

Publishing Partners

What is a standard eBook format?

A standard eBook (either EPUB or MOBI format) uses reflowable text so the reader can use any device. He/she can adjust the font size and style to fit reading preferences. There is no set pagination in EPUB OR MOBI because the number of words displayed per page can change based on user settings and the screen size of the particular device.

Both EPUB and MOBI (Kindle) work well for text-based books and books with small images embedded in line with text.

What is a fixed layout eBook?

When it comes to books that rely heavily on design elements or large illustrations/photos (cookbooks, children's books, comics, etc.), fixed layout may be the better solution if you want to preserve the qualities of the printed page. The pages of a fixed layout eBook will not "flow" across the page if the reader changes the settings, but most devices allow the reader to zoom in and out.

Fixed layout is like the digital version of typesetting; you can embed fonts, choose the exact placement of visual elements, etc. The benefit of fixed layout is that the author or publisher is in control of the reader's experience, which means that the readers are not in control. Readers can't resize text, change margins, change spacing, and change fonts like they can with standard eBooks like Kindle and Nook.

Don't confuse fixed layout with PDF. Although a PDF file is not reflowable, a fixed layout EPUB or MOBI eBook can make use of enhanced interactive features. Apple, Kobo, Barnes & Noble, and Amazon all support derivations of fixed layout files.

How do I decide if I should use standard eBook or fixed layout?

Standard eBook format

- mostly text (excluding the cover)
- a few images
- more than 50 pages
- ensure maximum usability (standard eBooks are readable on most eReaders, tablets, smart-phones, and computers).

Consider fixed layout

- allow text to float over images (selectable text on top of an image)
- set a background color
- text wraps around images
- horizontal orientation
- multiple columns
- Under 50 pages