

First Kindle Scribe software update begins closing the feature gap

Enlarge / Different brush types, each with their own thickness settings, will let you make more varied-looking and true-to-life notes and illustrations on the Kindle Scribe.

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Update, 5:28pm: The story has been updated to reflect that the new brush types support pressure sensitivity.

Original story: Amazon's Kindle Scribe is very nice hardware with a software problem—namely, that its operating system was designed with reading in mind, and the writing features feel underbaked compared to a writing-centric tablet like the reMarkable 2.

Amazon announced today that it would be “rolling out regular, free software updates” for the Scribe this year, starting with a small one today that expands on some of the Scribe's existing features.

On the writing front, the new Scribe update enables fountain pen, marker, and pencil brush types, each of which includes five different thickness options and pressure sensitivity support. There are also new features for organizing and leafing through your notebooks—the Scribe supports subfolders,

and you can now jump directly to a specific page in a given notebook like you can in a regular book rather than having to page back and forth one at a time.

These updates are a start, although the Scribe's software still has a long way to go. Its inability to share with other devices remains its biggest weak point. You can email yourself individual notebooks in PDF format, but unlike the reMarkable tablet, there's no integration with cloud storage services like Dropbox or Google Drive. Other Kindle devices and apps can't see handwritten annotations in books, and while the Kindle smartphone and tablet apps can view notebooks created on the Scribe, it can't export or modify them. If Amazon can close some of these functional gaps, it will make the Scribe a more appealing productivity device, in addition to being a huge e-reader.

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