

Unpacking the



Understanding some of the files on your computer, with particular attention to a uniquely confusing type of file we all know and love

First: about file types

- For everything we do on a computer, there are bundles of information being and shared and processed between devices. We generally refer to these as **files**.
- Different types of files have different purposes and contain different types of information.
- The name of each file contains an extension that tells you what it is, such as **resume.docx** or **document.pdf**

The main categories

and some common examples:

text documents: .txt .docx **.pdf**

image files: .jpeg .png .gif .svg

other
types:

sound files: .mp3 .wav .ogg

video files: .mp4 .avi .mov

.exe (starts a program on the computer)

.ppt (a slide presentation)

.xlsx (a spreadsheet)

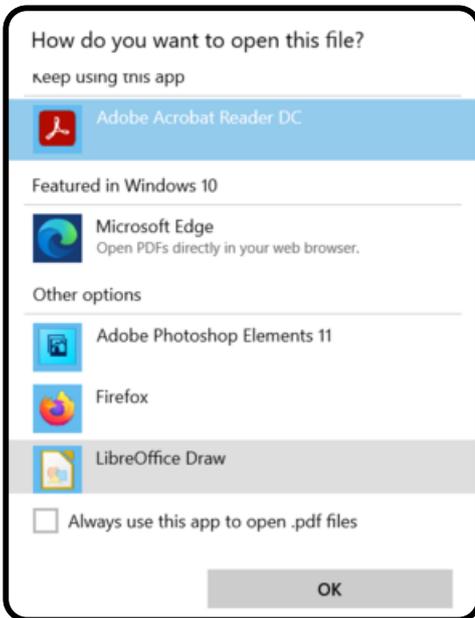
.html (a web document)



and their limits

The Portable Digital File [PDF] is meant to be used for formal documentation. It's really an *image file* made from text meant to preserve the integrity of a completed and/or official document; and make printing easier, with consistent results.

The format has some advantages, but *flexibility is not one of them*. We have to have special software just to open a PDF. In the real world, this may just look like your computer is acting... *strangely*.



When you open a PDF, you'll probably see a dialog box like the one shown at left, which will ask what program you would prefer to use to open the PDF.

Adobe Acrobat Reader is the standard reader for PDF files, but it's no longer the only option!

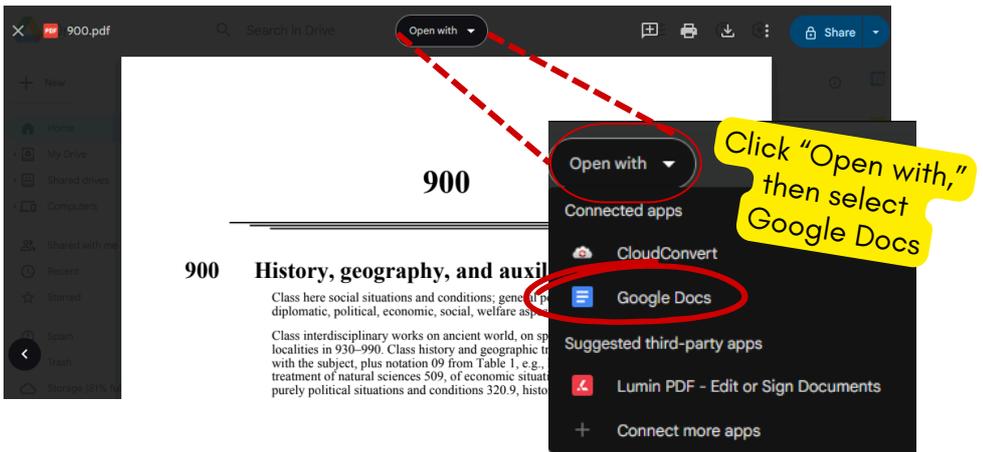
Most web browsers such as Firefox and Chrome have a PDF reader built in.

A big drawback about Acrobat Reader is the number of features that are *not included* in the free version. The Acrobat window contains all kinds of options for editing, filling out digital forms, etc., but only the most basic features are available without a subscription.

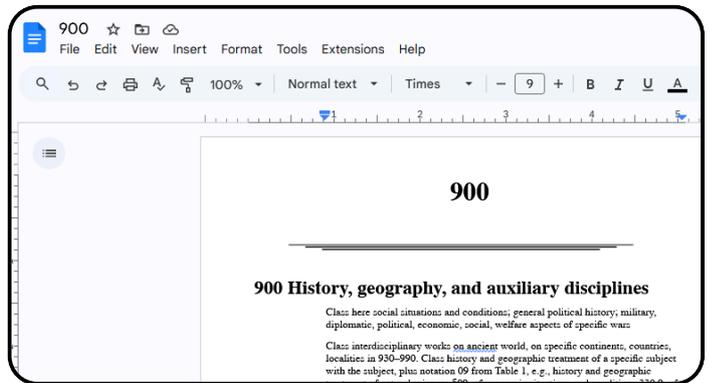
Your web browser may already be able to do what you need to do with the document. You can also find websites and browser extensions that will allow you to read and edit the document.

Google Docs

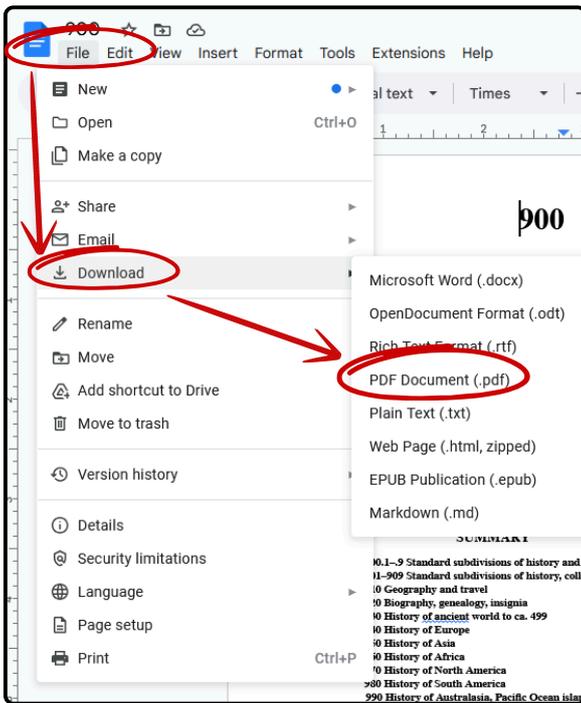
Google Docs is an easy-to-use online word processing tool. Using Docs requires a Google account. If you use Gmail, you have a Google account. If you have PDFs in Google Drive, either that you've uploaded there or that you've received in Gmail, you can usually open the document in Google Docs to make any edits you need. You will need to create a new PDF once your changes are made.



Google Docs will open a *new copy* of the document in a format that you can edit.

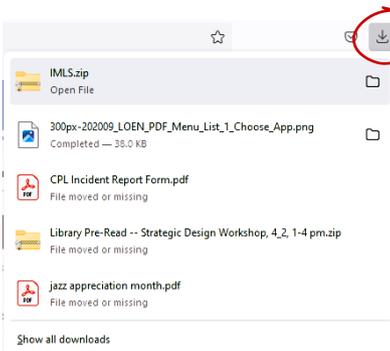
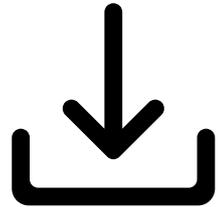


Remember, this is not the document you started with! This is a new document that you can save as a new PDF when you have finished making changes.



To create a new PDF from your edited Google Doc, click on the file tab and hover over Download. You'll see a list of formats that Docs will convert to instantly for you to download.

but here's the thing:



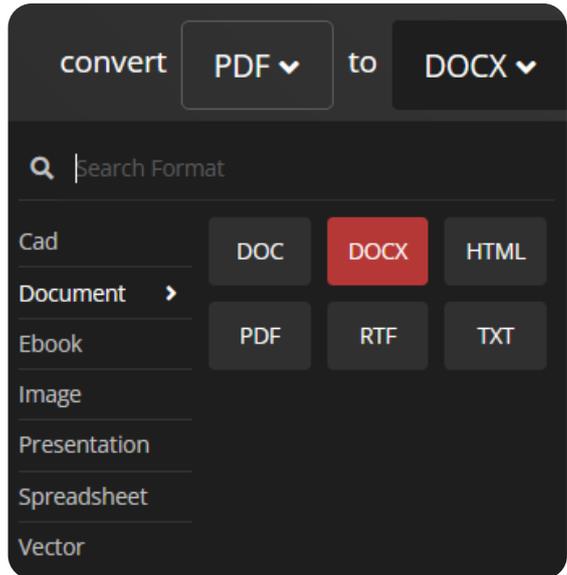
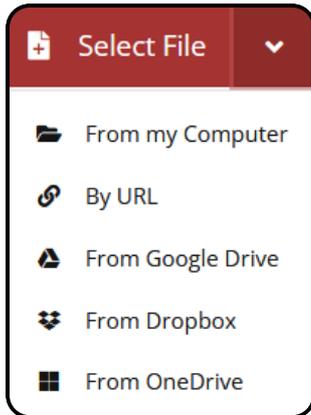
When you download a PDF, it's not always obvious where it went. In your web browser, you might see this icon at the top right corner of the window. Clicking this will show your recent downloads.

In Windows, you can also click the folder icon at the bottom of the screen to open File Explorer. From there, you can find your **Downloads** folder and the file should appear there.

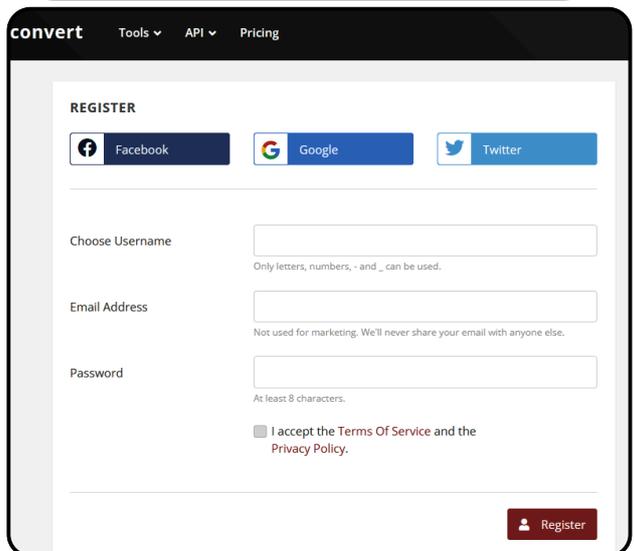


cloudconvert.com

CloudConvert is a free (with limits) online service that converts nearly any type of file to another relevant type of file. You can upload a .PDF and it will convert it to a .DOCX, or other conversions for images, presentations, and more.



You can convert a few files for free on your first visit, but you will have more features available with a free account. Clicking "sign up" at the home page will allow you to use existing accounts such as Google and Facebook to create an account quickly. You can also simply use your email address and create a password.



Many forms are now offered as PDF files that you are meant to fill out on a computer. This is not always a good practice!

But sometimes we have to use these forms, and it is a good practice to download/save a copy to your computer and then open that copy to fill out the fields. This is not the same thing as editing the PDF and you should be able to fill out the form and save it.

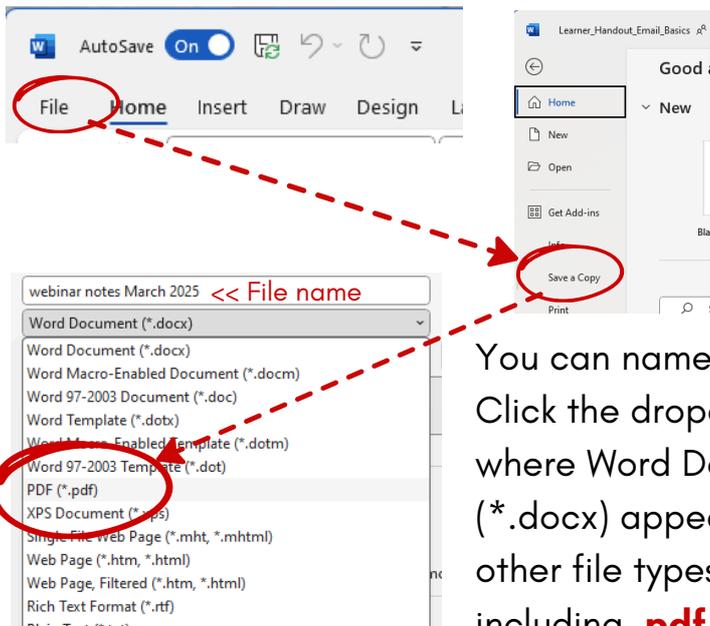
[NAME OF PRACTICE]
REGISTRATION FORM
(Please Print)

Today's date:		PCP:						
PATIENT INFORMATION								
Patient's last name:		First:	Middle:	<input type="checkbox"/> Mr. <input type="checkbox"/> Mrs.	<input type="checkbox"/> Miss <input type="checkbox"/> Ms.	Marital status: <input type="checkbox"/> Single / <input type="checkbox"/> Mar / <input type="checkbox"/> Div / <input type="checkbox"/> Sep / <input type="checkbox"/> Wid		
Is this your legal name? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		If not, what is your legal name?		(Former name):		Birth date:	Age:	Sex: <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F
Street address:		Social Security no.:		Home phone no.:		()		
P.O. box:	City:	State:	ZIP Code:					
Occupation:	Employer:		Employer phone no.:		()			
Chose clinic because/Referred to clinic by (please check one box): <input type="checkbox"/> Dr. <input type="checkbox"/> Insurance Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Hospital <input type="checkbox"/> Family <input type="checkbox"/> Friend <input type="checkbox"/> Close to home/work <input type="checkbox"/> Yellow Pages <input type="checkbox"/> Other								
Other family members seen here:								
IN CASE OF EMERGENCY								
Name of local friend or relative (not living at same address):		Relationship to patient:		Home phone no.:		Work phone no.:		
()		()		()		()		
<small>The above information is true to the best of my knowledge. I authorize my insurance benefits be paid directly to the physician. I understand that I am financially responsible for any balance. I also authorize [Name of Practice] or insurance company to release any information required to process my claims.</small>								
Patient/Guardian signature				Date				

Once you have filled out the form and saved it (use CTRL+S to save), you can then attach it to an email or upload the completed form to the recipient on their website.



This is a similar procedure in Microsoft Word. You'll click the File tab and then click "Save a Copy" or "Save As."



You can name the file here. Click the dropdown menu where Word Document (*.docx) appears to select other file types, including **.pdf**

Additional Learning Online: Check out some of these other resources to continue your learning:

[DigitalLearn.org](#)

Digital Learn offers a variety of quick technology basics classes and activities. Learn a new skill in ten minutes or less!

[GCFLearnFree.org](#)

This site has free tutorials for learning Everyday Life skills, Basic Math, Computer Programs, Mobile Apps, Reading, and much more.

[tinyurl.com/CPLtechacademy](#)

[CPL Technology courses on Niche Academy](#) - quick classes created by staff in Chelmsford and other libraries across the country.

Of course, you are always welcome to call 978-256-5521 or come in person to ask questions at the reference desk anytime, or email

[askusechelmsfordlibrary.org](#)