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Due to the tighter economy, college students' budgets are being pinched more than ever. Even as tuition continues to rise, the biggest complaint by students and others alike seems to be geared toward the outrageous cost of textbooks. Across the blogosphere, there appears to be more and more 'How to Save Money on Textbooks' articles being written in an effort to alleviate the problem.

So it seems, in these tough times, people are looking to help one another by offering advice on where to shop for textbooks. Some others are helping out fellow students save in not so legal ways, in the form of textbook torrents, or illegally copied textbooks that are downloaded from the Internet (more on textbook torrents later).

Textbooks are expensive, and it's one of the many reasons college students will always be broke. There are ways around this though. First off, you can check out our study that finds the cheapest places to buy textbooks online. A good list of resources that will help you save on textbooks.

Some colleges are even trying to help with the problem by setting up their own textbook rental programs. But, as technology advances and more students and colleges are making an effort to be green, digital textbooks seem to be a solid option. If you don't mind reading on a screen instead of a printed book, you have several free or low-cost options for downloading textbooks. It's something Amazon could be betting on with their new digital e-book reader, the Kindle.

McGraw-Hill, a major textbook publisher, publishes 95% of their books electronically as well as in print. Publishers are eager to jump into the digital textbook market in order to shut out the used textbook market, something that cuts into sales of new textbooks. Last year, digital textbooks only accounted for less than 7% of all textbook sales revenue.

The problem is there is no reasonable device to read these digital textbooks on, as it can be hard to read and follow textbooks on a laptop. This is why many believe the Kindle will be a hit on college campuses, assuming many take a following to digital textbooks.

Textbooks in digital form are not only cheaper (in most cases), but will be much easier to carry around. Another benefit: no waiting in long lines at your college bookstore. Digital textbooks can be downloaded right from the Internet.

There are a few sites out there that allow you to download textbooks: some are free, some cost money, some not as legal as others.

Where to Download Textbooks:

CourseSmart

CourseSmart claims to have the largest collection of e-Textbooks, with 4,226 at time of posting. Founded and supported by five major textbook publishers, the site advertises a \$57.46 average savings per e-Textbook. Their e-books do have their limitations though, as CourseSmart only lets students print out 10 pages at a time (still better than carrying a whole book around I suppose). Purchasers of the e-textbook don't get to keep the book permanently because the downloaded files have digital expiration codes and expire after about 180 days.

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