

The Pros and Cons of E-Books

The age of the E-book was inevitable and now it is here, there is strong debate around the pros and cons of their existence. An e-book is an electronic format of a book, which can be read using a computer or through technology known as an e-reader. An e-reader is generally a small hand held device that is portable, provides its own light source, and in some superior readers, allows the text to appear as if it is written on a piece of paper. There are several e-readers available on the market and a massive collection of e-books available.

There are some very obvious pros to an e-book:

1. You can easily carry a whole library of books around with you
2. You can read them at any time of day or night (availability of light is not an issue)
3. You can zoom in and adjust font sizes to make the book more user friendly
4. They are environmentally friendly, as the need for paper is avoided
5. You can take notes in them, which can be found, referenced and erased easily

However, there are also some well documented cons:

1. Reading from a screen can cause eye strain
2. The technology required to read the books can fail
3. Not all books are available as e-books
4. The battery life of your e-reader may be an issue
5. The cost of e-readers is relatively high. Joining a library is free!

The portability and convenience of an e-reader is clear, you could carry around hundreds of books and have them available to you at all times (battery permitting) However, I am aware that one of the most commonly cited cons of the e-book is related to the experience of reading a 'real' book. There is a certain joy about reading a book made from paper; the smell, the feel, the turned over page corners. As yet, the e-books and e-readers cannot replicate this experience, but technology is progressing, so who knows what the future may bring for readers looking for the convenience but wishing to keep hold of the authenticity!

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