



ANSWER QUEST TIP SHEET

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What's a PDF and how do I make one?

You see them all over the place, at work, on the web -- PDF this and PDF that.

What is a PDF?

Adobe's Portable Document Format (PDF) is a universal file format that preserves all the fonts, formatting, graphics, and color of any document no matter what type of application or platform was used to create it. They are compact and can be shared, viewed, navigated, and printed exactly as intended by anyone with the free Adobe Acrobat Reader software. They are also virtually immune to viruses.

You can purchase the Adobe Acrobat Writer software or use their new online service for a monthly fee. Obviously if you want to use this software frequently, purchasing the software is the better way to go.

Why else should you use it?

Adobe PDF files can be published and distributed anywhere: in print, attached to e-mail, on corporate servers, posted on Web sites, or on CD-ROM. The Free Acrobat Reader software is easy to download from the Adobe Web site. More than 300 million copies have been distributed worldwide. Compact Adobe PDF files are smaller than their source files, can be downloaded a page at a time for fast display on the Web, and don't slow down your network. Using the newest Acrobat 5.0 software, you can easily add bookmarks, set security options, and generate miniature Adobe PDF previews. Acrobat 5.0 also lets you comment on and approve Adobe PDF documents with digital signatures, all within a Web browser.

How does it work?

The easiest and fastest way to use this software is as a "printer." When you install the software, it will install a new printer driver called "Acrobat PDFWriter." So when you choose your printer, you will have a new choice.

Let's say you want to create a PDF file from a Word Document. Go into Word and open the document as you normally would. Click on **File**, then click on **Print**. Change the default printer to **Acrobat PDFWriter**. Click **OK**. It will ask where do you want to save your new PDF file -- choose the location. Click **Save** and that's it! The next time you want to print a hard copy of a document, you have to remember to switch the default printer back to your usual one.

This straightforward process presumes that you are using default fonts (like Arial and Times New Roman) or that you don't care whether the person viewing the document sees exactly the same fonts that you used Acrobat will substitute common fonts for any special ones.

To create a PDF that always shows the fonts that you have locally, you will need to set some properties for the Acrobat PDFWriter printer driver. Click on **File**, then click on **Print**. Change the default printer to **Acrobat PDFWriter**. Click on **Properties**. There are four tabs at the top: **Page Setup**, **Compression Options**, **Font Embedding**, and **About**.

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Click on **Font Embedding**. Be careful! Choose **Embed All Fonts** wisely. The more fonts that are embedded in your PDF file, the larger the file size will become.

On the **Font Embedding** window, there are three selection areas: **Available Fonts**, **Always Embed List**, and **Never Embed List**.

The **Available Fonts** list are the fonts that currently reside on your computer for your use.

The **Always Embed List** are the fonts that you use often but may not be on the reader's PC. This is where you add the font(s) so they will be included in the PDF file, making sure that whoever reads it will see it just as you created it.

The **Never Embed List** are the fonts that are available on almost every computer system by default. This means if you use one of these fonts, you won't need to embed them for your PDF file to be viewed correctly.

To create a PDF that is larger than a standard letter size or is to be viewed in landscape. Click on **File**, then click on **Print**. Change the default printer to **Acrobat PDFWriter**. Click on **Properties**. Click on the **Page Setup** tab. Here you can set the page size, whether it's portrait or landscape, the resolution (the larger the dpi the better the quality of the pictures but also the larger the file), and scaling. Changing the scaling will allow you to take an 8.5 x 14 inch document and scale it down to 8.5 x 11 inch PDF file.

That's it! You are all set to create simple PDF files to send anything to anyone!

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