



Step 3: Convert Your Manuscript to PDF

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1. Prerequisites for this stage

Your manuscript first must be properly formatted and ready for submission. If you need to make changes *after* you convert your manuscript to PDF, you should make them to your original text file (Word DOC or DOCX file, LaTeX file, RTF file, InDesign file, etc.) and then convert that file to a new PDF.

2. Converting your document to PDF

TigerPrints can convert your Word file upload to PDF

You may upload a single Word file to the TigerPrints ETD submission portal, and a built-in app will convert your file to PDF. The Manuscript Reviewer receives an automated email that your file has been converted through the portal. One limitation of the Digital Commons conversion tool is that it does not embed all fonts. The Manuscript Reviewer is aware of this, and will run an Adobe Acrobat “preflight” script on your PDF to be sure all fonts are embedded. This will show as a revision in your TigerPrints account and, under “reason for revision,” you will see a note reading “Admin optimized PDF” or similar wording.

The better option: Convert your manuscript to PDF yourself, before you submit it. The method and application you choose to use for PDF file creation will depend in part upon the word-processing or page-layout application you’ve used, and in part on your work platform (MacOS, Windows, Linux).



Word or RTF source files

Current versions of Word allow you to save your documents as PDF through the Print menu. If you also have Adobe Acrobat on your computer, you may see an Acrobat tab in your word menu options, and the option to “Save as Adobe PDF” in your print menu.

Please note: If you are working in Word, and you choose the *File > Save As > PDF* workflow, you may want to choose *Best for Printing* before you click *Save*. The *Best for electronic distribution and accessibility* option may not embed all the fonts in your PDF file, so some of your content may not display properly on all devices.

LaTeX source files

If your manuscript was built in LaTeX and you have access to Adobe Acrobat Standard or Professional, simply generate a *.prn file* of your LaTeX file and use Acrobat to convert it to PDF. If you do not have access to Adobe Acrobat, there are several online resources that will help you to convert your file to PDF using the *dvips - Ppdf driver* included in many distributions of LaTeX. Dr. Patrick Jöckel at the Max Planck Institute of Chemistry in Germany has created a very helpful [page on converting LaTeX to PDF](#). Another conversion resource you may investigate is [Ghostscript, by Artifex Software, Inc.](#)

Other source file types

If your manuscript was created using a program other than Word and is not an RTF file, you may need to search online for options for converting your manuscript into PDF.

Conversion with Adobe Acrobat Standard or Professional

Perhaps the best-known PDF applications are **Adobe Acrobat Standard** or **Professional**; these products can convert many file types to PDF. The Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available free and is pre-installed on most desktop and laptop computers, cannot *create* PDF files; it can only read them. If you do not have Acrobat Standard or Professional installed on your computer, there are several ways to access the software:

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Campus computer labs

Many departmental computer labs have Adobe Acrobat installed; CCIT labs do not.

Conversion with free online services

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Icecream PDF converter

One top-rated newer PDF conversion app is from [Icecream Apps](#). The website offers free download, a tutorial video, and a list of convertible file types. It can batch convert: combine multiple documents of different file types into one PDF in just one step.

PDFCreator

Developer *pdfforge GmbH* provides a downloadable [PDFCreator](#) with many features. One drawback: It's only for Windows operating systems.

PDF Online

[PDF Online](#), by *PDFTron SDK*, performs conversions from Word and other apps to PDF. It features drag-and-drop, and can access your files in DropBox and Google Drive as well as your own computer. With this free app, you can also merge multiple PDFs into one.



3. Conversion problems

If you are having issues with your conversion after trying the apps and conversion tools detailed above, please email manuscriptreview-1@clemsun.edu. Include specifics such as the file format you are working with, your operating platform (Windows, MacOS, Linux), what method and program you are attempting to use for the conversion, and the results and/or errors you're getting. Attach samples of your original files and/or output files if relevant.

Some common PDF conversion issues involve font and image embedding or image quality concerns. Occasionally, large files stored in the cloud won't convert. Manuscript Review staff should be able to help you solve these.

In addition, the University has great Acrobat support resources (and experienced trainers) in the [Adobe Digital](#)

Best practices

About EMBEDDING FONTS in your PDF: the Graduate School and the University Libraries request that you adjust your PDF output settings to **EMBED** all the fonts used in your manuscript. Adobe Acrobat also permits you to **SUBSET** (to embed only the characters used in your document, rather than the entire font), which will reduce your final file size.

Future readers will view your ETD on a wide array of devices, and embedded fonts ensure that everyone will see your text just as you intended, with consistent characters and without odd typeface substitutions, across all platforms and devices.

If you don't have customizable PDF output options in Word, and can't be sure your fonts are embedded, no worries. **Manuscript Review staff will optimize your uploaded PDF to embed and subset any missing fonts.** Unembedded fonts are not usually an issue with LaTeX source files.



Best practices

Word-to-PDF: Image quality, font embedding, and live links (hyperlinks) in your thesis or dissertation.

As you may have discovered, there is more than one way to output a PDF from your Word file. Each of these two ways has pros and cons.

Save as PDF: Open your Word document and in the top menu, click on *File* at top-left. From the dropdown menu, choose *Save As...* and type in your preferred filename in the *Save as:* field. Click on the drop-down menu next to *File Format:* and choose *PDF* from the list of file types. You will find two options here:

- *Best for Printing* will embed and subset all your document fonts, and will maintain high image resolution, but may not preserve hyperlinks.
- *Best for electronic distribution and accessibility* will preserve your links, but may downsample raster images and may not embed all document fonts, particularly if they are licensed or protected fonts.

Print to PDF: Open your Word document and in the top menu, click on *File* at top-left. From the dropdown menu, choose *Print...* You can ignore the *Printer* and *Print Presets* options, but make sure to select *Print all pages*. Then, at the bottom left of the menu box, select *PDF* and then *Save as PDF*. You will have the opportunity to choose save location, customize the PDF filename, and add metadata (title, author, subject, keywords). This method should embed all fonts and preserve image resolution. It may not preserve all hyperlinks if the link's full URL is not part of the visible text.

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Don't panic... contact the Manuscript Review office

Seriously, don't panic. You will *not* fail to graduate due to PDF conversion issues if you ask us for support *before the deadline*. The Manuscript Review staff

have experience in creating and troubleshooting PDF files and can help. Whether or not you are on the Clemson main campus, Review staff can offer virtual support; consider file-sharing from cloud storage or sharing your Word document as an email attachment if file size permits.

Hot link

Manuscript Review Office:

- E-106 Martin Hall, 8:00 a.m.–4:30 p.m. weekdays
- email manuscriptreview-l@clemson.edu

4. The next step

Once you have successfully converted your document to a PDF, proceed to the [SUBMIT webpage](#) or refer to the PDF Ref, [Step 4: Submit Your Manuscript for Format Review and Publishing](#) to learn how to begin the **Upload** process for format review and publication.