

# How Do I Manage My eBook Library on My iPad?



Chances are good that you're holding a physical book in your hands right now as you read these words. Physical books are an awesome invention: They're portable, easy-to-use, and fully "show-off-able," whether being read on the subway or sitting on a bookshelf at home. Physical books aren't going away anytime soon, but the age of electronic books — eBooks — is upon us. Amazon's Kindle lit a fire under the eBook category, but it's clunky to use and tied to Amazon; the iPhone and iPod touch are actually the most popular eReaders today, but they're a bit too small. As you see in this chapter, the iPad fills in these gaps by being easy to use, by supporting an open eBook format, and by having a screen that seems tailor-made for reading books.

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## Installing the iBooks App

In this chapter, I concentrate on iBooks, which is Apple's new eReader app. However, it's important to stress right off the bat that you're not restricted to using iBooks for reading eBooks on your iPad. Tons of great eBook apps are available (I mention a few of them at the end of this chapter; see the section on reading other eBooks on your iPad), so feel free to use any or all of them in addition to (or even instead of) iBooks.

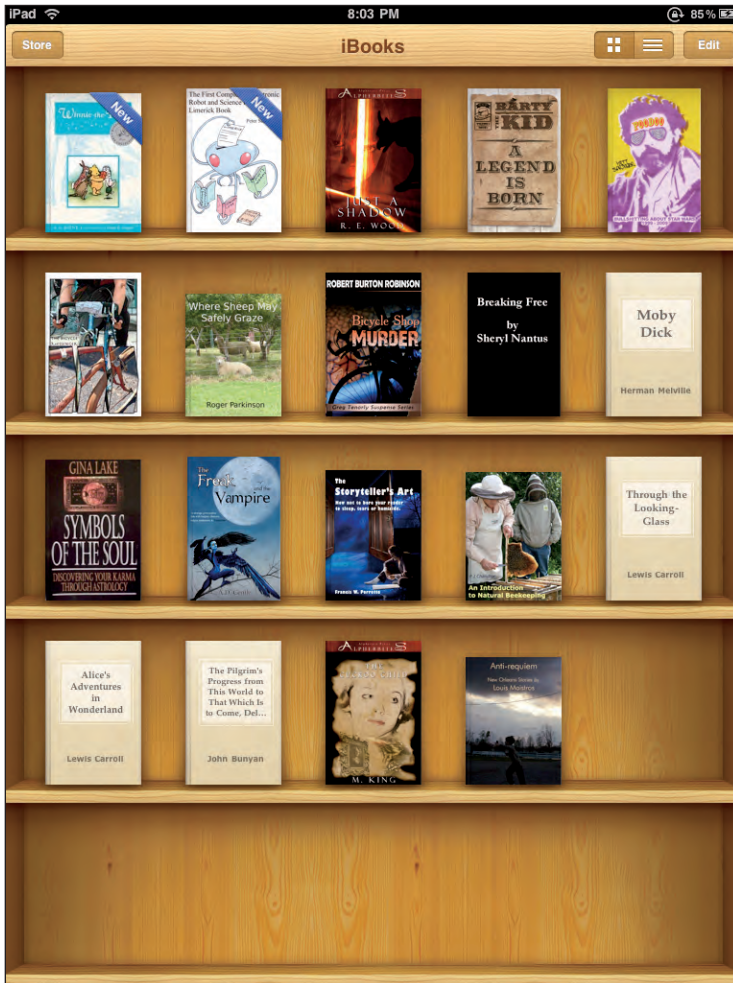
Unlike the other apps I've talked about in this book, iBooks isn't part of the default iPad app collection. Instead, you have to install it (it's free) from the App Store:

1. **On the Home screen, tap App Store.** Your iPad opens the App Store.
2. **Tap search to open the Search page.**
3. **Tap inside the Search box to display the keyboard, type iBooks, and then tap Search.** The search results appear.
4. **Tap the iBooks app.** The app's Info screen appears.
5. **Tap the FREE icon.** The Free icon changes to the Install icon.
6. **Tap Install.** The App Store asks for your iTunes account password.
7. **Type your password, and tap OK.** The App Store downloads and installs the app, and an iBooks icon appears on the Home screen.
8. **When the installation is complete, tap the iBooks icon to launch the app.** Figure 7.1 shows the iBooks Library, which looks like a bookcase.

## Getting Your Head around eBook Formats

If there's one reason why eBooks haven't taken off (in the same way that, say, digital music now rules the planet), it's because the eBook world is hopelessly, head-achingly confusing. As I write this, at least two dozen (yes, two *dozen!*) different eBook formats are available, with new formats jumping on the eBook bandwagon with distressing frequency. That's bad enough, but it gets

worse when you consider that some of these formats require a specific eReading device or program. For example, the Kindle eBook format requires either the Kindle eReader or the Kindle app; similarly, the Microsoft LIT format requires the Microsoft Reader program. Finally, things turn positively chaotic when you realize that some formats come with built-in restrictions that prevent you from reading eBooks in other devices or programs, or sharing eBooks with other people.



7.1 The iBooks Library is designed to mimic a real bookcase.

We're a long way from the simplicity and clarity that comes with having a near-universal eBook format (such as the MP3 format in music), but there are signs of hope because one format seems to be slowly emerging from the fray: EPUB. This is a free and open eBook standard created by the International Digital Publishing Forum (IDPF; see [www.idpf.org/](http://www.idpf.org/)). EPUB files (which use the .epub extension) are supported by most eReader programs and by most eReader devices (with the Amazon Kindle being the very noticeable exception). EPUB is leading the way not only because it's free and non-proprietary, but also because it offers quite a few cool features:

- Text is resizable, so you can select the size that's most comfortable for you.
- The layout and formatting of the text is handled by cascading style sheets (CSS), which is an open and well-known standard that makes it easy to alter the look of the text, including changing the font.
- Text is "re-flowable," which means that when you change the text size or the font, the text wraps naturally on the screen to accommodate the new character sizes. (This is opposed to some eBook formats that simply zoom in or out of the text.)
- A single eBook can have alternative versions of the book in the same file.
- eBooks can include high-resolution images right on the page.
- Publishers can protect book content by adding *digital rights management* (DRM) support. DRM refers to any technology that restricts the usage of content to prevent piracy. (Depending on where you fall in the "information wants to be free" spectrum, DRM may not be "cool" and may not even be considered a "feature.")

So the first bit of good news is that the iBooks app supports the EPUB format, so all the features listed above are available in the iBooks app.



### Note

For the record, I should also mention that you can use the iBooks app to read books in three other formats: plain text, HTML, and PDF.

The next bit of good news is iBooks' support for EPUB means that a vast universe of public domain books is available to you. On its own, Google Books (<http://books.google.com/>) offers over a *million* public domain eBooks. Several other excellent EPUB sites exist on the Web, and I tell you about them, as well as tell you how to get them onto your iPad, a bit later (see the section on adding other EPUB eBooks).

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- You can read your eBooks only on your iPad or on a computer that has iTunes installed.

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- EPUB format books that come wrapped in some other DRM scheme will *not* work on your iPad.

However, remember that DRM is an optional add-on to the EPUB format. Although it's expected that most publishers will bolt FairPlay DRM onto books they sell in the iBookstore, it's not required, so you should be able to find DRM-free eBooks in the iBookstore (and elsewhere).



### Note

If you have an Amazon Kindle, I'm afraid you won't be able to transfer any of your Kindle eBooks directly to your iPad, or vice versa. The Kindle doesn't support EPUB, so it can't load even your DRM-free EPUB books. The Kindle uses a proprietary eBook format, so Kindle eBooks won't transfer to the iPad (or any other eReader). However, Amazon does offer a Kindle app for the iPad, so you can use that app to read your Kindle books.

## Managing Your iBooks Library

The iBooks app comes with a virtual wood bookcase, which is a nice bit of eye candy, for sure, but is certainly no more than that since the real point is to fill that bookcase with your favorite digital reading material. So your first task is to add a few titles to the bookcase, and the next few sections show you how to do just that.

## Browsing books in the iBookstore

You'll see a bit later that you can grab eBooks via the iTunes Store, but what if you're out and about with your iPad, you've got a bit of time to kill, and you decide to start a book? That's no problem, because iBooks has a direct link to Apple's new book marketplace, the iBookstore. Your iPad can establish a wireless connection to the App Store anywhere you have Wi-Fi access or a cellular signal (ideally 3G for faster downloads, assuming you have a 3G version of the iPad). You can browse and search the books, read reviews, and purchase any book you want (or grab a title from the large collection of free books). The eBook downloads to your iPad and adds itself to the iBooks bookcase. You can start reading within seconds!

What about the selection? When Apple announced the iPad and the iBooks app, they also announced that five major publishers would be stocking the iBookstore: Hachette, HarperCollins, Macmillan, Penguin, and Simon & Schuster. Apple also promised that more publishers would be added; so along with all those free eBooks, you can rest assured the iBookstore will have an impressive selection.

To access the iBookstore, follow these steps:

### 1. Display the iBooks Library.

- If you haven't loaded the app yet, tap the iBooks icon to open the iBooks app.
- If you're in the iBooks app and reading a book, tap the screen to display the controls and then tap Library.

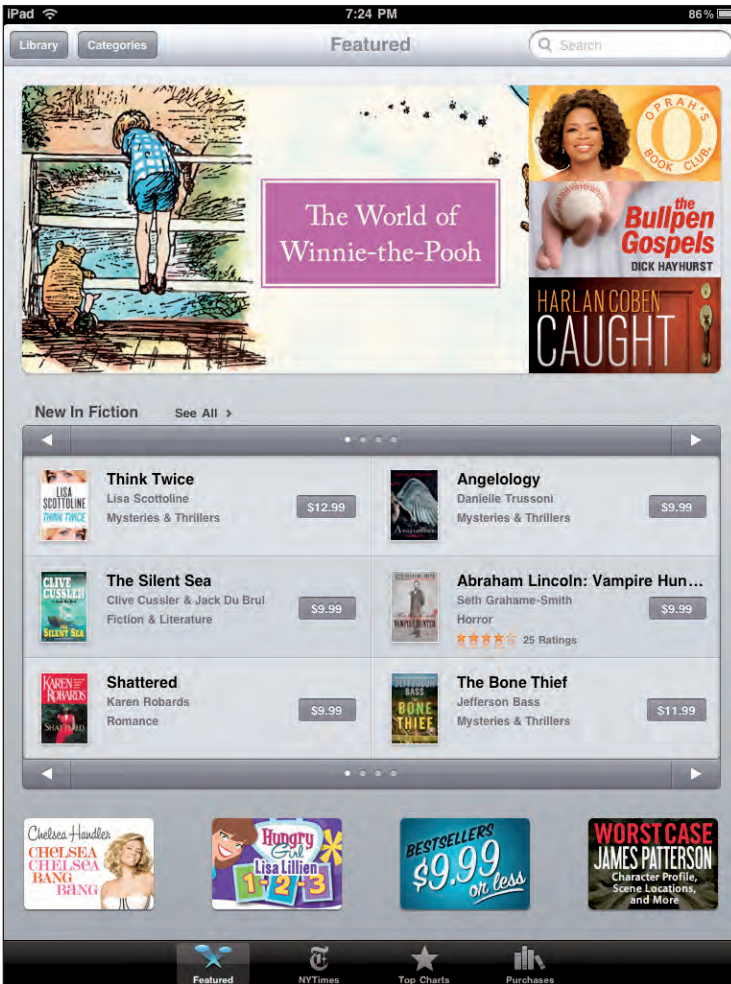
### 2. Tap the Store icon.

As you can see in Figure 7.2, your iPad organizes the iBookstore similar to the App Store. That is, you get four browse buttons in the menu bar — Featured, NY Times, Top Charts, and Publishers. You use these buttons to navigate the iBookstore.

Here's a summary of what each browse button does for you:

- **Featured.** Tap this button to display a list of books picked by the iBookstore editors. The list shows each book's cover, title, author, category, star rating, number of reviews, and price. Tap New to see the latest apps, and tap What's Hot to see the most popular items.

- **NY Times.** Tap this button to access the New York Times Bestsellers screen, which displays the top sellers in two lists: Fiction and Nonfiction.
- **Top Charts.** Tap this button to see a collection of charts, including the Top Paid books and the Top Free books.
- **Purchases.** Tap this button to see a list of the books you've downloaded.



**7.2** Use the browse buttons in the iBookstore's menu bar to locate and manage apps for your iPad.

The iBookstore also includes a Search box on the upper-right corner so you can search for the book you want, as well as a Categories button on the upper-left side so you can browse books by category.



### Note

Tap a book to get more detailed information about it. The Info screen that appears is divided into two sections: The top section shows standard book data, such as the title, author, cover, publisher, and number of pages; the bottom section is a scrollable window that gives you a description of the book, lists related books, and offers user reviews of the book.

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4. **Tap the Password box, type your password, and tap OK.** The iBooks app switches back to the Library bookcase, places your book on the top shelf, and displays a progress bar that tracks the download (most eBooks download in just a few seconds).
5. **When the download is complete, tap the eBook's cover to start reading.**



### Note

If the app is quite big and you're surfing the Internet over a cellular connection — particularly an EDGE connection — your iPad may abort the installation and tell you that you need to connect to a Wi-Fi network to download the app.

## Sampling an eBook

You'll see in the next section that paid books will set you back anywhere from \$4.99 to \$14.99 on average. (Textbooks and specialized technical books can easily run you well over \$100!) Before forking over that kind of cash, you may want to make sure you really want the book. Checking out other readers' ratings and reviews can help, but there's nothing like checking out the book itself. In an offline bookstore, you can just leaf through the pages; in the online iBookstore, you can do the next best thing: read a sample of the book. Here's how:

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- 4. Tap the Password box, type your password, and tap OK.** The iBooks app switches back to the bookcase and adds the sample.
- 5. When the download is complete, tap the sample to start reading.**

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- 3. Tap the Buy Book icon.** The iBookstore might ask for your iTunes Store account password.
- 4. Tap the Password box, type your password, and tap OK.** The iBooks app returns you to the Library, adds your book to the top shelf of the bookcase, and displays a progress bar that tracks the download process (which should take just a few seconds).
- 5. When the download is complete, tap the book and start reading.**

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- **Snee.** This site offers lots of children's picture books in the EPUB format. [www.snee.com/epubkidsbooks/](http://www.snee.com/epubkidsbooks/).

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- 2. Locate and click the EPUB file you downloaded.**
- 3. In iTunes for the Mac, click Choose.** In iTunes for Windows, click Open. iTunes adds the eBooks to the Books section of the library.

## Editing the iBooks Library

When you add a book to the iBooks Library, the app clears a space for the new title on the left side of the top shelf of the bookcase. The rest of the books get shuffled to the right and down.

This is a sensible way to go about things if you read each book as you download it because it means the iBooks Library displays your books in the order you read them. Of course, life isn't always that orderly, and you might end up reading your eBooks more haphazardly, which means the order the book appears in the Library won't reflect the order you read them.

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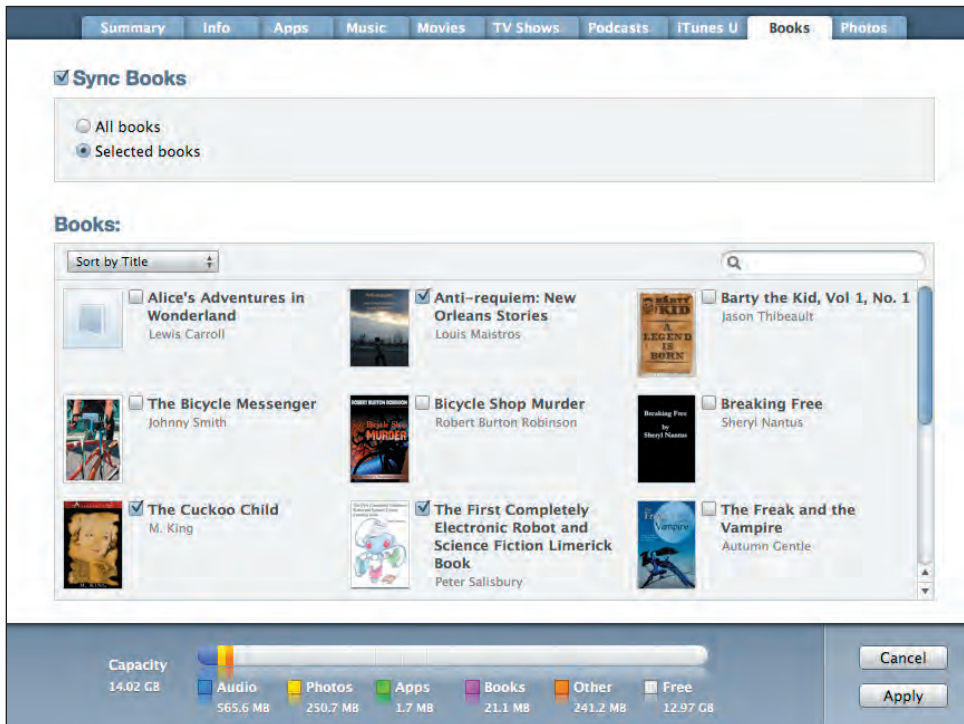
- 1. Display the iBooks Library.**
  - If you haven't loaded the app yet, tap the iBooks icon to open the iBooks app.
  - If you're in the iBooks app and reading a book, tap the screen to display the controls and then tap Library.
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- 3. Tap and drag the book covers to the bookcase positions you prefer.**
- 4. If you want to remove a book from your library, tap the X icon in the upper left corner of the book's cover, and then click Delete when iBooks asks you to confirm.**
- 5. Tap Done.** iBooks closes the Library for editing.

## Syncing Your iBooks Library

If you've used your computer to grab an eBook from the iBookstore or add a downloaded eBook to the iTunes library, you'll want to get that book onto your iPad as soon as possible. Similarly, if you've downloaded a few eBooks on your iPad, it's a good idea to back them up to your computer.

You can do both by syncing eBooks between your computer and your iPad:

1. **Connect your iPad to your computer.** iTunes opens and accesses the iPad. If you added eBooks to your iPad, be sure to wait until iTunes syncs them to your computer.
2. **In iTunes, click your iPad in the Devices list.**
3. **Click the Books tab.**
4. **Select the Sync Books check box.**
5. **To sync only some of your books, select the Selected Books option.**
6. **In the book list, select the check box beside each book that you want to sync, as shown in Figure 7.3.**



7.3 You can sync selected books with your iPad.

7. **Click Apply.** iTunes syncs the iPad using your new book's settings.

## Reading eBooks with the iBooks App

If you're a book-lover like me, when you have your iBooks Library bookcase groaning under the weight of all your eBooks, you may want to spend some time just looking at all the covers sitting prettily in that beautiful bookcase. Or not. If it's the latter, then it's time to get some reading done. The next few sections show you how to control eBooks and modify the display for the best reading experience.

### Controlling eBooks on the reading screen

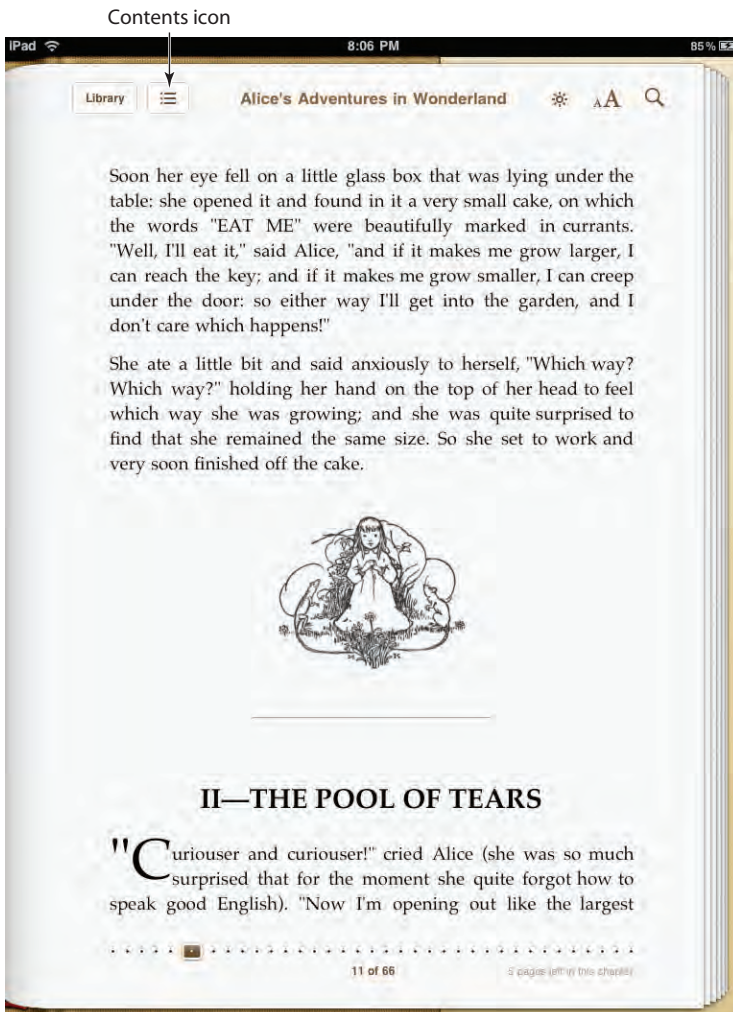
When you're ready to start reading a book using iBooks, getting started couldn't be simpler:

1. **Display the iBooks Library.**
  - If you haven't loaded the app yet, tap the iBooks icon to open the iBooks app.
  - If you're in the iBooks app and reading a book, tap the screen to display the controls and then tap Library.
2. **Tap the book you want to read.** iBooks opens the book.

Here's a list of techniques you can use to control an eBook while reading it:

- **To view one page at a time, orient the iPad in portrait mode.**
- **To view two pages at a time, orient the iPad in landscape mode.**
- **To flip to the next page, tap the right side of the screen.**
- **To flip to the previous page, tap the left side of the screen.**
- **To "manually" turn a page, flick the page with your finger.** Flick left to turn to the next page; flick right to turn to the previous page.
- **To access the iBooks controls, tap the middle of the screen.** To hide the controls, tap the middle of the screen again.
- **To access the book's Table of Contents, display the controls and tap the Contents icon, pointed out in Figure 7.4.** You can then tap an item in the Table of Contents to jump to that section of the book.

- To go to a different page in the book, display the controls and tap a dot at the bottom of the screen.
- To search the book, display the controls, tap the Search icon in the upper-right corner, type your search text, and tap Search. In the search results that appear, tap a result to display that part of the book.
- To return to the iBooks Library, display the controls and tap Library in the upper-left corner.

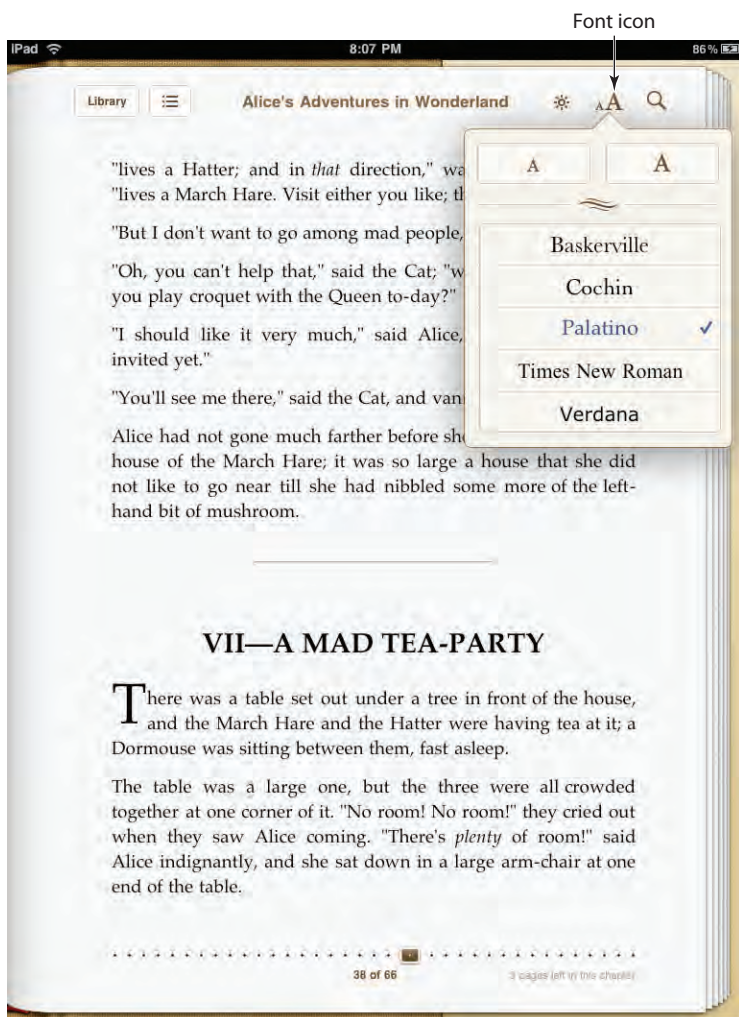


**7.4** Tap the middle of the screen to display the controls, and then tap the Contents icon to display the book's Table of Contents.

## Formatting eBook text

I mentioned near the top of the show that the EPUB format supports multiple text sizes and multiple fonts, and that the text “reflows” seamlessly to accommodate the new text size. The iBooks app takes advantage of these EPUB features, as shown here:

1. **While reading an eBook, tap the middle of the screen to display the controls.**
2. **Tap the Font icon, pointed out in Figure 7.5.** iBooks displays the Font options.
3. **Tap the larger “A” to increase the text size.** Tap the smaller “A” to reduce the font size.



7.5 Tap the Font icon to display the iBooks Font options.

4. **Tap Fonts.** iBooks displays a list of typefaces.
5. **Tap the typeface you want to use.** iBooks reformats the eBook for the new typeface.
6. **Tap the middle of the screen to hide the controls.**

## Looking up a word in the dictionary

While you're perusing an eBook, you may come across an unfamiliar word. You can look it up using any of the umpteen online dictionaries, but there's no need for that with iBooks:

1. **Tap and hold the word you're furrowing your brow over.** iBooks displays a set of options.
2. **Tap Dictionary.** iBooks looks up the word and then displays its definition.
3. **Tap outside of the definition to close it.**

## Saving your spot with a bookmark

Reading an eBook with the iBooks app is so pleasurable you may not want to stop! You have to eat sometime, however, so when it's time to set aside the book, mark your location with a bookmark:

1. **Tap and hold on the spot you want to mark.** iBooks displays a set of options.
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To return to your place, follow these steps:

1. **Tap the page.** iBooks displays the reading controls.
2. **Tap the Contents icon.** iBooks displays the reading controls.
3. **Tap the Bookmarks tab.** iBooks offers up a list of the saved bookmarks.
4. **Tap the bookmark.** iBooks returns you to the bookmarked page.

## Reading Other eBooks on Your iPad

In this chapter, I focused on the iBooks app, mostly because it's an excellent app that's optimized for the iPad and integrates seamlessly with iTunes. But the iPad is arguably the best eReader available today, so it seems a shame to ignore the massive universe of eBooks that aren't iBooks-compatible. If you want to turn your iPad into the ultimate eReader that's capable of reading practically *any* eBook in practically *any* format, then just head for the App Store and install the appropriate eReader apps.

A complete list of eReader apps would extend for pages, so I'll just hit the highlights here:

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