

Impact of Library Digital Book Pricing



Public Libraries face challenges funding e-books, digital audiobooks and digital media. Offering these resources is essential for their role in providing access and accessibility with digital technology integrated into daily life.

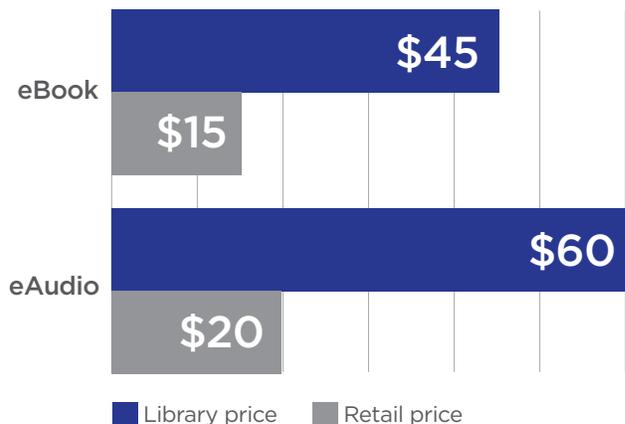
- Public Libraries typically lease e-books and digital audiobooks through an aggregator, such as Overdrive that provides the Libby app.
- Licenses usually expire after two years or after 26 check-outs. Once one of these conditions is fulfilled, the title is removed.
- When an option to buy a digital book is available, it's often 2-3 times the cost of leasing the book.
- Libraries pay three to four times what a consumer pays for the same e-book or digital audiobook.

With five major publishers controlling the most in-demand titles, libraries and their professional organizations are looking to engage in discussions with local government leaders and publishers to create sustainable strategies.

Digital Books at Dakota County Library

- 31% of the library's over 5.8 million checkouts are e-books or digital audiobooks in 2025.
- Libby checkouts increased by 13% and unique users of Libby increased by 12% from 2024 to 2025.
- 33% of the books and materials budget is allocated to digital books.
- Individuals wait 48 days to get a digital book vs. 16 days for a print title.

Estimated 2025 average cost per title



Consumer vs. Library Cost

Title: The Women - by Kristin Hannah

