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# 1

## Kindling your imagination

*The tablet computer market is becoming increasingly competitive and the Kindle Fire is fast establishing itself as a significant player in this arena. This chapter introduces the Kindle Fire and shows how to set it up and details what it can do. It also covers the role of Amazon, which is integral to the Kindle Fire, as most of the content comes from Amazon and the online cloud service, Amazon Cloud Drive.*

## About the Kindle Fire

Mobility is now a key word in the world of computing and tablet computers are beginning to play a significant role in how we all communicate and access information. The Kindle Fire is a fully-fledged tablet that has evolved out of the Kindle eReader that was originally designed for reading books, newspapers and magazines. The Kindle Fire takes this several steps further, with functionality to:

- Surf the Web and access your favourite social networking sites
- Use email
- Listen to music
- Download apps
- Play games
- Watch films
- Read all of your favourite books



One of the first things to say about the Kindle Fire is that it is an Amazon product and most things on it are linked to Amazon in one way or another. To use the Kindle Fire you need to have an Amazon Account with a username and password. If you do not already have one this will be set up if you buy your Kindle Fire from the Amazon website or, if you buy it from another retailer, you can create an Amazon Account during the set up process. Most of the content in terms of books, films, music and apps comes from Amazon, although there are some items that you can also upload to your Kindle Fire.

The Kindle Fire has a standard model and an HD model: both have a 7 inch screen and a minimum of 8 GB of storage so it is very portable and still powerful enough to be able to store the content you need, whether at home or on the move.

## Kindle Fire specifications

The specifications for the Kindle Fire HD and standard Kindle Fire are:

- 7 inch (diagonally) 1280 x 800 pixel HD display (1024 x 600 pixels on the Kindle Fire) with polarising filter and anti-glare technology. The actual size of the Kindle Fire is larger though, as it has a border around the viewing area. The overall size is approximately 8.5 inches (diagonally)
- Dolby audio and dual-driver stereo speakers (Kindle Fire HD) or standard stereo speakers (Kindle Fire)
- Dual antenna, dual-band Wi-Fi for fast downloads and HD streaming (Kindle Fire HD), single band Wi-Fi (Kindle Fire)
- 1.2 Ghz dual-core processor with Imagination PowerVR 3D graphics core for fast and fluid performance (Kindle Fire HD), or standard 1.2 Ghz processor (Kindle Fire)
- 8 GB storage (Kindle Fire) or 16 GB or 32 GB (Kindle Fire HD), plus free unlimited cloud storage for all of your Amazon content (see Chapter Three for details)
- Front facing HD camera for free Skype-to-Skype calls (Kindle Fire HD only). To use this to take photos you need to download the HD Camera app. Photos can also be downloaded from the Amazon Cloud Drive (see Chapter Three)
- An HDMI port for viewing your content on your TV or other devices (Kindle Fire HD only)
- Up to 11 hours battery life (Kindle Fire HD, 9 hours for the Kindle Fire) for mixed use including reading and surfing the web

## Buttons and ports

The buttons and ports on the Kindle Fire are located along the edges of the device and consist of:

- On/Off button. Press this once to turn on the Kindle Fire or put it into sleep mode. Press and hold to turn it off
- Volume buttons
- Stereo jack, for use with headphones or to connect to a stereo system
- Micro-B Connector for charging the Kindle Fire. This connects with a USB port on a computer or the Kindle Powerfast Charger (sold separately from the Kindle Fire)
- Micro-HDMI Connector for connecting the Kindle Fire to a high definition TV (Kindle Fire HD only)

On/Off button      Volume buttons      Stereo jack



HDMI Connector      Micro-B Connector (for charging)



## Setting up your Kindle Fire

When you first turn on your Kindle Fire you will be taken through the setup process. This only takes a few minutes and once it has been completed you will be ready to use your Kindle Fire and all of the related Amazon services. The elements of the setup process are:

- Select a language (tap on the Continue button after each step)
- Select your Wi-Fi connection (this can also be done at a later time). Your home Wi-Fi should show up for selection at this point
- Register your Kindle Fire with your Amazon Account, or create a new Amazon Account
- Select your time zone
- Link to your Facebook and Twitter accounts (this is optional)

Once you have completed the setup, your Kindle Fire will be ready for use; there are no other system requirements. The first thing you will see is the Kindle Fire Home screen which is in the form of the Carousel. See Chapter Two for more information about using this. There is also a Lock Screen that is activated when the Kindle Fire is put to sleep.

This contains promotions and suggestions from Amazon (which can be turned off for a £10 fee). Drag the padlock to the left to access the Carousel from the Lock Screen.



## Battery and charging

Battery life is important for any tablet device and the Kindle Fire can be used for up to nine hours from a single charge (11 hours for the Kindle Fire HD) for general use such as surfing the web, reading, listening to music and viewing videos. It comes with a Micro-B Connector that can be used to charge the Kindle Fire. There are two options for this:

- **Charging with a separate AC Adapter.** This comes in the form of the Kindle Powerfast adapter, which has to be bought separately from the Kindle Fire. The Micro-B Connector attaches to the adapter with a USB connector and the adapter can then be plugged into the mains power
- **Charging with a computer.** The Kindle Fire can also be charged by connecting the USB end of the Micro-B Connector to a Windows or Mac computer. However, this takes longer to charge than the Powerfast adapter

The Kindle Fire HD charges in approximately four hours using the Powerfast adapter, but up to 13.5 hours if it is connected to a computer via a USB port. The Kindle Fire charges in approximately three hours with the Powerfast adapter and 11.5 hours if it is connected to a computer.

The Kindle Fire charges more quickly if it is in sleep mode and even more quickly if it is turned off. However, it can still be used as normal while it is being charged, if required.

### Hot tip



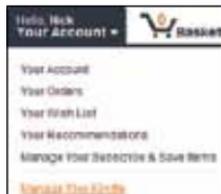
One useful app that can be downloaded from the Amazon Appstore is the Battery HD app. This displays a selection of information such as how long you can use the Kindle Fire for different functions and how long until charging is completed.

# Changing the Kindle's name

When you initially set up your Kindle Fire it will be given a default name based on your own Amazon Account name, e.g. Nick's Kindle Fire. This is displayed in the top left-hand corner on the Status Bar at the top of the screen. However this can be changed to anything of your own choosing. To do this:



1 Log in to your online Amazon Account



2 Under the **Your Account** heading, click on the **Manage Your Kindle** link from the available options

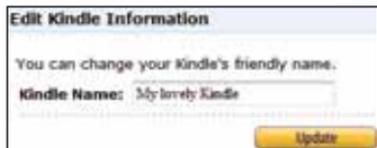
3 In the **Your Kindle Account** section click on the **Manage Your Devices** link



4 Click on the **Edit** button next to the required device



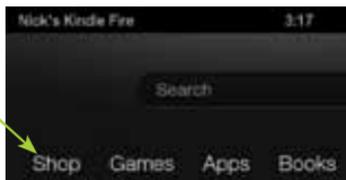
5 Enter a new name and click on the **Update** button. The new name will now appear on the Status Bar on your device



## Shopping on the Kindle

The Kindle Fire is an Amazon product and it is unashamedly linked to a wide range of content from the Amazon website. This include books, games, apps and music. This can all be accessed from the Shop button on the top Navigation Bar. To do this:

- 1 Tap on the **Shop** button at the top of the Kindle Fire window. (This can also be accessed using the Store button from individual sections)



- 2 The main Shop window contains a rotating range of promotional items. Tap on the buttons at the bottom of the window to view specific categories



- 3 Content can be downloaded for specific categories such as Apps, Books and Games



- 4 Enter a keyword in the Search box to find items across all of the Stores



## Using the Amazon Cloud

Another integral part of the Kindle Fire is the Amazon Cloud. This is available on the Amazon website once you have bought a Kindle Fire and consists of:

- **The Cloud** for storing content that has been purchased from Amazon. This includes items such as ebooks and music that have been bought from Amazon. Once this is done the content is not only available on your Kindle Fire, it is also stored, free of charge, in the Amazon Cloud. All of your compatible purchased content is stored in this way and it can then be downloaded to other Kindles, or by the Kindle app on other tablets and smartphones
- **The Amazon Cloud Drive.** This can be used to upload your own content, including photos, music and documents, which will then be available on your Kindle Fire. You get 5 GB of free storage in the Amazon Cloud Drive but you can buy additional space if required
- **The Cloud Drive Desktop App.** This is an app that can be downloaded to make it easier to add content to your Cloud Drive. You do not have to use it, as you can upload content directly to the Cloud Drive, but it makes the process easier and can be used on Windows and Mac computers. You will be prompted to download the Desktop App when you start to upload content through the Cloud Drive
- **The Cloud Player.** This can be used to upload your own music, which will then be available on the Kindle Fire. It can be downloaded from the Cloud Drive and then the Amazon Music Importer can be used to scan your computer for music to upload

For more information about using the Amazon Cloud see Chapter Three.

## Amazon Prime

When you buy a Kindle Fire you are entitled to a free month's trial of the Amazon Prime service. This consists of a virtual lending library where you can borrow up to one book a month, free of charge and with no due dates, and you can also get unlimited free one-day delivery on Amazon items. To use Amazon Prime on your Kindle Fire:

1

Tap on the **Books** link on the main Navigation Bar on the Home screen



2

Tap on the **Store** button



3

Tap on the **Kindle Owners' Lending Library** link under the **Categories** heading



4

Tap on a title to view details about it



5

Tap on the **Borrow for Free** button to download the title to your Kindle Fire



**Beware**



The Amazon Prime selection does not include the main bestsellers on the Amazon site so you may want to think carefully before paying for an annual subscription (£49).