



Bookshare.org

Taken from www.bookshare.org

How Bookshare works:

Bookshare® is an online library of digital books for people with print disabilities. It operates under an exception to U.S. copyright law which allows copyrighted digital books to be made available to people with qualifying disabilities. In addition, many publishers and authors have volunteered to provide Bookshare with access to their works. By requiring individuals to register as Members and provide a Proof of Disability, Bookshare ensures that only qualified individuals use the service.

Bookshare Members download books, textbooks and newspapers in a compressed, encrypted file. They then read the material using adaptive technology, typically software that reads the book aloud (text-to-speech) and/or displays the text of the book on a computer screen, or Braille access devices, such as refreshable Braille displays.

- Through an award from the U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), Bookshare offers free memberships to U.S. schools and qualifying U.S. students.

Who Bookshare Serves:

Bookshare provides multiple reading options for each of the communities it serves:

- **People with Visual Impairments**
Members with visual impairments can listen to books with using a text-to-speech synthesized voice, read books in Braille, or access the material in large print. Hard copy Braille books can also be ordered-these are then created by a partner organization that specializes in producing embossed Braille books. Members with low vision can read books in an enlarged font using either a screen magnifier or by opening the book in a software program that supports increased font size, color, contrast, etc.
- **People with Physical Disabilities**
Members can read books on a computer or a variety of portable devices, either visually and with text-to-speech as desired. Bookshare books are as easy as or easier to access than books on tape and may be controlled with an individual's single-switch or other adaptive technology.
- **People with Learning Disabilities**
Members with severe dyslexia typically benefit from access to the full text of books in digital format, for multi-modal reading with both visual and audio (through synthetic text to speech). Many great software programs exist that provide a range of reading support specifically designed for individuals with learning disabilities, including highlighting of text as it is read aloud, changing margin, word, paragraph and line spacing, and setting custom background and print colors.

Bookshare believes that all people, of all abilities, should have the same access to reading material as everyone else. With the help of Volunteers, publishers and partners of all kinds, Bookshare is making this vision a reality.

Making Print Books Accessible

Bookshare adds books to the digital library in a variety of ways:

- Volunteers upload books they have scanned.
- Publishers and authors grant Bookshare rights to their digital files.
- In-house staff and partners scan and upload books.
- Universities and schools contribute their scanned books.
- Educators assign books to Bookshare from the NIMAC repository.

Developed over several years, this approach is far more efficient and less expensive than other approaches. Bookshare has successfully reduced the time required to provide a book in an accessible format from months or years to days, while doing so at a cost that is as much as 75 times less expensive than traditional methods.

The books scanned and produced by Volunteers or in-house staff follow an efficient, and well-developed process:

1. **Book purchase/procurement:** Bookshare obtains a new book either through purchase or donations. Bookshare chooses books based on user requests and surveys, best-seller lists, book award winners and recommendations from teachers and school administrators. Volunteers will buy books or check them out of their local libraries.
2. **Book scanning and file conversion:** A Volunteer or staff member scans the book into a computer using equipment similar to a photocopier and then runs it through optical character recognition software to convert the scanned image into a digital text file. A first review of the book determines whether the scan successfully included all pages and established proper recognition of page breaks and chapters. This step typically takes between two and four hours, depending on the size and complexity of the book. Some preliminary proofreading is done by the person who scanned the book.
3. **Proofreading:** After a book has been scanned, through a combination of Volunteers and in-house staff, a second Volunteer reviews the book for basic quality (e.g., book title, author and copyright notice are correct, the book is complete, etc). This Volunteer also has the option of proofreading the book. Bookshare Volunteers are very detail-oriented and take great pride in ensuring high quality books. The time required for this step varies based on the length and type of book. Textbooks, for example, are longer and more complicated than the average literature book and require more time. The Volunteer then uploads the reviewed, proofread or book to the Bookshare approval queue for a final review.
4. **Final review and upload to the Bookshare website:** In the final step, a Bookshare staff member reviews all books and verifies that they meet all criteria for inclusion into the collection. This person makes the final decision about whether to add it to the Bookshare library.

Once approved, the book is converted from a simple text format to an accessible book format with relevant headings, page tags and other important features. The book is then made available to Bookshare Members for download in two accessible digital formats from the Bookshare website:

- **DAISY (Digital Accessible Information System)**-a talking-book file format. DAISY books from Bookshare are DAISY 3 text files that work with screen readers, self-voicing synthetic-voice DAISY players, portable self-voicing DAISY players, and scan-and-read software such as Kurzweil K1000 and K3000, WYNN, and OpenBook.

- **BRF (Braille Refreshable Format)**-digital Braille for use with Braille embossers and refreshable Braille devices.

Through this well-refined process, Bookshare adds hundreds of new books to the library every month, ensuring a continual supply of fresh reading for Members.

- **How do I join Bookshare®?**

There are three steps to becoming a Bookshare Member:

1. **Register online.** Select Sign Up at the top of the page and fill out the online registration form.
 - If you are a U.S. student or a U.S. educational institution, your membership is free, through an award from the U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). Be sure to fill out all the student/school information so you can qualify.
 - **Hadley students and alumni:** Current Hadley students can enter “Hadley student” in the Promo Code field to request verification of student status and disability. Hadley alumni can enter "Hadley alumni" in the Promo Code field to request verification of disability.
 - Read through and accept the Bookshare agreement.
 - Upon completion, you will receive a welcome email that contains a link to create a password. You'll see email and login fields on the website. You can use these to login after you set your password using the link in the welcome email Bookshare will send you.
2. **Provide proof of disability.** Once you have your password, you can log in with your email and password.
 - **Students of schools with Organizational Memberships:** If your school has already submitted your proof of disability to Bookshare as part of its account, your teacher or sponsor at the school can log in and print a special registration form specifically for you that will register you for individual membership without the need for additional proof of disability.
 - **National Library Service (NLS) patrons:** Select My Account, go to the Proof of Disability tab and complete the online Disability Verification Request form.
 - **Recording for the Blind & Dyslexic members:** Select My Account, go to the Proof of Disability tab and complete the online RFB&D disability verification form.
 - **CNIB patrons:** Patrons with a current CNIB Identification Card can mail or fax a copy of their card to Bookshare.
 - **All others:** Please complete the Proof of Disability form, have it signed by your doctor or a certifying professional and fax or mail it to:
Bookshare
480 South California Avenue, Suite 201
Palo Alto, CA 94306
Fax: 650.475.1066
3. **Pay membership fee.** There is a one-time \$25 initiation fee and a \$50 annual membership fee. If you are a U.S. student or a U.S. educational institution, your membership is free, through an award from the U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP).

- **How can I subscribe to the Bookshare discussion lists?**

- Bookshare Discussion List

Dr. Valerie Scaramella Nowinski
Pediatric Neuropsychology
Pediatric Neuropsychology Diagnostic and Treatment Center
(708) 403-9000
www.ndcbrain.com

- Subscribe: Send a blank email with “subscribe” in the subject line to:
bookshare-discuss-request@freelists.org
- Unsubscribe: Send a blank email with “unsubscribe” in the subject line to:
bookshare-discuss-request@freelists.org
- Bookshare Volunteer Discussion List
 - Subscribe: Send a blank email with “subscribe” in the subject line to:
bksvol-discuss-request@freelists.org
 - Unsubscribe: Send a blank email with “unsubscribe” in the subject line to:
bksvol-discuss-request@freelists.org

These are very active lists, with dozens of messages each day. You can subscribe to these lists in digest form, which typically means one email a day containing all of the emails sent to the list that day.

- Bookshare Discussion List: Send a message with “set digest” in the subject to:
bookshare-discuss-request@freelists.org
- Bookshare Volunteer Discussion List: Send a message with “set digest” in the subject to:
bksvol-discuss-request@freelists.org
- **What if I can't find the book I'm looking for on Bookshare?**

If you don't find what you are looking for in the Bookshare library, you can always request a book.

- **What is Bookshare?**

Bookshare is an online library that makes print material available for people with print disabilities. It is designed exclusively for the use of the blind and other individuals with print related disabilities. Bookshare has been in operation since February, 2002 and was created by Benetech® (formerly Arkenstone).

- **What is Benetech and how can I find out more?**

Bookshare is an initiative of Benetech, a nonprofit organization that harnesses the power of technology to meet important social needs. Benetech delivers these benefits using the innovative model of social enterprise, which combines market forces with philanthropic capital and entrepreneurial drive. It is the nonprofit successor of Arkenstone, which developed reading machines for people with visual and learning disabilities. To find out more about Benetech, please visit Benetech's website at www.benetech.org. There you can browse information about Benetech's vision, implementation, and ongoing projects.

- **How is Bookshare different from NLS or RFB&D?**

The Bookshare library serves people with disabilities in a new way, providing a vast collection of downloadable books in digital text formats. Other libraries provide mainly human narrated audio or hardcopy Braille. Bookshare books can be easily used with access technology using synthetic speech, large print and/or Braille. One major difference is that the Bookshare library is primarily created by its Members. If one Member thinks a book is worth scanning, Bookshare will add that book to the collection so it is available to all Members.

- **Isn't it illegal to share copyrighted material on the Internet?**

In general, it is illegal to share or distribute copyrighted works of literature. However, there is a special provision in U.S. copyright law that explicitly gives qualified nonprofit companies such as Bookshare the ability to distribute copyrighted materials in a specialized format for use only by those with disabilities. Section 17 U.S.C. § 121 of the copyright law states in part:

"... it is not an infringement of copyright for an authorized entity to reproduce or to distribute copies ... of a previously published, nondramatic literary work if such copies ... are reproduced or distributed in specialized formats exclusively for use by blind or other persons with disabilities."

- **Who can become a Member?**

Bookshare membership is available to people who provide proof of a print disability, such as blindness or low vision, a reading disability or a physical disability that makes it difficult or impossible to read standard print.

- **Is Bookshare only for students?**

No. Bookshare is for any qualified individual. The requirements for qualification are very similar to those required for access to other accessible media sources such as Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic (RFB&D) or the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, a division of the Library of Congress (NLS). Bookshare is available to those who provide proof of their print related disability. This certification may come from a doctor, rehabilitation counselor or other authorized professional.

- **How much does it cost?**

Students and schools in the U.S. have had their memberships paid for thanks to the generous support of the Office of Special Education Programs of the U.S. federal Department of Education. The cost for an annual individual membership for non-students is \$25.00 to sign up and \$50.00 for the annual membership, with no per-book download charges.

- **What types of books are available through Bookshare?**

Bookshare offers a range of material in numerous genres for Members of all ages. From children's books to New York Times Best Sellers, from textbooks and technical books to science fiction, Bookshare has something for everyone. Use the quick search and browse links in the navigation bar to find the book you want. Or select the Advanced Search link to narrow your search by title, author, publisher, language, category, ISBN, etc. You can browse and search the library without becoming a Member.

- **How do I search for books in the Bookshare library?**

Bookshare's powerful full text search capability searches for a word or phrase in the titles, authors' names, and contents of all books in the library. Just enter a word or phrase in the search box at the top of any page.

- **What types of newspapers and magazines are available from Bookshare?**

Leading national and some metropolitan newspapers, as well as some popular magazines are available through Bookshare, in partnership with the National Federation of the Blind through its

NFB-NEWSLINE© service. Browse newspapers and magazines. Newspapers and magazines may not be available in your state or country.

- **In which formats are the books available?**

Books from Bookshare are available in two specialized formats specifically designed for people with disabilities:

- **BRF (Braille Refreshable Format)** - digital Braille for use with refreshable Braille devices and Braille embossers.
- **DAISY (Digital Accessible Information System)** - a digital book file format. DAISY books from Bookshare are DAISY 3.0 text files that work with just about every type of access technology that reads text, such as screen readers, self-voicing synthetic-voice DAISY players, Braille notetakers, portable self-voicing DAISY Players, and scan-and-read software such as Kurzweil K1000 and K3000, and WYNN and OpenBook. Currently Bookshare is reprocessing all books in the collection to ensure compatibility with DAISY 3.0.

- **Where does Bookshare get books in digital form?**

The primary source for Bookshare books is the community of Members and Volunteers. There are many people who routinely use a computer to scan a book or other text into machine-readable form to make it accessible for their own use. Converting a book in this way can take up to several hours. Often, many people end up scanning a popular book, needlessly repeating many hours of work. Bookshare seeks to maximize the efficiency of this process by making a work scanned by only one or a few people available to thousands of people with qualifying disabilities.

Bookshare also receives books from publishers and authors who provide original digital copies with permission for Bookshare to make them available to people with disabilities, typically around the world. In addition, schools and universities submit books and textbooks they've scanned.

- **Can I share my Bookshare books with other people?**

Members are permitted to use Bookshare books for their own personal use. Bookshare uses Digital Rights Management (DRM) technology and contractual agreements with Members to maximize personal access to books and minimize abuse of this privilege. Bookshare copyrighted books are not available to the general public, and cannot be shared with individuals other than the Member for whom the book was downloaded, regardless of whether or not the other individual would qualify for service.