 months
All those age 18 and older	29%
Gender	
Male	29
Female	28
Age	
18-29	34*
30-49	34*
50-64	23
65+	17
Race and ethnicity	
White, non-Hispanic	29
Black, non-Hispanic	22
Hispanic (English- and Spanish-speaking)	23
Educational attainment	
High school grad or less	19
Some college	34*
College graduate	35*
Household income	
Less than \$30,000	20
\$30,000-\$49,999	25
\$50,000-\$74,999	35*
\$75,000+	38*

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Winter Tracking Survey January 20-February 19, 2012. N=2,253 adult respondents age 18 and older. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cells. The margin of error for the sample is +/- 2 percentage points. N for number of those who had read e-books in past 12 months=321.

In our December 2011 survey, we found that 45% of book readers age 16 and older said they were reading “yesterday” – the day before we reached them to conduct the survey interview. We say that this represents a portrait of a “typical” or “average” day. A disproportionate number of those who are reading on a typical day are e-book consumers – though they are not all reading in the electronic format. Fully 59% of e-book readers said in our December survey that they were reading a book “yesterday” – the day before they were contacted in our survey, compared with 41% of those who do not read e-

books who said they had read a book “yesterday.” Among e-book readers, 50% who read books on a typical day are reading an e-book and 58% are reading a printed book.

One of the major signs about the emergence of e-books is how gadget owners are gravitating to them as a regular source of reading. Among device owners, 49% of those who own e-book readers like traditional Kindles and Nooks who were reading “yesterday” said they were reading an e-book. This is not far from the 59% of them who said they had been reading a printed book. Among tablet owners, the gap between e-books and printed books is larger, but it is still notable how many are connected to e-books on any given day: 39% of the “yesterday” readers who own tablets were reading an e-book and 64% were reading a printed book.

Those who read e-books are also fans of other digital content: 65% read news or newspapers, and 77% of those news consumers have read such content on their e-reader or tablet computer. In addition, 60% of e-book readers read magazines and journals, and 53% of those magazine and journal readers have read such content on an e-reader, tablet, or cell phone.

People read e-books on computers and cell phones, too

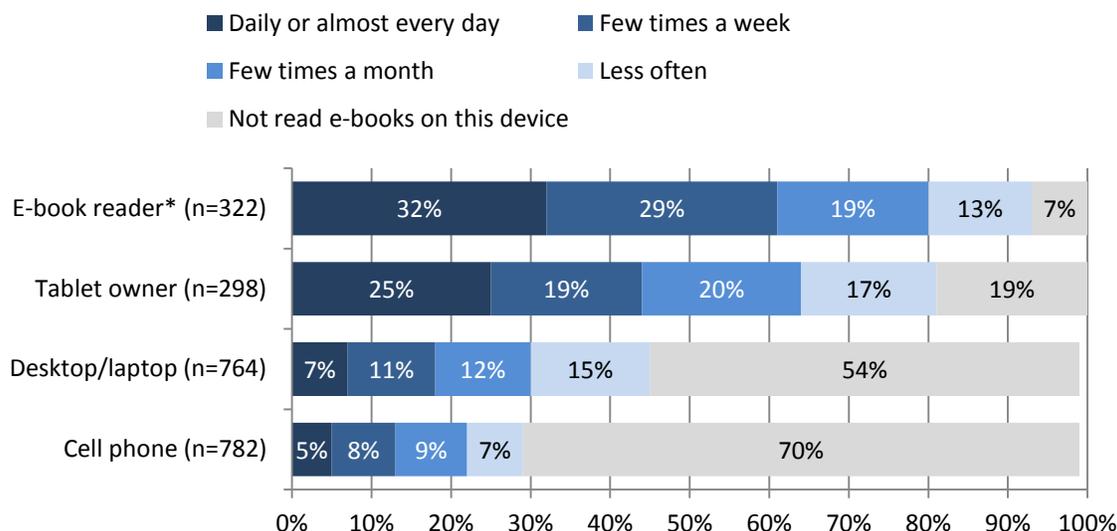
E-books are read on an array of digital devices. Somewhat surprisingly, as many people read e-books on their computers as read e-books on devices specifically made for e-book consumption. In our December 2011 survey we found that 42% of e-book readers consume their books on a computer; 41% of e-book readers consume their books on an e-book reader like a traditional Kindle or Nook.

Furthermore, 29% of those who read e-books consume e-books on their cell phones, and 23% of e-book readers consume the books on their tablet computer. Many respondents said they read e-books on the multiple digital devices they own, so those numbers don’t add up to 100%.

Another way to look at that data is to note that people who specifically own e-reading devices (readers and tablets) are particularly likely to read e-books: 93% of e-reader owners consume e-books on their traditional Kindle or Nook at least occasionally; 81% of tablet owners consume e-books on their tablet; 46% of computer owners consume e-books on their computer; and 29% of cell phone owners read e-books on their phone.

When you read electronic books or e-books, do you ever read them on your...?

% of owners of each device who read e-books, and how frequently they read e-books on that device



* Question was only asked of owners of each device who read e-books in general, so figures are % of those who own that device

Source: Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Reading Habits Survey, November 16-December 21, 2011. N=2,986 respondents age 16 and older. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cells. The margin of error for the sample is +/- 2 percentage points.

Those who own tablets and e-readers who are over 40 years old are more likely than those under 40 to read daily on their digital devices.

Some 93% of owners of e-book readers like traditional Kindles or Nooks said they had read a book on that device and 81% of tablet owners had read one on that device. Some 22% of cell owners said they had read an e-book on that device.

30% of those who read e-content say they now spend more time reading and owners of tablets and e-book readers particularly stand out as reading more now

In our December survey we asked the 43% of respondents who did long-form reading in digital format whether the availability of digital books, newspapers, magazines, and journals affected the amount of reading they did. Nearly a third (30%) said they were reading more, 7% said they were reading less, and 62% said they were reading the same amount.

The digital content readers who said they were reading more stood out in several respects: 41% of tablet owners and 35% of e-reader owners said they were reading more since the advent of e-content. Fully 42% of readers of e-books said they were reading more now that long-form reading material was available in digital format. The longer people had owned an e-book reader or tablet, the more likely they were to say they were reading more: 45% of those who had owned an e-reader for more than a year said they were reading more, vs. 30% of those who had owned an e-reader for less than six months.

In addition, those who said they were reading more in the era of e-content were more likely to be male than female: 33% of the male e-content readers said they were reading more, compared with 27% of the female e-content readers. The reading-more group was also more likely to be between the ages of 16 and 49, compared with those who are older. They are more likely to have at least some college experience and live in households earning more than \$75,000.

Those reading more now were more likely to say they read monthly for work or school or for personal research purposes.

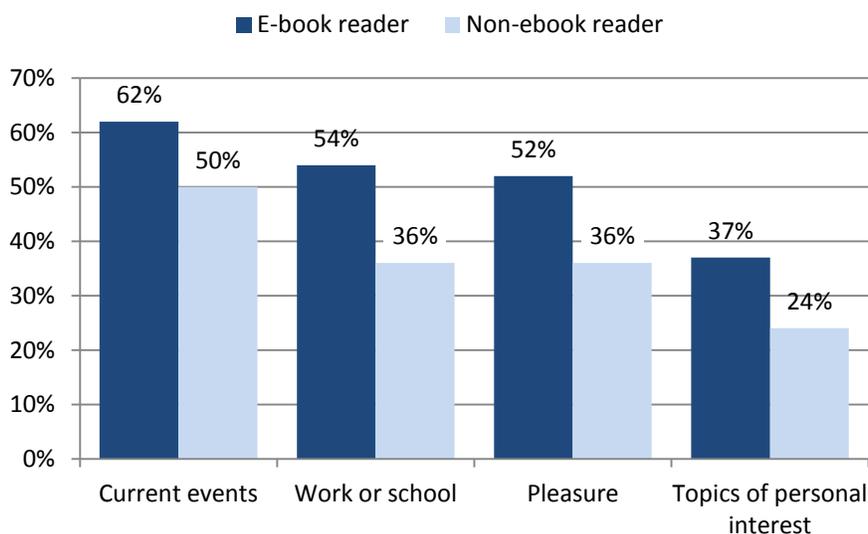
Those who read e-books read more books of all kinds, and read more frequently for every purpose

The average reader of e-books has read 24 books (the mean number) in the past 12 months, compared with an average of 15 books by a non-e-book consumer. The median figures (midpoint people in the sample) are 13 books for e-book readers and six for people who do not read in the e-book format.

Those who read e-books are more likely than other people to say they read for every purpose and to do so frequently – that includes those who read for pleasure (92% of e-book readers do that); to keep up with current events (87% of e-book readers do that), to research specific topics that interest them (92% of e-book readers do that) and for work or school (78% of e-book readers do that). The chart below shows that e-book readers are more likely than others to say they read nearly every day for each of the purposes for reading that we explored.

Readers of e-books read more frequently than others

% of Americans age 16 and older who read every day or nearly every day for these reasons



Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Reading Habits Survey, November 16-December 21, 2011. N=2,986 respondents age 16 and older. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cells. The margin of error for the sample is +/- 2 percentage points. N for e-book readers=739. N for non-ebook readers=1,681.

Among those who own tablet computers and e-book readers, women read more books than men (23 books on average in the past year vs. 19); whites read more books than minorities (23 books on average in the past year vs. 16); those who have owned the device more than a year read more books than newer purchasers (24 books on average in the past year vs. 20); and those over age 40 have read more books than those under 40 (22 books on average in the past year vs. 19).

Compared with others, e-book readers are more likely to say that their greatest pleasure in reading is for the escape and imaginative experience.

E-content is relatively easy to find in that format. Still, 23% of those who consume it do not always find it is available

Of the 43% of Americans who consume e-books, digital newspapers, or magazines, a sizable majority say they find it is available in the format they want. Yet 23% say they find the material they are seeking “only sometimes,” “hardly ever” or never available in the format they want:

- 20% of e-content consumers say the material they want is **always available** in the format they want. Those most likely to say so are e-content consumers who are ages 18-29, and those who read for pleasure.
- 50% of e-content consumers say the material they want is **available “most of the time.”** Gadget owners – those who have tablets and e-book readers – are more likely than others to give this answer.
- 17% of e-content consumers say the material they want is **available “only sometimes.”** Hispanics and those living in households earning less than \$30,000 are most likely to give this answer.
- 3% of e-content consumers say the material they want is **available “hardly ever.”**
- 4% of e-content consumers say the material they want is **never available.**

Part 5: Where and how readers get their books

Background

The past several years have brought changes to the bookselling ecosystem, including the rise of e-commerce (and of Amazon in particular) and the continuing decline of independent bookstores and the bricks-and-mortar mega-bookstore. Borders declared bankruptcy in 2011. The current bookstore landscape now includes Barnes & Noble and Books-A-Million, as well as smaller chains and independent bookstores, such as Powell's.

Meanwhile, the sphere of e-booksellers is constantly growing. It encompasses not only Amazon and traditional booksellers—many of whom have their own proprietary e-reading devices, such as Amazon's Kindle and Barnes & Noble's Nook—but also tech companies and makers of e-reader devices, such as Apple, Google, Sony, and Kobo. There are also many services, such as Project Gutenberg, that make e-books available for free downloads, usually because the titles are in the public domain. And smaller publishers and self-publishing companies have come into being in the digital era.

The audiobook market is currently dominated by Amazon's subsidiary Audible.com, although many other sellers exist as well.

Libraries, family, and friends have long been popular sources for borrowing print books for those who prefer to borrow their books, but e-books and audiobooks in their current formats are harder to lend, with the exception of those sold on CDs.

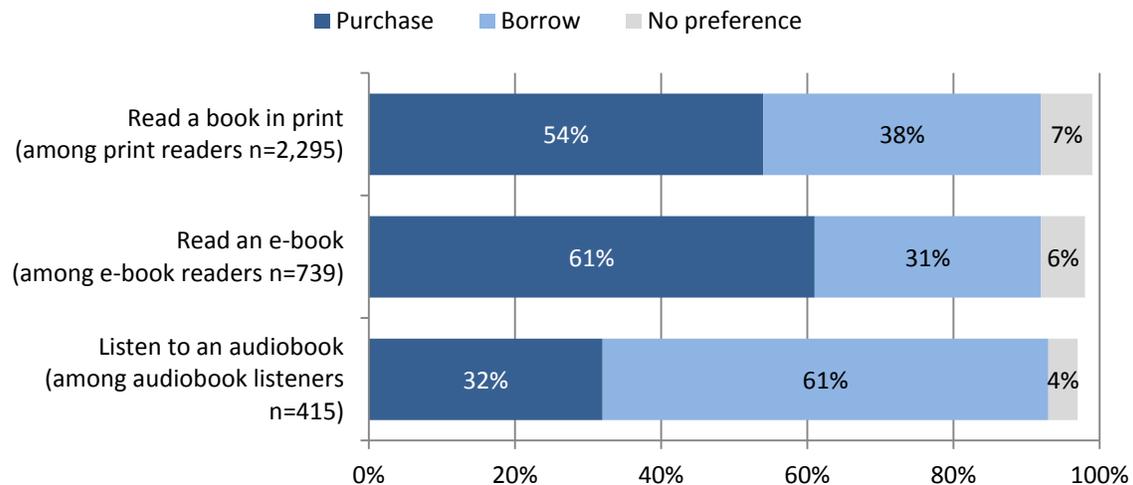
This chapter explores how people are navigating this new environment – how they discover books, where they get them, and their preferences for different book formats.

The way people prefer to get books: To buy or to borrow?

In our December 2011 survey, we found that a majority of print readers (54%) and readers of e-books (61%) prefer to purchase their own copies of these books. Meanwhile, most audiobook listeners prefer to borrow their audiobooks; just one in three audiobook listeners (32%) prefer to purchase audiobooks they want to listen to, while 61% prefer to borrow them.

When you want to consume books in different formats, do you prefer purchasing your own copy, or borrowing it from a library or some other source?

% of Americans age 16+, as of December 2011



Source: Dec. 2011 results are from a survey of 2,986 people age 16 and older conducted November 16-December 21, 2011. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. The margin of error is +/- 2 percentage points.

Looking more closely at preferences by format, we find:

- Among printed book readers:** men are more likely to want to purchase their books, as are those making at least \$75,000 per year. No matter what format a book is in, those who own tablet computers or e-book reading devices are more likely than non-owners to want to purchase printed books. Conversely, those who do not own such devices are more likely than owners to want to borrow books. Those who have library cards are more likely than others to want to borrow and those who don't have them are more likely to want to buy books.
- Among those who read e-books on any digital device:** E-book reader device owners dominate the buyers in this category. Tablet owners and e-book reader owners are considerably more likely than non-owners to say they prefer to buy e-books. Buyers are also more likely to be those in higher-income households (making more than \$50,000 per year) and are also generally more likely to prefer purchasing their e-books than other income groups. Just as in the case of printed books, the readers of e-books who have library cards are more likely to say they prefer to borrow e-books and those without library cards are more likely than others to say they prefer to buy books.
- Among audiobook listeners:** Library connections make a big difference here. Those with library cards are much more likely than others to prefer borrowing audiobooks and those without library cards are more likely to prefer buying their own copy. While men are almost equally likely to prefer purchasing their audiobooks (47%) as borrowing them (45%), women are much more likely to prefer borrowing (74%) to purchasing (19%).

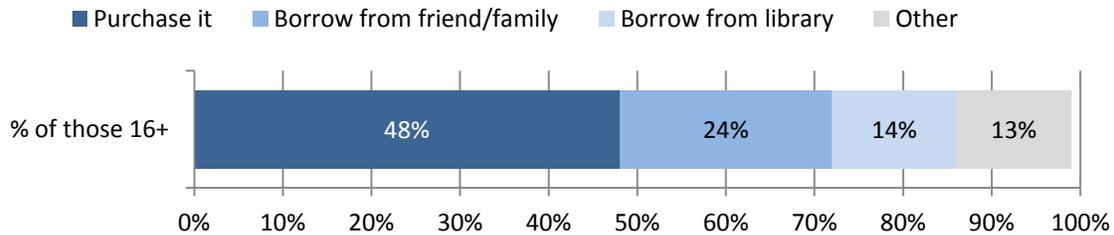
Additionally, tablet users and e-reader device users were more likely than non-users in general to say that they mostly prefer to purchase their own copies of both print and e-books.

Where did the most recent book come from?

As we noted in Part 2, we asked book readers about the most recent book they read in any format, print, audio, or e-book: How had they gotten it? Almost half (48%) of readers age 16 and older said they had purchased it. About a quarter (24%) said they had borrowed it from a friend or family member, and 14% said they borrowed it from a library.

Thinking about the last book you read, in any format, did you...

% of American readers age 16+, as of December 2011

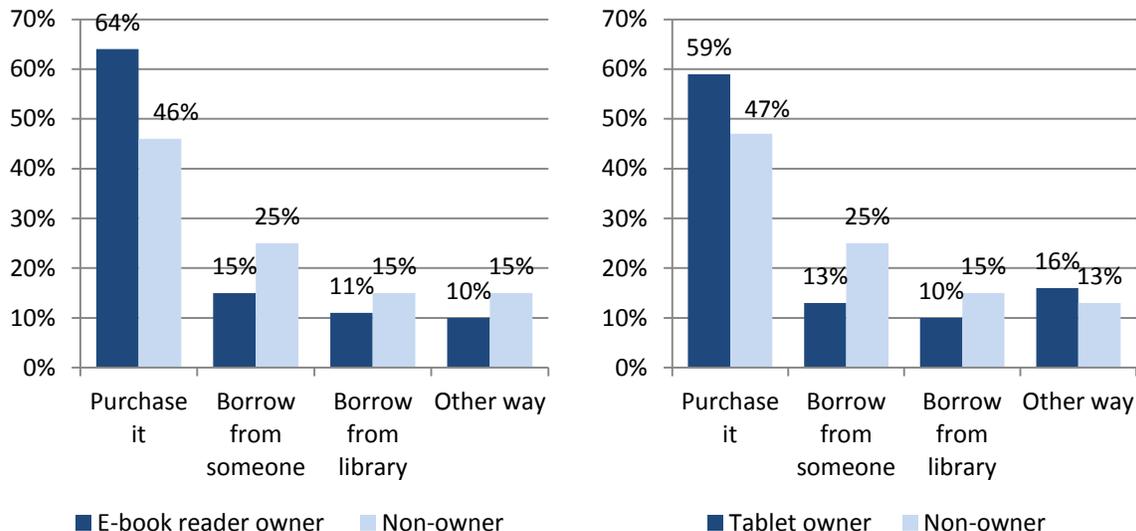


Source: Dec. 2011 results are from a survey of 2,986 people age 16 and older conducted November 16-December 21, 2011. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. The margin of error is +/- 2 percentage points. N for number of those who had read a book in the past 12 months=2,474.

Those who read e-books were more likely than other readers to have bought the book—and they are more likely to say they prefer buying books than getting them other ways. Some 64% of e-book reading device owners had purchased the book, compared with 46% of non-owners who had bought the book. For tablet owners, 59% had purchased the book, compared with 47% of non-tablet owners who had purchased the book.

How readers got the most recent book they read

% of those who read a book in the last 12 months who got the book by ...



Source: Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Reading Habits Survey, November 16-December 21, 2011. N for number of those who had read a book in the past 12 months=2,474 among those age 16 and older. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cells. The margin of error for the sample is +/- 2 percentage points. N for e-book reader owners=676. N for tablet owners=638.

Those who had read an e-book on any device in the previous year were also more likely than printed-book readers to have bought their most recent book: 55% of e-book readers had bought their most recently read book, compared with 49% of those who had read print books.

Beyond that major difference, the profile of those in each category varies:

- 48% of book readers had purchased the book.** Whites (49%) were more likely than minorities to have purchased their most recent book. Those living in households earning more than \$75,000 (59%) were more likely than those in lower-income households to have bought their most recent book.
- 24% had borrowed the book from a friend or family member.** Some 30% of African Americans had gotten their most recent book this way, compared with 23% of whites. Those with high school diplomas (29%) were more likely than those with higher education to have borrowed their latest book from family or friends. Those living in households earning less than \$75,000 (26%) were more likely than those in households earning more (18%) to have gotten their latest book this way. Some 31% of non-internet users borrowed their most recent book, compared with 22% of internet users. And those who chose to take our survey in Spanish were considerably more likely than English speakers to have borrowed their most recent book from a family member or friend.

- **14% had borrowed the book from the library.** Fully 37% of the 16- and 17-year-olds in our survey got their most recent book from the library, and 20% of those age 65 followed suit. Those whose most recent book came from the library tended to be those in the least well-off households – those earning \$30,000 or less. Non-tech owners – those who don't have tablets or e-book readers or cell phones – were more likely than tech owners to have gotten their most recent book from the library.

Those who are audiobook consumers are particularly likely to rely on the library for their recent books: 24% of those who listened to an audiobook in the past year had borrowed a book from the library, compared with 12% of those who didn't consume audiobooks.

Personal recommendations dominate book recommendations; logarithms, bookstore staffers, and librarians are in the picture, too

We asked all adults in our December 2011 survey where they got book recommendations and by far the most important source was family members, friends, or co-workers:¹⁵

- 64% of those 16 and older said they get **book recommendations from family members**, friends, or co-workers. Those most likely to cite these sources include: women (70%), whites (67%), those under age 65 (66%), college graduates (82%), those in households earning over \$75,000 (81%), parents of minor children (69%), suburban residents (66%), and all types of technology users (tablets, e-book readers, internet users).
- 28% said they get **recommendations from online bookstores or other websites**. Those most likely to get online recommendations include internet users who are: women (38%), those ages 30-64 (38%), college graduates (47%), those in households earning more than \$75,000 (46%), tablet owners (51%), and e-book reader owners (64%).
- 23% said they get **recommendations from staffers in bookstores** they visit in person. Those most likely to get recommendations this way include: college graduates (28%), those living in households earning more than \$75,000 (30%), parents of minor children (27%), technology owners and users, urban and suburban residents, and those under age 65.
- 19% said they get **recommendations from librarians or library websites**. Those most likely to get recommendations this way include: women (23%), 16- and 17-year-olds (36%), college graduates (26%), owners of e-book readers (25%), those who have read a printed book in the past year (23%), and those who have listened to an audiobook (37%).

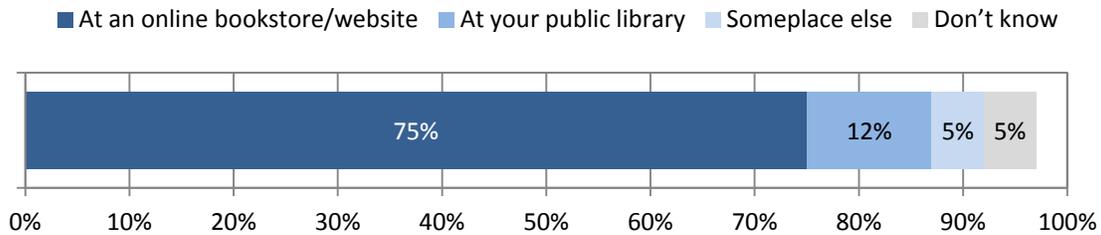
A closer look at e-books: Where do readers start their search?

In our December 2011 survey, three-quarters of those who read e-books (75%) said that when they want to read a particular e-book, they usually look for it first at an online bookstore or website, while 12% said they tend to look first at their public library.

¹⁵ Including those who had not read a book in the last 12 months.

When you want to read a particular e-book, where do you look first?

% of American e-book readers age 16+, as of December 2011



Source: Dec. 2011 results are from a survey of 2,986 people age 16 and older conducted November 16-December 21, 2011. N for number of those who had read a book in the past 12 months=2,474 among those age 16 and older. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. The margin of error is +/- 2 percentage points.

Men are more likely than women to look at online booksellers first, and whites are more likely to look online than African Americans. Those with at least some college are more likely to look at online booksellers first than those with less education, and those making at least \$50,000 per year are more likely to look online first than those making less (who are more likely to say that they don't know where they would look first).

One in twenty e-book readers said that they usually first look for e-books someplace other than an online bookseller or their public library. It's possible that among these sources is Amazon's Kindle Owners' Lending Library,¹⁶ which allows Amazon Prime members to check out one book at a time up to once a month. The lending library includes books from Amazon's own "KDP Select" authors and publishers along with more than 100 former and current *New York Times* bestsellers (although none of the "big six" publishers are participating).¹⁷ Outside of the Kindle Lending Library, Amazon has an option that allows Kindle e-books to be lent to another individual once for 14 days, although not all publishers have enabled this.

Showdown: Which is better, a print book or an e-book?

We asked a series of general questions about format preferences among the 14% of Americans who in the past 12 months have read both printed books and e-books. Overall, 36% of our sample of readers in both formats prefer e-books for a majority of the circumstances we queried, 24% prefer printed books, and 40% have no preference.

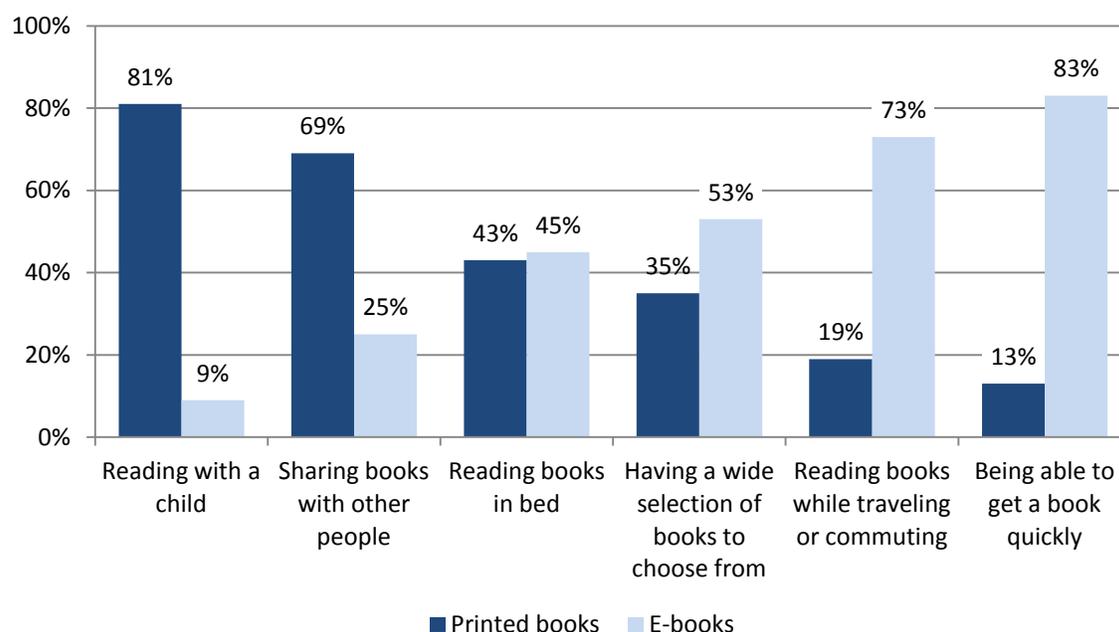
As a rule, readers preferred print over e-books when it came to reading to children and sharing books with others. They preferred e-books when they wanted to get a book quickly, when they were traveling or commuting, and when they were looking for a wide selection. There was a split verdict when it came to reading books in bed: 45% of these readers said they preferred an e-book and 43% said they preferred a printed book.

¹⁶ <http://www.amazon.com/kindleownerslendinglibrary>

¹⁷ "Customers Love Kindle Owners' Lending Library — KDP Authors and Publishers Benefit." Amazon.com press release, Business Wire, 12 Jan 2012. <http://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20120112005567/en/>

Which is better for these purposes, a printed book or an e-book?

% of those who have read both e-books and printed books in the last 12 months who say that this format is better for these purposes



Source: Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Reading Habits Survey, November 16-December 21, 2011. N=2,986 respondents age 16 and older. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cells. N for those who have read both printed books and e-books in the past 12 months is 701.

Here are more details about the book readers who have those views:

Reading with a child

By a huge 81%-9% margin, those who have read in both kinds of book formats in the past year say printed books are better for reading with a child. This is a consistent judgment throughout different demographic and tech-owning groups, although tablet owners (14%) are more likely than those who do not own tablets (7%) to say they prefer e-books for this situation.

Sharing books with other people

A large majority of readers in both formats believe that printed books are better to share than e-books. This is probably a testament to the fact that sharing e-books by passing along files is quite difficult to do. Women are more likely than men to say they prefer printed books when it comes to sharing (74% vs. 63%). Those with at least some college education and those in households earning more than \$50,000 are more likely than others to say this. Rural residents (79%) are more likely than urban (65%) residents to think that it is easier to share printed books.

Reading books in bed

This was a tie among readers in both formats: 45% of those who read books in the past year in both printed and e-book format said e-books were better for reading in bed and 43% said printed books. Hispanics and those living in relatively less well-off households were more likely than others to cite printed books as their preference. On the other hand, those saying that e-books were better were disproportionately likely to be those who prefer buying e-books to borrowing them, to live in households earning \$50,000-\$75,000, and to live in urban areas.

Having a wide selection of books to choose from

Some 53% of those who had read print books and e-books in the past year declared that e-books were better when it came to having a wide selection of books to choose from. That compares with 35% who thought print books held the advantage for a wide selection. Those who picked e-books were more likely to be ages 18-29 than other ages; more likely to live in urban areas; and to be book-reading device owners under age 40.¹⁸

Reading books while traveling or commuting

Among readers who have read print and e-books in the past 12 months, e-books hold a decided advantage when it comes to reading while traveling or commuting: 73% of readers in both formats said e-books were better for reading while on the move, compared with 19% who cited printed books. Those under age 65 held this view in notable numbers, as did device owners who are college graduates and device owners living in households earning more than \$50,000.

Being able to get a book quickly

Among readers of both printed and e-books, the digital format has a lopsided advantage when it comes to being able to get a book quickly, no doubt because instant wireless downloading is possible with e-book reader devices and tablets. Some 83% of these readers said e-books were better for that and 13% picked printed books. Those most likely to choose e-books for this reason included those ages 18-50, those living in households earning more than \$50,000, and those who say they get book-choice recommendations from websites.

¹⁸ "Book-reading device owners" include all those in our December 2011 sample who said they own an e-reader or tablet computer.

Part 6: The differences among e-book reading device owners

Introduction

This section takes a closer look at the reading habits and preferences among those who own e-book reading devices such as e-readers and tablet computers. It further explores differences among these device owners because they do not all use their devices the same way for the same purposes. In our December 2011 survey we oversampled both groups.¹⁹

Compared with all Americans 16 and older, these “e-reading device owners” are more likely to live in high income households and have more educational experience, and are also much more likely to be more tech-savvy in general. Not all e-reading device owners read e-books, but in general they do so at a much higher rate than the general population; they are also more likely to read in general, and to read a book on a typical day. Their reading habits are not confined to books: They are more avid readers of newspapers and magazines than other Americans, and are more likely to read long-form content of any kind for pleasure.

Device owners generally enjoy reading for the same reasons as other readers, but sometimes are more likely to prefer e-books to print books for reading in certain situations (and, surprisingly, vice-versa). Among those who read e-content, device owners are also somewhat more likely to say that they spend more time reading since the advent of electronic media, and when looking for e-content they generally find that it is available in the format they want at least most of the time.

In addition to being more intense readers, device owners in general are more likely to prefer owning books in all formats than the general population—the more well-to-do device owners most of all. In the same vein, device owners are less likely than other readers to prefer borrowing their books from friends or family or from the library. Similarly, when they want to read an e-book they are more likely to look first at an online bookseller. When they look for recommendations to read, they turn to all sources—friends and family, online sources, bookstore staff, and libraries—more than the general population.

Tech and gadget use

The e-book reader and tablet owners from our December 2011 survey were a technologically connected group. Some 97% of e-book reading device owners use the internet at least occasionally. In addition to their e-reader or tablet, 96% also owned a desktop or laptop computer, and 96% owned a cell phone.

Among e-reading device owners, 16% owned both an e-reader and a tablet computer. Looking more closely at demographic differences among device owners, we find:

- Women, whites, those 40 or older, and avid readers (those who read at least 11 books in the past year) were the most likely to have only an e-reader.²⁰

¹⁹ The number of tablet owners in the sample was 638 and the number of e-book reader owners was 676.

²⁰ As opposed to owning both an e-reader and a tablet computer.

- Men, minorities, those under 40, those who had owned their device for less than a year, and those who read 10 or fewer books per year were more likely than other groups to own only a tablet.²¹
- College graduates, those making at least \$50,000 per year, and those who had owned at least one of their devices for at least a year were the most likely to own both a tablet and an e-reader.²²

Reading habits

Overall, e-book reading device owners were more likely to read for all of the following reasons, compared with all Americans 16 and older, and were also more likely to read for these reasons on a daily basis.²³

- Some 89% of e-reading device owners say they read at least occasionally **for pleasure**, compared with 80% of all Americans 16 and older. Some 49% read for pleasure every day or almost every day (vs. 36% of all those 16 and older).

Among those who own these devices, women, whites, those over 40, college graduates, those living in households making over \$50,000 per year, and avid readers who read at least 11 books in the past year are more likely than other groups to say they read for this reason.

- Similarly, 89% of e-reading device owners say they read at least occasionally in order to **do research on specific topics that interest them** (vs. 74% of all 16+). Some 36% read for this reason daily or almost every day, compared with 24% of the general population.

Among those who own the devices, whites, college graduates, those living in households making over \$50,000 per year, and those who read 11 or more books in the past year are more likely than other groups to say they read for this reason.

- Some 88% of e-reading device owners (compared with 78% of all those 16 and older) say they read at least occasionally **to keep up with current events**. People read most frequently for this reason: 64% say they do it daily or almost every day (vs. 50% of all those 16 and older).

Among those who own the devices, whites, those over 40, college graduates, those living in households making over \$50,000 per year, and avid readers are more likely than other groups to say they read for this reason.

- Some 71% of e-reading device owners say they read **for work or school** (compared with 56% of all those 16 and older); almost half (49%) do so daily (compared with 36% of all those 16 and older).

Among those who own the devices, men, college graduates, those living in households making at least \$50,000 per year, and parents are all more likely than other groups to say they read for work or school. Younger device owners are particularly likely to read for work or school: 81% of device owners under 40 read for this reason, compared with 63% of device owners over 40.

²¹ As opposed to owning both an e-reader and a tablet computer.

²² As opposed to owning either only an e-reader or only a tablet computer.

²³ Including books, magazines, journals, newspapers, and online content.

Where they get reading recommendations

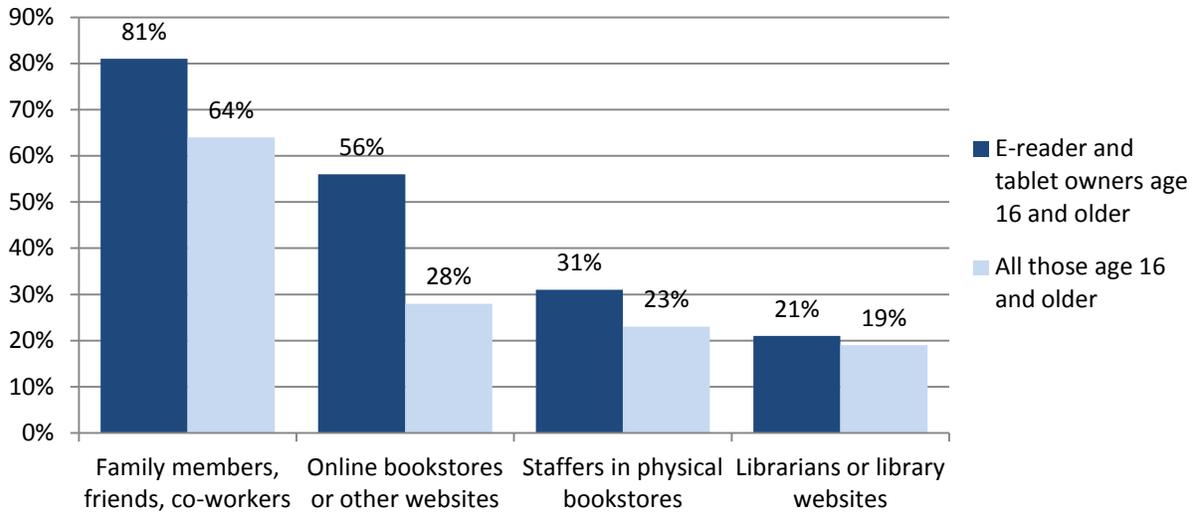
When we asked e-reading device owners where they got recommendations for reading material, most said that they got recommendations from family, friends, or co-workers. A majority also got recommendations from online bookstores or other websites. Recommendations from the staff of physical book stores were used by a little less than a third of device owners, and about one in five got reading recommendations from libraries or librarians.

- 81% of device owners got recommendations from **family, friends, or co-workers**. Among device owners, women, whites, college grads, those living in households making at least \$50,000 per year, and avid readers were more likely than other groups to get recommendations from this source.
- 56% of device owners got recommendations from an **online bookstore or other website**. Among device owners, whites, those over 40, college graduates, those living in households making at least \$50,000 per year, and avid readers were more likely than other groups to get recommendations from this source.
- 31% of device owners got recommendations from **the staff of a bookstore they visit in person**. Among device owners, women (35%) were more likely than men to use this source, and avid readers were more likely than those who read 10 or fewer books to get recommendations from this source.
- 21% of device owners received recommendations from **libraries or librarians**, including library websites. Among device owners, women, whites, college grads, and the most avid readers were more likely than other groups to get recommendations from this source.

Overall, owners of e-reading devices were more likely than all Americans 16 and older to get recommendations from people they knew and bookstore staff, and were also more likely to get recommendations from online bookstores or other websites than the general population. Device owners were also slightly more likely to get recommendations from libraries or librarians than all of those 16 and older.

Where do you get recommendations for reading material?

% of Americans age 16+, as of December 2011. For instance, 81% of e-reader and tablet owners say get recommendations for reading material from family members, friends, and co-workers.



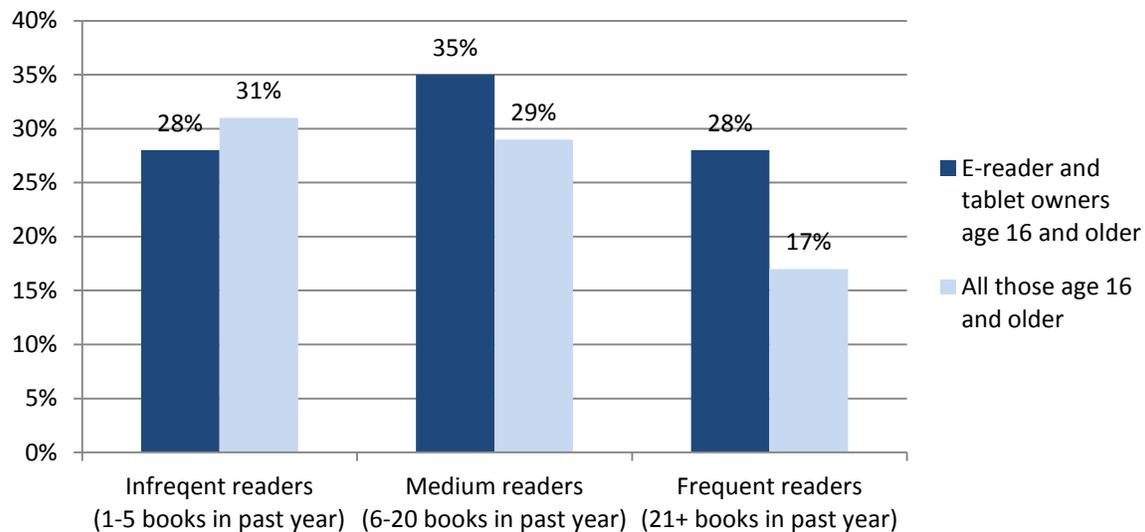
Source: Dec. 2011 results are from a survey of 2,986 people age 16 and older conducted November 16-December 21, 2011. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. N for the number of owners of either an e-book reader or a tablet device=1,132.

Number of books read

Overall, e-book reading device owners read more books in a year than the general population. In December 2011, we found that 91% of device owners had read a book in the year prior to the survey, compared with 78% of all Americans 16 and older. The median number of books an e-reader or tablet owner had read was 10; the average number of books was 21. Among device owners, the heaviest book readers are women, whites, and those over 40.

Number of books read in the past year

% of Americans age 16+, as of December 2011. For instance, 28% of e-reader and tablet owners read 1-5 books in the past year.



Source: Dec. 2011 results are from a survey of 2,986 people age 16 and older conducted November 16-December 21, 2011. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. The margin of error is +/- 2 percentage points. N for the number of owners of either an e-book reader or a tablet device=1,132.

Reasons for reading

The reasons device owners gave for reading in our December 2011 survey were similar to those for all readers.

- 25% of device owners who had read a book in the past 12 months said that their pleasure came in learning, gaining knowledge, and discovering information.
- 17% cited the pleasures of escaping reality, becoming immersed in another world, and the enjoyment they got from using their imaginations.
- 15% said their pleasure in reading came from its entertainment value, the drama of good stories, and the suspense of watching a good plot unfold.
- 15% cited the pleasure of relaxing while reading and having quiet time.
- 9% mentioned how enjoyable and fun reading is to them.
- 3% cited the pleasure of finding spiritual enrichment through reading and expanding their worldview.
- 3% cited the pleasure of being mentally challenged by books.
- 2% cited the variety of topics they could access via reading and how they could find books that particularly interested them.

- 1% cited the physical properties of books – their feel and smell – as a primary pleasure.

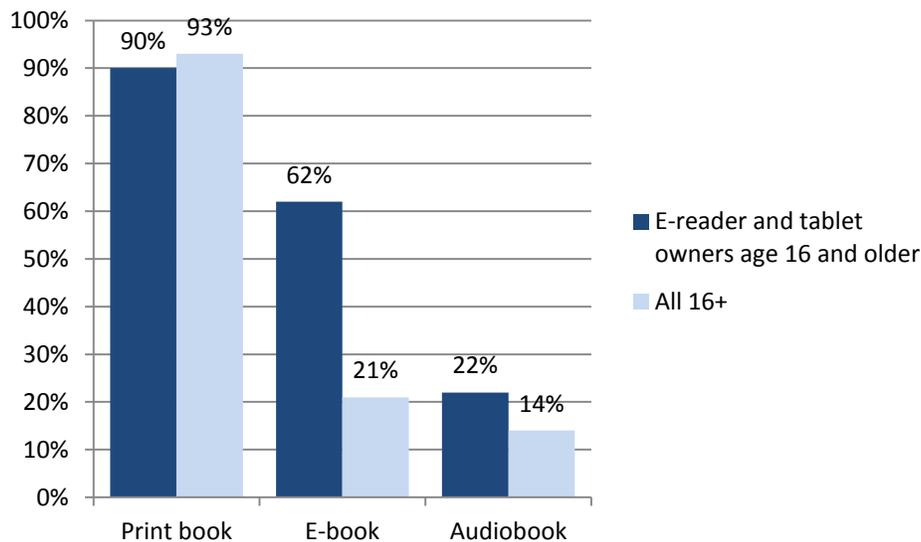
Reading habits

Overall, device owners are more likely to have read a book in any format in the past year (91%) than all those 16 and older (78%). Unsurprisingly, the nine in ten device owners who read any sort of book in the last year are also much more likely to have read an e-book in the last year than the general reading population; they are also more likely to have listened to an audiobook. In terms of their reading on a typical day, while among readers device owners are slightly less likely than all readers 16 and older to have read a print book “yesterday,” they are much more likely to have read an e-book in the previous day—and are more likely to have read a book on a typical day overall.

Types of books

Book formats read in the past year

% of book readers age 16+, as of December 2011. For instance, 90% of readers who own an e-reader or tablet read a print book in the past year.



Source: Dec. 2011 results are from a survey of 2,986 people age 16 and older conducted November 16-December 21, 2011. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. The margin of error is +/- 2 percentage points. N for the number of owners of either an e-book reader or a tablet device=1,132.

Readers who own e-reading devices are roughly as likely to have read a print book in the past year (90%) as readers in general (93%), but are almost three times more likely to have read an e-book in that time (62%, vs. 21% of all those 16 and older). They are also more likely to have listened to an audiobook: 22% of device owners listened to an audiobook in the past year, compared with 14% of all those 16 and older who read a book in the past year.

Looking more closely at device owners who read e-books as of December 2011, we found that among **tablet owners** who read an e-book in the past year, 81% did so on their tablet computer:

- 25% said they read e-books on their tablet every day or almost every day
- 19% said they did so a few times a week
- 20% did so a few times a month
- 17% did so less often
- 19% said they did read e-books, but not on their tablet.

Among **e-reader owners** who read an e-book in the past year, 93% did so on their e-reader:

- 32% said they read e-books on their e-reader every day or almost every day
- 29% said they did so a few times a week
- 19% did so a few times a month
- 13% did so less often
- 7% said they did read e-books, but not on their e-reader

Additionally, e-reading device owners who read e-books are *less* likely than all e-book readers to read e-books on their computers or cell phones: About three in ten device owners who also owned a desktop or laptop computer said that they read e-books on these devices (29%, compared with 46% of all e-book readers who also own computers), and about one in five who owned cell phones said they read e-books on their phone at least occasionally (22%, compared with 29% of all e-book readers who also own cell phones).

Reading on a typical day

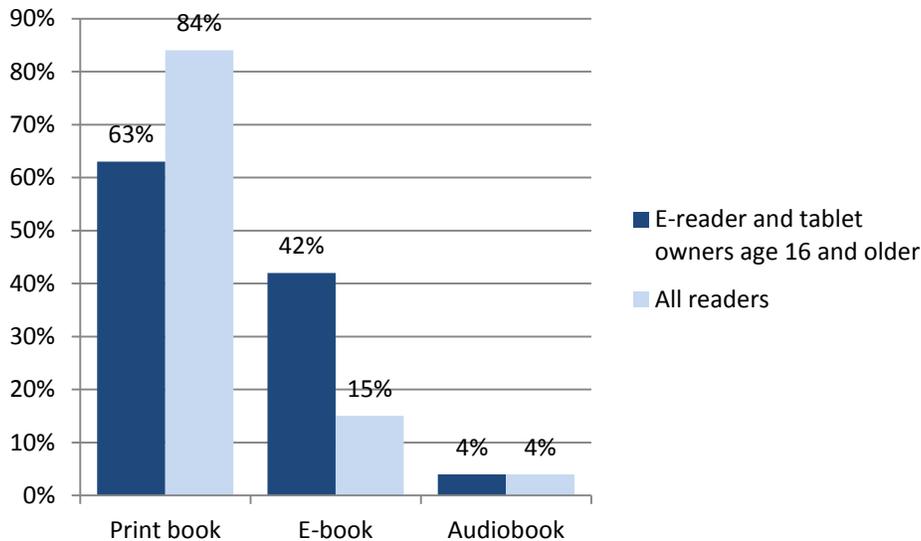
Among device owners who read a book in the past year, 56% are reading a book on a “typical” day. Of those “yesterday” book readers:

- 63% said they had read a print book
- 42% said they had read an e-book
- 4% said they had listened to an audiobook

Overall, device owners are more likely than other adults to read on a typical day—in our December 2011 survey, less than half (45%) of all book-reading Americans age 16 and older said they read a book “yesterday.”

Book formats read “yesterday”:

% of readers age 16+, as of December 2011. For instance, 63% of readers who own an e-reader or tablet read a print book yesterday.



Source: Dec. 2011 results are from a survey of 2,986 people age 16 and older conducted November 16-December 21, 2011. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. The margin of error is +/- 2 percentage points. N for the number of owners of either an e-book reader or a tablet device=1,132.

Availability of e-content in different formats

Almost a quarter (23%) of device owners say that e-content is “always” available in the format they want (women are more likely than men to say this). Almost six in ten (58%) say e-content is available in their desired format most of the time; 13% say it is available “only sometimes” (men are more likely than women to say this).

Overall, 82% of device owners say that e-content is available in the format they want at least most of the time, including 85% of women and 78% of men. Another 13% of device owners say their desired format is available sometimes, and 3% say it is hardly ever or never available.

Last book read: Borrow or buy

When we asked device owners who read how they had gotten the most recent book they read in any format, they were much more likely than all readers to say that they had purchased it, and were less likely to say they had borrowed it.

Some 61% of e-reading device owning readers said they had purchased the most recent book they read, compared with 48% of all readers. Another 15% said they had borrowed their most recent book from a friend or family member (vs. 24% of all readers), and 10% said they borrowed it from a library (vs. 14% of all readers).

Among device owners who read a book in the past year, whites and those over 40 were more likely than other groups to have purchased the last book they read, as were those who live in households making over \$50,000 and avid readers who read at least 11 books in the past year.

Preferences: Borrow or buy

Looking at overall preferences, device-owning readers are more likely than all readers 16 and older to prefer to purchase all types of content, and are less likely to prefer to borrow from an acquaintance or library:

- 65% of device owners who read print books prefer to purchase their print books, compared with 54% of all readers. 29% prefer to borrow their print books, compared with 38% of all readers.
- Among device owners who read e-books,²⁴ 71% prefer to purchase their e-books, compared with 61% of all readers. Another 24% of device owners prefer to borrow their e-books, compared with 31% of all readers.
- Among device owners who listen to audiobooks, 39% prefer to purchase their audiobooks, compared with 32% of all readers. Another 54% of device owners prefer to borrow their audiobooks, compared with 61% of all readers.

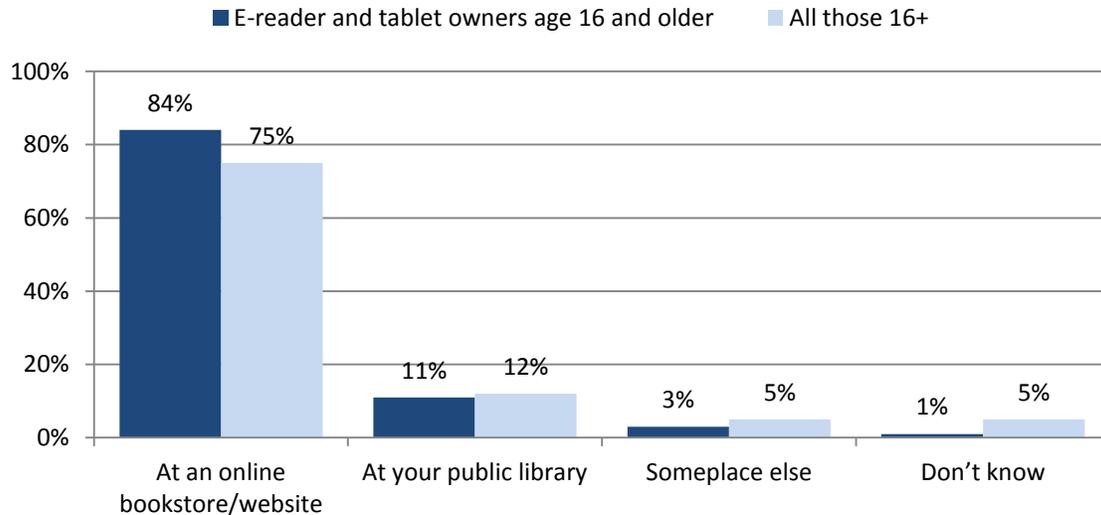
Where device owners look first when hunting for an e-book

When device-owning e-book readers want to read an e-book, they are more likely than other e-book readers to look for that e-book first online: 84% of device owners look for it first at an online bookstore (compared with 75% of all e-book readers), while 11% of device owners look in their public library and 3% look someplace else. Among e-reading device owners who read e-books, whites are more likely than minorities to look for e-books first at an online bookstore or other website, and those making less than \$50,000 per year are more likely than those in higher income households to look first at a library.

²⁴ As of December 2011

When you want to read a particular e-book, where do you look first?

% of readers of e-books age 16+, as of December 2011. For instance, 84% of e-reader or tablet owners who read e-books say that when they want to read a particular e-book, they look for it first at an online bookstore or website.



Source: Dec. 2011 results are from a survey of 2,986 people age 16 and older conducted November 16-December 21, 2011. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. The margin of error is +/- 2 percentage points. N for the number of owners of either an e-book reader or a tablet device=1,132.

Preferences: When e-books are better than print and vice versa

In general, device owners who read both print books and e-books as of December 2011 are very similar to the overall population of print and e-book readers when discussing which book format is better for different situations, slightly favoring e-books for most of the scenarios presented.

One major difference is that those who own handheld e-reading devices like e-readers or tablets are *more* likely to say e-books are preferable to print books for reading in bed: 53% of device owners say e-books are better than print books in this situation, compared with 45% of all print and e-book readers. This might be because, as previously noted, owners of e-reading devices are less likely than all e-book readers to read their e-books on a desktop or laptop computer—and those who primarily read their e-books on a computer may not consider this arrangement to be as convenient for pre-bedtime reading as those who rely on their (more portable) dedicated e-reading devices.

Device owners are also more likely than all print and e-book readers to say that print books are better for sharing with other people (77% of device owners, vs. 69% of all print and e-book readers).

Methodology

Reading Habits Survey

Prepared by Princeton Survey Research Associates International for the Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project with support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

December 2011

Summary

The Reading Habits Survey, conducted by the Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project with support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, obtained telephone interviews with a nationally representative sample of 2,986 people ages 16 and older living in the United States. Interviews were conducted via landline ($n_{LL}=1,526$) and cell phone ($n_C=1,460$, including 677 without a landline phone). The survey was conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates International. The interviews were administered in English and Spanish by Princeton Data Source from November 16 to December 21, 2011. Statistical results are weighted to correct known demographic discrepancies. The margin of sampling error for results based on the complete set of weighted data is ± 2.2 percentage points. Results based on the 2,571 internet users have a margin of sampling error of ± 2.3 percentage points.

Details on the design, execution and analysis of the survey are discussed below.

Design and Data Collection Procedures

Sample Design

A combination of landline and cellular random digit dial (RDD) samples was used to represent all adults in the United States who have access to either a landline or cellular telephone. Both samples were provided by Survey Sampling International, LLC (SSI) according to PSRAI specifications.

Numbers for the landline sample were drawn with equal probabilities from active blocks (area code + exchange + two-digit block number) that contained three or more residential directory listings. The cellular sample was not list-assisted, but was drawn through a systematic sampling from dedicated wireless 100-blocks and shared service 100-blocks with no directory-listed landline numbers.

Contact Procedures

Interviews were conducted from November 16 to December 21, 2011. As many as seven attempts were made to contact every sampled telephone number. Sample was released for interviewing in replicates, which are representative subsamples of the larger sample. Using replicates to control the release of sample ensures that complete call procedures are followed for the entire sample. Calls were staggered over times of day and days of the week to maximize the chance of making contact with potential respondents. Interviewing was spread as evenly as possible across the days in field. Each telephone number was called at least one time during the day in an attempt to complete an interview.

For the landline sample, interviewers asked to speak with the youngest adult male or female currently at home based on a random rotation. If no male/female was available, interviewers asked to speak with the youngest adult of the other gender. This systematic respondent selection technique has been shown to produce samples that closely mirror the population in terms of age and gender when combined with cell interviewing.

For the cellular sample, interviews were conducted with the person who answered the phone. Interviewers verified that the person was an adult and in a safe place before administering the survey. Cellular respondents were offered a post-paid cash reimbursement for their participation. Calls were made to the landline and cell samples until 1,125 interviews were completed in each. Once those targets were hit, screening for e-book and tablet owners was implemented. During the screening, anyone who did not respond with having an e-book or tablet device was screened-out as ineligible. All others continued the survey until approximately 700 e-Reader/tablet owners were interviewed overall.

Weighting and analysis

The first stage of weighting corrected for the oversampling of tablet and e-reader users via screening from the landline and cell sample frames. The second stage of weighting corrected for different probabilities of selection associated with the number of adults in each household and each respondent's telephone usage patterns.²⁵ This weighting also adjusts for the overlapping landline and cell sample frames and the relative sizes of each frame and each sample.

This first-stage weight for the i^{th} case can be expressed as:

$$WT_i = \frac{1}{\left(\frac{S_{LL}}{S_{CP}} \times \frac{1}{AD_i}\right)} \text{ if respondent has no cell phone}$$

$$WT_i = \frac{1}{\left(\frac{S_{LL}}{S_{CP}} \times \frac{1}{AD_i}\right) + R} \text{ if respondent has both kinds of phones}$$

$$WT_i = \frac{1}{R} \text{ if respondent has no land line phone}$$

Where S_{LL} = size of the landline sample

S_{CP} = size of the cell phone sample

AD_i = Number of adults in the household

R = Estimated ratio of the land line sample frame to the cell phone sample frame

The equations can be simplified by plugging in the values for $S_{LL} = 1,526$ and $S_{CP} = 1,460$. Additionally, we will estimate of the ratio of the size of landline sample frame to the cell phone sample frame $R = 1.03$.

²⁵ i.e., whether respondents have only a landline telephone, only a cell phone, or both kinds of telephone.

The final stage of weighting balances sample demographics to population parameters. The sample is balanced to match national population parameters for sex, age, education, race, Hispanic origin, region (U.S. Census definitions), population density, and telephone usage. The Hispanic origin was split out based on nativity; U.S. born and non-U.S. born. The White, non-Hispanic subgroup is also balanced on age, education and region. The basic weighting parameters came from a special analysis of the Census Bureau's 2010 Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) that included all households in the United States. The population density parameter was derived from Census 2000 data. The cell phone usage parameter came from an analysis of the July-December 2010 National Health Interview Survey.²⁶²⁷

Weighting was accomplished using Sample Balancing, a special iterative sample weighting program that simultaneously balances the distributions of all variables using a statistical technique called the *Deming Algorithm*. Weights were trimmed to prevent individual interviews from having too much influence on the final results. The use of these weights in statistical analysis ensures that the demographic characteristics of the sample closely approximate the demographic characteristics of the national population. Table 1 compares weighted and unweighted sample distributions to population parameters.

²⁶ Blumberg SJ, Luke JV. Wireless substitution: Early release of estimates from the National Health Interview Survey, July-December, 2010. National Center for Health Statistics. June 2011.

²⁷ The phone use parameter used for this 16+ sample is the same as the parameter we use for all 18+ surveys. In other words, no adjustment was made to account for the fact that the target population for this survey is slightly different than a standard 18+ general population survey.

Table 1: Sample Demographics

Parameter (16+)		Unweighted	Weighted
<u>Gender</u>			
Male	48.6	47.2	48.9
Female	51.4	52.8	51.1
<u>Age</u>			
16-24	16.0	15.0	14.2
25-34	17.3	14.0	15.1
35-44	17.0	14.9	17.3
45-54	18.7	17.6	18.7
55-64	14.8	17.3	18.5
65+	16.2	21.2	16.2
<u>Education</u>			
Less than HS Graduate	16.8	11.5	15.5
HS Graduate	33.8	26.7	33.3
Some College	23.1	23.3	23.9
College Graduate	26.3	38.5	27.3
<u>Race/Ethnicity</u>			
White/not Hispanic	68.0	73.1	67.7
Black/not Hispanic	11.7	10.8	11.9
Hispanic - US born	6.4	6.5	6.8
Hispanic - born outside	7.5	4.3	7.3
Other/not Hispanic	6.2	5.3	6.2
<u>Region</u>			
Northeast	18.5	15.8	18.2
Midwest	22.0	24.1	22.7
South	36.9	37.3	37.0
West	22.6	22.7	22.1
<u>County Pop. Density</u>			
1 - Lowest	20.1	23.6	20.3
2	20.0	21.2	20.1
3	20.1	22.3	20.4
4	20.2	17.6	20.2
5 - Highest	19.6	15.2	18.9
<u>Household Phone Use</u>			
LLO	9.3	5.0	8.3
Dual/few, some cell	41.7	51.7	42.3
Dual/most cell	18.5	20.6	19.0
CPO	30.5	22.7	30.5

Effects of Sample Design on Statistical Inference

Post-data collection statistical adjustments require analysis procedures that reflect departures from simple random sampling. PSRAI calculates the effects of these design features so that an appropriate adjustment can be incorporated into tests of statistical significance when using these data. The so-called "design effect" or *deff* represents the loss in statistical efficiency that results from systematic non-response. The total sample design effect for this survey is 1.46.

PSRAI calculates the composite design effect for a sample of size n , with each case having a weight, w_i as:

$$deff = \frac{n \sum_{i=1}^n w_i^2}{\left(\sum_{i=1}^n w_i \right)^2} \quad \text{formula 1}$$

In a wide range of situations, the adjusted *standard error* of a statistic should be calculated by multiplying the usual formula by the square root of the design effect (\sqrt{deff}). Thus, the formula for computing the 95% confidence interval around a percentage is:

$$\hat{p} \pm \left(\sqrt{deff} \times 1.96 \sqrt{\frac{\hat{p}(1-\hat{p})}{n}} \right) \quad \text{formula 2}$$

where \hat{p} is the sample estimate and n is the unweighted number of sample cases in the group being considered.

The survey's *margin of error* is the largest 95% confidence interval for any estimated proportion based on the total sample— the one around 50%. For example, the margin of error for the entire sample is ± 2.2 percentage points. This means that in 95 out every 100 samples drawn using the same methodology, estimated proportions based on the entire sample will be no more than 2.2 percentage points away from their true values in the population. It is important to remember that sampling fluctuations are only one possible source of error in a survey estimate. Other sources, such as respondent selection bias, questionnaire wording and reporting inaccuracy, may contribute additional error of greater or lesser magnitude.

Response Rate

Table 2 reports the disposition of all sampled telephone numbers ever dialed from the original telephone number samples. The response rate estimates the fraction of all eligible respondents in the sample that were ultimately interviewed. At PSRAI it is calculated by taking the product of three component rates:²⁸

²⁸ PSRAI's disposition codes and reporting are consistent with the American Association for Public Opinion Research standards.

- Contact rate – the proportion of working numbers where a request for interview was made²⁹
- Cooperation rate – the proportion of contacted numbers where a consent for interview was at least initially obtained, versus those refused
- Completion rate – the proportion of initially cooperating and eligible interviews that were completed

Thus the response rate for the landline sample was 14 percent. The response rate for the cellular sample was 11 percent.

Table 2: Sample Disposition

Landline	Cell	
66,518	60,997	Total Numbers Dialed
2,876	919	Non-residential
3,004	142	Computer/Fax
16	----	Cell phone
32,283	22,623	Other not working
3,844	887	Additional projected not working
24,495	36,426	Working numbers
36.8%	59.7%	Working Rate
1,281	296	No Answer / Busy
7,092	13,997	Voice Mail
118	27	Other Non-Contact
16,004	22,106	Contacted numbers
65.3%	60.7%	Contact Rate
902	3,485	Callback
11,408	14,644	Refusal
3,694	3,977	Cooperating numbers
23.1%	18.0%	Cooperation Rate
104	129	Language Barrier
1,960	2,362	Child's cell phone / Oversample Screenout
1,630	1,486	Eligible numbers
44.1%	37.4%	Eligibility Rate
104	26	Break-off
1,526	1,460	Completes
93.6%	98.3%	Completion Rate
14.1%	10.7%	Response Rate

²⁹ PSRAI assumes that 75 percent of cases that result in a constant disposition of “No answer” or “Busy” are actually not working numbers.