

Selling books online – a BOOKSWARM Cheat Sheet

Retailer product links

If you want to link directly to a book on a retailer's website, you need to know the unique address of the page for that book. For a single book, you can just copy and paste that link – but that's not sustainable if you're making lots of links. The following table shows all the main book retailer websites and the link formats you need to know to make deep links. Just replace the **xxxx** parts with the correct identifier for the book you're linking to. Remember that ISBNs should always be written as shown below – as a string of numbers with no spaces or hyphens.

Note: this list consists of retailers who can generally be expected to carry a full range of all books in print; we have not included discount retailers, specialist retailers or individual bookshops.

Retailer	Link format	ID	Link format
Amazon.co.uk	HB, PB	ISBN-10	http://amazon.co.uk/dp/xxxxxxxx
Amazon.co.uk	Kindle ebook, digital audiobook	ASIN	http://amazon.co.uk/dp/xxxxxxxx
Amazon.com	HB, PB	ISBN-10	http://amazon.com/dp/xxxxxxxx
Apple iBookstore	Ebook	ISBN-13	http://itunes.apple.com/gb/book/isbnxxxxxxxxxxxx
Audible	Digital audiobook	ASIN	https://www.audible.co.uk/pd/xxxxxxxx
Blackwell's	HB, PB, Audiobook	ISBN-13	https://blackwells.co.uk/bookshop/product/xxxxxxxxxxxx
The Book Depository	HB, PB, Audiobook	ISBN-13	https://www.bookdepository.com/book/xxxxxxxxxxxx
Foyles	All	ISBN-13	http://www.foyles.co.uk/all?term=xxxxxxxxxxxx
Google Play	Ebook	ISBN-13	https://play.google.com/store/search?q=xxxxxxxxxxxx
Hive.co.uk	All	ISBN-13	http://www.hive.co.uk/Search/Keyword?keyword=xxxxxxxxxxxx
Kobo	Ebook	ISBN-13	http://www.kobobooks.com/search/search.html?q=xxxxxxxxxxxx
Waterstones	HB, PB	ISBN-13	https://www.waterstones.com/book/xxxxxxxxxxxx
Waterstones	Audiobook	ISBN-13	https://www.waterstones.com/audiobook/xxxxxxxxxxxx
WHSmith	HB, PB, Audiobook	ISBN-13	https://www.whsmith.co.uk/products/book/xxxxxxxxxxxx
Wordery	HB, PB, Audiobook	ISBN-13	https://wordery.com/xxxxxxxxxxxx

What's an ASIN?

ASIN stands for Amazon Standard Identification Number. It's a 10-character alphanumeric unique identifier that's assigned by Amazon and its partners. It's used for product identification within the Amazon organisation.

In the case of physical books, the ASIN is also the ISBN-10 for the book. For ebooks and digital downloads, it looks more like this: B07562DRBZ. You can find ASINs on the product's Amazon page, and if you look carefully you will see them in the URL (web address) of a product on Amazon too.

Why do we have two lengths of ISBN?

When Amazon was being set up, all ISBNs were 10 digits long. After they were upgraded to 13 digits in 2007, Amazon continued to use the 10 digit versions, because it had also used its own 10 digit product identifiers (ASINs) for non-book products. So now, we often need to know both. Fortunately, we can use this handy tool to convert one to the other: <https://isbnconverter.sampo.co.uk/>

Affiliate programmes

You may want to combine your deep links with affiliate programmes to generate marginal revenue from your book links. Amazon's Associates programmes are probably best-known (they have one scheme for each site - .com, .co.uk, .ca, etc.), but other schemes are available.

Here are the current retailer affiliate programmes you may want to think about:

Programme	Commission	Sign-up link
Amazon.co.uk Associates	Up to 5%	https://affiliate-program.amazon.co.uk/
Amazon.com Associates	Up to 4.5%	https://affiliate-program.amazon.com/
Apple iTunes	Up to 7%	https://www.apple.com/uk/itunes/affiliates/
Blackwell's	Up to 6%	https://affiliates.blackwells.co.uk /
The Book Depository	Up to 5%	https://affiliates.bookdepository.com/
Foyles	Up to 7%	http://www.foyles.co.uk/Foyles-Affiliates
Hive.co.uk	Up to 8%	https://www.hive.co.uk/Help/Affiliate-Programme
Waterstones	Up to 4%	https://www.waterstones.com/help/affiliate-programme/45
WHSmith	Up to 5%	https://www.whsmith.co.uk/fcp/content/Help-AboutUs-BecomeAnAffiliate/content

When choosing which affiliate schemes to enrol in, consider the following:

- Where your website visitors come from
- Any rules and regulations imposed by the scheme operator
- What tools and analytics are provided by the scheme operator

'Try now' on Amazon Kindle

You may not know that it's possible to link to a free instant preview of Kindle ebooks that are available on Amazon. All you need to know is the ASIN. Here's the link format:

<https://read.amazon.co.uk/kp/embed?asin=xxxxxxxx>

Even better – if you use the ISBN-10 of the paperback or hardback, or the ASIN of the audiobook download, in that link format, you will still get the instant preview, as long as there is also an ebook edition.

Selling internationally with multiple affiliate schemes

If you want to sell to international customers and have multiple Amazon Associates accounts or iTunes affiliate accounts, you may want to consider the Genius Link platform. This will offer your visitors an affiliate link to the appropriate version of Amazon for their location, based on their IP address. It does have a cost associated, but there's a WordPress plugin which makes it nice and easy to set up. Find out more: <https://www.genius.us/>

About Bookswarm

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