

# The Rise of E-Reading

April 4, 2012

As the number of Americans that own tablet computers and e-book reading devices has increased, so has the percentage of adults who report that they have read an e-book in the past year.

In a February survey, 21% of adults said they had read a e-book in the last year, compared to 17% who reported doing so in December. This tracked with a major spike in ownership of e-reader devices that occurred during the holiday gift-giving season in December. During that period, ownership of an e-book reader or a tablet each increased to 19% of adults, compared to 10% for each device in mid-December.

Those who read e-books read more books than those who don't have the devices: 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. 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).

While e-book reading is markedly growing, printed books still dominate the world of book readers. In a December 2011 survey, 72% of American adults said they 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.

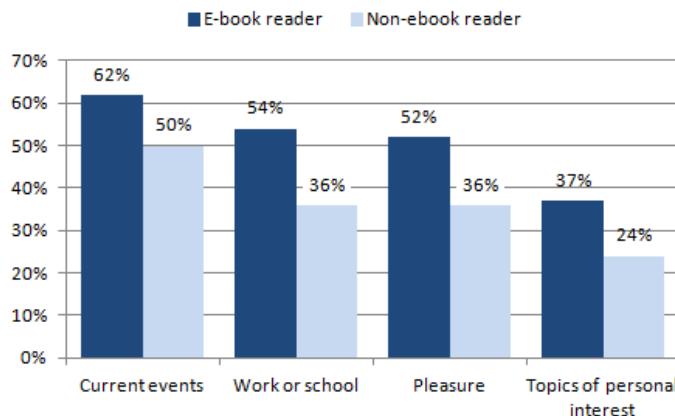
The rise of e-books in American culture is part of a larger story about a shift from printed to digital material. Using a broader definition of e-content in a survey ending in December 2011, some 43% of Americans age 16 and older say they have either read an e-book in the past year or have read other 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.

Read the [full report](#) for detailed findings on these subjects:

- [The general reading habits of Americans](#)
- [Americans and their e-readers and tablets](#)
- [The state of e-book reading](#)
- [Where and how readers get their books](#)
- [Difference among e-book owners](#)

## 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.

