

Electronic Publications

This factsheet lists some sources of electronic texts (books, newspapers and periodicals) available on the internet, by e-mail and on disk or CD through the post.

The vast majority of these texts are in ASCII (text only) format and can be read by any computer whether PC or Mac, DOS or Windows. Others are audio recordings that require specific playing software.

The Internet

Included in the enormous amount of information available on-line are many thousands of books, articles, journals and comments on every subject you can imagine.

Some websites contain the texts or recordings of books that can be retrieved and read at your leisure and free of charge. Some websites are simply "virtual bookshops" where you can purchase conventional books or audio books that will then be sent to you in the post at a cost that covers the books, postage and packing.

This factsheet is concerned entirely with electronic books that can be downloaded and read or listened to on your computer or portable device such as the Book Courier.

Project Gutenberg

Project Gutenberg is the Internet's oldest producer of free electronic books (mostly titles already out of copyright). Their home page contains thousands of books on all subjects, fact and fiction, which can be downloaded and saved on your computer to read later. The site includes several easy ways of finding a book: by title, author, subject or even by other details including language, version or author's birth date.

However, this website was not designed with visual impairment in mind and some people may not find it easy to read or screen reader friendly.

Most of the books available from the sites mentioned below are those of Project Gutenberg and hence are available from this website.

www.gutenberg.net

National Library for the Blind UK

This website, designed for easy access by those with a visual impairment, is a good source of electronic texts you can download. There is also a lot of useful information about NLBUK and their other services.

www.nlb-online.org

The Internet Public Library

Another very useful resource of electronic texts arranged in 10 easy to browse categories including Languages, Natural Sciences and Mathematics, The Arts and Literature and Rhetoric.

Although the site is not written with visual impairment in mind, no frames or side menus mean that it is screen reader friendly.

www.ipl.org/div/books

The Talking Newspaper Association of the UK

TNAUK offer over 200 titles on tape, disk, e-mail or downloadable from their website or BBS (bulletin board service). They include daily newspapers and weekly magazines, as well as other monthly and quarterly publications. The TNAUK website outlines the services they offer and gives information about how to join (membership starts from around £30 per year). A full listing of all their publications in all formats is also available on the website.

www.tnauk.org.uk

Tel: 01435 866102

RNIB Electronic Publications

The RNIB Library Information Service has a catalogue of all publications available from the RNIB that can be obtained on disk from them by telephone or viewed on their website.

www.rnib.org.uk

Tel: 0845 702 3153

Bookshare

This website has a wide range of out of copyright titles in text and HTML format. You will also see copyright titles – unfortunately these are available to disabled US residents only.

www.bookshare.org

Audible.com

This website sells unabridged copyrighted audio books, periodicals and radio recordings. Download them to your computer to listen to using their free playing software or on mobile devices such as the Book Courier.

www.audible.com

What Other Related Information is Available On-Line?

The internet is a vast resource of information on practically any subject. As well as containing texts of books, you can also find articles, reviews and availability details on books, plays, programmes and films. Just search using the relevant key words such as "who won the Booker Prize this year" or "the life of Roald Dahl".

The DAISY Project

The latest generation of Talking Books is based on an electronic format that can be played on a computer with the correct player software, the new generation of talking book machines or mobile devices such as the Book Courier.

They combine a digital recording of a human voice reading the book, and the text of the book in electronic form. The two can interact so that it is easy to move through the book by chapter, page, sub-headings or even to search for phrases or single words, from which point the spoken playback can instantly continue.

www.daisy.org