

Portable Document Format (PDF) files

This workshop will discuss

What is a PDF file?

Invented by Adobe Systems and perfected over 15 years, Portable Document Format (PDF) lets you capture and view information — from almost any application, on any computer system.

Why use a PDF file?

You can share PDF files with virtually anyone, anywhere. Individuals, businesses, and government agencies around the world trust and rely on PDF to communicate their ideas and vision.

Preparing a file for PDF conversion

Outlining

Word provides many tools that you can use to help you develop your writing. One tool, which many people find particularly helpful, is outlining. The outlining features in Word are an implementation of how you learned to create outlines in school. First, you develop your major ideas, which become the headings in your outline. As you add more detail, your outline takes form with different levels of headings.

The headings in an outline are, in reality, the headings you use in your document. Thus, the outline becomes a condensed version of your document, showing only your headings. You can switch between your regular editing views and your outline by simply clicking your mouse on the Outline View icon in the lower-left corner of the screen (pre-Word 2007) or at the lower-right corner of the screen (Word 2007).

To create an outline from scratch, follow these steps:

Create a new document.

Make sure Outline view is selected. The Outline toolbar should appear on your screen (pre-Word 2007) or the Outlining tab of the ribbon should be selected (Word 2007).

Start typing your document. The paragraphs you enter will be a first-level head (formatted with the Heading 1 style).

Adjust the heading levels of your paragraphs by clicking the left and right arrow keys on the Outline toolbar or on the Outlining tab of the ribbon. With acknowledgement to <http://goo.gl/GMMH>.

Document Map

In Word, you can use the Document Map to display a list of all headings in your document down the left-hand side of your document window. In many respects, the Document Map performs a similar function to that navigation bar on a webpage.

When you turn on the Document Map, you can quickly navigate up and down through the document, rather than having to laboriously scroll through pages to find the paragraph title you are looking for. You can see all the chapter headings at a glance and move quickly through the document.

In Word, go to *View > Document Map*. This displays the navigation map on the left-hand side of the screen. If your document is well designed, and uses styles rather than hard-coded headings, the map should display only the chapter headings.

With acknowledgement to <http://goo.gl/KMLD> .

Image compression

Conveniences come at a cost and Microsoft Word documents are no different. Some of the features we use can lead to large file sizes. This can be an issue if you are low on disk space or you need to send these files as email attachments. Many ISPs and companies have a size limit for email attachments. Here are five quick tips to compress Microsoft Word files.

Tip 1 - Insert Graphics instead of Copying and Pasting

People like to use copy and paste to add graphics into Microsoft Word. The feature is effortless, but it is not efficient as the pasted image is a bitmap file. The differences in file sizes can be astounding especially if you are using a file format such as JPG as your source.

To insert a picture in Microsoft Word,

1. From the Insert menu, select Picture
2. From the submenu, select From File
3. Navigate to your picture and click the Insert button

Note: If the document is for personal use, try linking to the picture. On step 3, click the down arrow next to the button and select Link to File.

Tip 2 - Compress Pictures if Possible

This nice feature was added in Word 2002. In most cases, you can compress pictures without your reader noticing a difference. This is also an area where you can experiment to your own tastes.

To compress a picture in Word 2002 and later,

1. Right-click the picture in your document.
2. Select Format Picture from the shortcut menu.
3. Select the Picture tab.
4. Click the Compress button in lower left.
5. Select your options.
6. Click OK.

Tip 3 - Turn off Preview Picture

The preview picture is the thumbnail of the document's first page. This thumbnail shows in the Details section of Windows Explorer when you highlight the file. Usually, this is not an issue unless your first page displays a graphic. We shaved 600k off one file that had a large cover graphic.

To turn off Preview Picture in Microsoft Word,

1. From the File menu, select Properties
2. Select the Summary tab
3. Deselect the checkbox for Save preview picture
4. Click OK.

Tip 4 - Check for Versions

There are some documents where you need to keep versions. However, after many versions, you may find this feature adds too much to the file size. You can either turn the feature off, or delete unneeded versions.

To turn off Versions in Microsoft Word,

1. From the File menu, select Versions
2. In the Versions dialog, deselect Automatically save a version on close
3. If needed, highlight an existing version(s) and click Delete
4. Click Close.

Tip 5 - Turn off Fast Save

Many people think Fast Save is a timed file save. Rather than saving your document in the logical order, Fast Save saves the recent changes and appends them to the previous file. In other words, if you added a paragraph to Page 12 of a 30-page document, that paragraph is tacked to the end of the file. In contrast, when you do a full save, the document is properly reordered and changes occur in the proper place.

I tend to use Fast Save mainly when I am working on large complex documents. There have been a couple times where I was thankful I checked the option. However, for any shared document, I turn the feature off for security reasons. It also does not have any value if you are working on documents that are on a network drive unless you save them locally to your PC.

To turn off Fast Save in Microsoft Word,

1. From the Tools menu, select Options
2. Select the Save tab
3. Under Save options, deselect Allow fast saves
4. Click OK.

Any of these five tips should help compress your Word file. Some of these tips will result in better file size reductions than others based on the document elements. With acknowledgement to <http://goo.gl/slc2>.

NOTE: Viewers with an impaired vision, using a screen reader, need to have an alternative text added to the images and graphs. This can be done by either:

- Renaming the image file or
- Adding text to the image in Word (right clicks the image, click Size and select Alt Text to add background text).

Saving as an Rich Text Format (RTF)

Whenever you create, open, or save a document in Microsoft Word 97, the document may contain content that you may not want to share with others when you distribute the document electronically. This information is known as "metadata". Metadata is used for a variety of purposes to enhance the editing, viewing, filing, and retrieval of Microsoft Office documents.

Some metadata is readily accessible through the Microsoft Word user interface; other metadata is only accessible through extraordinary means, such as opening a document in a low-level binary file editor. Here are some examples of metadata that may be stored in your documents:

- Your name
- Your initials
- Your company or organization name
- The name of your computer
- The name of the network server or hard disk where you saved the document
- Other file properties and summary information
- Non-visible portions of embedded OLE objects
- The names of previous document authors
- Document revisions
- Document versions
- Template information
- Hidden text
- Comments

This article <http://goo.gl/kkgl>, explains various methods that you can use to minimize the amount of metadata that is contained within your Word documents.

Recovering RTF to .DOC file

Select and open your RTF file in Word and do a Save As... Word 93-97 Word document.

Web ready vs. Print ready PDF (file size)

A print ready PDF file retains the original image sizes and the original fonts are embedded in the document. It is generally a large file. The alternate is web ready where the PDF file has the images reduced and the fonts not embedded in the Save As.. process. When a PDF reader reads this file it uses the fonts on the machine it is being opened on.

PDF as a presentation tool (full screen option)

The advantage of this technique is that the PDF files are generally smaller than an equivalent PowerPoint. They do not need anything but a PDF reader to see the presentation.

In a PDF file select View/Full screen.

- To enlarge the page for readable text or viewable images, use Ctrl + or - to increase or decrease the screen viewing area...
- Click the left or right mouse button to move between pages.
- Use Escape (Esc) to exit the screen.
- Use the Up or Down arrow to move up or down the page.

TIP: If you want to use this method for a presentation, create each screen as a separate page in your PDF.

Methods of conversion

Google Docs and Gmail

Both of these 'cloud' applications allow you to save a text document and convert to a readable PDF file. You need a free account to load files to the applications for saving and viewing.

Online e.g. Zamzar.com and others

Zamzar at <http://zamzar.com> supports conversion between a wide variety of different file formats. They are adding support for new formats all the time.

At present, there is conversion support for:

- Document formats
- Image formats
- Music formats
- Video formats
- E-Book formats
- Compressed formats

Another online converter is <http://pdfonline.com> (select doc2pdf).

There are many online file converters – go to Google and put in something like ‘online pdf file converter.’

Open Office

Open Office supports text conversion to PDF with the command Export As PDF..Note the options for compressing the file size.

NOTE: Click PDF/1A-1a to embed original fonts (larger file size that is print ready, but note image reduction).

Microsoft Office add ins

Office 2007 has a free addin to save Word 2007 documents to PDF. Get the addin from <http://goo.gl/ERYo>.

In Office 2003, you can download free printer drivers that allow you to print your text document as a PDF. The options for change are limited.

PDF viewers and programmes for free

In contrast, you can get the equally powerful Foxit Reader at <http://goo.gl/6lie> , with a 6.69 MB download of the version 3.3.1.

Adobe Acrobat at <http://goo.gl/fIFn> , is the most commonly recommended PDF file viewer. While it is often found on magazine discs it is bloated at around 16.3 MB for version 9.1.

A smaller download again is Sumatra at <http://goo.gl/vmHQ> , a 1.2 MB download. It is basic but adequate.

Gizmo.s page of PDF tools at <http://goo.gl/6tCE> .