

Creating a PDF File

This document provides information on Adobe's Portable Document Format (PDF) and how to creating PDF files on both Mac OS X and Microsoft Windows operating systems.

Note: If you are using an earlier version of Mac OS (8.x - 9.2), you may not be able to obtain software for creating PDF documents since Adobe no longer offers their software for these earlier Mac operating systems. You may still be able to create PDF documents using a free online service. Refer to the "Free online PDF creation services" section near the end of this document

What is a Portable Document Format (PDF) file?



PDF is a file format created by the Adobe corporation that preserves the fonts, images, graphics, and layout of any source document, regardless of the application and platform used to create it. With PDF, you can ensure that what you the sender of the file see on your screen, is what the receivers will see on theirs. This format is ideal for graphic designers, illustrators, and publishers.

(A note about Rich Text Format (RTF): Another popular file format for document exchange is RTF. The RTF file format is limited to basic typographic layout and does not handle the exchange of graphics elements very well. If you are only concerned about the preservation of textual content and simple typographic layouts, then RTF is a good alternative to PDF. If you require the preservation of complex page layouts with graphics when transferring your files (i.e. you want your document to look *exactly* the way it looks on the screen), then PDF is the format you should choose. For more information on RTF, refer to the ITS HOW-TO "Creating RTF Documents".)

There are two pieces of software associated with PDF: software to view PDF, and software to create PDF documents.

PDF Viewing Software

The software to view PDF documents is free of charge. Some operating systems like Mac OS X have a basic built-in PDF viewer. Users of Microsoft Windows will require Adobe's Acrobat Reader software. You can find it here:

<http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readermain.html>

PDF Creation Software

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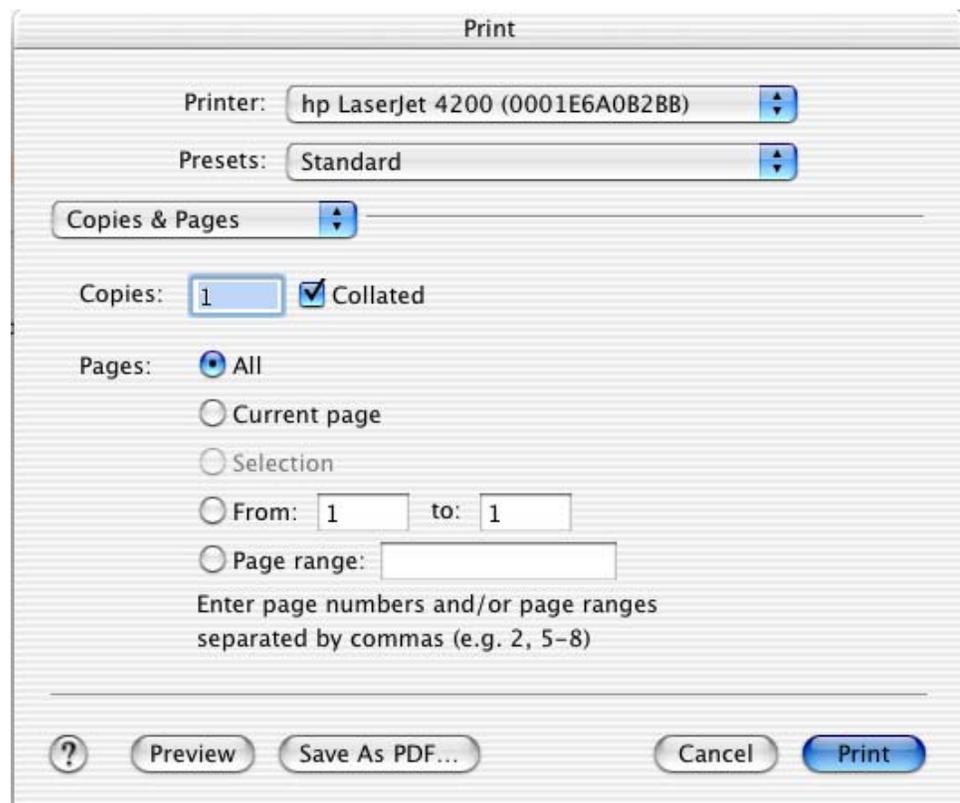
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The availability of PDF creation software differs depending on your operating system. Mac OS X has built in support for creating PDF documents. Please see below for instructions on how to generate PDF documents on Mac OS X. If you are using Microsoft Windows, extra software is required to create PDF documents. Some versions of this software cost money, some are free but limited in features. We provide some links to some free PDF creation software below. Please see below for more information.

Creating PDF Files on Mac OS X

How to create a PDF file

1. Create a file in an application, let's say Microsoft Word. When you have the file completed and the layout is the way you want it, select **Print** as if you were going to print the document. You will see a dialog window:

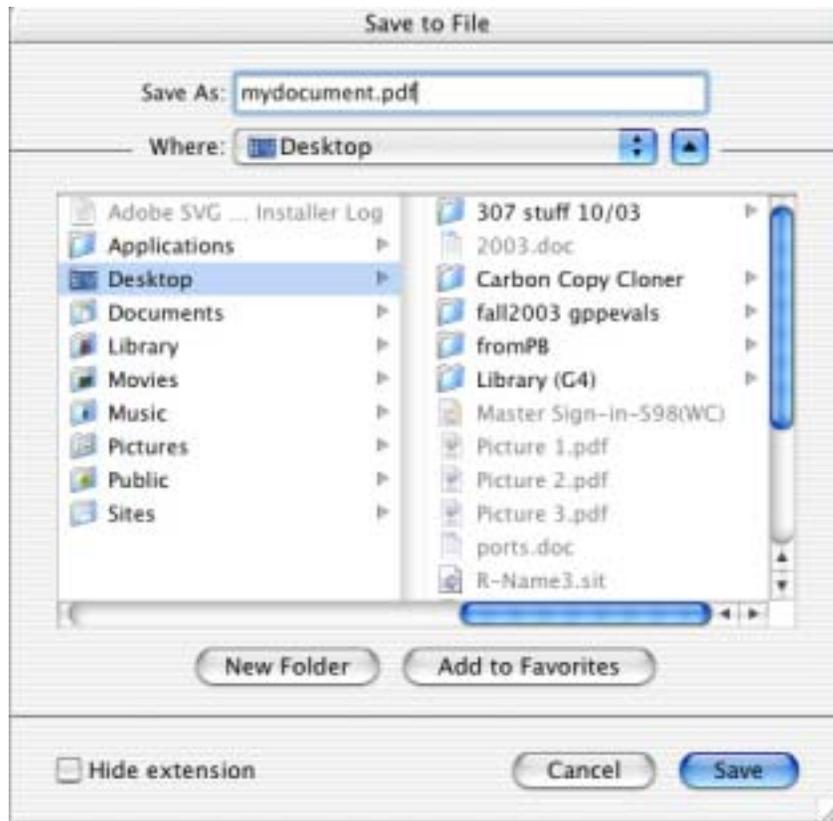


2. Near the bottom of that window, you'll see a button that says **"Save As PDF..."** Click it. A second dialog window will appear:

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3. Ensure you name your document using the **.pdf** suffix. Click **Save**. If you double click the saved file, it will open in Apple's Preview software; it will also open in Acrobat Reader if you have this installed.

The procedures above should work with the following list of programs:

- Microsoft Word
- Microsoft Excel
- Microsoft Powerpoint
- Internet Explorer
- Safari
- Netscape
- Adobe Photoshop
- Macromedia Dreamweaver
- Fireworks
- Freehand
- InDesign
- Filemaker

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Creating PDF Files on Microsoft Windows

Unlike Mac OS X, versions of Microsoft Windows operating system do not come with built-in support for creating PDF documents. In order to create PDF documents, you need to install extra software which can do this. Some versions of this software are free, and some are not. Please read the disclaimer at the end of this document before attempting to install any of these software packages.

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Commercial PDF creation software

Adobe Acrobat is the most popular commercial software for the creation of PDF documents. A program to view PDF files (Adobe Acrobat Reader) is available for free from their website, but the software to create/generate PDF documents costs money. An educational discount is available for ECI faculty, staff and students when the software is purchased from an Adobe Authorized Education Reseller. A list of resellers in your area can be found here:

<http://store.adobe.com/store/general/otherplaces/uscanada/educlist.jhtml>

There are many other commercial applications available for creating PDF documents. A good site to consult for reviews of these products is the *PDF Zone*: <http://www.pdfzone.com/> (requires registration).

Free PDF creation software

There are a few software packages which allow you to create PDF documents for free. These software packages seem to come and go over time, so if the following links do not work, try searching the internet for "Free PDF creation software". The free versions of this software are usually limited in features compared to the commercial versions but should work well for many purposes.

- **Free PDF Creator – PrimoPDF**
<http://www.primopdf.com/>
- **CutePDF Writer (Free version)**
<http://www.acrosoft.com/Products/CutePDF/writer.asp>

Free online PDF creation services

There are quite a few websites which will create a PDF document for you from a file you upload to their site. The PDF document will be either emailed to you, or a link to the PDF document will be provided for you to download.

- Additionally, Adobe permits you to create up to 5 PDFs online at no charge (registration required):
<http://createpdf.adobe.com/?v=AHP>
- A good site to consult for reviews of both commercial and free PDF related software is the *PDF Zone*: <http://www.pdfzone.com/> (requires registration).
- Try doing a web search for "*online PDF creation*". There are many services that come and go over time.

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