



## How to Save Money By Using PDF documents

One of the things we must bear in mind when designing web sites is that visitors to the site will be viewing on a range of different monitor sizes, or different web browsers. Decisions are taken early on regarding the target audience and whether any special design requirements are needed.

Good web design allows a web page to “degrade gracefully” when viewed on various screens (including contrast, resolution etc.) or using different web browsers such as Internet Explorer, Opera, Safari or Firefox. This means the web page should still be useable over a wide range of visitor monitor & browser configurations. In other words, the results might look a little different on different screens, but the web site will still work well enough so as not to cause a problem.

So what some users actually see on their screens is not necessarily what the web designer created so precisely in the first place (much to the designer’s chagrin sometimes!). The “fluid” layout of a web page is exactly what’s required to enable content to be laid out reasonably well on various screens and browsers.

The coding used to create world wide web pages is not a *page description language*. If you need a precise rendering of a creative work with 100% accuracy of size, layout, colour etc. then a web page is **not** the answer.

Most users know of the Adobe PDF (Portable Document Format), which is a subset of the standard Postscript page description language used in the process of designing brochures, magazines and packaging etc. The PDF is ideal for distributing documents via the web or by Email.

The PDF’s main benefit is that *what the user sees will be exactly as the designer intended*. Complex colour brochures, fact sheets, price lists, adverts, catalogues and more can all be sent out electronically in PDF format. PDFs also understand web links, so you can embed hyperlinks to external web sites, and entire multi-thousand page manuals can be reduced to a single PDF stored on a CD ROM. PDFs can be searchable, too, enabling keywords to be located in context.

In order to read PDFs, a freely downloadable program called Adobe Reader should be fetched from [www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com).



Simply follow the button and select your type of operating system, then download and install the program.

You can download Adobe Reader for Windows, Mac, Linux and mobile (even PDAs such as the Palm Tungsten or Windows smartphones can view PDFs) as well as other operating systems.

## Create your own PDFs easily and cheaply

You probably heard, in years gone by, the promises they made that computers would “make life easier” and they would “cut down paperwork”. In our experience, neither statement proved to be true!

One of the great benefits of the Adobe PDF is that it enables you to create and store documentation *digitally*, especially if you don’t need a hard copy.

Consider a typical E-commerce transaction. After buying an item online (maybe through eBay or your favourite online store) invariably the seller offers you some form of online receipt, probably with an order reference number. Chances are that you print it onto some sheets of paper, but once the goods arrive you no longer need the printout – wasting trees as well as ink. And if you forget to print it, then you’ve lost a valuable snapshot of the transaction.

The PDF is the ideal solution for reducing paper and ink usage. Now anyone can create PDFs by using freely downloadable software, such as the excellent Primo PDF from <http://www.primopdf.com/>

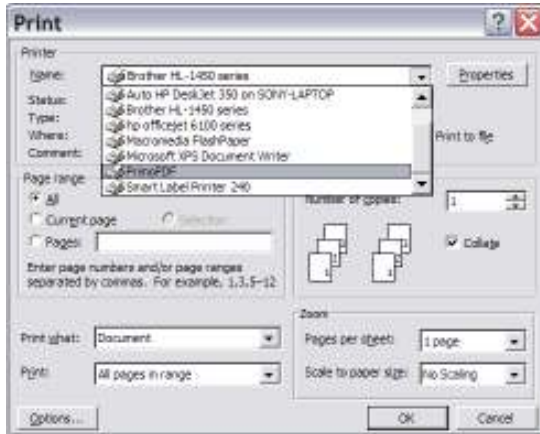
Primo PDF works like a “printer” in that you print the document in the normal way, but you select the Primo PDF printer driver instead of your usual printer hardware. It then generates a PDF file that you can save onto your computer.

Use Primo PDF to create PDFs out of:

- Web pages – just “print” them to Primo PDF and save on disk.
- Microsoft Office documents (Word, Excel, etc.).
- Brochures or flyers created in popular desktop publishing or word processing software.
- Almost any standard type of document that can be printed on a traditional printer, can be saved as a PDF instead. Primo PDF claims it supports more than 300 file types.

It is ideal for saving documents in a disposable format (such as web page receipts, online bank statements or taking a snapshot of an interesting web page for future reference). Think of the ink and paper you'll save.

Here's a brief summary of how Primo PDF works:



^ Print a document in the usual way, but select Primo PDF as the printer.



^ In Save As, browse to a folder where you want the PDF stored (Desktop, in this example) and click OK. We saved this one as a file called “making PDFs.pdf”.

Usually, [Computer] Screen setting is fine – the result isn't quite as detailed as the output suitable for printing, but mostly Screen is ideal for saving quick snapshots or screen grabs.



- If you want to cut wastage with your paper printing, a versatile Printer program we recommend is **FinePrint** from <http://www.fineprint.com/> which is utilised by many corporate users, banks etc. looking to save overheads. You can delete “phantom” empty or nearly empty pages from the job, print multiple pages on one sheet or make booklets, thereby slashing your ink and paper consumption. Download a free trial.
- Usually, pressing CTRL + P (on a Windows keyboard) will launch your program’s Print... applet. We find this quicker than clicking the Print icon. Hit Enter to print one copy to your default printer.
- Remember that Print... opens the Printer properties to allow you to choose a printer and settings; however a Print (with no dots) button will cause your job to print immediately to your default printer, whether you want the whole document printing or not. This can be very wasteful and time consuming.
- If you go CTRL + P followed by a number (e.g. 1 or 2), then hit Return, your default printer will immediately print that number of hard copies. A good timesaver.
- In Internet Explorer 7, CTRL + P also opens the Print chooser applet, whilst ALT + R prints a page immediately to your default printer.
- Check your inkjet settings: you may be better using the “everyday” or “draft” settings. Apart from being quicker, it uses much less ink.
- Consider a fax modem and fax software too – they still have a use, you can “print” electronically to a fax and send it from your PC without needing to print it first.

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