

Output documents in PDF format



No printer? Paperless office? Sending documents via email? Save time, effort and expense by creating PDFs instead of paper prints.

Printing out your documents is not always the best thing to do. While there's something rather pleasant about having a physical hardcopy of your work, it can be expensive and time-consuming (especially if you spot mistakes and have to print the whole thing out again!). But outputting as a PDF saves time and effort, and can also be conveniently emailed. If someone needs a hard copy, they can always print it out at their end.

You can export a PDF file from any component of the OOo suite simply by selecting Export PDF from the File menu (in *Calc* you have to select Export and then choose PDF as the filetype).

A PDF file (Portable Document Format) is very similar to PostScript (printer data that would be sent to a printer when printing out the document). It encodes the text, character shapes and images in

such a way that the same document can be read on any platform, or any computer with PDF reading software. It was developed by Adobe initially because of the problems people had with fonts, and not being able to read the same document on multiple computers (even more important if you are sending it to someone else).

Important format

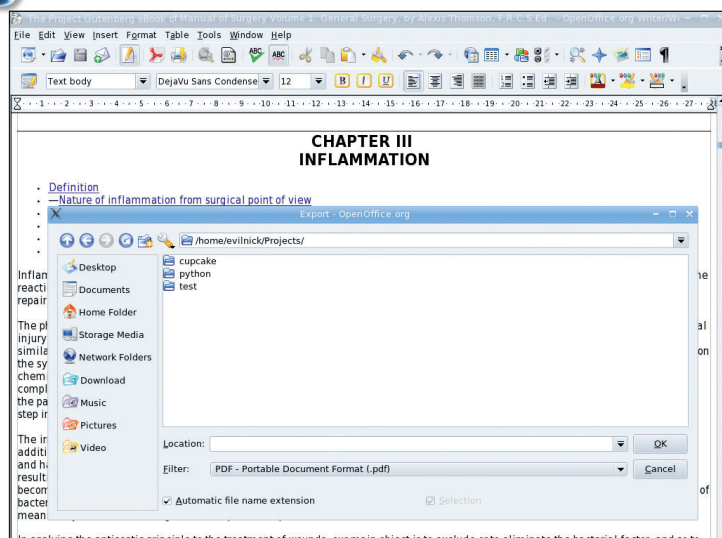
OpenOffice.org Writer recognises the fact that PDFs are important by having a distinct button for producing them (see item 4 on our *Writer* interface guide on p19), whereas most versions of *Microsoft Word* tend to bury the PDF creation option in an obscure place at the bottom of a Print dialog rather than giving it the prominence it deserves. Over time, the format has been extended to include all

sorts of interactive features and security settings to protect the content. Although, it must be pointed out, the security methods used by the PDF format aren't that robust, so don't trust the confidentiality of your top state secrets to them!

Intending to email documents? You should be aware that enabling many of the options (eg Tagging) may dramatically increase the size of the document. If your PDF files end up too big to email, usually the first step is to reduce the graphic resolution in the General Settings tab.

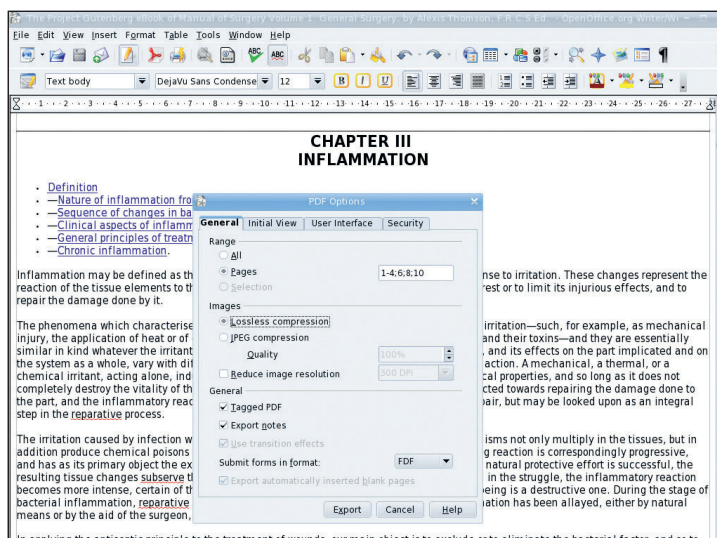
“Writer has a button for creating PDFs in the toolbar.”

OpenOffice.org: exporting a PDF



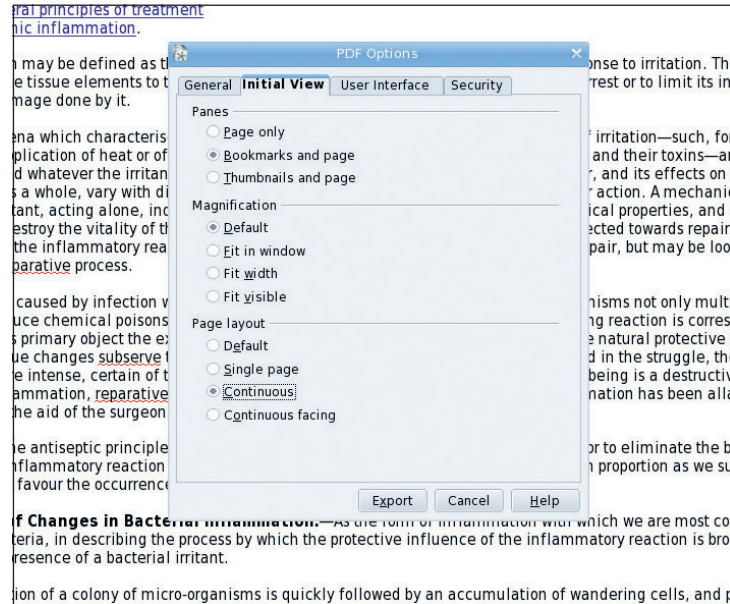
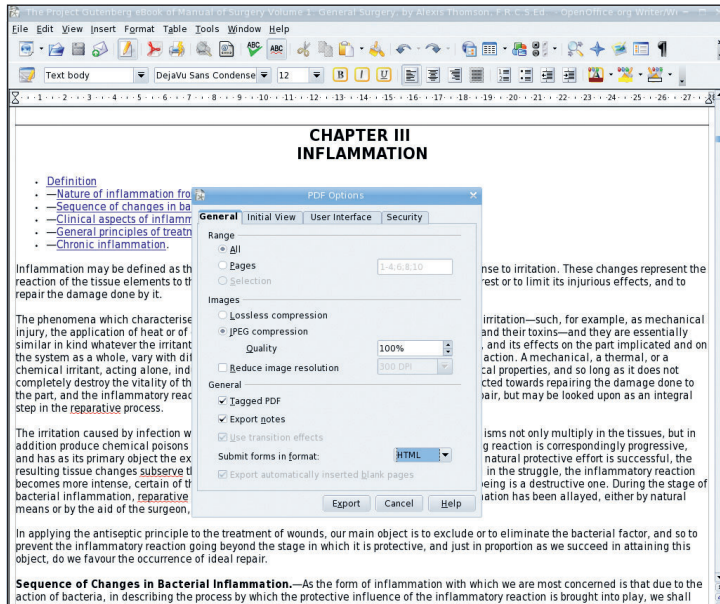
1 File extension

Choose File > Export PDF (on *Calc*, choose Export and then select PDF as a filetype). You will get the standard file requestor; navigate the filesystem and type in a filename to save to. By default the Automatic extension box is checked, so you don't need to add '.pdf' to the end. The selection option, if selected, will only export the selected elements of the document.



2 Setting the options

OK the filename and the tabbed PDF options dialogue appears; mostly you'll use General. Specify a page range (eg '1-4:8:10' will output pages 1,2,3,4,8,10). Check the images section below to reduce filesizes or resolution to 90 or 72 dpi if PDFs are only to be read on screen. For high res printing, choose lossless compression and set the dpi to 300, or don't scale the resolution at all.

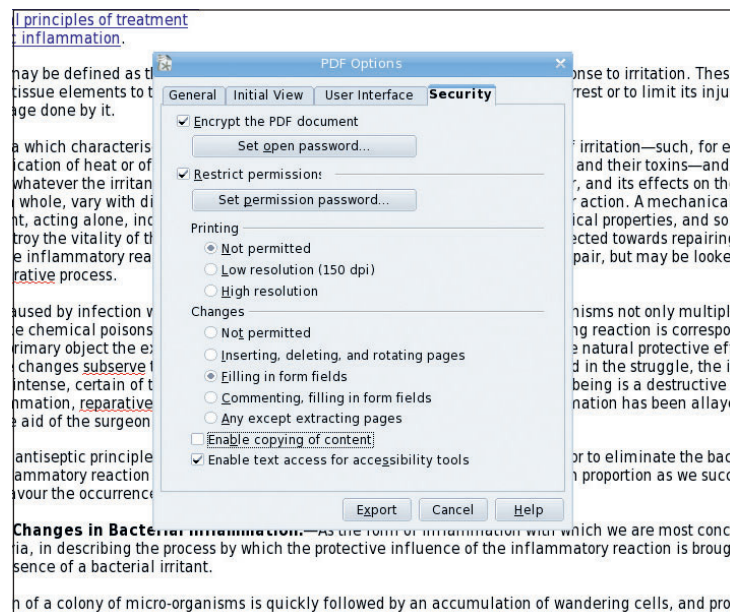
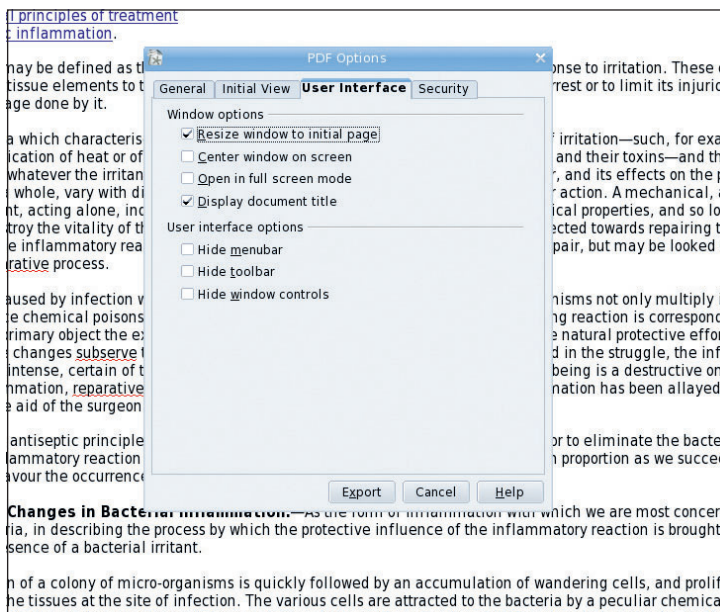


3 Still on the General settings!

The lower half of the dialog deals with some of the extended and extra features of PDF. Some of these features may not be supported by all PDF readers or browsers, but most will support them. They are primarily of use with hypertext documents, as they enable effects such as following hyperlinks and bookmarks. The Tagged PDF option automatically uses *OOo Writer* text styles to create tags for chapter and section headings in the document.

4 Initial View

This tab controls the view of the PDF a user will see when they open it (though you should be aware that this feature does not work on all PDF viewers). For simple, single-page documents, the Page Only view is best, but the bookmarks and thumbnail options are good for longer documents. Magnification is usually best left at default unless it is important that the whole document is visible at once, and the page layout setting will depend on how you have constructed your document.



5 User Interface

This section controls the default toolbars and display mode for the document. Once again, not all viewers support these modes. Most of these options should be self-explanatory, and somewhat superfluous too. We can't think of many occasions when it is vitally important to turn off the user's menu and toolbar, but if it fits your design aesthetic, then so be it!

6 Security

On the last tab we can set some security features. This enables you to password-protect the entire document, or password protect specific features, such as being able to print out the document. Both of these sets of features can use different passwords (in fact, that is the only way it makes sense). Again, these security measures are more of a deterrent than a cast iron guarantee that things will be made impossible! **LXF**