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Frequently Asked Questions

Hoopla Digital: Frequently Asked Questions

What is Hoopla Digital?

Hoopla Digital is a streaming service that provides free access to a vast collection of movies, music, audiobooks, eBooks, comics, and TV shows through a user's public library card.

Why is the library discontinuing the service?

The libraries in the Prairie Lakes Library System voted together to discontinue Hoopla after a cost analysis showed that continuing the service as a consortium was no longer financially sustainable.

What other similar resources does the library offer?

All public libraries in Wisconsin offer Wisconsin's Digital Library, more commonly known as Libby or OverDrive.

Why is Hoopla Digital so expensive?

Hoopla operates under a "pay-per-use" model: each time a patron borrows an item for immediate use, the library pays for it. Usage can be unpredictable and can escalate quickly.

In contrast, OverDrive/Libby content is licensed under various models that make its costs more predictable. Because Wisconsin libraries purchase collectively through the WPLC, they receive significant discounts—something Hoopla does not offer.

Can I save my reading history?

Currently, Hoopla does not offer a dedicated "Export Reading History" button for users. The feature was previously available on some older library interfaces but is not part of the standard Hoopla website or app today.

Ways to manually save reading history.

1. Log in to your Hoopla account on a desktop or laptop computer.
2. Navigate to *My Hoopla > History* to see your previously borrowed items.
 - a. On the webpage, you can select and copy the text containing the title, author, and date of borrowing for the items you want to save. Paste the copied information into a document, spreadsheet, or note-taking app.
 - b. Take screenshots of the entire list, scrolling down and capturing each part of your history. Here's how to take computer screenshots of one active window:
 - i. Windows Computer: press **Alt + Print Screen**
 - ii. Mac Computer: **Shift + Command + 4**, then press the Space bar
 - c. Copy the titles, authors, and borrow dates to paper by hand.

When is the last day of service?

The last day of service for Hoopla Digital is December 30, 2025.

Can I finish reading my e-materials after the last day of service?

Yes. Any items checked out before the service ends will stay accessible until the end of their standard loan period—even if that date falls after December 30, 2025.

Is this a local problem, or are other libraries experiencing this issue?

This is a nationwide issue. Skyrocketing demand for eBooks and audiobooks, combined with a library's responsibility to manage its budget and serve all patrons equitably, is further complicated by the fact that a handful of large publishers control most of the market. These publishers set restrictive, high-priced licensing terms—often charging libraries several times more than consumers and limiting how long digital titles remain available in collections.

Did the library try to negotiate or solve the problem?

Yes—absolutely.

- Libraries began by setting caps on individual checkout costs, limiting the number of checkouts per patron per month, and applying daily and monthly spending limits. They also restricted access for temporary cards. Even with these measures, Hoopla remained financially unsustainable.
- PLLS, together with a committee of local library directors, reached out to other libraries and consortia nationwide to explore the issue and gather any possible solutions. Nothing significant was found beyond the steps already taken.
- PLLS libraries explored several alternative streaming services but found that most offered smaller collections at similar or higher costs.
- The system partnered with other Wisconsin library agencies to send open letters to Hoopla's leadership and requested meetings with decision-makers capable of addressing pricing concerns. However, after a few rounds of discussion, we determined that they were unable to implement meaningful changes that would allow us to continue offering the service.

Libby & Wisconsin's Digital Library: Frequently Asked Questions

What is Libby?

Libby is OverDrive's free app and website that lets you borrow and read e-books, audiobooks, and digital magazines from your local library for free.

How do I get started with Libby?

Visit <https://libbyapp.com/> or download the app. Step-by-step [directions are available here.](#)

The Libby app is available for:

- iOS 10+ (get it from the [Apple App Store](#))
- Android 7.1+ (get it on [Google Play](#))
- [Newer Fire tablets](#) (get it from the [Amazon Appstore](#))

Where can I find help with Libby?

- <https://help.libbyapp.com/en-us/index.htm>
- Contact your library for a one-on-one appointment.

Why do I have to “wait my turn” for most of Libby’s eBooks and digital audiobooks?

Book publishers decide the rules for how libraries can lend eBooks and audiobooks. Hoopla mostly offers items that everyone can borrow at the same time, but this shared access comes at a higher cost. OverDrive uses different types of licenses, which let libraries buy and share more titles in more affordable ways.

How can I find something I can read right now?

1. Use [search filters](#) to narrow a search – [Availability](#), [Skip-the-Line](#), *Sequence* (stand-alone or first in series), *etc.*
2. Digital Magazines have no holds; they’re available on demand.
<https://libbyapp.com/search/wplc/spotlight-magazines/page-1>
3. Catch one of OverDrive’s global digital book clubs–[Libby Reads](#). The selected title is available on demand for a specified timeframe. This quarter’s on-demand title is “The Village Beyond the Mist” by Sachiko Kashiwaba, Avery Fischer Udagawa, and Sarah Skaer. It’s available November 18-December 2, 2025. <https://www.biglibraryread.com/>
4. Browse *Skip-the-Line Books* (Formerly called the *Lucky Day Collection*) to score a popular title available on a first-come, first-served basis with shorter loan periods.

Can I search for items that are standalone or first-in-a-series?

Yes, this is a new-ish feature, and a further improvement on [Libby’s series information](#).

What can be done to shorten wait/hold times?

What Libby users can do:

- If an item is finished before the automatic return date, please use the [Return Early](#) feature. Shelf > Loans > Manage Loan > Return Early > Return Loan.
- If you no longer want a hold or need to delay delivery, please use the options to [Cancel a Hold](#) or [Suspend a Hold](#).

What Prairie Lakes Library System and its members are doing:

- OverDrive Advantage Accounts (AA) allow library systems to buy extra digital copies specifically for their own patrons, helping to shorten local wait times. PLLS manages a shared system-level account that gives priority access to local readers and later makes copies available statewide once demand decreases.

- PLLS and its member libraries have adopted a five-year digital content budget plan starting in 2026 that significantly increases funding for shared OverDrive Advantage accounts.
- PLLS continually monitors digital publishing trends, tests new streaming services, and analyzes anonymous local usage data to anticipate user needs.
- The system regularly refines its purchasing practices to maximize value and advocates for better budget and collection development tools.

How many holds and/or checkouts can I have at a time?

Each library cardholder may have 10 holds and 10 checkouts at any given time. This is set by WPLC, local libraries and library systems cannot independently adjust these limits.

Do items automatically return like they did with Hoopla?

Yes. To help the next person get the item even faster once you're done, you can use the [Return Early](#) feature. To do this, go to Shelf > Loans > Manage Loan > Return Early > Return Loan.

How can I stay up to date with Libby info and improvements?

Subscribe to the [Libby Life email list](#) and/or [OverDrive Email list](#).

Glossary

- [Libby](#) is the app and website that patrons use to check out digital content.
- [OverDrive](#) is the company that offers the Libby platform and handles transactions with the libraries and publishers.
- [Wisconsin's Digital Library](#) is the name of the digital collection (or digital library) belonging to WPLC (see next bullet) that Wisconsin public libraries offer via Libby.
- [The Wisconsin Public Library Consortium \(WPLC\)](#) is a formal group of Wisconsin public libraries that cooperatively pays for the OverDrive account and collection.
- [Library Systems](#) vary by state. In Wisconsin, a cooperative network of public libraries works together to share resources and provide services to their member libraries and patrons. Prairie Lakes Library System (PLLS) serves member libraries in the Counties of Racine, Rock, and Walworth.

- A consortium is a group of people, businesses, or governments that decide to work together on something they couldn't do alone.
- [SHARE Consortium](#) is a library catalog and resource-sharing partnership composed of the Kenosha County Library System and the Prairie Lakes Library System. [All SHARE libraries](#) accept each other's cards.
- Collections are groups of materials that a library owns or provides access to, enabling people to learn, read, and explore.