

Also covers Kindle Fire!

Kindle Fire™ HD

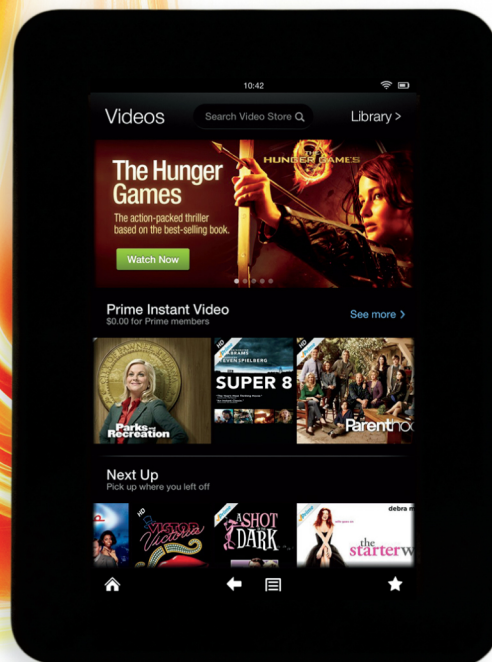
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Dedication

To Blair Pottenger, my partner in crime for the last seven years or so, for his unending professionalism and support.

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Introduction

Kindle Fire HD is a very affordable way to get at all kinds of media, from music and videos to books and colorful magazines. It's also a device that allows you to browse the Internet, connect to your Facebook account, make video calls via Skype, check your e-mail, and read documents. Its portability makes it incredibly useful for people on the go in today's fast-paced world.

In this book, I introduce you to all the cool features of Kindle Fire HD, providing tips and advice for getting the most out of this ingenious little tablet. I help you find your way around its attractive and easy-to-use interface, provide advice about getting the most out of the Amazon Cloud Drive for storing content, and even recommend some neat apps that make your device more functional and fun.

Why Buy This Book?

"If Kindle Fire HD is so easy to use, why do I need a book?" you may be asking yourself. When I first sat down with Kindle Fire HD, it took about three or four days of poking around to find settings, features, and ways to buy and locate my content and apps. When was the last time you had four days to spare? I've spent the time so that you can quickly and easily get the hang of all the Kindle Fire HD features and discover a few tricks I bet your friends won't uncover for quite a while.



This book covers many of the features in the original Kindle Fire, released in 2011, as well as the features that are new with the Kindle Fire HD. In September 2012, Amazon also released a new, upgraded (though non-HD) version of the first-generation Kindle Fire that costs \$159 and has only 8GB of storage, along with the somewhat clunkier hardware design of the original Kindle Fire. Though this book is focused on Kindle Fire HD, whichever Kindle Fire model you own, you should find lots of advice and answers in this book.

Foolish Assumptions

You may have opted for a tablet to watch movies and read books on the run. You might think it's a good way to browse business documents and check e-mail on your next plane trip. You might have one or more computers and be very computer savvy, or you might hate computers and figure that Kindle Fire HD gives you all the computing power you need to browse the Internet and read e-books.

Kindle Fire HD users come in all types. I won't assume in this book that you're a computer whiz, but I will assume that you have a passing understanding of how to copy a file and plug in a USB cable. I'm guessing you've browsed the Internet at least a few times and heard of Wi-Fi, which is what you use to go online with a Kindle Fire HD (unless you purchase the 8.9-inch LTE version). Other than that, you don't need a lot of technical background to get the most out of this book.

How This Book Is Organized

For Dummies books don't require a linear read, meaning that you could jump in anywhere and find out what you need to know about a particular feature. However, if you're opening the box and starting from square one with your Kindle Fire HD, consider working through the first couple of chapters first. Here's the breakdown for how this book is organized.

Part I: Making the Kindle Fire HD Yours

This part provides information about what's new in Kindle Fire HD and how to set up your Kindle Fire HD out of the box. You begin to understand how to navigate your way around the device and get things done using its simple interface. You also discover how to make some of the most useful Kindle Fire HD settings, such as adjusting volume and screen brightness and managing Parental Controls.

Part II: Taking the Leap Online

Chapters 4 and 5 help you buy apps and media content, such as music, videos, and magazines. You also explore how to go online and set up your e-mail account and Wi-Fi connection, and work with the Silk browser.

Part III: Having Fun and Getting Productive

In this part, you can begin to explore the wealth of multimedia and written content Kindle Fire HD makes available to you. You get to know the Kindle e-reader and how to subscribe to and read periodicals; you also find out how all this content is coordinated among your devices using Amazon's Whispersync technology. Chapters 7 and 8 are where you read about playing music and videos on your Kindle Fire HD. Chapter 9 gets you connected to others as you manage contacts, and make calls over the Internet using Kindle Fire HD and the Skype app, while Chapter 10 talks about getting productive by working with documents.

Part IV: The Part of Tens

This part includes two chapters that recommend apps you can get to add basic functionality to the Kindle Fire HD, such as a calculator and notes, and ten games to turn your Kindle Fire HD into a great gaming machine.

Icons Used in This Book

Icons are little pictures in the margin of this book that alert you to special types of advice or information, including



- ✓ These short words of advice draw your attention to faster, easier, or alternative ways of getting things done with Kindle Fire HD. Tips might also point out where a feature works slightly different from the first generation Kindle Fire or another Kindle Fire HD model.



- ✓ When you see this icon, you'll know that I'm emphasizing important information for you to keep in mind as you use a feature.



- ✓ There aren't too many ways you can get in trouble with the Kindle Fire HD, but in those few situations where some action might be irreversible, I include warnings so you can avoid any pitfalls.

Get Going!

Time to get that Kindle Fire HD out of its box, set it up, and get going with all the fun, entertaining things it makes available to you. Have fun!

Part I

Making the Kindle Fire HD Yours

The 5th Wave

By Rich Tennant



"Other than this little glitch with the landscape view, I really love my Kindle Fire HD."

In this part . . .

This part provides information about what's new in Kindle Fire HD and how to set up your Kindle Fire HD out of the box. You begin to understand how to navigate your way around the device and get things done using its simple interface. You also discover how to make some of the most useful Kindle Fire HD settings, such as adjusting volume and screen brightness and managing Parental Controls.

Overview of the Kindle Fire HD

In This Chapter

- ▶ Comparing Kindle Fire HD to the competition
- ▶ Surveying all of the Kindle Fire HD's features

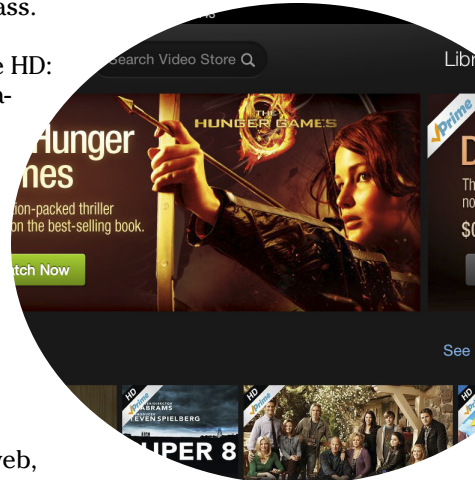
Amazon, the giant online retailer, just happens to have access to more content (music, movies, audio books, and so on) than just about anybody on the planet. So, when an Amazon tablet was rumored to be in the works, and as Amazon stacked up media partnerships with the likes of Fox and PBS, the mystery tablet was seen as the first real challenge to Apple's iPad.

Now, a year after the release of the first Kindle Fire, the Kindle Fire HD is available, and it turns out to offer several very nice improvements at the right price and feature mix for many people, while offering the key to that treasure chest of content Amazon has been wise enough to amass.

In this chapter, you get an overview of the Kindle Fire HD: how it compares to competing devices and its key features. Subsequent chapters delve into how to use all those features.

A Quick Rundown of Kindle Fire HD Hardware Features

Let's start at the beginning. A *tablet* is a handheld computer with a touchscreen and an onscreen keyboard for providing input, and apps that allow you to play games, read e-books, check e-mail, browse the web, watch movies and buy music, and more.



In the world of tablets, the first device to hit big was iPad, and then subsequent tablets, such as Samsung Galaxy and HP TouchPad, appeared. No tablet since iPad seemed to have gained a foothold in the market until Kindle Fire showed up.

Kindle Fire HD, the second generation of Kindle Fire, is lighter and smaller than iPad, at $7.6 \times 5.4 \times 0.4$ inches (see Figure 1-1) and weighing only 13.9 ounces, versus iPad's 9.7-inch display and 1.3-pound frame. For some, that smaller, lighter form factor makes the Kindle Fire HD easier to hold with one hand than the iPad. In addition, the rubberized back helps you keep a tight grip on the device, in most circumstances.

Kindle Fire HD has a projected battery life of 11 hours. The screen resolution on the Kindle Fire HD's bright color screen is just about on a par with the best tablets out there, and it brings the addition of gorilla glass, which means the screen is tough and probably doesn't require an additional screen protector.



Photo courtesy of Amazon.com

Figure 1-1: The neat size and weight of Kindle Fire HD make it easy to hold.

In its first generation model, Kindle Fire had no camera or microphone, which meant you couldn't use it to take pictures or make phone calls. With the arrival of Kindle Fire HD, you have a camera and microphone that allow you to make video calls with the built-in Skype app. However, there still isn't what you'd think of a traditional camera, one that allows you to take still photos or videos, as you can with some other popular tablets.

Finally, though a Micro USB cable (one end is a standard USB connector that fits in your computer and the other end is a micro USB connector that fits into Kindle Fire HD) is included with the Kindle Fire HD, there's no power adapter for plugging it into an outlet and charging it. You can buy an adapter from Amazon for about \$10 when you buy your device or \$20 if you buy it separately. Alternately, you can root around in your kitchen drawer to see if you have ever owned a smartphone that came with such an adapter. The adapter simply plugs into the USB end of the Micro USB cable.

Table 1-1 provides an at-a-glance view of Kindle Fire HD features.

Table 1-1	Kindle Fire HD Specifications
<i>Feature</i>	<i>Kindle Fire HD Specs</i>
Display size	7 inches or 8.9 inches
Processor	Dual Core Omap 4470 processor
Screen resolution	1900 × 1200
Internal storage	16GB or 32GB
Battery life	11 hours
Price	7-inch model is \$199 for 16GB and \$249 for 32GB; 8.9-inch model is \$299 for 16GB and \$369 for 32GB
Content	Amazon Appstore
Connectivity	Wi-Fi
Ports	Micro USB to connect to your computer, HDMI port for high definition video output
Browser	Silk
Camera	For video calls only
Sound	Dual stereo speakers, Dolby Digital Plus sound
Volume control	Physical volume rocker switch
Antenna	Dual band, dual antenna for Wi-Fi

Key Features of Kindle Fire HD

Kindle Fire HD is a tablet device with all the things most people want from a tablet packed into an easy-to-hold package: e-mail, web browsing, players for video and music content, built-in calendar and contacts apps, an e-reader, a great online content store, access to tens of thousands of Android apps, and so on. In the following sections, you get to explore all these useful features.

Storage on Earth and in the cloud

Kindle Fire HD offers 16GB and 32GB of storage in its 7-inch model. Either storage amount will probably work just fine for you because when you own a Kindle Fire HD, you get free, unlimited Amazon Cloud Drive storage for all digital content purchased from Amazon (but not content that you copy onto Kindle Fire HD from your computer by connecting a Micro USB cable). This means that books, movies, music, and apps are held online for you to stream or download at any time, instead of being stored on your Kindle Fire HD.

This Amazon Cloud Drive storage means that you don't use up your Kindle Fire HD memory. As long as you have a Wi-Fi connection, you can stream content from Amazon Cloud at any time. If you'll be away from a connection, download an item (such as an episode of your favorite TV show) and watch it, and then remove it from your device the next time you're within range of a Wi-Fi network. The content is still available in the Cloud: You can download that content again or stream it anytime you like.



If you want to go whole hog into Kindle Fire HD Land, you can opt for the highest memory device, the 64GB 8.9-inch Kindle Fire HD 4G LTE Wireless version of the device. Just be aware that this version comes with the cost of an AT&T data plan.

App appeal

In several ways, Kindle Fire HD is easy to use, with a simple Android-based touchscreen interface. It's a great device for consuming media — and what a lot of media Amazon makes available! Kindle Fire HD also offers a brand new version of its Silk browser, an e-mail client, calendar and contact apps, and an available Skype app, as well as the Kindle e-reader (see Figure 1-2).



Just because a particular type of app doesn't come preinstalled on Kindle Fire HD doesn't mean you can't get one, often for free. At this point, the selection of apps available for Android devices isn't nearly as robust as those available for Apple devices, but that will change over time. See Chapter 11 for a list of ten apps that can flesh out your Kindle Fire HD with popular features such as a budget tracker, weather reporter, and calculator, and check out Chapter 12 for ten or so great game apps.

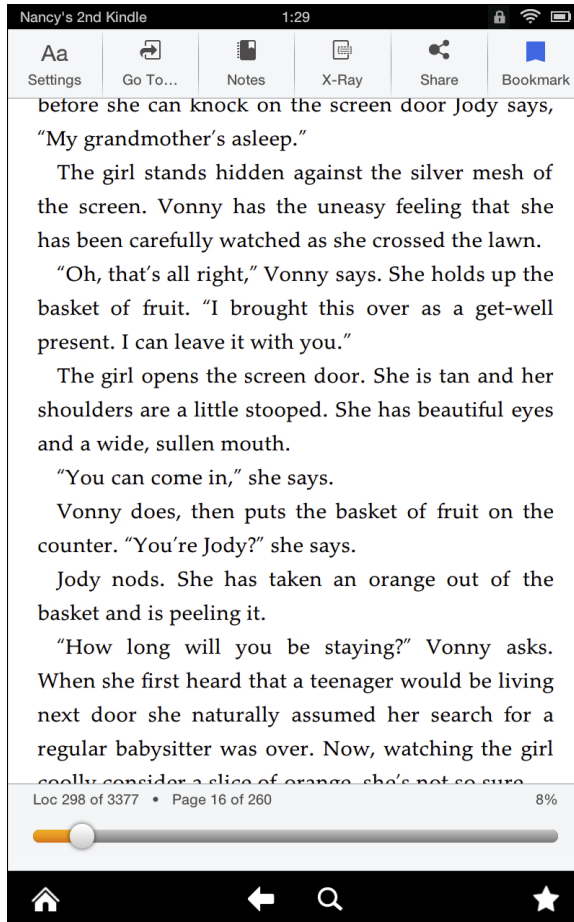


Figure 1-2: Where it all started, with Kindle e-reader functionality.

Check out the price

Amazon brought the Kindle Fire to market as a lower-priced device, losing money on the hardware and making it up with content purchases. Some consider it just a device for buying Amazon content, and it certainly lacks some features of more sophisticated devices such as iPad. However, the lower pricing scheme has clearly been a hit with many people.

Here's the rundown of current Kindle Fire devices and their pricing:

- ✓ **Kindle Fire:** \$159
- ✓ **Kindle Fire HD 7-inch display:** 16GB, \$199; 32GB, \$249
- ✓ **Kindle Fire HD 8.9-inch display:** 16GB, \$299; 32GB, \$369
- ✓ **Kindle Fire HD 8.9-inch display with 4G LTE Wireless:** 32GB, \$499; 64GB, \$599



Just keep in mind that at the top end, you'll pay \$829 for a 9.7-inch, 64GB, 3G iPad and \$599 for a 64GB Kindle Fire HD 8.9-inch 4G LTE Wireless. Amazon is positioning its device as a more cost-effective tablet, but do be aware that the lower cost on the Kindle Fire HD is subsidized to some extent by some rather blatant advertising. You can pay \$15 to have the advertising removed from your Kindle Fire HD experience. See Chapter 3 for more about how to do this.

Pre-installed functionality

Here's a rundown of the functionality you get out of the box from pre-installed apps:

- ✓ E-reader to read both books and periodicals
- ✓ Music player
- ✓ Video player
- ✓ Audiobook player
- ✓ Contacts app
- ✓ Calendar app
- ✓ Cube Calculator app
- ✓ Docs document reader for Word, PDF, RTF, and HTML format files
- ✓ Silk web browser
- ✓ Photos (see Figure 1-3) in which you can view and make a very few edits (rotate and crop) to photos
- ✓ Personal Videos app for transferring personal videos to Kindle Fire HD
- ✓ The IMDb database of movie trivia and facts
- ✓ E-mail client (use this to set up Kindle Fire HD to access your existing e-mail accounts)
- ✓ Integration for Facebook and Twitter
- ✓ OfficeSuite for simple word processing and spreadsheet functionality