

# Using Calibre to Read E-Books and Convert E-Pub Files for the Kindle

## Quick Guide

Created 01/12

Updated

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Most people who use a Kindle simply download the books they want from the Amazon web site. But what can you do if you want to read something else on your Kindle? The Kindle recognises Kindle (.azw), Text (.txt) and Mobi (.mobi) files and can also view (but not read out) PDFs. It cannot currently handle E-Pub files, so if the book or resource you are looking for is only available in E-Pub format, you need to convert it, using a program such as Calibre.

## Calibre

Calibre is a free E-Book management program that you can download from <http://calibre-E-Book.com>. You can use Calibre to search for and download E-Books from the internet to build up and manage your own collection on a computer. Calibre can convert files in one format into another to suit any external E-Book reader you may be using, e.g. a Kindle. It is available for Windows (XP, Vista and 7), Mac OS X and Linux, and can be run from a memory stick.

## Setting up your Kindle Account

Note that you are advised to set up your Kindle Account to receive email attachments before you install Calibre on your computer.

### Finding your Kindle Email address

Calibre will ask for your Kindle email - the chances are that you won't know it! To find it, go to <http://www.amazon.co.uk> (or to your local Amazon site, depending on which country you are in) and click on **Your Account** (top right of the Amazon window). You may have to sign in, unless Amazon 'remembers' you. Once you have signed in and clicked on My Account, you should have a screen that looks like this:

The screenshot shows the Amazon.co.uk 'Your Account' page. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'Shop All Departments', 'Search', and 'Basket'. Below that, the 'Your Account' section is displayed. It includes a 'Your Orders' section with options to view, modify, track, or cancel orders. There's also a 'Payment & GC' section for managing payment methods and gift certificates. A 'Settings' section allows users to change their name, email, password, and manage their address book. On the right side, there's a 'Kindle Support' section with links to help pages and a 'Manage Your Kindle' button.

Click on **Manage your Kindle** (under Account Settings), then **Personal Document Settings** (under Your Kindle Account) and you will see your Kindle email address under Personal Document Settings and Send-to-Kindle Email Settings. Make a note of this email address.

### ***Adding your email address to the Kindle Approved List***

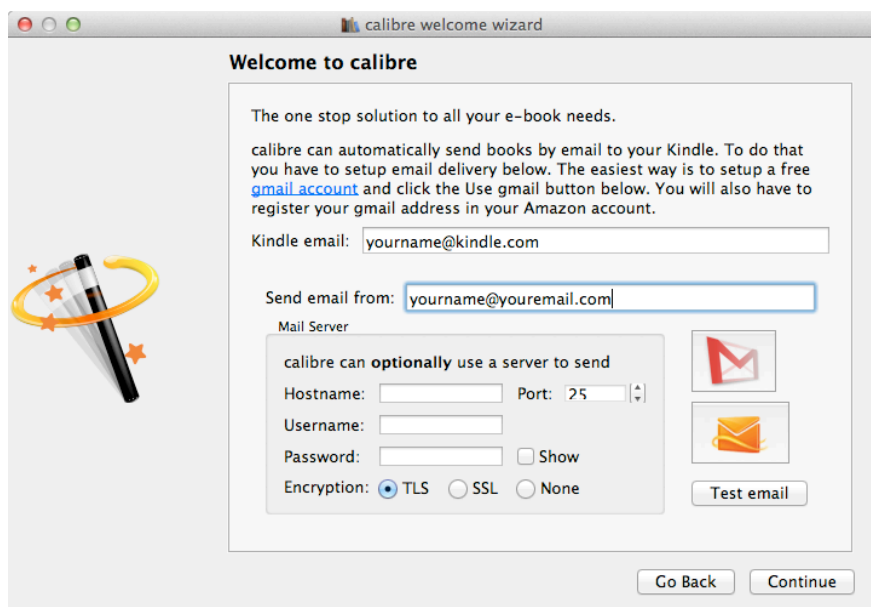
You now have to add the email address you will be using to send files from Calibre to Kindle to the approved list for your Kindle Account. Scroll down under Personal Document Settings until you get to Approved Personal Document E-Mail List and click on Add a New Approved E-Mail Address. Type in the address and click on **Add Address**. Note that you can approve more than one email address.

## Installing Calibre

Now that you have set up your Kindle account, you can proceed to download and install Calibre. Go to <http://calibre-E-Book.com/download> and select the version you require. In Windows, the installation file is calibre(+Version No.).msi, while on the Mac it is Calibre(+Version No.).dmg.

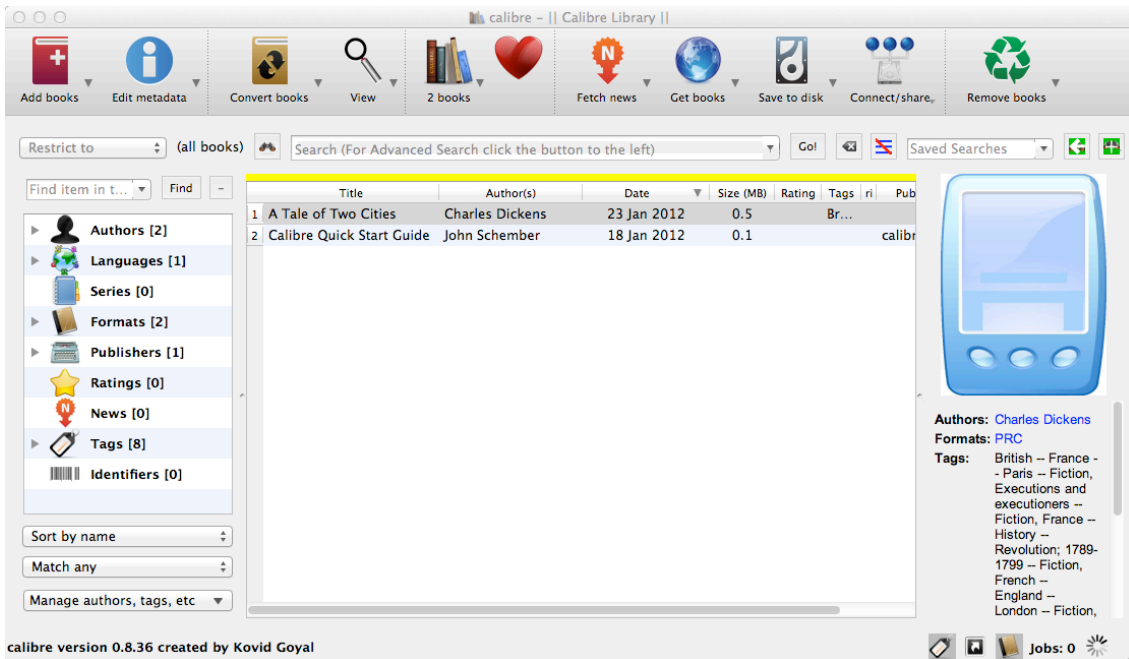
The Calibre Welcome Wizard asks you to:

1. Choose your language and a location for your books.
2. Choose your E-Book device by manufacturer and device.
3. In the case of a Kindle, you will then be asked to give your Kindle email and the email address that you have approved for use with your Kindle Account, as shown below. You can send an email to your Kindle account to make sure it is working. Note that you won't actually receive the email on your Kindle until it is switched on and connected to the internet by a wifi connection.

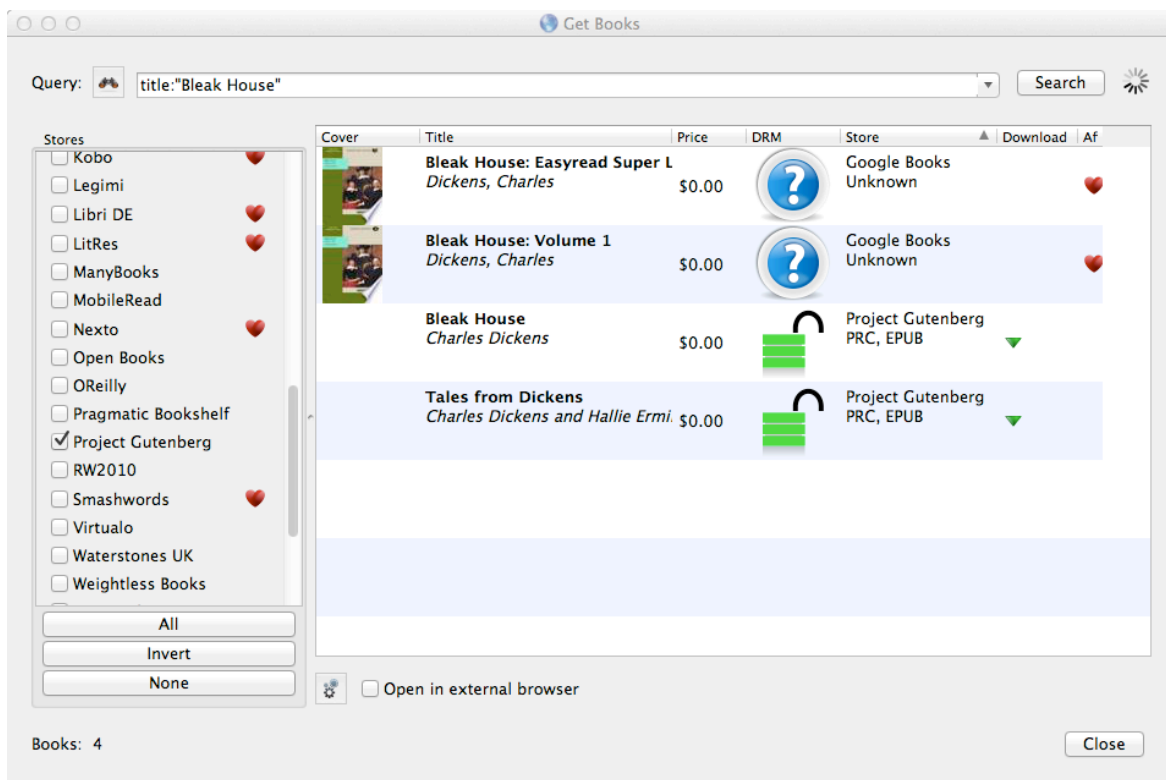


## Finding a Book with Calibre

When you open Calibre, the initial screen will show you the books you already have available in your E-Book library, and give you options to search for more titles, convert existing titles from one format to another and perform a range of management tasks within your library.

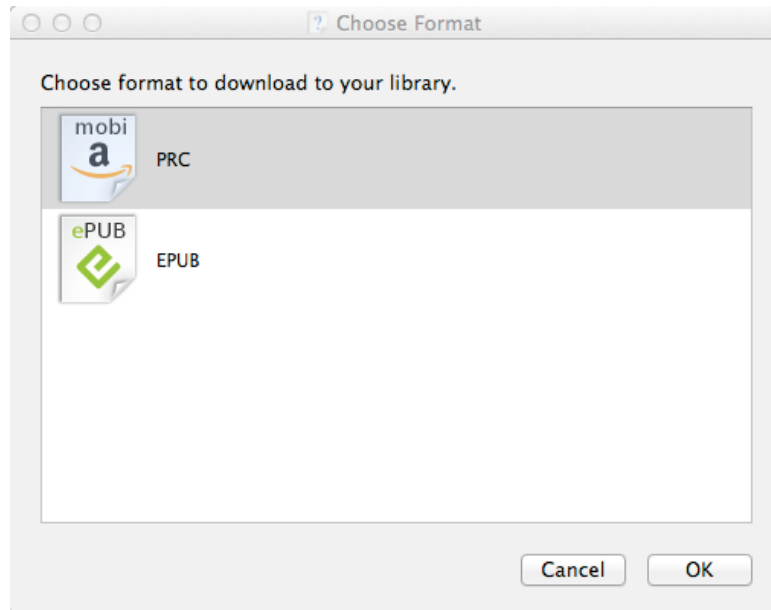


If you click on 'Get Books' you will see that Calibre can access nearly 50 online commercial and public domain book sources. You can choose to search all, or a selection, of these libraries. If you are looking for a 'popular' book, it is a good idea to restrict your search to just a few sites, e.g. Amazon Kindle, Project Gutenberg and Waterstones, otherwise you may be overwhelmed with options. If you know the exact title or author of the book, you can save yourself time by using the Advanced Search facility. Click on the 'binoculars', then Title / Author / Price and enter the details of your search term. You should get a list of possible sources for the E-Book. If there is a green triangle beside it, you can download it directly by double-clicking on the title.

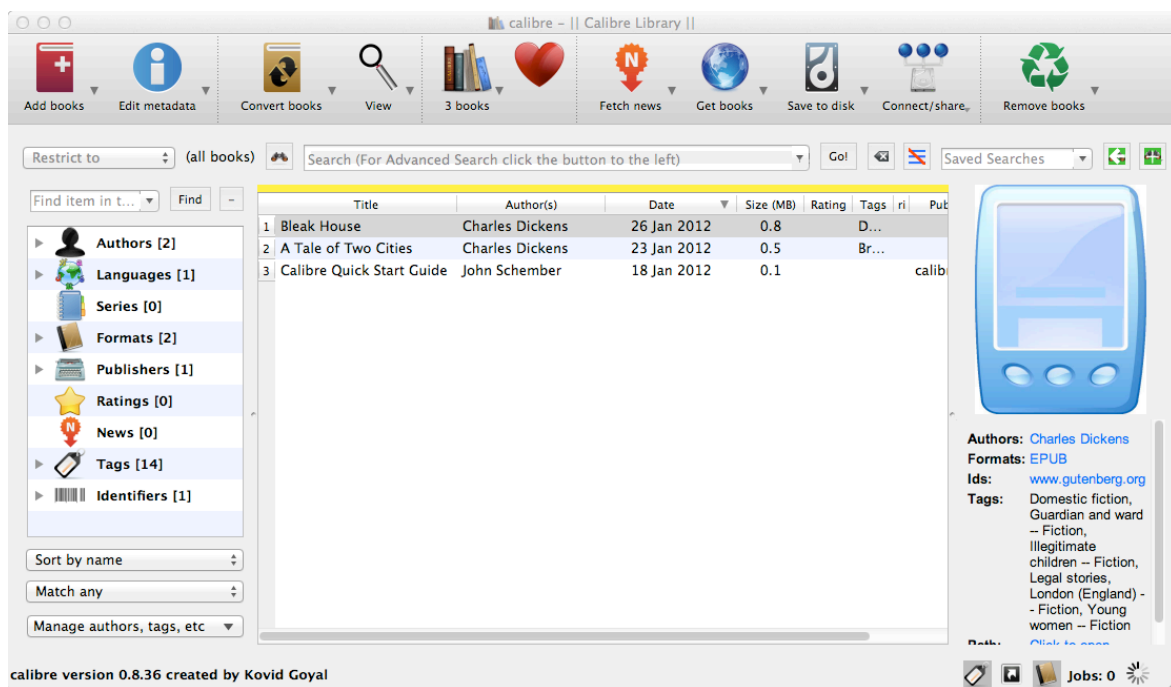


In this example, Bleak House is available from Project Gutenberg in E-Pub and PRC Formats. The PRC format is compatible with the Mofi format used by the Kindle, so you could just

download this. If the only available file was in E-Pub format, you would have to download it and convert it.



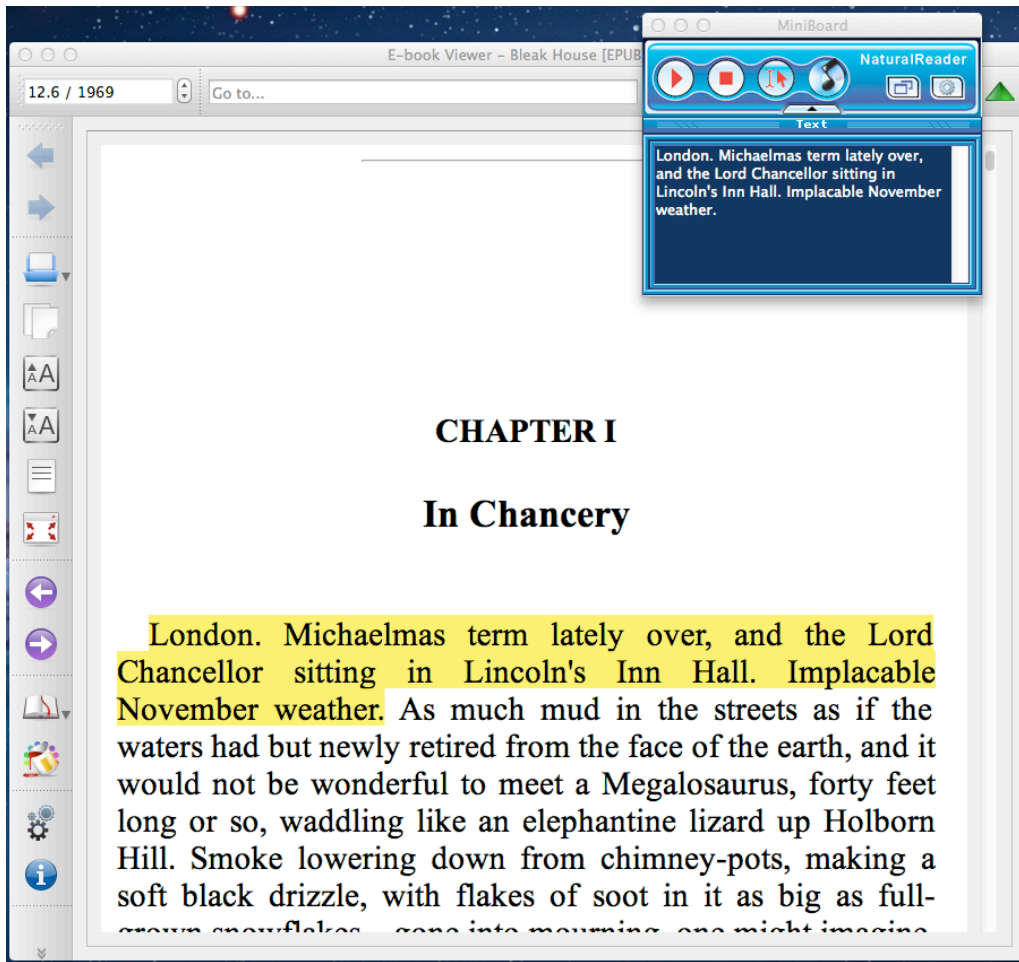
Double-click on the title, then click on OK to download it. The downloaded file will now be added to your personal library.



## Reading a Book Using Calibre

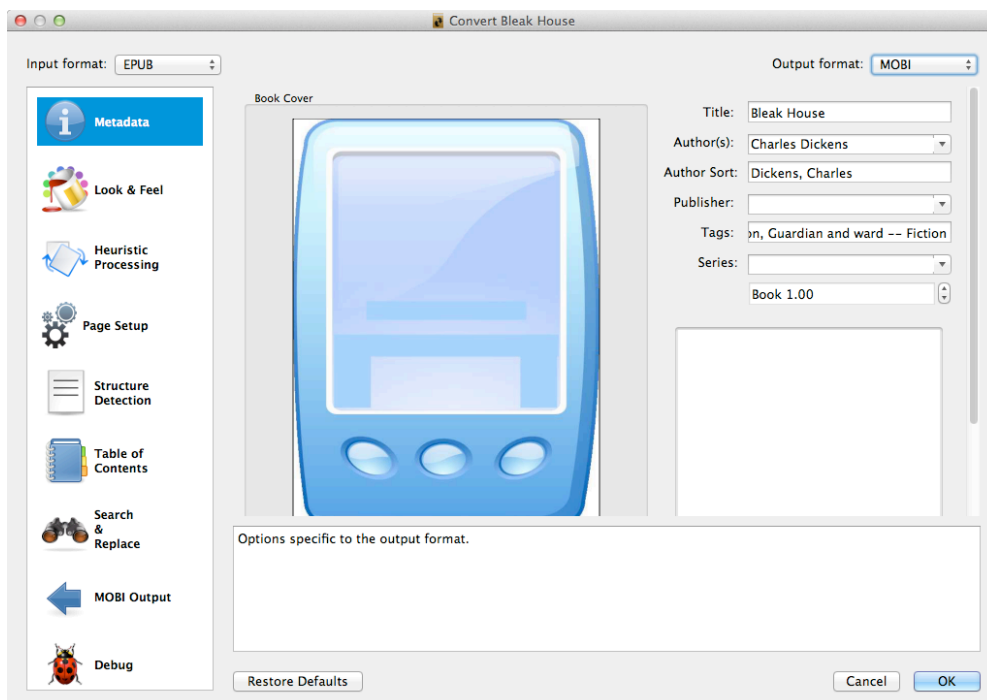
Double-click on a book in your library, or click once on the book you want to select it and then click on the **View** icon to open the book in the Calibre reader.

Depending on the level of protection of the original text, the Calibre reader allows you to change font, enlarge text, move easily from page to page and set bookmarks. There are keyboard shortcuts for people who prefer not to use a mouse. Unfortunately, it loses your place in the document if you enlarge the text, so it is a good idea to do this before you start reading. Another drawback is the lack of a built-in text to speech facility, but as long as you can select the text with your mouse it works well with a text to speech program, such as the free version of NaturalReader.



## Converting a Book for use on a Kindle

If you only have an E-Pub version of a book you have to convert it to MOBI format in order to read it on a Kindle. Select the book in your library that you wish to convert and click on Convert Books. The next screen provides a lot of options to 'fine tune' the conversion, but you probably will not have to make many changes. Make sure that MOBI is selected at the top-right of the window.



There are a lot of options that you can ‘tweak’ to fine-tune your output, but it is probably best to stick with the default settings initially, before experimenting with others. For example, if you are setting up a book for somebody with specific requirements with regard to font and size of text, it is worth looking at some of the options under Look and Feel, but beware that some of this is complicated.

Note that your converted document won’t actually appear as a new entry in the list of titles in your library, but you can check that it is there by clicking on the title, and looking to see if the format for the converted book is included in the list to the right of the screen.

## Transferring your Book to your Kindle

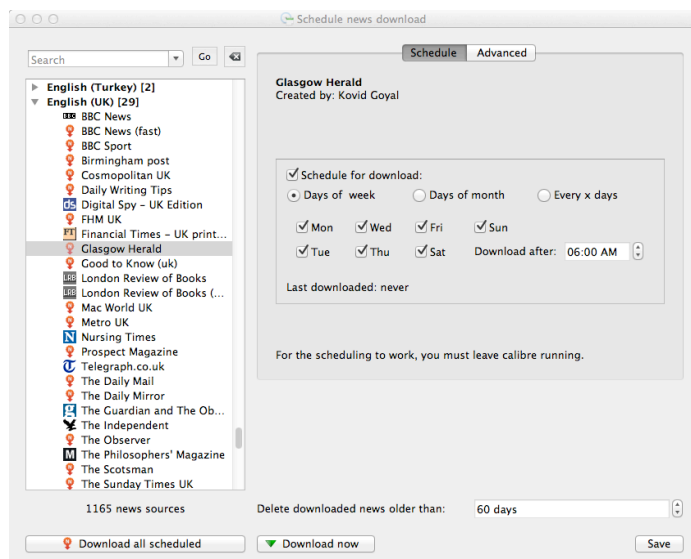
There are two main ways to transfer your E-Book to your Kindle:

1. **By Email** - Simply click on the Connect/share icon and select Email to... (Your Kindle email address should be visible.) The book will automatically be transferred to your Kindle account and will be downloaded the next time your Kindle has a wifi connection. Note that there is a charge for getting a book over a 3G connection so Kindle defaults to wait until you are connected by Wifi. This is easy, but takes a bit of trust the first couple of times to be sure the book has really been transferred!
2. **By USB Connection** - This is a bit more complicated, but it is easier for you to see that the file has been transferred! Connect your Kindle to a USB connection on your computer. The Kindle will appear as an additional disk drive on the computer. Open the Kindle drive and you will see a folder called ‘Documents’. Open this folder to see the documents that you already have on your Kindle. Now go back into Calibre, select the title that you wish to transfer and click on the small triangle beside the Save to Disk icon. You want to **Save only MOBI format to disk**. Locate the Documents folder on your Kindle drive and click on **Save**. This will save your MOBI file onto your Kindle, allowing you to read the book.

Once you have the MOBI file on your Kindle you will be able to read it the same way as any other book. Text to speech will be available, unless this was blocked within the original DRM (Digital Rights Management) settings when the E-Book was first created.

## Accessing News Services via Calibre

You can also use Calibre to access and download information from news services and magazines throughout the world. If you click on the Fetch News icon, you will see a list of available titles - there are currently well over 1,000 titles available, including many newspapers based in the UK.



You can schedule a 'download' time for each title, depending on how regularly it is published. Note that you must have Calibre running to download your publication. Publications are downloaded automatically and can be read using the Calibre reader.



Your titles will be automatically transferred to your Kindle the next time that you have a wi-fi connection.