

You can shower with the new Kindle - you just can't read

October 31 2017, by Anick Jesdanun



Coffee is spilled onto a new Kindle Oasis E-reader, Tuesday, Oct. 31, 2017, in New York. Amazon's top-of-the-line e-reader is now waterproof. (AP Photo/Mark Lennihan)

Amazon's top-of-the-line e-reader is now waterproof—an excellent feature for a \$250-and-up investment.

But don't go scuba diving just yet. Your Kindle Oasis might not survive.

Huh? How is that waterproof then? And what about the optional cover?

THE FINE PRINT ON WATERPROOF

The new Oasis is designed to survive up to an hour in up to two meters (6.5 feet) of fresh water, not the higher pressure of anything deeper—such as a scuba dive.

Fresh-water protection is great, but you're more likely to read by a swimming pool or on the beach. Amazon says you'll still get some protection from chlorinated or salty water—just not as much as what's promised for [fresh water](#). Same goes for coffee spills.

As for that cover, the standard version with woven fabric (\$45) is "water safe" but not "waterproof." Amazon says that means minor spills, but not lengthy submersion. To be safe, choose a dark color to conceal any stains. The pricier leather covers (\$60) won't resist water at all, which defeats having a waterproof e-reader in the first place.

READING WHEN WET

Waterproofing is meant to protect the device from accidental splashes and spills, not underwater reading.



The new Kindle Oasis E-reader is displayed, Tuesday, Oct. 31, 2017, in New York. Amazon's top-of-the-line e-reader is now waterproof. (AP Photo/Mark Lennihan)

Common with other gadgets, the touchscreen gets errant when wet. Reading during an ice-cold bath was fine, until I submerged the device. The font size started changing, and all sorts of other settings popped up. During a hot shower, pages turned on their own.

While walking in a storm, rainwater distorted the text, like a magnifying glass, and I had to wipe many drops away. (In any case, I probably should have been paying attention instead to what's in front of me.)

OTHER FEATURES

Overall, the Oasis is a great device for booklovers—just not because of the waterproofing, with all its limits.

You can pair the new Kindle with Bluetooth headsets and enjoy integration with Amazon's Audible audiobook service. You can switch between the text and audio versions of your book without losing your place. Unfortunately, you have to buy both versions to do this.

The larger 7-inch screen on the Oasis makes the other devices' once-adequate 6-inch screens seem too small. Amazon says the Oasis fits 30 percent more words. The Oasis also has more built-in lights for greater brightness. And unlike phones and tablets, the e-reader isn't prone to glare—or to such distractions as Facebook and text notifications. Though you can get other Kindles for that—and pay far less.

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Citation: You can shower with the new Kindle - you just can't read (2017, October 31) retrieved 28 June 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2017-10-shower-kindle-.html>

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