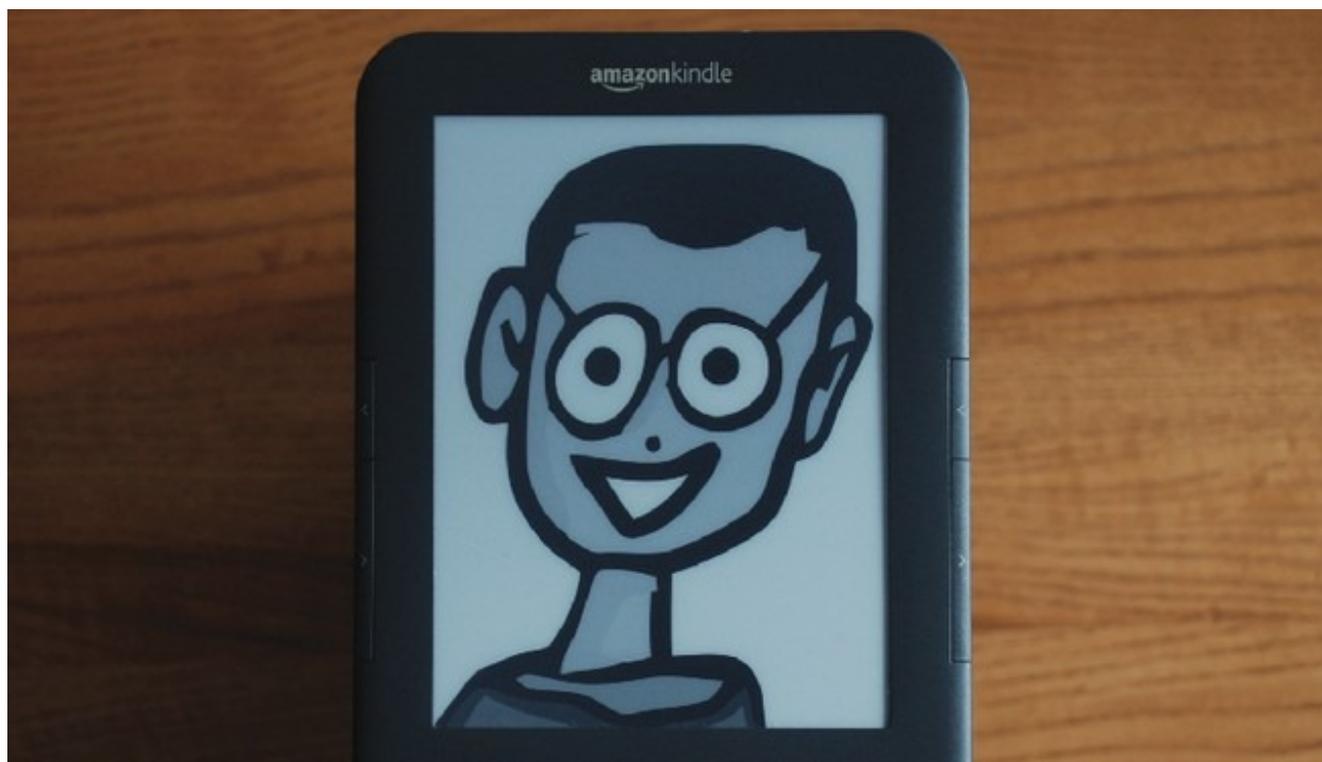


Jailbreak Your Kindle for Dead Simple Screensaver Customization - How-To Geek

<http://www.howtogeek.com/howto/37424/jailbreak-your-kindle-for-dead-simple-screensaver-customization/>

December 27, 2012

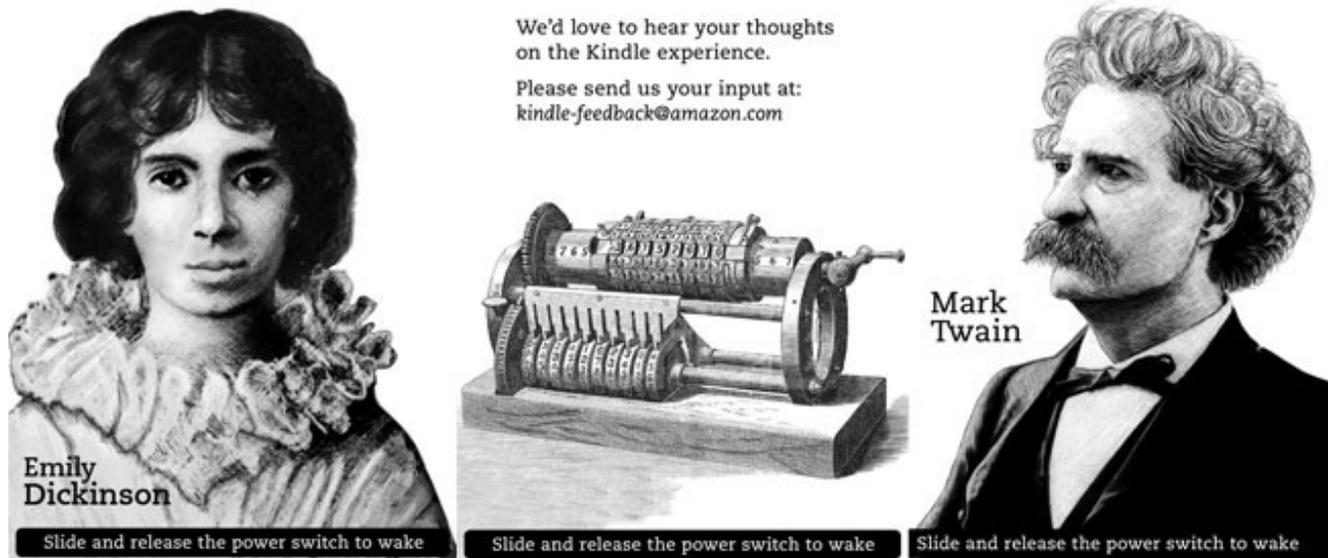


If you're less than delighted with the default screensaver pack on the Kindle relief is just a simple hack and a reboot away. Read on to learn how to apply a painless jailbreak to your Kindle and create custom screensavers.

Note: We originally published this article last year, but we've updated it to work with the latest version of Kindle, so we're republishing for everybody.

Unlike jailbreaking other devices like the iPad and Android devices—which usually includes deep mucking about in the guts of your devices and the potential, however remote, for catastrophic bricking—jailbreaking the Kindle is not only extremely safe but Amazon, by [releasing the Kindle sourcecode](#), has practically approved the process with a wink and a nod.

Installing the jailbreak and the screensaver hack to replace the default screensavers is so simple we promise you'll spend 1000% more time messing around making fun screensaver images than you will actually installing the hack.



The default screensaver pack for the Amazon Kindle is a collection of 23 images that include portraits of famous authors, woodcarvings from centuries past, blueprints, book reliefs, and other suitably literature-oriented subjects. If you're not a big fan of the pack—and we don't blame you if, despite Emily Dickinson being your favorite single lady, you want to mix things up—it's extremely simple to replace the default screen saver pack with as many custom images as your Kindle can hold. This hack works on every Kindle except the first generation; we'll be demonstrating it on the brand new Kindle 3 with accompanying notes to direct users with older Kindles.

Applying the Jailbreak

Note: We've updated the mirrors in the Jailbreak and Screensaver section to the Jailbreak and Screensaver hack for Kindle OS version 3.1. The file numbers in the following screenshots are from the prior version of the hack, however, the same exact steps are used just with the 0.6 Jailbreak and the 0.20 Screensaver hack (instead of 0.4 and 0.18, respectively).

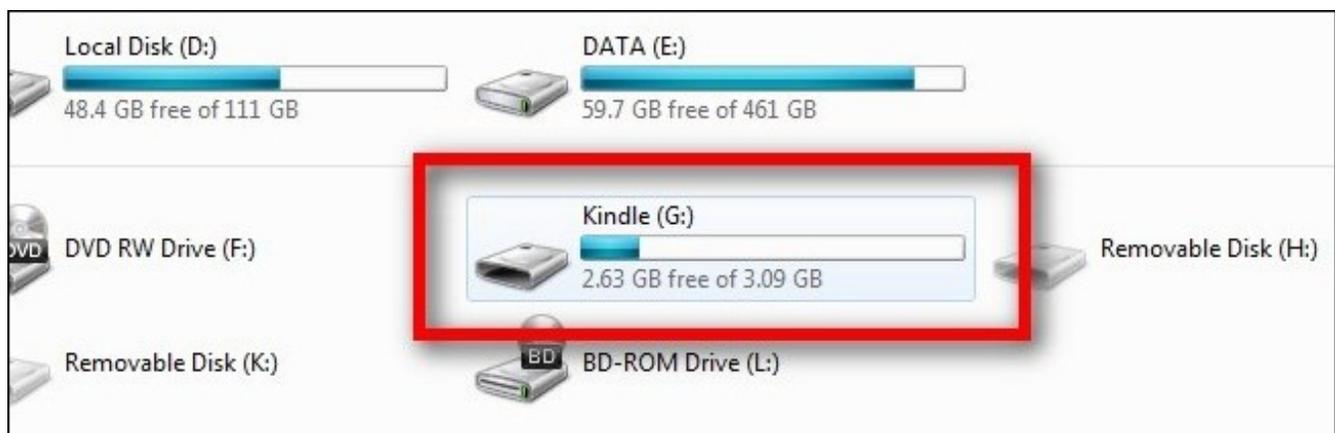
If you've sweat through jailbreaking your iPhone—all the while praying you're not bricking it—you'll love how simple the Kindle jailbreak is. The first thing you need to do is download the Kindle Jailbreak pack from one of the following mirrors:

The tiny 48k ZIP file holds all the jailbreak installers and uninstallers for all version of the Kindle.

Name	Type	Size	Ratio	Packed
src	File folder			
ChangeLog.txt	Text Docu...	11,589	81%	2,293
README.txt	Text Docu...	18,567	64%	6,723
update_jailbreak_0.4.N_dx_install.bin	VLC media...	2,443		2,443
update_jailbreak_0.4.N_dx_uninstall.bin	VLC media...	1,301		1,301
update_jailbreak_0.4.N_dxg_install.bin	VLC media...	2,444		2,444
update_jailbreak_0.4.N_dxg_uninstall.bin	VLC media...	1,302		1,302
update_jailbreak_0.4.N_dxi_install.bin	VLC media...	2,443		2,443
update_jailbreak_0.4.N_dxi_uninstall.bin	VLC media...	1,301		1,301
update_jailbreak_0.4.N_k2_install.bin	VLC media...	2,443		2,443
update_jailbreak_0.4.N_k2_uninstall.bin	VLC media...	1,298		1,298
update_jailbreak_0.4.N_k2i_install.bin	VLC media...	2,444		2,444
update_jailbreak_0.4.N_k2i_uninstall.bin	VLC media...	1,300		1,300
update_jailbreak_0.4.N_k3g_install.bin	VLC media...	1,468		1,468
update_jailbreak_0.4.N_k3g_uninstall.bin	VLC media...	1,302		1,302
update_jailbreak_0.4.N_k3gb_install.bin	VLC media...	1,468		1,468
update_jailbreak_0.4.N_k3gb_uninstall.bin	VLC media...	1,303		1,303
update_jailbreak_0.4.N_k3w_install.bin	VLC media...	1,468		1,468
update_jailbreak_0.4.N_k3w_uninstall.bin	VLC media...	1,302		1,302

The important part of the filename is the found after the 0.4.N portion. DX is for the Kindle DX, DXi for the Kindle DXi, K2 for the Kindle 2, and K3 for the Kindle 3. The suffixes for each indicate what kind of Kindle it is within that subset. The K3G, for example is the US Kindle with 3G service, the K3GB is the UK Kindle with 3G service, the K3W is the Kindle 3 Wi-Fi only, and the K2i is the International edition of the Kindle 2. Start with your base model and select the file with the suffix that matches your country and data connection. In our case we'll be jailbreaking a Wi-Fi only Kindle 3 so we pick **K3W_install.bin**.

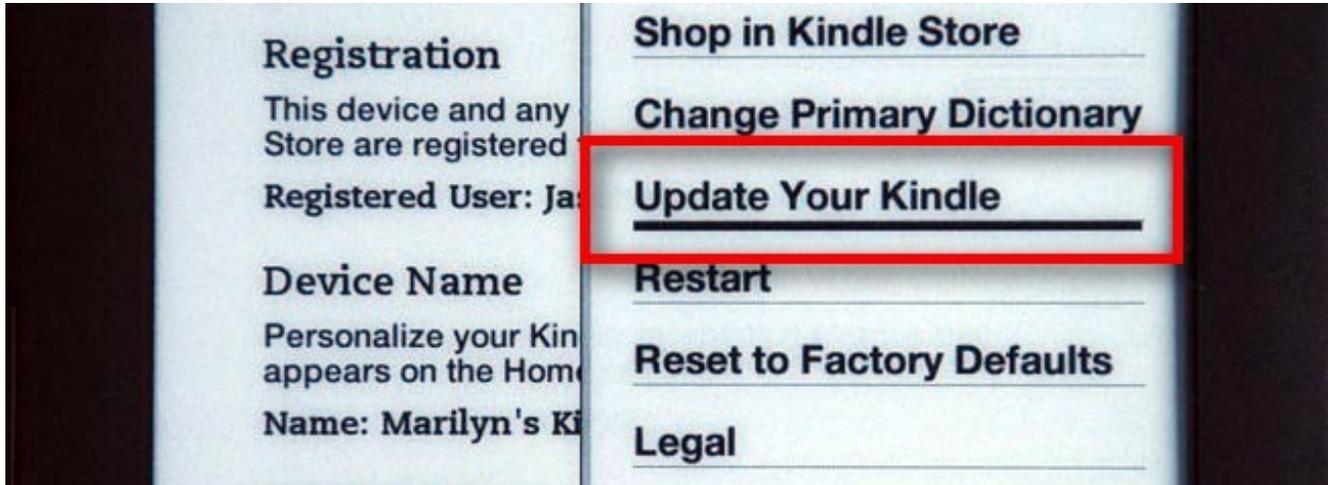
Mount your Kindle on your computer as a USB device—it should mount automatically when you tether it to your computer via the sync cable. If it doesn't mount right away slide the switch next to the Kindle data port back and forth to wake it.



If you'd like to play it extra safe you can backup your Kindle books at this point. We haven't had any issues with the library vanishing but if you want to skip the hassle of resyncing all your books or you've made a bunch of custom collections and don't want to deal with recreating them it's easy enough to backup the entire library. To backup your Kindle library simply copy the

/system/collections.json file to a safe location before proceeding with the jailbreak. If anything goes wrong just copy the file right back over. Backups created or ignored, it's time to jailbreak.

Extract the appropriate file for your Kindle to the root directory of your Kindle. Once the file has transferred, eject your Kindle and unplug the data cord. Once you're back into regular browsing mode, navigate to the Update menu by pressing **Menu Button -> Settings-> Menu Button -> Update Your Kindle**.



The Kindle will ask you if you want to continue, click OK. At this point the jailbreaking begins and can take anywhere from 30 seconds to 10 minutes or so. First it will tell you that it's updating, then it will flash the screen and notify you that the update was successful, and then it will switch to the man-reading-beneath-tree default Amazon Kindle startup screen. Once the wait is over your Kindle will restart.

Note: If you're jailbreaking a Kindle 2 there is a high probability you'll get a failure message with a U006 error at the bottom of the screen at some point during the jailbreak process. Don't panic, just leave it alone until it restarts by itself, it doesn't effect the outcome of the jailbreak at all.

A few button clicks and you're done. Your Kindle is now jailbroken and ready for some custom screensaver goodness.

Installing the Custom Screensaver Hack

Note: We've updated the mirrors in the Jailbreak and Screensaver section to the Jailbreak and Screensaver hack for Kindle OS version 3.1. The file numbers in the following screenshots are from the prior version of the hack, however, the same exact steps are used just with the 0.6 Jailbreak and the 0.20 Screensaver hack (instead of 0.4 and 0.18, respectively).

Enabling custom screensavers is as easy-peasy as jailbreaking your Kindle. Again you'll need to download a ZIP file—this one a Herculean 1.1MB compared to the 48Kb jailbreak archive.

 update_ss_0.18.N_k2i_uninstall...	VLC media...	1,668	1,668
 update_ss_0.18.N_k3g_install.bin	VLC media...	132,007	132,0...
 update_ss_0.18.N_k3g_uninstall...	VLC media...	1,667	1,667
 update_ss_0.18.N_k3gb_install....	VLC media...	132,008	132,0...
 update_ss_0.18.N_k3gb_uninsta...	VLC media...	1,668	1,668
 update_ss_0.18.N_k3w_install.bin	VLC media...	132,007	132,0...
 update_ss_0.18.N_k3w_uninstal...	VLC media...	1,668	1,668

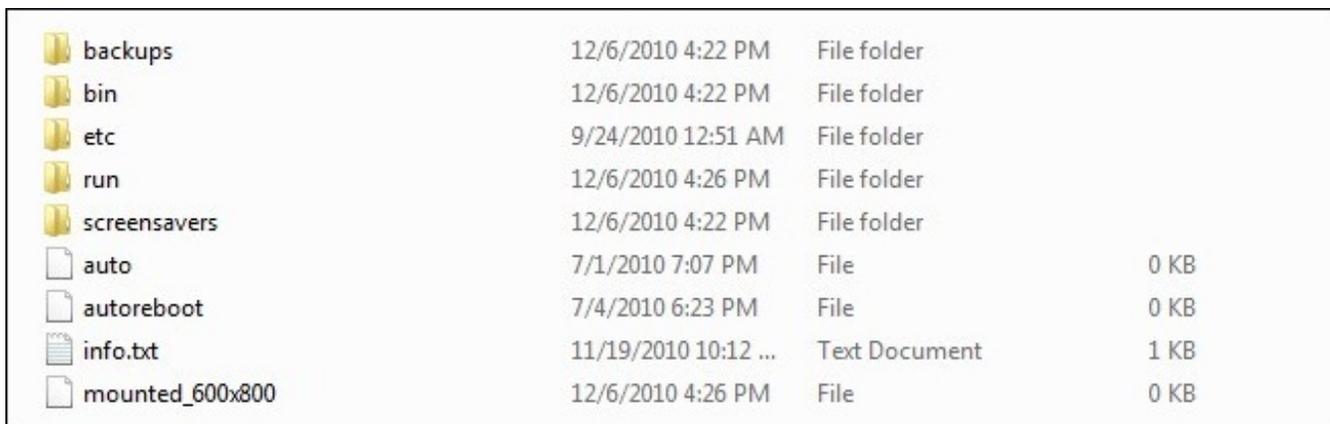
The contents of the screensaver hack archive look almost exactly like the contents of the jailbreak hack. Use the same naming convention we used for the jailbreak to locate the screensaver hack for your device. Again we'll be selecting the file with the suffix **K3W_install.bin** to go with our Wi-Fi only Kindle 3.

Tether your Kindle with the USB sync cable again and copy the appropriate file to the root of the device. Again, navigate to the Update menu by pressing **Menu Button → Settings → Menu Button → Update Your Kindle**. This process will look exactly like it did when you jailbroke the device. First the update screen, then the confirmation of update, then the reboot of the device.

When the reboot process is completely, again tether your device with the sync cable. The root directory should have a folder labeled **/linkss/**.



If you don't see this folder that doesn't mean the screensaver hack failed to install. You may need to do a hard reboot. Reboot your Kindle by navigating, from the main library screen, with the following button combination: **Menu Button → Settings → Menu Button → Restart**. Tether and check the root directory once the restart is complete.



The inside of the **/linkss/** folder looks like the above screenshot. The only areas of relevance to the end user are the **/backups/** and **/screensavers/** folders and the **autoreboot** file. If there are any screensavers from the default screensaver pack that you were particularly fond of you can retrieve them from the **/backups/** folder—we won't make fun of you for keeping the Jules Verne screensaver, he's a sexy beast. If you don't want any of the default pictures to be part of your new screensaver pack you can ignore the folder.

The **/screensavers/** folder is the real area of interest. Here is where you'll be dumping all your fancy new screensaver images. By default the files in the screensaver folder will play in alphabetical/numerical order from start to finish, one per wake/sleep cycle of your Kindle. If you would like to randomize the order just create an empty file in the **/screensavers/** folder named **random** to randomize the play order.

After you add new screensaver images you'll need to restart your Kindle to see them in the

screensaver cycle. If you want to skip manually restarting your Kindle you can copy the **autoreboot** file and rename the copy to **reboot**. After you eject your Kindle from the computer it will automatically reboot 10 seconds later.

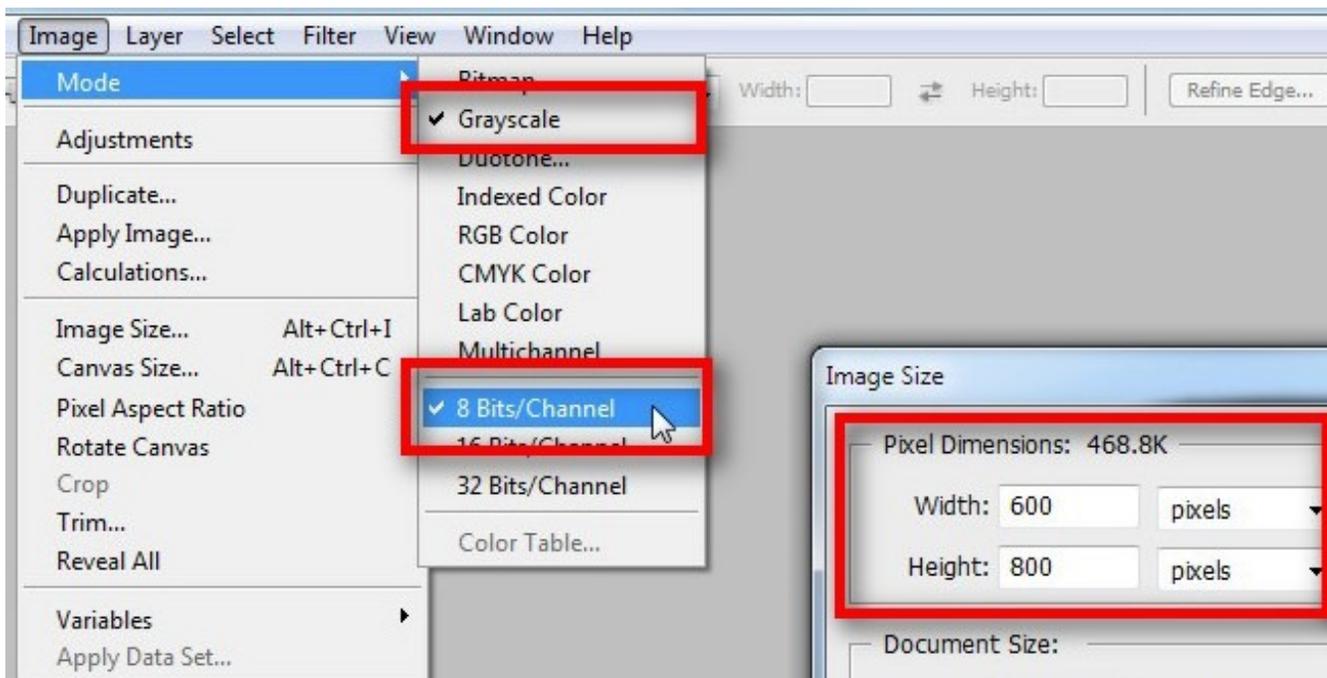
Creating Custom Screensaver Images



You've got the jailbreak installed, the screensaver hack installed, all that's left is to load up your **/screensavers/** folder with pictures of your choosing. Goodbye Jane Austen, hello Wonder Woman.

Kindle screen savers are 600×800 for the regular Kindle and 824×1200 for the DX. When creating images for either device you want to work in 8-bit grayscale and save the images as .PNG files—the screensaver hack can handle both .JPG and .PNG, but we prefer saving them in a higher quality format.

The screenshot below shows how the prior settings look in Adobe Photoshop but the process can easily be adapted for any image editor capable of changing the image mode.



Because we're discarding the color and downgrading the quality, conversion can have mixed results. Images with simpler patterns and not a lot of fine gradients—[such as the How-To Geek logo](#) we used for the first photo in this guide—translate well to the Kindle's screen. What you see in your image editor is strongly representative of what you'll see on the Kindle screen; if it looks bad in the editor it won't look any better on the Kindle.

While you could write a batch script in Photoshop or similarly equipped editors that would crop and change the image settings for you it's better to do the work by hand. The Kindle has an oddly shaped screen as far as most images online are concerned. Most cool wallpaper and screensaver images you'll find online are sized for standard and widescreen monitors and will need a careful cropping to look awesome on the Kindle screen.



When I surprised my wife with a Kindle I outfitted it first with dozens of Wonder Woman screensaver images. With careful cropping and attention to the detail and color palette of the image prior to cropping it's easy to create some really awesome images. If you're a Wonder Woman fan yourself, you can [grab a copy of 66 various Wonder Woman images here](#).

Update: If doing the work by hand seems too arduous, How-To Geek reader [Insomnic recommends](#) using the Manga-to-Kindle conversion software [Mangle to convert the images](#)—it doesn't distinguish between comic book pages and screensaver images and converts both admirably. Reader [Groff](#) makes it even easier on the image-editing adverse among us; visit this [Kindle Wallpaper tumblr](#) to find a wide variety of pre-sized and converted images. Thanks for the tips guys!

Uninstalling Screensaver Hack and Jailbreak

Although we're sure you'll be perfectly happy with your jailbroken Kindle and swanky screensaver hack if there is any reason you'd like to restore it to stock—selling it on eBay, returning it for service, whatever—doing so is simple.

Make sure to keep a copy of the two archives you downloaded for this hack, the jailbreak and the screensaver hack. Whatever files you used to install the jailbreak and the screensaver hack will have an accompanying uninstall file.

 update_jailbreak_0.4.N_k3g_install.bin	VLC media...	1,468	1,468
 update_jailbreak_0.4.N_k3g_uninstall.bin	VLC media...	1,302	1,302
 update_jailbreak_0.4.N_k3gb_install.bin	VLC media...	1,468	1,468
 update_jailbreak_0.4.N_k3gb_uninstall.bin	VLC media...	1,303	1,303
 update_jailbreak_0.4.N_k3w_install.bin	VLC media...	1,468	1,468
 update_jailbreak_0.4.N_k3w_uninstall.bin	VLC media...	1,302	1,302

In our case we used the **K3W_install** file to install the jailbreak on our Wi-Fi only Kindle 3. To remove the jailbreak we simply repeat the process outlined above in the jailbreaking section but with the **K3W_uninstall** file. To reverse the process just work backwards, first uninstalling the screensaver hack, then the jailbreak. Restart the Kindle and you're back to stock. You don't even have to reinstall the old screensaver images as they're stored in a ROM chip onboard the Kindle and will appear automatically upon removal of the screensaver hack.

Now that you're armed with a jailbroken Kindle and the know-how to start cranking out some awesome screensaver images. If you create an image (or a whole batch) that you're particularly proud of share a link in the comments.