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Q & A: PDF

What is a PDF file?

PDF means Portable Document File. The extension of the file will be pdf. PDF allows for the creation of documents that look the same on Windows, Mac OS, Unix, and most other computer platforms. You can open these documents with the free Adobe Acrobat Reader program.

What are the benefits?

- Easily Turn any Windows files into virus free portable PDFs
- Preserves graphics, colors, fonts, & formatting regardless of the program the file was created with.
- Universal distribution (All computer platforms can view PDFs, including Windows, Unix, Mac, & Linux)
- Non-editable (receiver can't make changes to PDFs)
- Small file size (PDF compresses the document usually at least by half)
- Receiver(s) can easily view, navigate, and print PDFs
- PDF's can be made into forms where visitors can type in information to fields and have that information (along with the document) print out. Great for registration forms!
- PDF files (depending upon the program used to created the PDF) can have java scripts incorporated like 'mail to' or 'print'
- Higher end PDF creating programs usually have compression options for really shrinking down the file size of the document (Options like: low resolution graphics or no graphics; or using "screen" or "print" resolution; or grayscale or full color documents; etc...)

How simple is it to use?

First you install a "PDF" printer on your system. This is just installing one of the programs listed below which then creates (automatically) another printer on your system. Then open a file, such as a Web page, document, spreadsheet, graphic, or whatever, and select the print option as you normally would, and choose the "PDF" printer (could be Adobe PDF for example). Lastly, the program opens, and asks you to name the file, and where you want to save your PDF. Hit

"OK" and VWHALAA the program will create a full color non-editable PDF file! You don't have to worry about fonts, formatting, or colors because it preserves the file regardless of the program you printed from.

Is it possible to cut and paste text from a .pdf file? ...

...I need to insert a small portion of a page (as text) in an e-mail.

- Open your PDF file in Acrobat Reader; Use Ctrl+A to Select All; Use Ctrl+C to Copy; Paste into your word processor and edit from there.
- To select a small portion of the page click the text select button (a T with a box next to it), left click and highlight the part you want then do the ctrl+C
- Sometimes 'cut 'n paste' (any & all editing) is disabled by the PDF document creator (file protection).

PDF Programs:

(free, freeware & full programs to create PDF files)

- 1. Foxit PDF reader**
<http://foxitsoftware.com>. Free PDF-reader too – loads fast, allows you to read, print and even input data into some PDFs. The Foxit site also has a bunch of other PDF tools--- editors, converters, etc--- which may also be useful. The other tools aren't free, but do allow free trials.
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<http://www.cutepdf.com>. To use CutePDF Writer you need the program and the free converter program (available for download at above URL). CutePDF has no watermarks in the document. Note: the size of the Cute PDF Writer file is larger than Win2PDF (15% to 25% larger).
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- 7. PDFLab for MAC computers**
For the MAC platform, PDFLab is the software desired <http://www.iconus.ch/fabien/pdflab/>. Shareware
- 8. 602ProPrint**
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- 9. Win2PDF**
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- 10. PDF Factory**
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The 'paid' version allows users to delete/add pages & combine PDF documents, embed fonts and offers international font support. \$49.95 & 99.95 for the ProVersion which has extra features like scaleable window sizes, encryption, live URLs and bookmarks. Small download - about 1.2MB!

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12. MakePDF for Word

<http://www.docauto.com/MakePDF.htm> Program from Document Automation Developers will work with Word documents only. \$35 dollars. A business evaluation version is available.

13. PDF995

<http://www.pdf995.com/> - PDF995 offers several programs (pdf995, pdfedit995 & signature995; \$10 per application or \$20 for all three) that work together. Pdf995 program operates like a 'printer driver'. Lacks fancy features and may not reproduce complex documents with total accuracy. Buying the software eliminates the advertising that accompanies the freeware. <http://www.pdf995.com/pdfedit.html> - this is a must since it allows the features that allow bookmarks, merging documents, embed fonts, how the page is visualized etc.... <http://www.signature995.com/> (allows digital signatures, verify, encrypt)

14. Desk PDF

http://www.docudesk.com/support_files.shtml Create PDF files from Office Applications. \$19.95

15. WordPerfect Office

<http://www3.corel.com/> - **Office 10** has the ability to create a PDF file from the WordPerfect Office Document – this is a new feature for version 10 (which is the current version)

16. PDFOnline

<http://www.pdfonline.com> As a Free Web Based Service, PDF Online allows you to quickly create PDF from anywhere in the world (PC, Mac, and Linux compatible). Applications to convert:

DOC PPT XLS JPG GIF TIFF RTF PPS HTML BMP PNG EMF TXT PUB WMF

17. PDF Redirect

<http://www.exp-sytems.com> , where they offer both a free program, PDF Redirect, and an upgraded program PDF Redirect Pro. The free program is remarkable, is very simple to use, and handles large files very well. The Pro version has more added features over the basic free version. One very nice thing is that the Pro version has a 90 day trial period, and costs only \$19.99 to purchase the license for. Both will even create a PDF file from an "E" size architectural drawing without losing any detail. I think it is probably the best free PDF writer I have tried, so much so I decided to purchase the licensed copy to support the good works.

18. FamilyTree Maker, version 10 & higher

Family Tree Maker can create a PDF file from any of the formats (family trees, reports and other docs)

<http://www.genealogy.com> This ONLY works for printing from FamilyTree Maker

19. PDFLab for MAC computers

For the MAC platform, PDFLab is the software desired <http://www.iconus.ch/fabien/pdflab/>. Shareware

Opening PDF Files:

Option 1: Download Free Program

<http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html> - Install the Free Adobe Acrobat Reader program

Option 2: Web TV Instructions for opening PDF files

Adobe has created a page that will convert a PDF file to HTML. All you have to do is type in the address of the PDF file, choose a button, and the file will show up on your screen. You can access the page at:

http://access.adobe.com/simple_form.html .

To locate the address of a PDF file: Using your remote or keyboard, highlight the name of the file with the yellow cursor. Choose the Options key on your remote or keyboard. The Options panel will pop up. Choose Info on the Options panel. Using your mouse, highlight the URL, right click and select "copy" or hold down the CTRL key and the C" key (which is copy) and paste the URL on this webpage:
http://access.adobe.com/simple_form.html.

Option 3: Mail URL to Adobe

If the Adobe PDF file is on the Internet, you can mail the URL (Web address) of the PDF file in the body of an e-mail message to pdf2txt@adobe.com (for plain text) or to pdf2html@adobe.com (for HTML). The convertor will mail back the translation of the PDF file. You can submit multiple URLs in a single e-mail. Tip: Some URLs are very long and cumbersome to type. Cutting and pasting the URL into the mail message will save you some keystrokes.

Option 4: Email - AOL 'MIME' Attachment

If the Adobe PDF file is on local media, such as a hard drive, CD-ROM, or internal server, it can be submitted as a MIME attachment to an e-mail message. All converted Adobe PDF documents will be sent back to the sender as MIME attachments. For plain text, mail the attached PDF to pdf2txt@adobe.com . For HTML, mail the attached PDF to pdf2html@adobe.com.

What needs to be included on a website that offers PDF files?

1. Instructions on opening the file

It is appropriate to include a link for the Free Adobe Acrobat Reader program for visitors that may not have Adobe Reader installed on their computer. <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html>

2. Instructions on opening the file with WebTV

http://access.adobe.com/simple_form.html - This link is a 'MUST' if one is offering PDF files on their site. This allows a WebTV user to type in the URL of the PDF document and the form will convert the PDF into html (making it a webpage) for viewing on the TV. WebTV viewers don't have a computer to decode; they just 'view' so this is vital for those users to open and use PDF documents. See instructions below for how WebTV viewers can open the PDF document.

Unable to Open PDF files from the Internet

Question: I have Internet Explorer and am unable to open PDF's from the web site. What should I do?

Answer: An Adobe Acrobat product (such as Acrobat, Acrobat Reader, or Adobe Reader) may be unable to display a PDF file inside a compatible Web browser window if the Acrobat product can't read the PDF file, if the Web browser isn't configured correctly with the Adobe PDF Browser plug-in, or if the Web server on which the PDF file is stored can't serve the PDF file. Work through this document to troubleshoot and resolve the issue.

Solution 1: Clear your temporary internet files and try again.

PDF files that show up as blank or corrupt, or that freeze your browser, were likely damaged during the download process. In order to fix this, clear your browser's cache, close the browser and make another attempt. If you do not do this, any additional attempts may force your browser to view the cached (and, therefore, damaged) version of the PDF file instead of downloading again from the web server.

Solution 2: Configure Acrobat Reader to NOT open PDF files in browser.

Open Acrobat Reader, and select Edit/Preferences. In the window that opens, click on the Options link in the left menu, and uncheck the option that says "Open PDF in Browser". Now, return to your browser and clear your temporary internet files again. Refresh the page, and click on the link to the PDF file. Follow any options to allow the PDF file to display in Acrobat Reader instead of Internet Explorer.

Solution 3: Upgrade the Acrobat product.

Upgrade to the latest version of the Acrobat product. For upgrade information, visit the Adobe Web site at www.adobe.com/store/products/master.jhtml?id=catAcrobat . (The free Adobe Reader 6.0 is available from the Adobe Web site at www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html .) If you are already running the latest version, remove and reinstall the application.

Solution 4 (Windows only): Upgrade Internet Explorer.

Upgrade to Internet Explorer 5.5 or later, which corrects display issues of PDF files sent dynamically using POST or ASP (Active Server Page) methods.

Solution 5: Try to open a local copy of a PDF file in the Acrobat product.

Determine if the Acrobat product can open the PDF file from the local hard drive rather than from the Web:

- In Internet Explorer, right-click the link to the PDF file, and then choose Save Target As from the pop-up menu (Windows), or click and hold the link to the PDF file and choose Download Link to Disk from the pop-up menu (Mac OS).
- Specify a name and location for the PDF file, and then click Save.
- Open the Acrobat product, choose File > Open, and try to open the PDF file that you saved in step 2:
- If the PDF file opens, complete Solution 7.
- If the Acrobat product displays a blank screen or returns an error when you try to open the PDF file, clear your temporary internet files and refresh your browser window, and attempt again.

Solution 6 (Windows only): Enable Acrobat ActiveX Control.

In Internet Explorer 4.x or later, enable the Acrobat ActiveX Control in the security options: Note: This procedure changes Internet Explorer's security options for all ActiveX Controls. If you prefer to use stricter security, contact your Network Administrator or Microsoft for information about using the Administrator Approved setting in Internet Explorer's Security panel.

To enable the ActiveX Control:

Close Internet Explorer and the Acrobat product.

Choose Start > Settings > Control Panel, and then double-click Internet (or Internet Options).

Click the Security tab in the Internet Properties dialog box.

Choose the appropriate zone for the location hosting the PDF file (for example, Internet or Local Intranet).

Click the Custom security level.

In the Security Settings dialog box, select Enable under Run ActiveX Controls and plug-ins, and then click OK.

Click OK in the Internet Properties dialog box.

Solution 7 (Windows only): Check the number of characters in the URL.

If the URL for the PDF file contains more than 256 characters, do one of the following:

Ask the provider of the PDF file to modify the path to the file or location of the file so that the URL contains 256 or fewer characters, and then ask the provider to repost the PDF file. (After the provider reposts the PDF file, you may need to click Refresh to reload the Web page.)

Upgrade to Internet Explorer 5.5, which supports pathnames that contain an unlimited number of characters.