

# How to get more use out of your Kindle

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 15TH, 2011

So you've had your Kindle<sup>1</sup> for a few months now, and it's been sitting in your pack, unused for the last few weeks. What happened? Here's how can you get more use out of this gadget you used to be so excited about.

**Ask it to do less.** With its apps and its web browser, the Kindle is technically capable of many things, but great for only one thing: *reading*. Reading, you may recall, is a wonderful pleasure that may have gotten pushed out of your life awhile back. Use your Kindle for reading more. Resist the temptation to use it for things that will tend to marginalize reading again: games, email, and so forth.

**Use the magic wirelessness to your advantage.** There is really no good reason to be in the habit of plugging your Kindle into anything (other than to charge it up once or twice a month).

Here's how I manage my ebook collection wirelessly:

1. To put an ebook on my Kindle, I email it to my `free.kindle.com` address (a snap since Gmail accepts drag-and-drop attachments). Presto, book appears on my Kindle.
2. When I'm done with a book, I either delete it from my Kindle or put it in a "Finished" folder in my Kindle.
3. Gmail keeps a copy of the file in the email attachment in case I ever need it. (I also stick them in a folder on my computer.)

Using this method, there are no wires, no syncing, and there's no need for special software like Calibri unless I need to convert an ebook to a Kindle-compatible format.

**Make finding new reading material as automatic as possible.** Time spent looking for new stuff to read is time you could have spent reading. Find ways to have the world send *you* new things, rather than digging for them yourself. This one is something I am continually looking for improvements on. Some options:

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1. <https://amzn.com/B002Y27P3M/?tag=thloya-20>

- Deliverreads<sup>2</sup>—This is a new one, and it's just the kind of thing I'm looking for: free, high-quality stories delivered automatically to your Kindle, roughly once a week. This one is almost a no-brainer.
- Instapaper<sup>3</sup>—Even though Instapaper is having some problems with automatic deliveries<sup>4</sup> at the moment (which will probably be fixed before too long), if you do any browsing on the Internet in the course of a normal day, Instapaper makes a great way to collect long articles for later reading. Just try and use it as a stash for things you already run across; don't start crawling the web just to look for Kindle material—you're trying to get away from that, remember?
- Newspaper subscriptions: Try a subscription to the New York Times<sup>5</sup> or the Wall Street Journal<sup>6</sup>. Currently the reviews are very mixed; as of today you can see that not everyone finds these subscriptions worth the cost compared to the print editions. It will depend on the publication and whether you have the time to read all the issues.

**Treat Twitter like a newspaper.** One good use I have found for the web browser is to use it to log into `m.twitter.com`. This is an excellent way to catch up on Twitter. You can now check it once or twice a day at home as part of your morning or evening routine, and forget about it for the rest of the day. (Unless you happen to be stuck in a queue or waiting room with nothing but your smartphone.)

**Start or join a book club.** The ideal book club will center around a specific kind of book, and send you a new book every month automatically. This is just an idea of mine—I haven't yet run across a book club like this—but it makes so much sense it's hard to believe they don't already exist.

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2. <http://deliverreads.com/>

3. <http://instapaper.com>

4. <http://notely.blogspot.com/2011/05/instapaper-auto-send-to-kindle-not.html>

5. <https://amzn.com/B000GFK7L6/?tag=thloya-20>

6. <https://amzn.com/B000FDJ0FS/?tag=thloya-20>