Kindle 2

Price: $259
Size: 8" x 5.3" x .36"
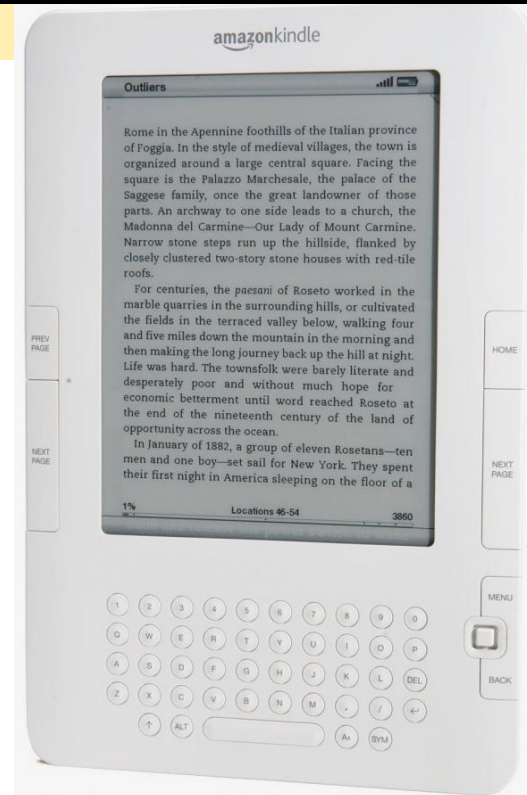Internet: Free 3G connection
Screen Type: E Ink
Screen Size: 6"
Online store: Amazon.com
Out-of-box storage: ~1,500 books
Interface: Keyboard / Joystick
Extra Features:

- Text to Speech
- Doesn't require a computer
- Magazine and Blog support
- Email documents to yourself (Whispernet)

Things to Consider...

The Kindle is one of the most popular names in e-readers. It's a well made and durable product, and has many features that the other readers don't. However, with its always on 3G internet connection, the Kindle doesn't connect to a computer, and is the only place that your digital files will 'live'. The Kindle is largely tied to the Amazon store, and isn't able to download books from our library's free service (Overdrive). On the other hand, Amazon's online store is one of the cheaper options around. Some people may also be put off by using a keyboard, joystick, and face-plate buttons to navigate the device, instead of a touch screen.

Kindle DX

Price: $489
Size: 10.4" x 7.2" x 0.38"
Internet: Free 3G connection
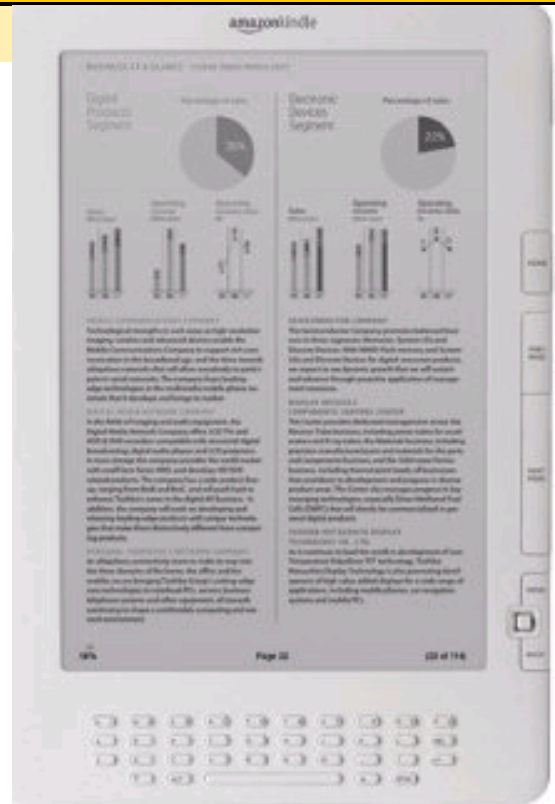Screen Type: E Ink
Screen Size: 9.7"
Online store: Amazon.com
Out-of-box storage: ~1,500 books
Interface: Keyboard / Joystick
Extra Features:

- Text to Speech
- Doesn't require a computer
- Magazine and Blog support
- Email documents to yourself (Whispernet)

Things to Consider...

The DX is one of the most expensive e-readers that you can buy, but also one of the best. Its large screen, host of extra features, and appealing design are all selling points. The same concerns with the Kindle 2 exist with the Kindle DX: namely that it's tied to Amazon's store, and doesn't work with many of the free e-book services. Before committing to Amazon's store it's a good idea to check out their selection and prices and ask yourself if you want to continue using them for as long as you have your Kindle. Some people also dislike using the face-buttons and joystick for navigation: it's always a good idea to try a physical product before you buy.

Nook

Price: $259
Size: 7.7" x 4.9" x .5"
Internet: Free 3G connection
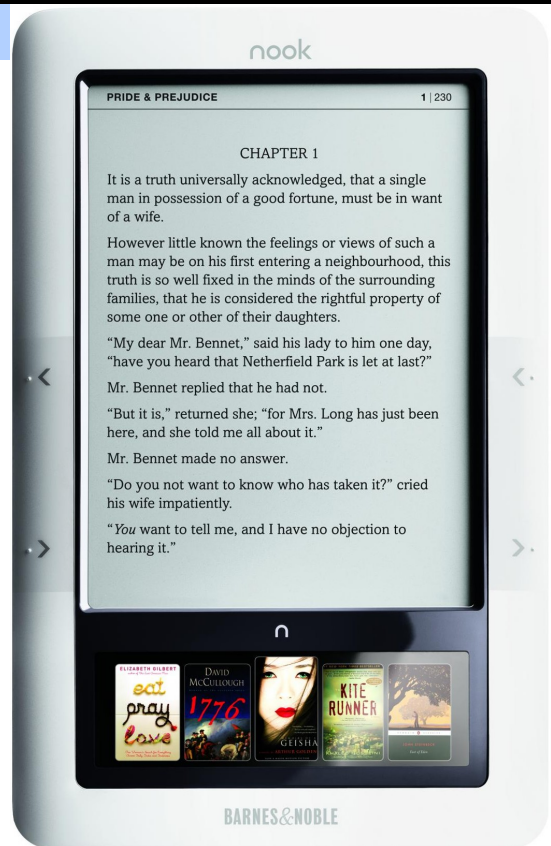Screen Type: E Ink
Screen Size: 6" (and color navigation screen)
Online store: barnesandnoble.com
Out-of-box storage: ~1,500 books
Interface: Touch Screen
Extra Features:
- Doesn't require a computer
- "Lend" feature to allow friends to borrow titles you own.
- Can download from our Library site
- Free book access in B&N stores

Things to Consider...

At the same price, and relatively same features as the regular Kindle, the Nook is a good option for people who like the Kindle's always on wireless connection, but are put off by not being able to download free Google books, and items from our Library's e-book collection. Some people say that Amazon has slightly lower prices, but it varies from title to title. If there's a particular author you read a lot of, then it's a good idea to check their prices on both sites before buying. Some reviews have said that the Nook has less impressive battery life (due, in part, to the color navigation screen), and that it seems a little slower than its counterparts. Nooks are available at any Barnes and Noble retail outlet for you to try.

Sony Readers

PRS-300

Price: $199
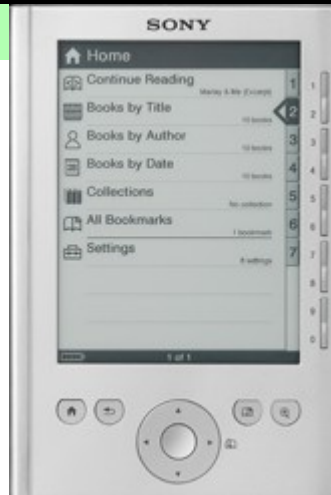Size: 6 1/4 x 4 1/4 x 13/32
Internet: No
Screen Type: E-ink
Screen Size: 5"
Out-of-box Storage: 512 MB
Interface: Buttons
Extra Features:
- Works with our library's e-book collection
- Available in 3 colors
- Easily scalable text
- Expandable storage capacity

PRS-600

Price: $299
Size: 6.9 x 4.8 x .4 inches
Internet: No
Screen Type: E-ink
Screen Size: 6"
Out-of-box Storage: ~512 MB
Interface: Touch Screen
Extra Features:
- Works with our library's e-book collection
- Available in 3 colors
- Easily scalable text
- Expandable storage capacity

PRS-900

Price: $399.99
Size: 5 x 8.2 x 19/32 inches
Wireless Internet: Yes
Screen Type: E-ink
Screen Size: 7"
Out-of-box Storage: 2 GB
Interface: Touch Screen
Extra Features:
- Works with our library's e-book collection
- Built in cover
- Easily scalable text
- Expandable storage capacity

Things to consider...

Sony offers the most options out of all of the e-reader manufacturers. They have one of the cheapest systems (the PRS-300), and their other models are very competitive for their price. However, you're not getting the always-on wireless connection that the Nook and the Kindle both have (with the exception of the most expensive model). Every Sony system works with most free e-book options. Sony's online store, however, isn't as well developed as Barnes and Noble's or Amazon's.

Further reading...

There are a few other names that manufacture e-readers, which aren't mentioned here. These are largely specialized (catering towards groups like researchers, or students), and include:

- The "Bookeen" by Cybook
- The "iLiad" by iRex
- The "eBook" by Hanlin
- The "EZreader" by Astak

If you'd like to research these other readers, then there's always the buying guides, blog, and forum at http://www.mobileread.com. If you'd like to compare prices of ebooks across a number of stores, then there's http://www.inkmesh.com. If you'd like to see the items available through our online library, then you can check out: http://maryland.lib.overdrive.com/.