toolsko_ | Learn

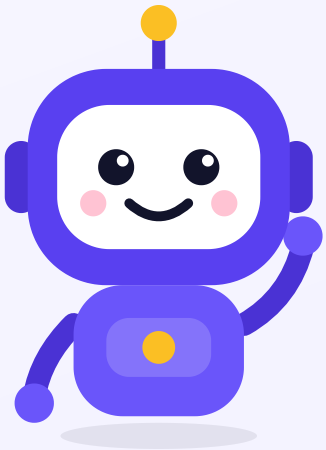
PDF Skills · Book 1

How PDF Works

What a PDF really is, why everyone uses it, and how to open, read, fill, sign, make and share one safely

Total beginner · ages 13 and up | About 75 minutes | 10 chapters with quizzes | Free

A PDF is like digital paper — it looks the same everywhere. Let's learn how it works, one page at a time!



A TOOLSKO LEARN ORIGINAL · TOOLSKO.COM/LEARN

toolsko_ | Learn

How PDF Works

What a PDF really is, why everyone uses it, and how to open, read, fill, sign, make and share one safely

PDF Skills, Book 1 · First edition, November 2026

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Published by ToolsKo Learn · toolsko.com/learn · admin@toolsko.com. Product facts checked November 22, 2026.

What you will learn

- What a PDF is, and why it looks the same on every screen
- How to open and read a PDF on a computer or phone
- The difference between a text PDF and a scanned PDF
- How to fill in and sign a PDF form
- How to make your own neat PDF from a document or photos
- How to spot fake or dangerous PDF attachments

This is **Book 1** of the **PDF Skills** series. You will start from zero: no computer skills needed. Every new word is explained with an everyday example.

Our honest promise

This book will not make you an expert overnight. It gives you the basics most people never learn, so you can handle school, work and government PDFs with less stress. App buttons change often, so yours may look a little different.

Age note

This series is for ages 13 and up. Free browser readers need no account. Some apps ask you to sign in, and each one has its own age rule — ask a parent before you install an app or send personal documents.

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What you need

Item	Why
A computer or phone	To open and practice with PDFs
One PDF to practice on	A school handout, a form or any PDF you already have
About 15 minutes a day for 2 weeks	For the lessons and the 14-day plan

How to use this book

1. **Read one chapter at a time**
   Do the small exercise right away, while it is fresh.

2. **Practice on a copy**
   Never practice on your only copy of an important file.

3. **Check your learning**
   Every chapter ends with key takeaways, 3 quiz questions with answers, and a practice task.

THE PDF RULE IN ONE LINE

```
Check the sender + open in a trusted app + test with search + keep the original
```

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CHAPTER 10 Real-Life Examples: PDFs Made Easy

THE END Quick Summary

WHAT'S NEXT Your Next Learning Path

EXTRA Free ToolsKo Tools for This Book

EXTRA Words to Know (Glossary)

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CHAPTER 1

Why PDF Matters

School handouts, job forms, bills, receipts and government forms often come as PDFs. Knowing how they work saves you time and trouble.

Have you ever sent a document to a friend, and it looked messy on their phone? The words moved, the pictures jumped, and the page broke in a strange place. That happens a lot with files that can be edited. A PDF solves this problem.

New word: PDF

PDF stands for **Portable Document Format**. "Portable" means it can travel. A PDF is like a **photocopy of a finished page**: whoever opens it, on any phone, computer or printer, sees the same page you see.

The company Adobe launched PDF in **1993** — that is **33 years** ago. In 2008 it became an open world standard (ISO 32000), so any company can make apps that read and create PDFs. That's why almost every device can open one today.

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PDF myths

PICTURE 1 **PDF myths vs truths**

MYTH

What people think

- "You need to buy an app to open a PDF."
- "A PDF can never be changed."
- "Every PDF is safe to open."
- "A photo of a page is the same as a PDF."

TRUTH

What's really true

- Free browsers and readers open PDFs
- PDFs can be filled, signed and edited with the right tool
- Fake PDFs are a common scam trick
- A neat PDF is easier to read, print and send

Knowing the truth helps you work faster and stay safe.

The big idea of this book

A PDF is digital paper. It looks the same everywhere. Open it safely, read it smartly, and always keep the original.

A real-world example

Ana's school sends an enrollment form as a Word file. On her mother's phone, the boxes slide around and one line falls onto page 2. The next year, the school sends the same form as a **PDF**. Now it looks exactly the same on the phone, the laptop and the printed copy. Nothing moved.

QUICK RECAP

PDF means Portable Document Format. It works like a photocopy of a finished page, so it looks the same on every device and printer. Adobe launched it in 1993, and it became an open standard in 2008. Free apps can open PDFs, but not every PDF is safe. Big idea: a PDF is digital paper — open it safely, read it smartly, keep the original.

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TRY IT NOW

Find the PDFs around you

1. Open your phone's Files app or your computer's Downloads folder.
2. Look for files whose names end in .pdf.
3. Write down three of them and where each one came from.

Key takeaways

- PDF = Portable Document Format.
- It looks the same on every device.
- Free apps can open PDFs.
- Big idea: a PDF is digital paper.

Quiz: 3 quick questions

1. What does PDF stand for?

A Private Data File
B Portable Document Format
C Printed Digital Folder

2. Why do schools and offices like PDFs?

A They look the same on every device
B They cannot be opened on phones
C They are always very large

3. Is every PDF safe to open?

A Yes, PDFs are always safe
B Only on weekends
C No — scammers also send fake PDFs

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Answers

1. **B. Portable Document Format** — "Portable" means the page can travel and still look the same.
2. **A. They look the same on every device** — The page doesn't move, so everyone sees the same thing.
3. **C. No — scammers also send fake PDFs** — Fake PDF attachments are a common scam trick. Chapter 7 shows how to spot them.

PRACTICE TASK

Your PDF list

Make a short list of the PDFs you use most (school, work, bills, forms). Next to each one, write if you only read it, or if you need to fill, sign or send it. This list tells you which chapters matter most to you.

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CHAPTER 2

Beginner Basics: What's Inside a PDF

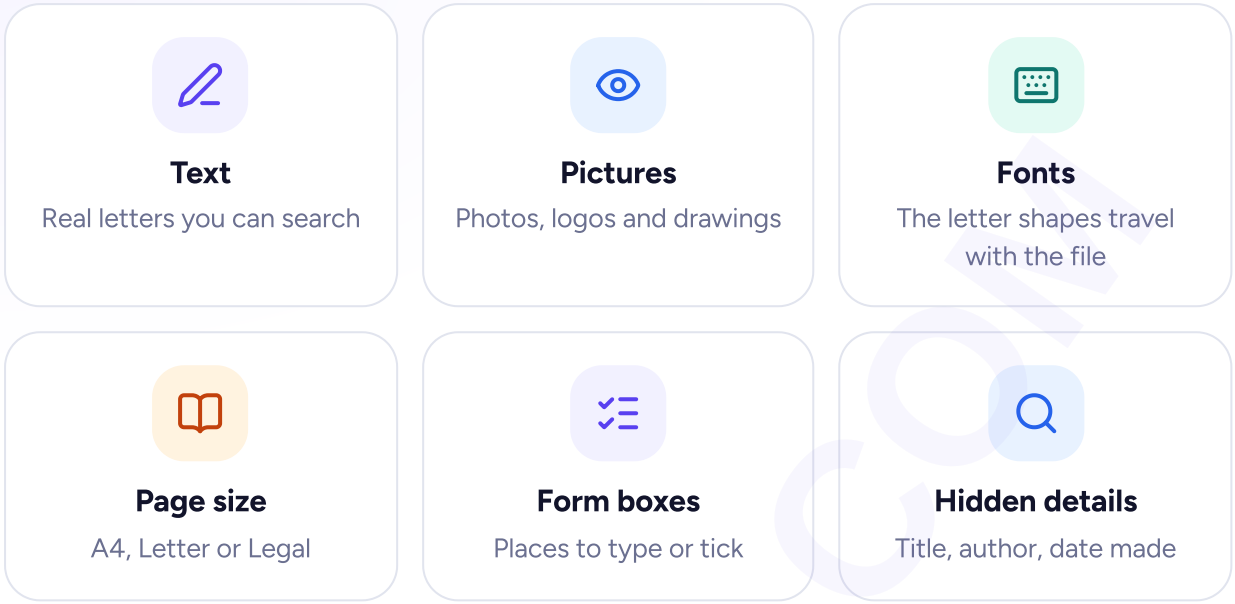
A PDF is a box that holds everything a page needs: words, pictures, letter shapes and page size. Let's open the box.

PDF words you will use

Word	What it means	Example
File	One saved item on your device	enrollment-form.pdf
File extension	The letters after the dot that tell the file type	.pdf, .docx, .jpg
PDF reader	An app that opens PDFs	Chrome, Edge, Acrobat Reader, your phone's Files app
Font	A style of letters	Arial, Times New Roman
Text PDF	A PDF with real letters you can search and copy	A form made on a computer
Scanned PDF	A PDF made of pictures of paper pages	A photo of a signed form saved as PDF
Form field	A box in a PDF where you can type or tick	Name: ____ ☐ Yes ☐ No
File size	How much space a file takes	200 KB is small; 20 MB is big

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PICTURE 2 **What's inside a PDF box**



A PDF packs everything a page needs, so nothing goes missing when it travels.

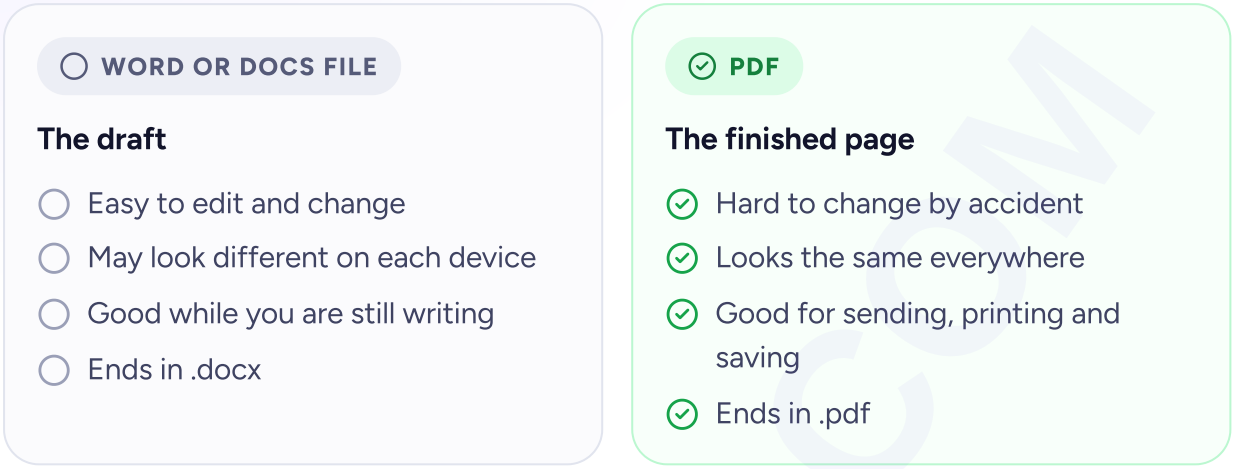
New phrase: embedded fonts

A PDF can carry its own letter shapes inside the file. This is called **embedding fonts**. It's like packing your own plate and spoon when you visit a friend: you can eat the same way, even if their kitchen is different. That's one big reason a PDF looks the same everywhere.

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A Word file vs a PDF

PICTURE 3 **Draft vs finished page**



Write in Word or Google Docs; send and print as a PDF.

Example: file sizes

KB (kilobyte) and **MB** (megabyte) measure file size. About 1,000 KB make 1 MB. A 10-page text PDF may be about **100 KB**. The same 10 pages as a scan may be about **4 MB** — around **40 times bigger**, because pictures take much more space than letters.

QUICK RECAP

A file extension like .pdf tells the file type. A PDF reader is the app that opens it. A PDF holds text, pictures, fonts, page size, form boxes and hidden details. Embedded fonts help it look the same everywhere. Word files are drafts; PDFs are finished pages. Scanned PDFs are much bigger than text PDFs.

TRY IT NOW

Read a file's details

1. Find one PDF on your device.
2. Look at its full name and its size (KB or MB).
3. Guess: is it a text PDF or a scan? You'll test your guess in Chapter 4.

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Key takeaways

- The extension .pdf tells the file type.
- A PDF carries its own fonts.
- Draft in Word; send as PDF.
- Scans are much bigger than text PDFs.

Quiz: 3 quick questions

1. What is a file extension?

A The letters after the dot, like .pdf
B A longer file name
C A kind of virus

2. Why does a PDF look the same everywhere?

A It is always printed first
B It carries its own fonts and layout
C It has no words

3. Which is usually bigger: 10 scanned pages or 10 text pages?

A 10 text pages
B They are always the same
C 10 scanned pages

Answers

1. **A. The letters after the dot, like .pdf** — It tells your device what type of file it is.
2. **B. It carries its own fonts and layout** — Embedded fonts are like packing your own plate and spoon.
3. **C. 10 scanned pages** — Pictures of pages take much more space than letters.

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PRACTICE TASK

Word cards

Make five small word cards: file extension, PDF reader, text PDF, scanned PDF, form field. On the back, write the meaning in your own words and one example. Read them again tomorrow.

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CHAPTER 3 · LESSON 1

Open and Read a PDF Anywhere

You don’t need to buy anything. Your browser or phone can already open most PDFs.

Where to open a PDF

Device	Free way to open	What you can do (checked Nov 22, 2026)
Computer	A web browser like Chrome or Edge	Read, zoom, search, print; Chrome added draw, highlight and signature tools in February 2026
Computer	Adobe Acrobat Reader (free)	Read, print, highlight, add notes, fill forms, sign with Fill & Sign
iPhone	Files app or the Preview app (iOS 26)	Read, mark up, add text boxes, add a drawn signature
Android	Google Drive or Chrome	Read, fill simple forms, draw and highlight, save a copy

Menus change often. Look for words like Open with, Markup, Annotate or Fill & Sign.

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PICTURE 4 **Opening a PDF in five steps**



Find it, open it in a reader, zoom, search, then print or save a copy.

Search saves time

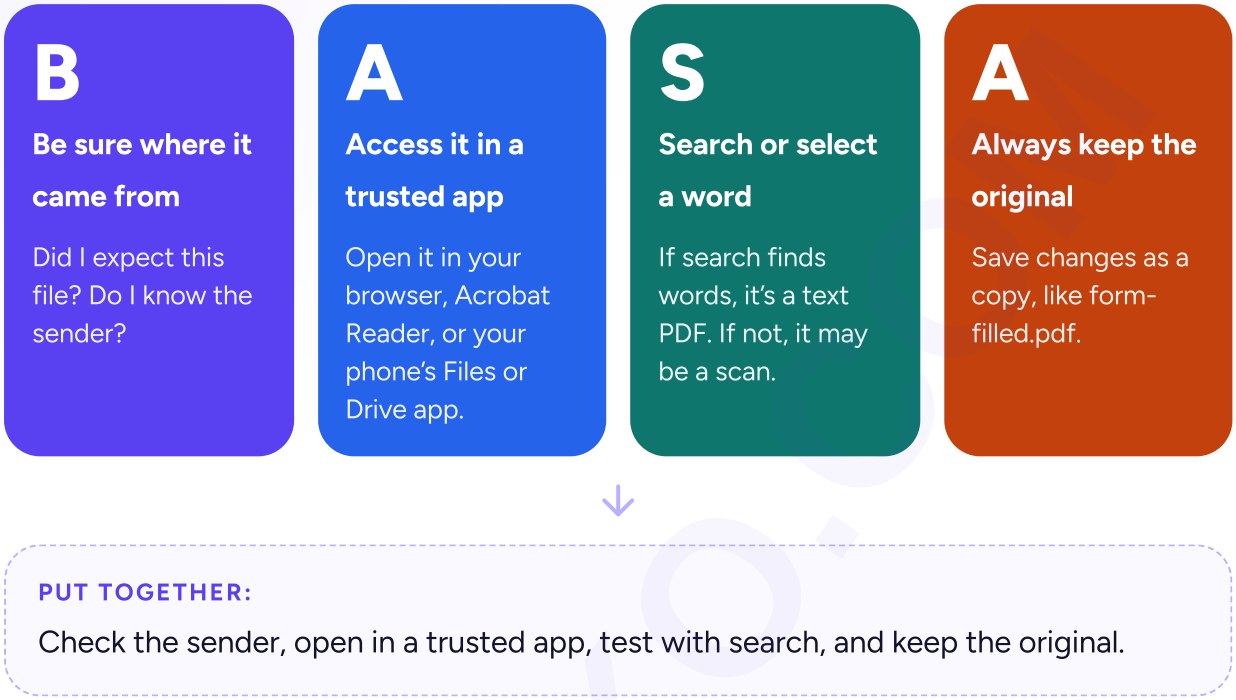
Press **Ctrl+F** on Windows (or **Cmd+F** on a Mac), or tap the search icon on your phone. Type a word like "deadline" or "signature" and the reader jumps right to it — no need to read 30 pages to find one date.

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The B-A-S-A recipe

PICTURE 5 **B-A-S-A: the PDF reading recipe**



Named after "basa" — to read. Use it every time a new PDF arrives.

Example: reading a long PDF

Ben gets a 24-page scholarship guide. Instead of reading every page, he opens it in his browser, presses Ctrl+F and types "deadline." He finds the date on page 17 in five seconds. Then he searches "requirements" and makes a short checklist.

Open with, not upload to

To read a PDF, you don't need to upload it to a random website. Use the apps already on your device first. Upload private files only to services you trust.

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QUICK RECAP

Browsers like Chrome and Edge, the free Adobe Acrobat Reader, the iPhone Files or Preview app, and Google Drive on Android can all open PDFs. Find the file, open it, zoom, search with Ctrl+F, and print or save a copy. B-A-S-A: Be sure where it came from, Access it in a trusted app, Search or select a word, Always keep the original.

TRY IT NOW

Open one PDF two ways

1. Open the same PDF in your browser and in another app (Reader, Files or Drive).
2. Search for one word in each.
3. Write which app felt easier and why.

Key takeaways

- Your browser can open most PDFs.
- Ctrl+F finds words fast.
- B-A-S-A every time.
- Read on your device; don't upload private files to random sites.

Quiz: 3 quick questions

1. Do you need to buy an app to read a PDF?

A No — browsers and free readers open PDFs
B Yes, always
C Only on phones

2. What does the S in B-A-S-A stand for?

A Send it to everyone
B Search or select a word
C Save it on the desktop

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3. What keyboard shortcut searches a PDF on Windows?

A Ctrl+P

B Ctrl+S

C Ctrl+F

Answers

1. **A. No — browsers and free readers open PDFs** — Chrome, Edge, Acrobat Reader and phone apps open PDFs for free.
2. **B. Search or select a word** — Searching tests whether the PDF has real text.
3. **C. Ctrl+F** — F for "find." Ctrl+P prints and Ctrl+S saves.

PRACTICE TASK

The five-second search

Open a long PDF (a handbook, guide or manual). Pick three things to find: a date, a name and a number. Use search to find each one, and time yourself. Write the page numbers you found.

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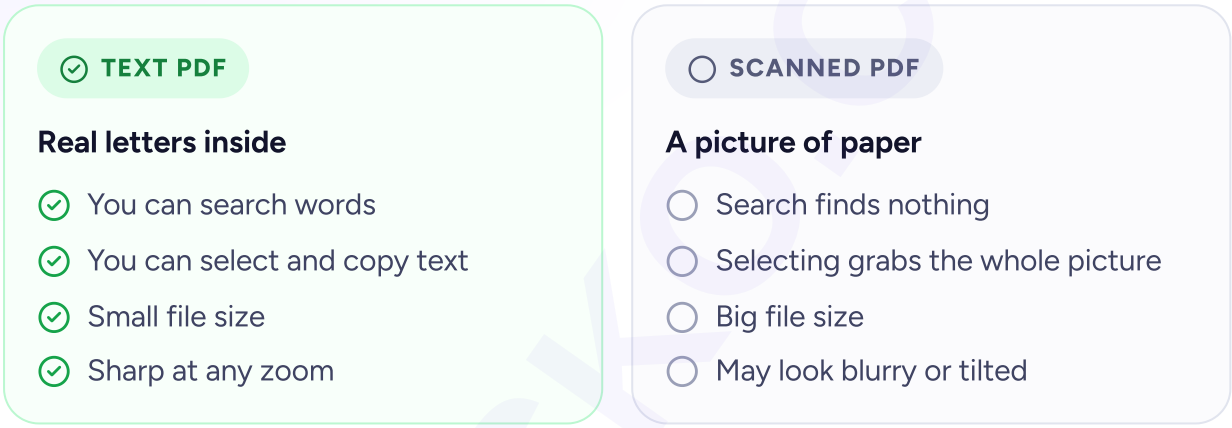
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CHAPTER 4 · LESSON 2

Text PDF or Scanned PDF?

Two PDFs can look the same but work very differently. One has real letters; the other is just a picture of a page.

PICTURE 6 **Text PDF vs scanned PDF**



Both look like pages, but only a text PDF has letters your device can read.

The two-second test

1 **Try to select a word**

Press and hold (phone) or click and drag (computer) over one word.

2 **Watch what happens**

If only that word turns blue, it's a text PDF. If a big box covers the page, it's a picture.

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3 **Try search too**

Search a word you can see on the page. Found? Text PDF. Not found? Probably a scan.

New word: OCR

OCR means **Optical Character Recognition**. It's a tool that looks at a picture of a page and "reads" the letters, like a person reading a photo of a sign out loud. OCR turns a scanned PDF into a searchable one.

Example: making a scan searchable

Mila has a 12-page scanned school record. Search finds nothing. She runs it through an OCR tool, like the ToolsKo **OCR PDF** tool. Now search finds her name on pages 1, 4 and 9. She checks a few lines, because OCR can misread blurry letters, like "8" for "B."

You want to...	Text PDF	Scanned PDF
Find a word	Use search	Run OCR first, then search
Copy text into a message	Select and copy	Use OCR or PDF to Text after OCR
Send by email	Usually small and easy	May be too big; Book 3 shows how to shrink it
Read on a small phone	Zoom stays sharp	May get blurry when zoomed

Check with PDF Info

The ToolsKo **PDF Info & Page Counter** shows the number of pages, page sizes and whether a PDF looks like a scan — before you print or upload it.

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QUICK RECAP

A text PDF has real letters you can search and copy, and it stays small and sharp. A scanned PDF is a picture of paper: search finds nothing and the file is bigger. Test by selecting a word or searching. OCR (Optical Character Recognition) reads letters from pictures to make a scan searchable — always double-check its work.

TRY IT NOW

Test your PDFs

1. Take the PDF from the Chapter 2 exercise.
2. Try to select one word, then search for it.
3. Write: text PDF or scanned PDF? Was your guess right?

Key takeaways

- Text PDF: searchable and small.
- Scanned PDF: a picture of paper.
- Select or search to test.
- OCR reads letters from pictures — check its work.

Quiz: 3 quick questions

1. You search for a word you can see, and nothing is found. What is the PDF most likely?

A. A scanned PDF
B. A broken computer
C. A text PDF

2. What does OCR do?

A. Makes a PDF smaller
B. Reads letters from a picture of a page
C. Adds a password

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3. Why should you check OCR results?

A OCR is never used

B OCR changes your photos

C OCR can misread blurry letters

Answers

1. **A. A scanned PDF** — A scan is a picture, so there are no real letters to search.
2. **B. Reads letters from a picture of a page** — Optical Character Recognition turns pictures of letters into real text.
3. **C. OCR can misread blurry letters** — It may read “8” as “B” or miss smudged words.

PRACTICE TASK

Sort five PDFs

Find five PDFs. Test each with the two-second test. Make a table with three columns: file name, text or scan, size. Notice how the scans are usually bigger.

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CHAPTER 5 · LESSON 3

Fill and Sign a PDF Form

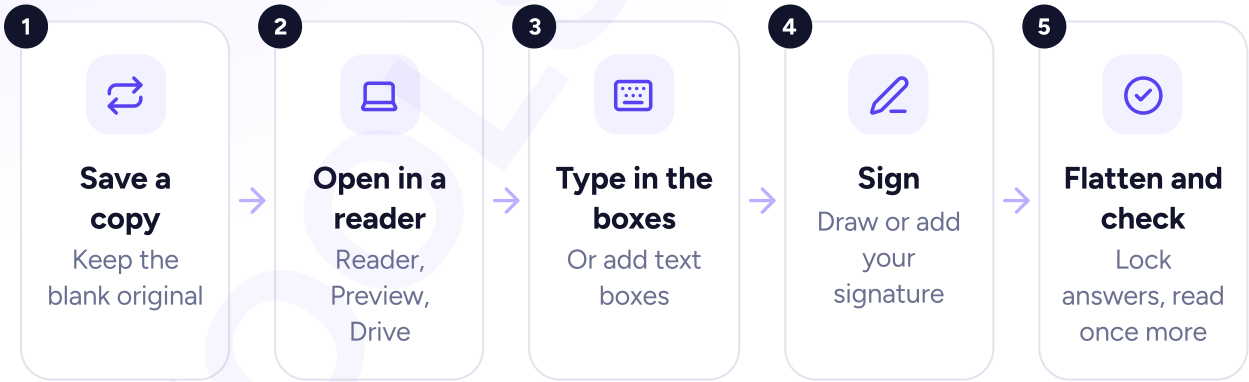
No more printing, writing, scanning and sending back. Many forms can be filled and signed right on your phone or computer.

New phrase: fillable form

A **fillable form** has ready-made boxes (form fields) you can tap and type into. It's like a printed form with blank lines, but the lines are smart: you type, and the words land in the right place. A **flat form** has no smart boxes, so you add text boxes yourself.

How to fill a form

PICTURE 7 **Fill, sign, flatten, check**



Work on a copy, fill every box, sign, lock the answers, then read it one last time before sending.

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App	How to fill and sign (checked Nov 22, 2026)
Adobe Acrobat Reader (free)	Choose Fill & Sign, type in boxes, then add your signature
iPhone Preview or Files (iOS 26)	Open the PDF, tap Markup, add text boxes and a drawn signature
Google Drive on Android or iPhone	Open the PDF, tap Fill out form; type, tick boxes, then save a copy
Chrome on a computer	Type into form boxes; use the draw tool for a signature; save
ToolsKo Fill PDF Form and Sign & Fill PDF	Type into boxes or place text, a date and a drawn signature in your browser

Menus change. Look for Fill, Sign, Markup or Annotate.

New word: flatten

Flattening locks the answers into the page, so the boxes can't be changed anymore. It's like laminating a filled form: you can still read it, but nobody can erase your answers. The ToolsKo **Flatten PDF** tool does this.

Is a drawn signature legal?

In the Philippines, the **E-Commerce Act (RA 8792, from 2000)** says electronic documents and electronic signatures can count like paper ones, when the signing method is reliable and shows who signed. But some papers still need a real ink signature or a notary. **Always ask the office receiving your form if they accept e-signatures.**

Simple signature vs digital signature

A **drawn signature** is like signing on paper with your finger. A **certified digital signature** is a special locked code from a trusted provider that proves who signed and shows if anything changed after. Most school and everyday forms only need the simple kind.

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Example: a permission slip

Joy's teacher sends a field trip permission slip as a PDF. Joy saves a copy, opens it in Google Drive, types her name and section, and ticks "Yes." Her mother adds her own signature on her phone. They flatten it, check every box once more, and send it back the same day.

QUICK RECAP

A fillable form has smart boxes; a flat form needs added text boxes. Save a copy, open it in a reader, type in the boxes, sign, flatten, and check before sending. RA 8792 lets electronic signatures count like handwritten ones when the method is reliable, but ask the receiving office first. A drawn signature is simple; a certified digital signature proves who signed and if anything changed.

TRY IT NOW

Fill a practice form

1. Find any fillable PDF form (or make a simple one with the ToolsKo Text to PDF Maker).
2. Save a copy and fill it with made-up practice answers.
3. Add a practice signature, then flatten the copy.

Key takeaways

- Always fill a copy, not the original.
- Fillable forms have smart boxes.
- Flatten to lock your answers.
- Ask if the office accepts e-signatures.

Quiz: 3 quick questions

1. What does flattening a PDF do?

A Makes it lighter in color

B Locks the answers so the boxes can't change

C Deletes all pages

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2. What should you do before sending a form with an e-signature?

A Ask if the office accepts e-signatures

B Print it ten times

C Nothing

3. What do you fill: the original or a copy?

A The original, always

B Neither

C A copy, so the blank original stays safe

Answers

1. **B. Locks the answers so the boxes can't change** — It's like laminating a filled form.
2. **A. Ask if the office accepts e-signatures** — Some documents still need ink or a notary.
3. **C. A copy, so the blank original stays safe** — If you make a mistake, you can start again from the blank original.

PRACTICE TASK

Your signature, ready

In the app you use most, create and save your signature (with a parent's OK if you are under 18). Then fill and sign a practice form in under 5 minutes. Write the steps you used so you can repeat them next time.

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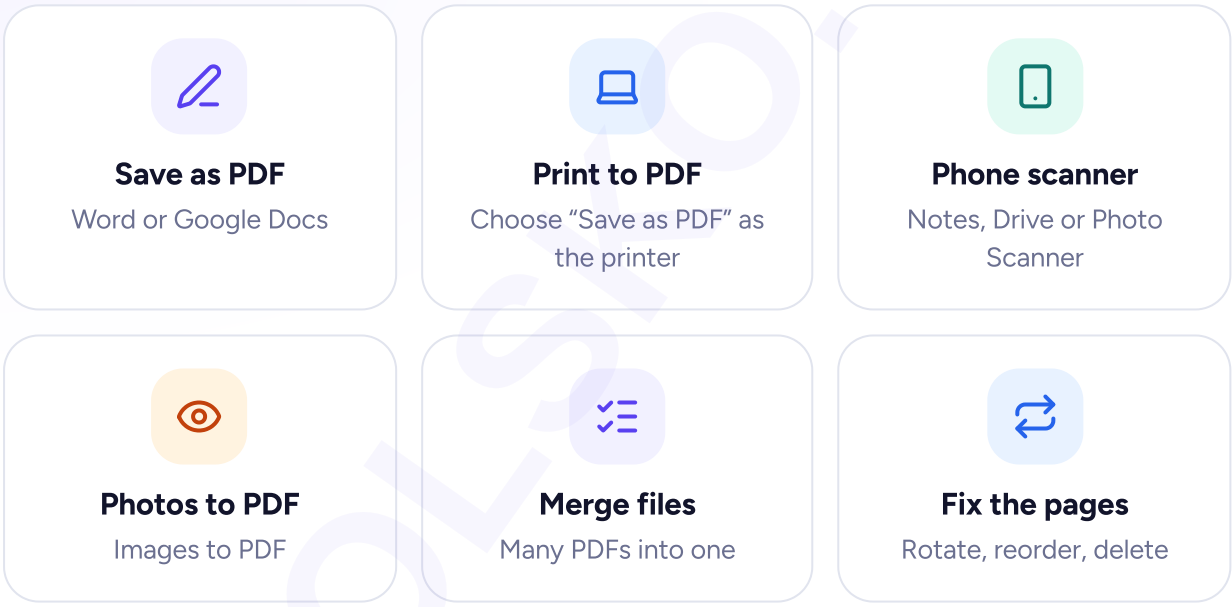
CHAPTER 6 · LESSON 4

Make Your Own Neat PDF

Turning a document or a few photos into one clean PDF makes you look organized — and makes life easier for whoever receives it.

Six ways to make a PDF

PICTURE 8 Six ways to make a PDF



Pick the way that matches what you have: a document, a printout, a paper or a few photos.

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You have...	Do this
A Word file	File → Save As → choose PDF (or use Word to PDF)
A Google Doc	File → Download → PDF Document (.pdf)
A web page or email	Print (Ctrl+P) → choose “Save as PDF” as the printer
A paper form	Scan it with your phone: Notes (iPhone), the Scan button in Google Drive, or the ToolsKo Photo Scanner
Several photos	Put them in order and use Images to PDF
Several PDFs	Use Merge PDF Files to make one

Scan like a pro

Put the paper on a dark, flat table near a window. Hold the phone straight above it. Let the scanner find the corners. One neat scanned PDF is much easier to read than six tilted photos.

Example: good file names

Not clear	Clear
scan001.pdf	DelaCruz-Juan-Enrollment-Form-2026.pdf
IMG_4482.pdf	Santos-Ana-Birth-Certificate.pdf
final final 2.pdf	Reyes-Ben-Resume-2026-11.pdf

Made-up names. Last name, first name, what it is, and a date or year.

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New word: PDF/A

PDF/A is a special kind of PDF made for keeping files for many years (archiving). It packs all fonts inside and leaves out things like sound and video. Think of it as a time capsule: it should still open the same way decades from now. Some offices ask for PDF/A when they store records.

QUICK RECAP

Make a PDF with Save as PDF (Word, Google Docs), Print to PDF, a phone scanner, Images to PDF, Merge PDF Files, and page tools to rotate or reorder. Scan on a dark flat table with good light. Use clear file names: last name, first name, what it is, and a date. PDF/A is a kind of PDF made for keeping records for many years.

TRY IT NOW

Make one neat PDF

1. Pick a paper you need (a certificate or a school paper).
2. Scan it with your phone's scanner and save it as a PDF.
3. Rename it with a clear file name.

Key takeaways

- Save as PDF from Word or Docs.
- Scan papers instead of taking tilted photos.
- Merge many files into one PDF.
- Use clear file names.

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Quiz: 3 quick questions

1. How do you make a PDF from a Google Doc?

A File → Download → PDF Document
B Take a screenshot
C Copy and paste into chat

2. Which file name is clearest?

A scan001.pdf
B Santos-Ana-Birth-Certificate.pdf
C final final 2.pdf

3. What is PDF/A for?

A Adding music to a PDF
B Making a PDF move
C Keeping files safe to open for many years

Answers

1. **A. File → Download → PDF Document** — Google Docs can download any document as a PDF.
2. **B. Santos-Ana-Birth-Certificate.pdf** — It says whose file it is and what it is.
3. **C. Keeping files safe to open for many years** — It's a time-capsule kind of PDF for archiving.

PRACTICE TASK

Your document folder

Make a folder called "My Documents PDF." Scan or save three important papers (for example, a report card, a certificate and an ID card copy kept only for yourself). Give each a clear name. Keep the folder private.

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CHAPTER 7 · LESSON 5

Share PDFs Safely and Spot Fake Ones

Scammers love PDFs because people trust them. Learning a few warning signs protects your accounts and your family.

Security researchers at Check Point found that PDFs were **22% of all harmful email attachments** — more than 1 in 5. A fake PDF may pretend to be a bill, a delivery notice, a job offer or a government letter.

New word: phishing

Phishing (said like "fishing") is a trick where a scammer sends a fake message to "catch" your password, money or personal details. A fake PDF is the bait on the hook. It looks tasty, but there's a hook inside.

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PICTURE 9 Six signs of a fake PDF

Unexpected file
"Invoice" you never asked for

Asks you to log in
"Sign in to view this PDF"

Pressure to hurry
"Pay today or lose your account"

Strange file name
invoice.pdf.exe or a .zip

Odd sender
The email address doesn't match

Asks for OTP or PIN
Real offices never ask this way

One sign is enough to stop. Check with the real sender using a phone number or website you already know.

PICTURE 10 PDF traffic light



Go
A PDF you expected, from a sender you know, opened in your browser or trusted reader. Keep your apps updated.

Check first
A file from an unknown sender, a download site or a group chat. Confirm with the sender by phone or the official website before opening.

Stop
It asks for your password, OTP or PIN; the file ends in .exe or .zip; it says "enable content"; or it pushes you to pay now. Delete and report it.

Open the green, check the yellow, and never open the red.

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Share your own PDFs safely

- **Send only what is needed.** If they need page 1, don't send all 10 pages.
- **Be careful with IDs.** Send copies of IDs only to offices you trust, through their official channels. The **Data Privacy Act (RA 10173)** protects personal data in the Philippines, and the National Privacy Commission handles complaints.
- **Check hidden details.** A PDF may carry your name or the app used in its properties. The ToolsKo **PDF Properties Editor & Remover** lets you see and clean them.
- **A black box is not always enough.** Drawing a black shape over text may not remove the text underneath. Book 4, PDF Security, shows the right way to hide private parts.

Example: a fake delivery PDF

Rico gets an email: "Your parcel is on hold. Open the PDF to pay the fee." The PDF has a button that says "Log in to view." Rico wasn't expecting a parcel, and the sender's address is a random mix of letters. He doesn't click. He checks the courier's official app instead — there is no parcel. He deletes the email and warns his family.

QUICK RECAP

PDFs were 22% of harmful email attachments (Check Point). Phishing uses fake files as bait. Warning signs: unexpected file, asks you to log in, pressure, strange file name, odd sender, asks for OTP or PIN. Use the traffic light: open expected files, check unknown ones, stop at password requests and .exe or .zip files. Share only what is needed, protect IDs, check hidden details, and know that a black box may not hide text.

TRY IT NOW

Inbox check

1. Look through your email or chats for PDFs from the last month.
2. Put each one in green, yellow or red.
3. For any red one, delete it and tell a parent or your IT team.

Key takeaways

- Fake PDFs are common bait.

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- Never log in through a PDF button.
- Check unknown senders another way.
- Share only what is needed.

Quiz: 3 quick questions

1. A PDF says "Log in with your email password to view this file." What should you do?

A Type your password quickly
B Forward it to all your friends
C Stop — it's a phishing sign

2. A file is named invoice.pdf.exe. What is it?

A A program pretending to be a PDF
B A normal PDF
C A photo

3. Does drawing a black box over text always hide it?

A Yes, always
B Not always — the text may still be underneath
C Only on phones

Answers

1. **C. Stop — it's a phishing sign** — Real PDFs don't need your email password to open.
2. **A. A program pretending to be a PDF** — The real extension is the last one: .exe means a program.
3. **B. Not always — the text may still be underneath** — Proper hiding (redaction) removes the text. Book 4 explains it.

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PRACTICE TASK

Family safety card

Write a short message for your family chat: three signs of a fake PDF and the rule “never log in or pay through a PDF button.” Show it to a parent before sending.

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CHAPTER 8

Your 14-Day PDF Starter Plan

About 15 minutes a day for two weeks. By day 14, you'll open, test, fill, sign, make and share PDFs with confidence.

Start any day. Use practice files or copies — never your only copy of an important document.

PICTURE 11 **The 14-day PDF plan**



Open, test, fill, make, then share — one small skill a day.

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Day	Task (about 15 minutes)	Done?
1	Find five PDFs on your phone or computer.	☐
2	Open one in your browser and one in another reader.	☐
3	Practice search: find a date, a name and a number.	☐
4	Do the two-second test on five PDFs.	☐
5	Make one scanned PDF searchable with OCR and check it.	☐
6	Fill a practice form on a copy.	☐
7	Create and save your signature in one app.	☐
8	Flatten your filled form and check every box.	☐
9	Save a document as PDF from Word or Google Docs.	☐
10	Scan one paper with your phone into a PDF.	☐
11	Rename your files with clear names; merge two into one.	☐
12	Sort your recent PDF attachments into green, yellow and red.	☐
13	Check a PDF's hidden details (properties).	☐
14	Send your family the safety card from Chapter 7.	☐

Bonus exercises

1 **Help someone**

Teach a parent or grandparent how to search inside a PDF.

2 **Clean your Downloads**

Delete old PDFs you don't need, and move important ones into your document folder.

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3 **Try PDF Info**

Check the page count and page size of a PDF before printing it.

4 **Read the next book**

Book 2, Convert PDF Like a Pro, shows how to turn PDFs into Word, Excel or images and back.

Small skills, big help

Each skill takes only minutes to learn. Together they save you trips to the computer shop, printing costs and a lot of stress.

QUICK RECAP

Days 1–3: find, open and search PDFs. Days 4–5: test text vs scan and try OCR. Days 6–8: fill a copy, save your signature and flatten. Days 9–11: save, scan, rename and merge. Days 12–14: sort attachments by the traffic light, check hidden details and share the family safety card.

TRY IT NOW

Start today

1. Copy the 14-day table.
2. Do Day 1 now.
3. Set a daily reminder on your phone.

Key takeaways

- One small skill a day.
- Practice on copies.
- Fill, sign and flatten.
- Finish with safety.

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Quiz: 3 quick questions

1. What do you practice on day 4?

A Sending money
B The two-second test (text or scan)
C Deleting all files

2. What should you practice on?

A Copies or practice files
B Your only birth certificate scan
C A stranger's files

3. What do you do on day 12?

A Buy a PDF app
B Print every PDF
C Sort attachments into green, yellow and red

Answers

1. **B. The two-second test (text or scan)** — Days 4–5 are about telling text PDFs from scans.
2. **A. Copies or practice files** — Copies keep your important files safe.
3. **C. Sort attachments into green, yellow and red** — The traffic light helps you spot risky files.

PRACTICE TASK

Complete the 14 days

Follow the plan and tick each box. On day 14, write the three skills that helped you most and one you want to practice more.

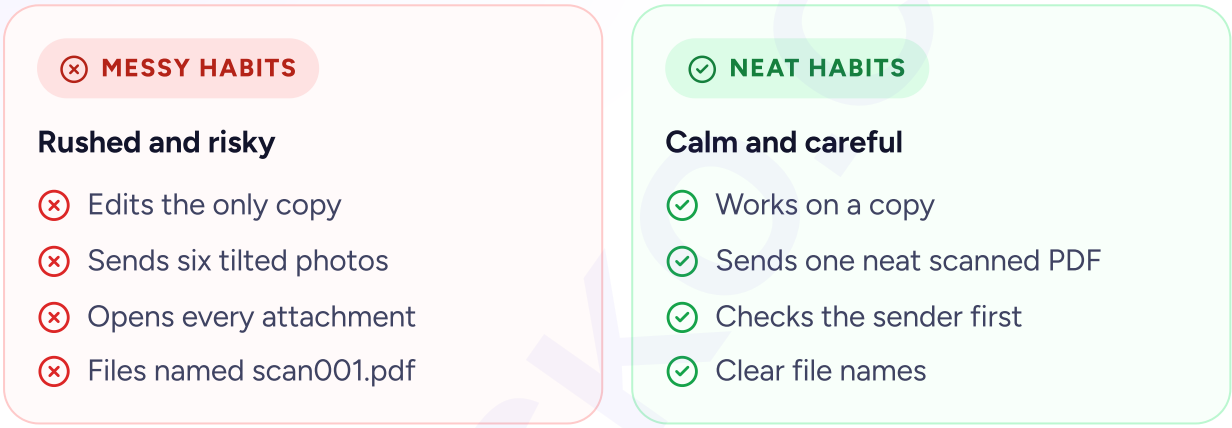
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CHAPTER 9

Common PDF Mistakes (and Easy Fixes)

Most PDF problems come from a few small habits. Fix them once and they stop happening.

PICTURE 12 **Messy habits vs neat habits**



A few careful habits make your PDFs easier to use and safer to share.

Now check your habits against this table.

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Mistake	Why it hurts	Easy fix
Filling or editing the only copy	One mistake and the blank form is gone	Save a copy first
Sending many photos instead of one PDF	Hard to read, print and keep in order	Scan into one PDF
Unclear file names	Files get lost or mixed up	Last name, first name, what it is, date
Opening every attachment	Fake PDFs can steal passwords	Use B-A-S-A and the traffic light
Logging in through a PDF button	Scammers catch your password	Go to the official website yourself
Thinking a scan is searchable	You can't find or copy words	Do the two-second test; use OCR
Forgetting to flatten a filled form	Answers can be changed later	Flatten before sending
Not asking if e-signatures are OK	The office may reject your form	Ask first
Hiding text with a black box only	The text may still be underneath	Use proper redaction (Book 4)
Uploading private files to random sites	You lose control of your data	Use your device's apps or trusted tools

The before-you-send check

Before you send any PDF, ask: "Is it the right file?", "Is every box filled and signed?", "Is the name clear?" and "Am I sending only what is needed, to the right person?"

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QUICK RECAP

Common mistakes: editing the only copy, sending many photos, unclear names, opening every attachment, logging in through PDF buttons, thinking a scan is searchable, not flattening, not asking about e-signatures, hiding text with only a black box, and uploading private files to random sites. Each has an easy fix. Do the before-you-send check.

TRY IT NOW

Audit your habits

1. Tick every mistake you have made before.
2. Write the fix next to each one.
3. Choose one fix to start today.

Key takeaways

- Copy first, then change.
- One neat PDF, clear name.
- Check before you open.
- Check before you send.

Quiz: 3 quick questions

1. Why save a copy before filling a form?

A So the blank original stays safe
B Copies print faster
C It's required by law

2. What is the safest way to log in after a PDF asks you to?

A Use the button in the PDF
B Go to the official website yourself
C Reply with your password

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3. Which is part of the before-you-send check?

A Send to as many people as possible

B Add extra pages

C Make sure every box is filled and signed

Answers

1. **A. So the blank original stays safe** — If you make a mistake, you can start again.
2. **B. Go to the official website yourself** — Never trust a login link inside an unexpected file.
3. **C. Make sure every box is filled and signed** — A complete form avoids delays.

PRACTICE TASK

Your PDF rules

Write 5 personal PDF rules (for example, “Copy first”, “One neat PDF”, “Clear names”, “Never log in through a PDF”, “Check before sending”). Keep them near your computer or in your phone notes.

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CHAPTER 10

Real-Life Examples: PDFs Made Easy

These five example stories are based on common Filipino situations (names are made up). Look for the habits, not the apps.

L

Liza, 14
Grade 8 student, Bulacan

THE PROBLEM

Her teacher sent a worksheet as a PDF, and she didn't know how to type on it.

WHAT LIZA TYPED

```
Saved a copy, opened it in Google Drive on her phone, filled the boxes, and named it Lopez-Liza-Science-Worksheet.pdf.
```

THE RESULT

She sent a neat worksheet on time without printing anything.

Lesson: The right free app turns a PDF into a form you can fill.

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M

Mang Ben, 52

Jeepney operator, Pampanga

THE PROBLEM

Had to send six documents, and his photos were tilted, dark and out of order.

WHAT MANG BEN TYPED

```
Scanned each paper flat near a window with a phone scanner, merged
them into one PDF in the right order, and rotated one sideways
page.
```

THE RESULT

The office accepted his single, clear PDF on the first try.

Lesson: One neat PDF beats six blurry photos.

C

Carla, 24

New office assistant, Makati

THE PROBLEM

Got an “Overdue Invoice” PDF from an unknown sender asking her to log in to view it.

WHAT CARLA TYPED

```
Checked the sender address, saw it didn’t match the supplier,
didn’t click, and reported it to her IT team.
```

THE RESULT

IT confirmed it was phishing and warned the whole office.

Lesson: Check the sender; never log in through a PDF button.

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J

Jun, 19
College student, Iloilo

THE PROBLEM

His scanned research papers couldn't be searched, so finding quotes took hours.

WHAT JUN TYPED

```
Did the two-second test, ran the scans through OCR, and checked a few lines for mistakes.
```

THE RESULT

Now he finds any word in seconds and copies quotes correctly.

Lesson: Know if it's a text PDF or a scan, and use OCR when needed.

T

Tita Nena, 60
Retired teacher, Laguna

THE PROBLEM

Needed to sign and return a membership form but had no printer.

WHAT TITA NENA TYPED

```
Called the office to ask if e-signatures were accepted, signed on her tablet with her grandson's help, flattened the form, and checked it before sending.
```

THE RESULT

Her form was accepted the same day, with no trip to town.

Lesson: Ask first, sign, flatten and check.

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PICTURE 13 **Five PDF wins**

Liza
Filled a worksheet on her phone

Mang Ben
Six photos into one neat PDF

Carla
Spotted a fake invoice PDF

Jun
OCR made scans searchable

Tita Nena
Signed and flattened a form

Different lives, same habits: work on a copy, keep it neat, check before opening, and check before sending.

What these stories have in common

They used free apps they already had, worked on copies, kept files neat and clearly named, checked unknown files before opening, and checked their own files before sending. None of them needed to be a computer expert.

QUICK RECAP

A student filled a worksheet in Google Drive; an operator turned six photos into one neat PDF; an office assistant spotted a fake invoice; a college student used OCR on scans; and a retired teacher asked first, signed, flattened and checked her form.

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TRY IT NOW

Your next step

1. Pick the story most like your situation.
2. Copy one habit from it this week.
3. Write how it went after 7 days.

Key takeaways

- Free apps are enough to start.
- Neat, clearly named files.
- Check before you open.
- Check before you send.

Quiz: 3 quick questions

1. What did Carla do with the suspicious invoice PDF?

A Logged in to view it
B Didn't click and reported it to IT
C Paid the invoice

2. How did Mang Ben fix his messy photos?

A Scanned them and merged them into one PDF
B Sent more photos
C Gave up

3. What did Tita Nena do first?

A Signed without asking
B Printed the form at a shop
C Asked if e-signatures were accepted

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Answers

1. **B. Didn't click and reported it to IT** — The sender didn't match, and it asked her to log in — two warning signs.
2. **A. Scanned them and merged them into one PDF** — One neat PDF is easier for the office to read.
3. **C. Asked if e-signatures were accepted** — Some offices still need ink signatures.

PRACTICE TASK

Your PDF story card

Write your own story card: one PDF task you struggle with, the chapter that helps, the app you will use, and the habit you will keep from now on.

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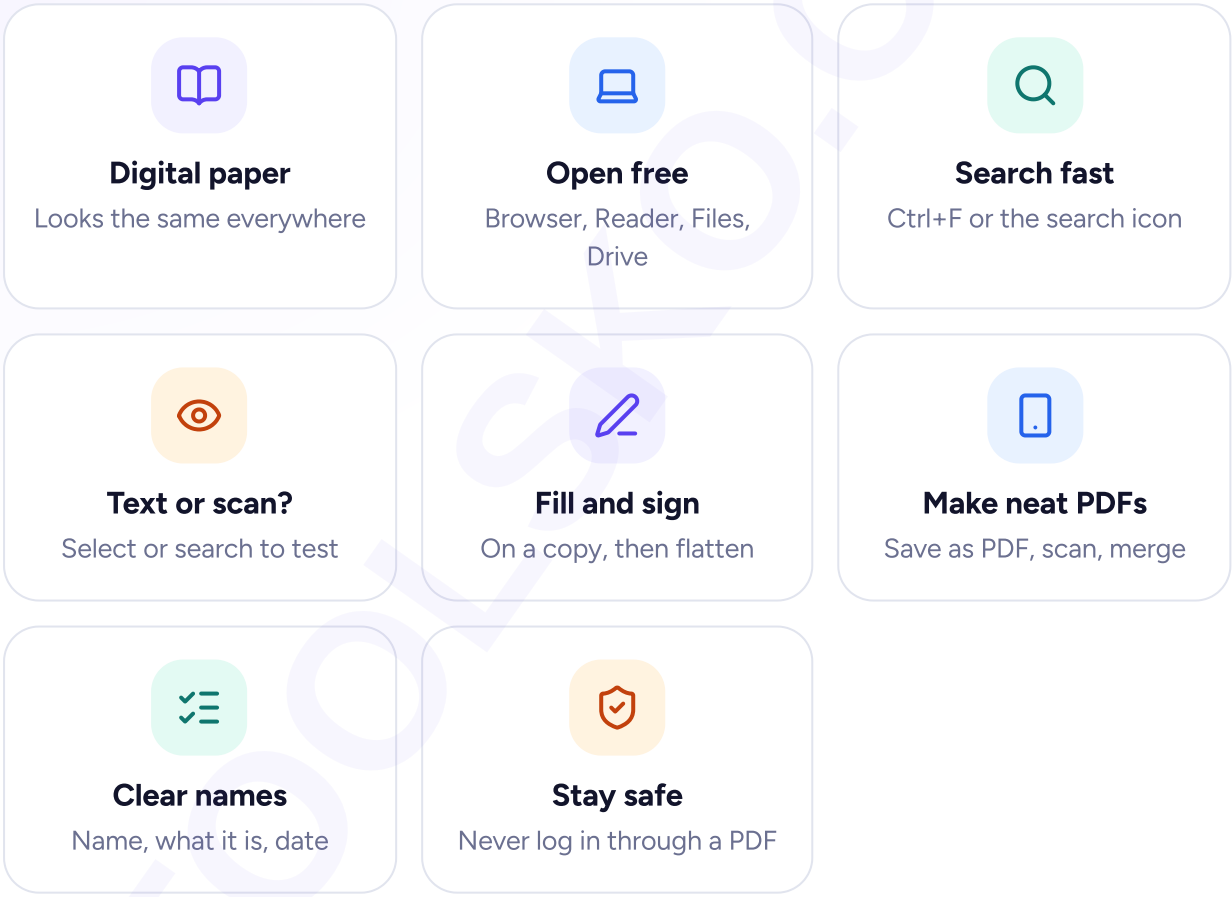
THE END

Quick Summary

Everything important, on one page.

The whole book on one page. Keep it near your computer or in your phone notes.

PICTURE 14 **Cheat sheet: PDFs in 8 cards**



Eight habits that make PDFs easy and safe.

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Remember	In one line
The big rule	A PDF is digital paper: open it safely, read it smartly, keep the original.
Recipe	B-A-S-A: Be sure where it came from, Access it in a trusted app, Search or select a word, Always keep the original.
Text vs scan	Text PDFs are searchable and small; scans are pictures — use OCR and check it.
Forms	Fill a copy, sign, flatten, check; ask if the office accepts e-signatures (RA 8792).
Making PDFs	Save as PDF, Print to PDF, phone scanner, Images to PDF, merge; use clear file names.
Safety	Unexpected file, login request, pressure, .exe or .zip, odd sender, OTP request = stop.
Privacy	Send only what is needed; protect IDs; check hidden details; a black box may not hide text.

You can handle PDFs now

You know what a PDF is, how to open and search it, how to tell a text PDF from a scan, how to fill and sign a form, how to make a neat PDF, and how to spot fake ones. Try one new skill this week.

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WHAT'S NEXT

Your Next Learning Path

You finished Book 1. Here is where to go from here.

This is **Book 1** of the **PDF Skills** series. Here is your path:

PICTURE 15 **Your PDF Skills path**



Understand PDFs, convert them, make them smaller, then keep them safe.

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What to do next

Next step	Why
Finish the 14-day plan	Open, test, fill, make and share PDFs with confidence.
Read Book 2	Convert PDF Like a Pro: turn PDFs into Word, Excel or images and back without breaking the layout.
Read Book 3	Compress PDF Guide: make big PDFs small enough to email or upload.
Read Book 4	PDF Security: passwords, permissions, proper redaction and safe sharing.
Grow your skills	The Digital Skills series (Canva, Excel, Google Sheets) and the Resume & Career series use PDFs every day.

One last tip

Keep one private folder of your important documents as clear, neatly named PDFs. When a school, job or office asks for papers, you'll be ready in minutes.

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Put what you learned to work. These tools are free on toolsko.com, need no sign-up, and most work right in your browser.

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OCR PDF: Make a Scanned PDF Searchable
Turn a scan into a PDF you can search.
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Fill PDF Form
Type into the boxes of a fillable PDF form.
toolsko.com/fill-pdf-form ↗

Sign & Fill PDF (Add Signature, Text, Date)
Add a drawn signature, text and the date.
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Flatten PDF
Lock your answers into the page before sending.
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Word to PDF Converter
Turn a Word file into a PDF.
toolsko.com/word-to-pdf ↗

Photo Scanner (Camera to PDF)
Scan paper with your camera into a neat PDF.
toolsko.com/photo-scanner ↗

Images to PDF
Put several photos into one PDF in order.
toolsko.com/images-to-pdf ↗

Merge PDF Files
Combine many PDFs into one file.
toolsko.com/pdf-merger ↗

PDF Properties Editor & Remover
See and clean hidden details before sharing.
toolsko.com/pdf-metadata-editor ↗

Words to know

PDF	Portable Document Format: a file that looks the same on every device and printer.

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File extension	The letters after the dot that tell the file type, like .pdf or .docx.
PDF reader	An app that opens PDFs, like a browser, Acrobat Reader or a phone's Files app.
Embedded fonts	Letter shapes packed inside the PDF so it looks the same everywhere.
Text PDF	A PDF with real letters you can search and copy.
Scanned PDF	A PDF made of pictures of paper pages.
OCR	Optical Character Recognition: a tool that reads letters from pictures of pages.
Form field	A box in a PDF where you can type, tick or choose.
Fillable form	A PDF with ready-made boxes you can type into.
Flatten	Lock answers and marks into the page so they can't be changed.
Electronic signature	A signature added on a device, like a drawn or typed one.
Digital signature	A certified locked code that proves who signed and shows later changes.
Metadata	Hidden details in a file, like its title, author and date made.
KB and MB	Units of file size; about 1,000 KB make 1 MB.
PDF/A	A kind of PDF made for keeping records safe to open for many years.

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Phishing	A trick using fake messages or files to steal passwords, money or personal details.

Where the facts come from

1. The History of the PDF: launched June 15, 1993 (Adobe timeline)
2. ISO 32000-2:2020 (PDF 2.0) is now available; first edition 2017 (PDF Association)
3. No-cost access to ISO 32000-2, PDF 2.0, April 2023 (PDF Association)
4. Adobe Acrobat Reader FAQ: free to view, print, annotate, fill and sign (Adobe, June 2026)
5. Chrome's built-in PDF tools: annotate and sign on PC and Android (BGR, June 2026)
6. The iOS 26 Preview app: mark up, fill and sign PDFs on iPhone (Tom's Guide, January 2026)
7. Fill out PDF forms in Google Drive on mobile (Google Workspace Updates)
8. Electronic signature laws in the Philippines: RA 8792 (Adobe, July 2026)
9. PDFs are 22% of malicious email attachments (TechRadar, Check Point Research)
10. What is PDF/A: the ISO 19005 archiving standard (Adobe)

App features, menus and rules were checked on November 22, 2026. Apps change their buttons and menus often, so yours may look a little different — look for the same idea under a similar name. All names, files and amounts in the examples are made up. ToolsKo is not connected to Adobe, Google, Apple, Microsoft, any government agency or any other company named in this book. The parts about electronic signatures and privacy are general information, not legal advice — ask the office that will receive your document what it accepts. Written by ToolsKo Learn · toolsko.com/learn

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Book 2	Convert PDF Like a Pro
Book 3	Compress PDF Guide — coming soon
Book 4	PDF Security — coming soon

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