

Staff Development Unit

Student and Staff Services Division

***ADOBE ACROBAT
READER & PDF'S
DEMYSTIFIED***

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Adobe Acrobat Reader & PDFs Demystified



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Adobe Acrobat Reader & PDFs Demystified

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Acrobat® Reader™ 5.0

Introduction (or “What is an Acrobat, and would I want to read one?”)


To start, a comparison needs to be drawn to explain the terminology being used. Word (for example) is a word processing program, developed by Microsoft. Adobe is also a software company, whose products focus more on the visual media, and many people would have heard of their most popular product “Photoshop” - a powerful digital graphics editing program. Adobe also have created another program called “Acrobat”. This program is used to convert documents from other programs such as Word into an e-document format. These are stored in a format called a PDF, which we will discuss in a second. To view these documents, Adobe has created a program that it gives away for free called “Acrobat Reader”, which is the subject of this training course.


In simple terms, the Portable Document Format (PDF) is chosen to be able to distribute a document electronically (ie via the Web, E-mail or disk) so that it can be opened and viewed irrespective of computer type (eg PC, Mac, Unix) and installed software. For example, there is no point sending a Word document created on a PC to a person operating a Mac who doesn’t own Microsoft Office.

PDFs solve this problem, being specifically designed to be platform-independent, yet still retain the look and feel of the original document. Their use doesn’t end there however. They can be used for electronic forms, can incorporate sound and movies, hyperlinks and links to web pages, and security features to prevent unauthorised people from opening, printing, copying content etc.

One final point- Acrobat is not used to create the initial page, or its layout. The author of a PDF will still use their favourite program (such as Word, Excel, PageMaker etc) to create the initial document, then convert it to PDF format using Acrobat for distribution.

In summary, Adobe PDF is a universal file format that preserves all of the fonts, formatting, colours and graphics of any source document, regardless of the application and platform used to create it. PDF files are compact and can be shared, viewed, navigated and printed exactly as intended by anyone with the free Acrobat Reader.

Software Company: Microsoft
Product: Word 2000
File Format: Word Document
File Suffix: .doc
File Icon: 

Software Company: Adobe
Product: Acrobat 5.0
File Format: Portable Document Format
File Suffix: .pdf
File Icon: 

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How do I recognise a PDF when I come across it?

PDFs are typically found on the Web, CD or in an e-mail. The author will usually give pretty obvious clues when a PDF is used.



• [FAQ \(PDF: 21 KB / 3 pages\)](#)



I've found a PDF, now what do I do with it?

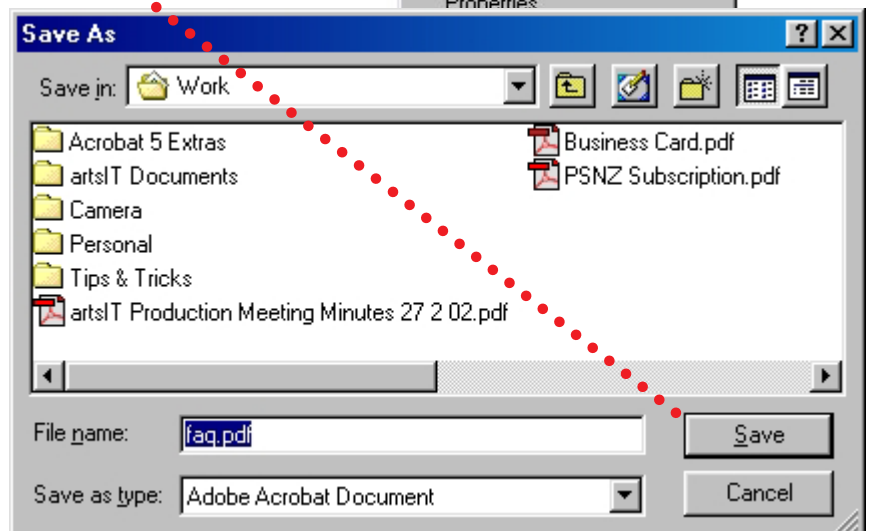
If you have encountered the PDF on the Web, you typically have three options- open, save or print. The default action is normally “Open”, which you can activate by double-clicking the icon. Alternatively, using the right mouse button, and right-clicking the icon will bring up a menu list.

This menu gives you the option to ‘Open’ and ‘Open in New Window’. The difference between these is, the first will display the PDF in the browser window you are currently using (such as Netscape or Internet Explorer), while the second will open a new browser window to display the PDF, so that you can continue surfing the site while the PDF downloads.

‘Save Target As’ allows you to save the PDF to your harddrive, and ‘Print Target’ send the PDF directly to your printer.

In some cases, the ‘Open’ commands will not display the PDF in a browser but instead will open Acrobat Reader to view the PDF. When this happens, it means the Plug-in for your browser to view PDFs is missing. It is not an important omission, but it can be corrected if desired.

FAQ (PDF: 21 KB / 3 pages)



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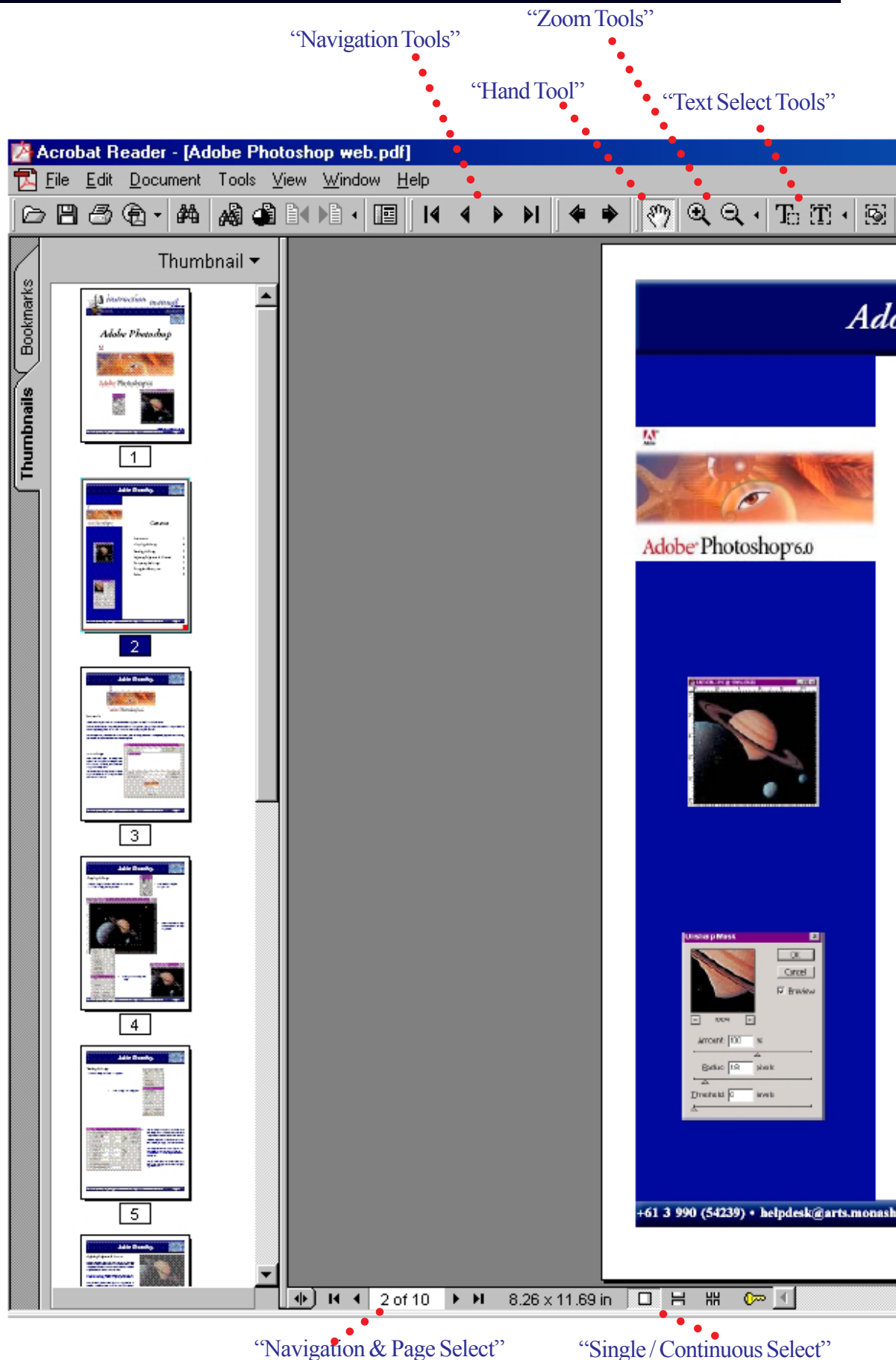
The Comparison

Acrobat vs Acrobat Reader

Acrobat Reader software is a free utility for viewing and printing Adobe PDF files. Acrobat 5.0 is a desktop productivity tool that allows you to create, review, approve, secure and share Adobe PDF files online.

Features	Acrobat Reader	Acrobat 5.0
View, navigate and print Adobe PDF files	X	X
Fill in Adobe PDF forms	X	X
Convert any document from any application to an Adobe PDF file		X
Create and save interactive, electronic forms in Adobe PDF		X
Convert Web pages/sites to Adobe PDF files		X
Review and share comments on an Adobe PDF file		X
Easily add electronic sticky notes, highlights and strikethroughs		X
Add digital signatures to an Adobe PDF file from within a Web browser		X
Add security controls to an Adobe PDF file		X

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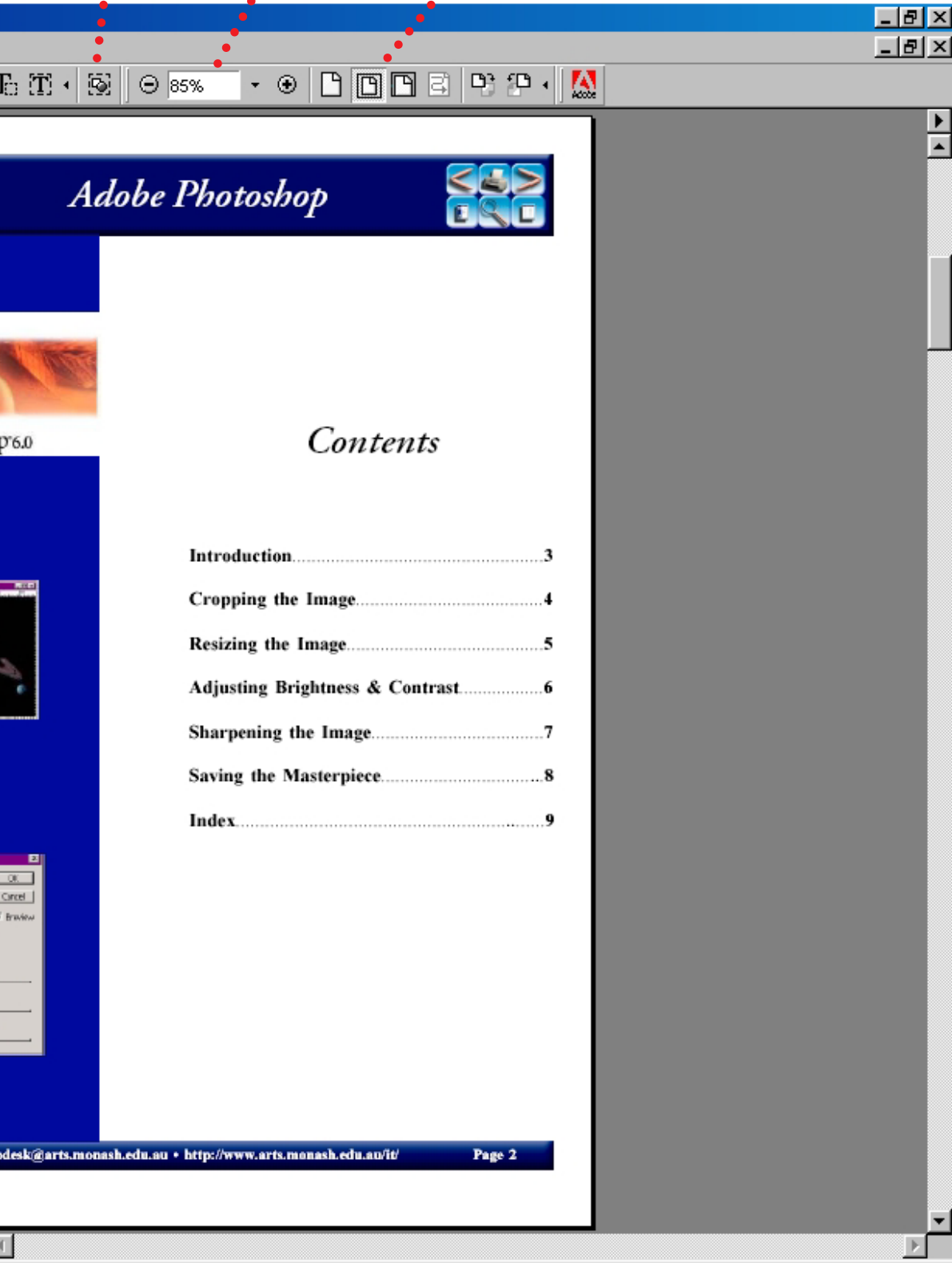


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“Graphics Select Tool”

“Single / Continuous Select”

“Magnification Select”



“Document Info”

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Finding your way around a PDF document

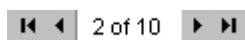
Navigation Buttons

Like many programs these days, there are multiple ways of achieving the same thing, and where it comes to navigating a document, Acrobat Reader is almost unmatched in the number of ways of getting around. (Un)fortunately, the author of the PDF can choose to disable any of these that they wish, and they can also design and add their own.

The most common are the arrows at top of the screen in the toolbar.



The same arrows are repeated at the bottom of the screen.



First Page Previous Page Next Page Last Page

As mentioned, the author can also design their own. Here are a couple of samples that I have used in the past.



You may notice that there are more than just navigation buttons here. That is because the author (using Acrobat) can create a whole range of functional buttons, adding search tools and even web links to name a few.

You can also use the menu to navigate. Click on “Document” then click the desired option. You will see to the right of each option there are also keyboard shortcuts for all the navigation tools. The most common used are the forward and back arrows to advance or retreat a page respectively.

Document	Tools	View	Window	Help
First Page				Ctrl+Shift+Pg Up
Previous Page				<-
Next Page				->
Last Page				Ctrl+Shift+Pg Dn
Go To Page...				Ctrl+N
Go To Previous Document				Alt+Shift+<-
Go To Previous View				Alt+<-
Go To Next View				Alt+>
Go To Next Document				Alt+Shift+>
Select Reading Order...				Ctrl+Shift+C

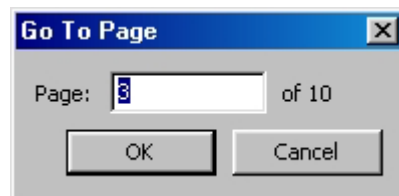


Another very common tool used is the ‘Go To Previous View’. This is very similar to the “Back” button in your web browser. There is also the ‘Go To Next View’ to advance again after using the ‘Go To Previous View’ button. Confused? It is definitely worth taking some time to try out all these buttons until they become second nature. Using Acrobat Reader you cannot damage a PDF, so feel free to play.

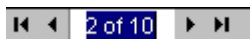
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Getting to a Specific Page

You can jump directly to any page in a PDF document by a number of methods. You can use either the keyboard shortcut “Ctrl+N” or click on the menu item ‘Document’ then ‘Go To Page’. This brings up a window where you can type in the desired page number. Alternatively, at the bottom of the screen, you can highlight the current page number, and type in the number of the page you want to jump to.

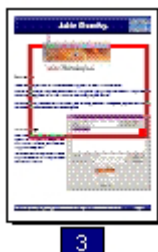
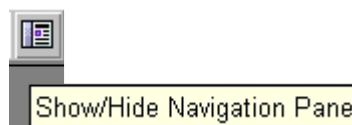


Document	Tools	View	Window	Help
First Page				Ctrl+Shift+Pg Up
Previous Page				<-
Next Page				->
Last Page				Ctrl+Shift+Pg Dn
Go To Page...				Ctrl+N
Go To Previous Document				Alt+Shift+<-
Go To Previous View				Alt+<-
Go To Next View				Alt+>
Go To Next Document				Alt+Shift+>
Select Reading Order...				Ctrl+Shift+C



Thumbnails

The author may have created thumbnails for the document to assist in navigation. If these are not already visible, click the ‘Show/Hide Navigation Pane’ button, then click the ‘Thumbnail’ tab. You can use thumbnails to navigate by clicking on the page that you want to display.

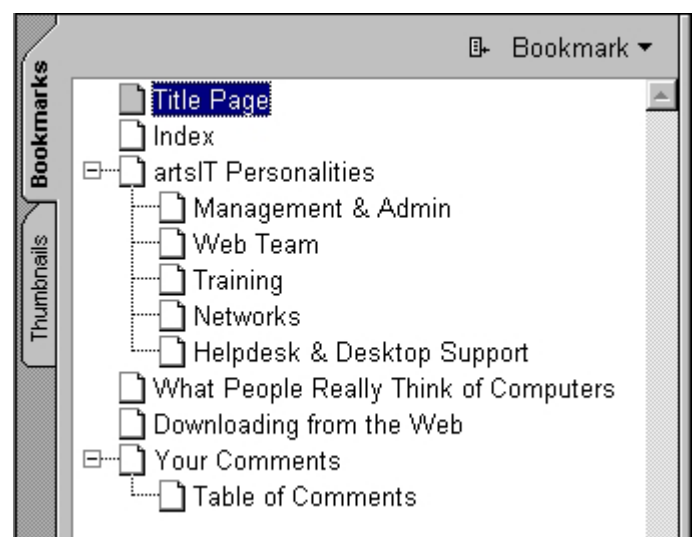


The red box indicates the area currently visible in your window. By placing your mouse on the edge of the box, it can be dragged, and your window display will reflect the new location. It can also be resized by zooming (see the next page), or by grabbing the little red square at the bottom-right corner, and dragging this to resize the red box.




Bookmarks

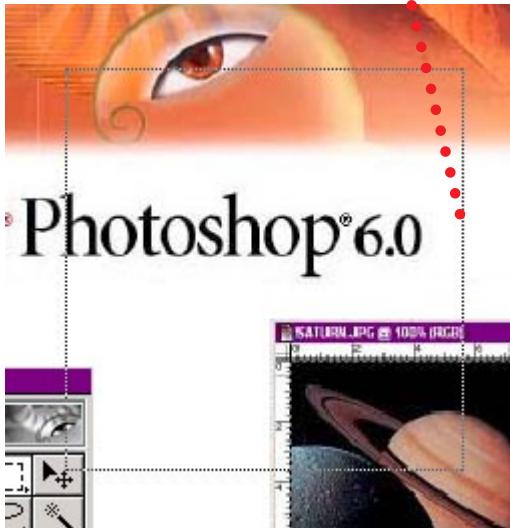
The author may have also created bookmarks for the document. Click on the ‘Bookmark’ tab to see the bookmarks that have been created. Clicking on any of the headings will jump the PDF document to the corresponding page, and magnification chosen by the author.



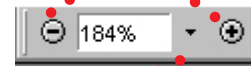
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Zoom (magnification)

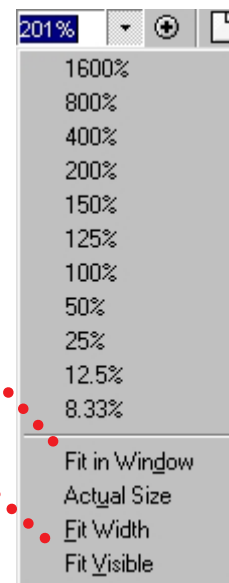
There are numerous ways of changing the magnification of the window in Acrobat Reader. In the toolbar, there are the magnifying buttons.  These can be used two ways. Firstly, by selecting the magnifying glass then single-clicking on the image, you will zoom in (or out) by set increments. By using the same tool, you can also click, and hold the button to drag a marquee around the area you want the view to zoom to.



The toolbar displays the current magnification, and also has symbols on either side for zooming in and out by set steps.



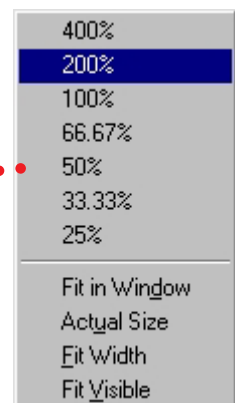
The down arrow opens up a list of common magnifications that you can choose from, and also gives the options of "Fit in Window", "Actual Size", "Fit Width" and "Fit Visible".



These options are also available as buttons on the toolbar, and all the options are available under "View" in the menu.



There is the right mouse button options as well. Right-clicking on the document opens up familiar zoom options again, and finally, the previous page discusses how to zoom using thumbnails.



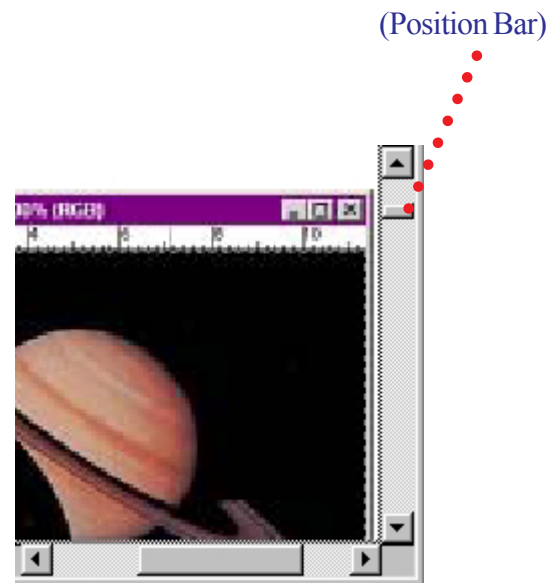
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Getting Around the Current Page

As discussed earlier, you can use thumbnails to scroll around a page (if you have zoomed in). There is also the “Hand Tool” which allows you to drag the page around.

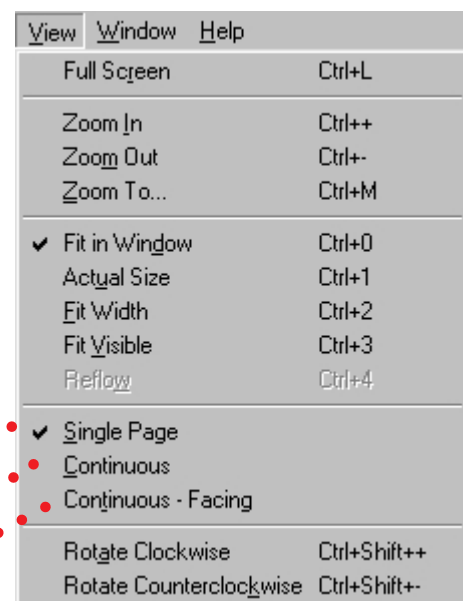


Depending on the size of the document, and the current magnification, there may be scroll bars on the right side and/or bottom of the page. These can be used in a similar way to the “Hand Tool” and can also be used to (slowly) move from page to page. For a multipage document, you can grab the position bar, and drag it down multiple pages. The view will not change while you are holding the position bar, but Reader will tell you which page will appear when you release the mouse button.



Almost there. How Acrobat Reader displays one page after the next can also be chosen. The author will have already chosen the default setting, but you can change this to your personal preference. The options are “Single Page”, where the view will ‘flick’ from one page to the next, like reading a book. “Continuous” will scroll one page directly after the previous- similar to “Print Layout” in Word. “Continuous-Facing” is used when an image or text spreads over 2 pages, so you get to see both the left and right pages at the same time.

These options can be set either under “View” in the menu, or by clicking on the small buttons at the bottom of the screen.



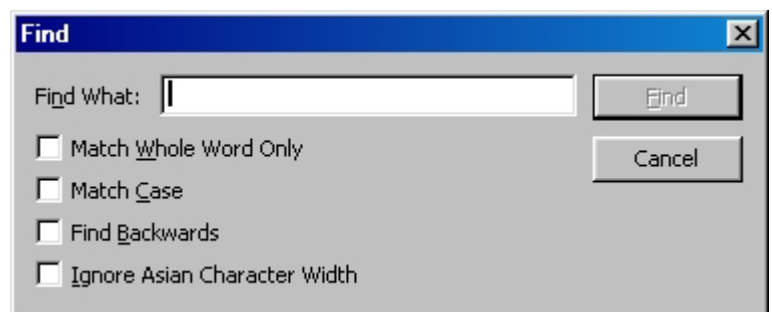
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More Tools - Print and Find

Printing with Acrobat Reader is much the same as any other program, so there is no specific requirement to go into too much detail here. You can access the print menu via 'File' then 'Print', or via the icon on the toolbar.



The find text tool can be accessed via 'Edit' then 'Find', or the keyboard shortcut <Ctrl> + 'F'. Keep in mind that this tool searches from your current position to the end of the document. It does not automatically start from the beginning. When it reaches the end of the document, it will ask if you wish to continue searching from the start.



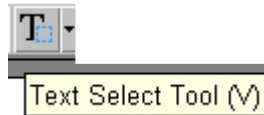
Some authors also include a separate index file with their PDF document(s), especially the longer, more complex ones. In this case, you can also use the 'Search' tool to access this file. However, a vast majority of people using PDFs never access this option.

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The Other Tools - Text Select and Graphics Select

The “Text Select Tool” allows you to highlight passages of text, and copy them to the clipboard using either ‘Edit’ then ‘Copy’, or the keyboard shortcut <Ctrl> + ‘C’

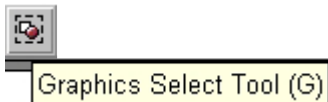
This can then be pasted into any other program, such as Word.



Adobe Photoshop is a powerful, industry-standard

It can be used for simple image manipulations, such as formats depending on the intended use, the most common

The “Graphics Select Tool” works slightly differently. In this case, it allows you to draw a marquee around the area you require (and can include text and graphic elements). This area can then be copied to the clipboard as above, and pasted into another document as desired.



Contrast

Images, rarely have the correct contrast. The exception to this are images, which should have had the contrast adjusted already.

Images that are washed out, lacking colour, or faded through a grey sheet of film.

The right-hand photo is “as

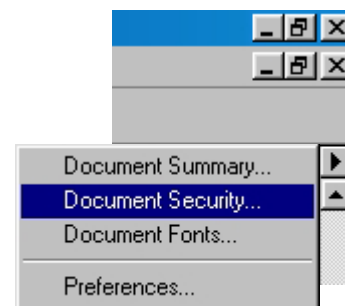
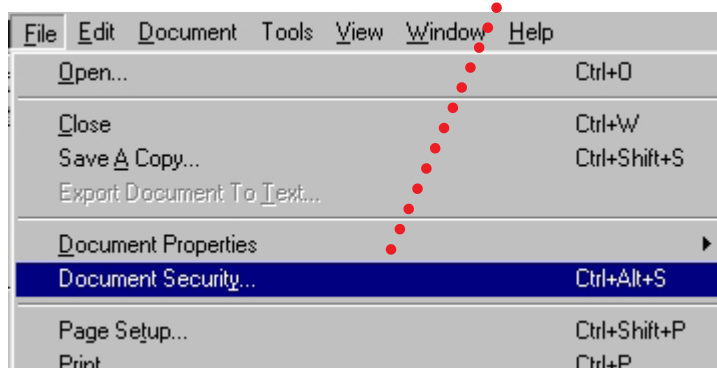


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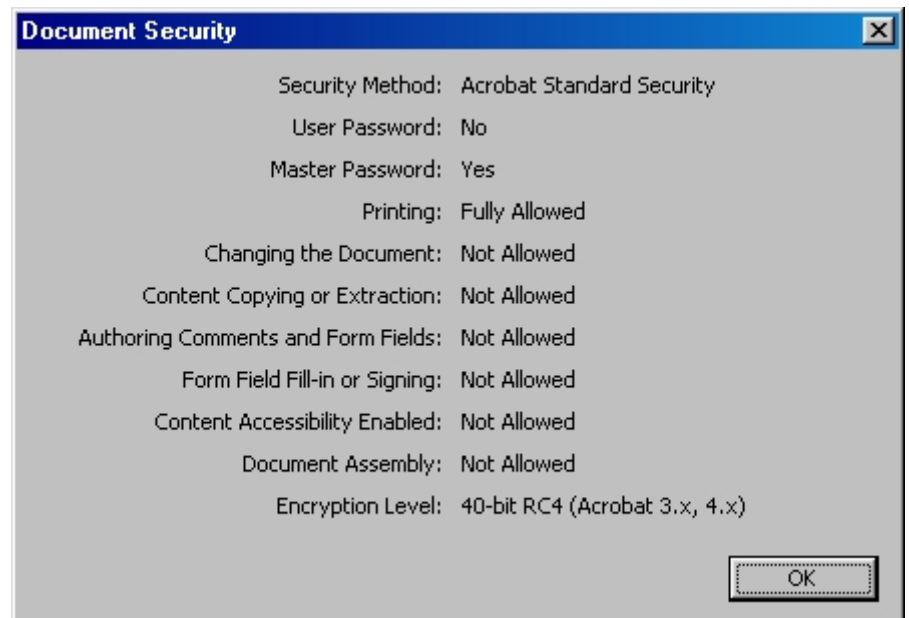
Why are these ‘Select’ tools not working?

There are a couple of reasons that the tools do not function as expected. Firstly, if the PDF was created by scanning a document into Acrobat directly, it is created as a PDF Image File. That means that although you can see text on the screen, it is still an image, and the text select tool is not functional.

The other main reason is the author has enabled certain levels of the security features available. You can check to see what has been enabled by clicking on ‘File’ then ‘Document Security’ or by using the keyboard shortcut <Ctrl> + <Alt> + ‘S’ or by clicking on the arrow at the top right of the screen, and selecting ‘Document Security’ from that menu.



A list of all the security features is displayed with their current settings. If “Content Copying or Extraction” shows “Not Allowed”, this would explain why the select tools are not working as expected.



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