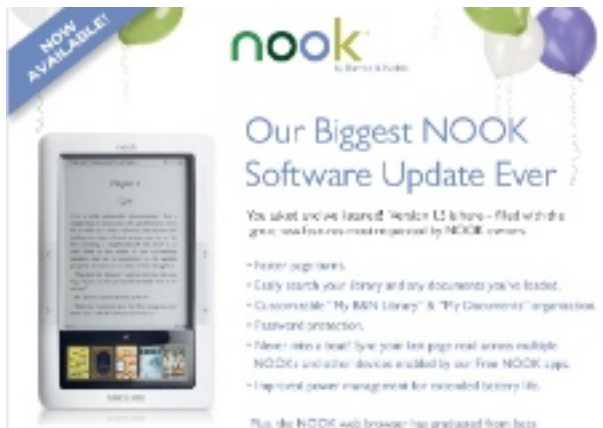


Written by Mark (Admin)

Monday, 22 November 2010 21:55 - Last Updated Monday, 22 November 2010 23:04



Did the title give it away?

When I read the update summary on the web site I thought, "Wait, isn't this the biggest nook update EVER?" Ok, I'm done complaining now, let's get on to what's in the 1.5 package and what's not.

The Daily

No updates here. Call me crazy but I thought just maybe the Dave Barry "Your New Nook" article would feature all new content! Nope, the "daily" update that never goes away can still be counted on. :)

My Library

Most of the updates can be found here, which is a good thing.

A lot of people have complained about book management on the nook and B&N listened and added "Categories" (they call them "Shelves"). If you've seen the nookColor it's the same feature on the new nook. You might hope all your shelves are uploaded to B&N servers and sync'd with other apps but my shelves don't seem to sync with my nookColor. So if you have a nook problem and reset you'll lose all your categorizations. The shelves concept seems to work pretty well and you can even change your main view to sub-group books by the shelf you added them to.

You might also hope that your categories bridge both B&N content and content you've loaded

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on your nook - but it seems you have different shelves in My Documents versus My B&N Library. That takes us to the next topic - library integration. I hoped based on a lot of feedback we'd see some integrated view of our B&N content with non-B&N content. I don't see this in the update. Really I think shelves would have been a nice bridge but they continue to be two completely different libraries with the "special" features only for B&N content. My editorial comment here is one word, "silly".

Search hasn't really improved. You still have separate searches for your content and B&N content. The search has no ability to restrict the view to a specific shelf. If you view search as an important tool to manage a lot of books there isn't much new here to help. I'm glad I don't have a ton of books!

The "auto-save" option for last read page can be found on the menu for a book, but it isn't book specific - it's nook-wide. That's good and bad. It would be nice for people who share B&N accounts in their family to do it by book but that's a really unusual usage. I've tested it and it seems to work pretty well with my other supported devices. It does seem to require wi-fi and my tests didn't work in 3G only mode.

The page turns are supposed to be 50% faster and I can't dispute it. With my wife's 1.4 nook side by side mine seems clearly to win the page turn battle (yes she'll get 1.5 soon enough).

Shop, Games, and Audio Player

I didn't see any upgrades to the Shop application, I'm a pretty big fan of how this works. I don't want games on my nook so I'm glad to see they didn't sacrifice quick page turns for a checkers game. No game updates at all. Given the ease to port some simple Android games to the nook this surprised me, but no big loss. The audio player didn't seem to get updated for playlists or simple filtering by artist or album from what I see.

Settings

Password protection for purchases is one new feature that will make a lot of people happy. I know when the nook launched we had people that were panicked over this issue. Personally I won't turn it on, if you get my nook and buy something I'll just contact B&N and then dispute the charge on my card. The other nice feature is the ability to add a lock code to the nook that must be entered before use. If you read a lot of steamy trashy romance books this might be a good idea to keep the kids extreme mental damage (that's a joke). These are things B&N has been

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asked for and they listened.

The Browser

The feature most people tried a few times and gave up on is now out of "Beta". I didn't see anything from B&N on updates to the browser but my side by side comparision with 1.4 shows no menu changes and I did some speed tests - no changes there either. I don't use the browser on the nook so something might have escaped me.

Last Thoughts and a Warning

Overall the fact B&N is still updating the nook after a year - even with a brand new color device out is a great thing. I don't feel like this update was as big of a deal they made it out to be and IMHO there is still a lot of room for improvement in book management. I was particularly surprised to see the separation of "My Documents" and the lack of backing up notes, highlights, and shelves to the cloud. I would be very careful about spending a lot of time "organizing" your nook until we see if there is a way to backup.

If you are using the nookdev firmware and want to continue I would not recommend updating to 1.5. The nookdevs site has some content that makes it appear the 1.4.+ firmware were part of the problem with rooting newer devices.

{jcomments on}