

Printing it out!

Get your work off the computer and onto paper with a minimum of fuss and hassle.

Whatever your particular project is, and however you might feel about the lovely trees, and how much better they look upright rather than all mashed up and bleached and squashed flat, there are going to be plenty of times you need to print things out. But, don't worry too much, you can salve your conscience a little by printing out things properly first time and not having to throw away the first dozen drafts.

Each of the *OpenOffice.org* apps keeps the printing command in the first menu, the File menu. In fact, there are three important entries here, the Print Preview, Print and Printer Settings options.

The last of these is the most important to get right, because this is where you will select the output device, and change any settings on your

printer. It doesn't make much difference whether you are using a Mac, a Linux box or a Windows PC, as long as there is a valid printing device available (*ie* that you have installed the drivers for the device on your OS), then *OpenOffice.org* should be able to access it.

Printer settings

When you first select printer settings, *OOo* should pick up the default printer for the system. You can change the printer you want to use (if you have more than one), by clicking on the drop-down menu at the top of the dialogue box that just opened and selecting one from the list.

Clicking on the properties button will take you through to settings specific for the printer you have

chosen. The paper tab comes up first, which is good because this is the one you will use most often (usually to switch from portrait to Landscape printing, but maybe also to change the paper size), though it is often better to change the page settings to reflect these things (see the walkthroughs opposite).

Clicking on the Device tab will show some specific printer settings. The exact settings will depend on your printer, as they cover specific features according to the drivers being used. On colour inkjets for example, this is where you would find the settings for altering the colour balance, resolution or media type. For laser printers, you will probably get options for resolution, levels of grey and other things supported by the driver.

OOo printer dialog: a guide

Options

The Device tag contains all the printer-specific options.

Settings print

Set specific printer properties.

Choose printer

Click here to select a printer from those available on the network.

PostScript

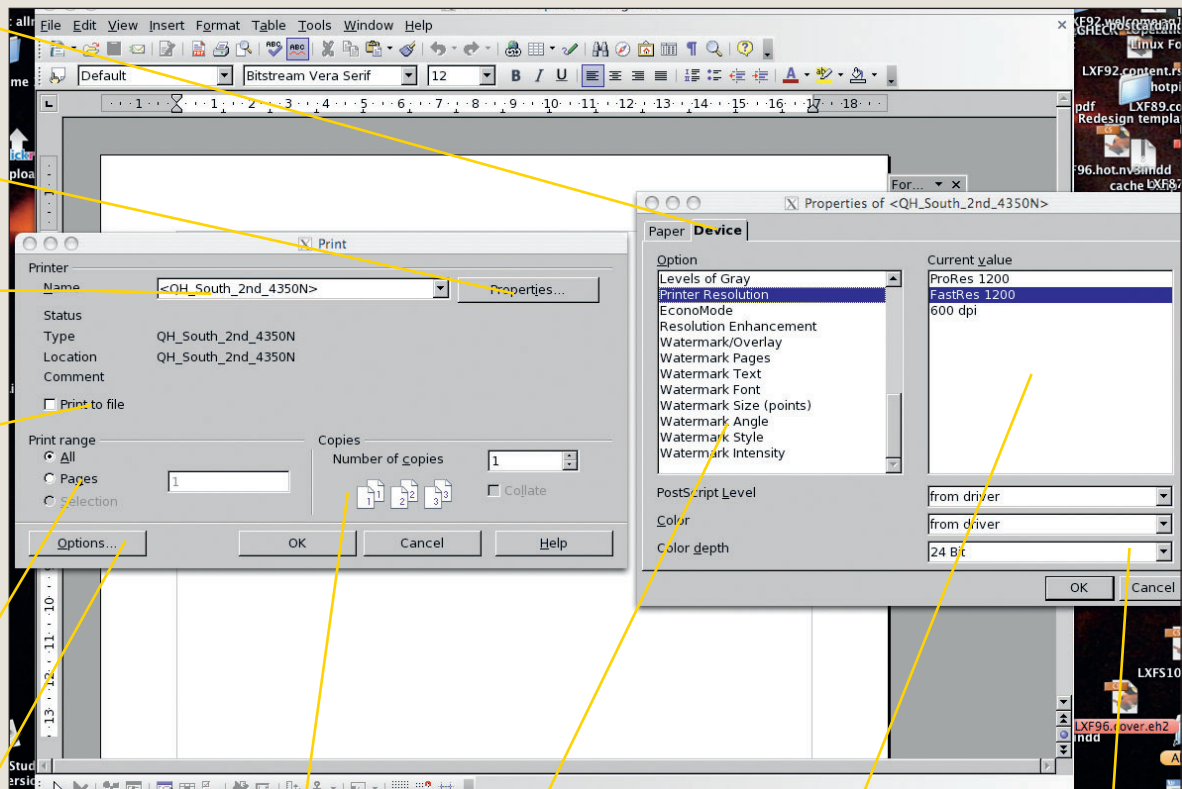
Click here to save a doc as a PostScript file, rather than print it out now. PostScript files can be sent to compatible printers at a later date, or imported into other apps.

Page by page

Select the page range to print (you can enter a non-consecutive list such as "1-4,8,10" in the box).

Print options

Options include what elements to print (*eg* suppress graphics) and further print job selections.



How many?

Number of copies.

Device

Options appear in this list.

Resolution

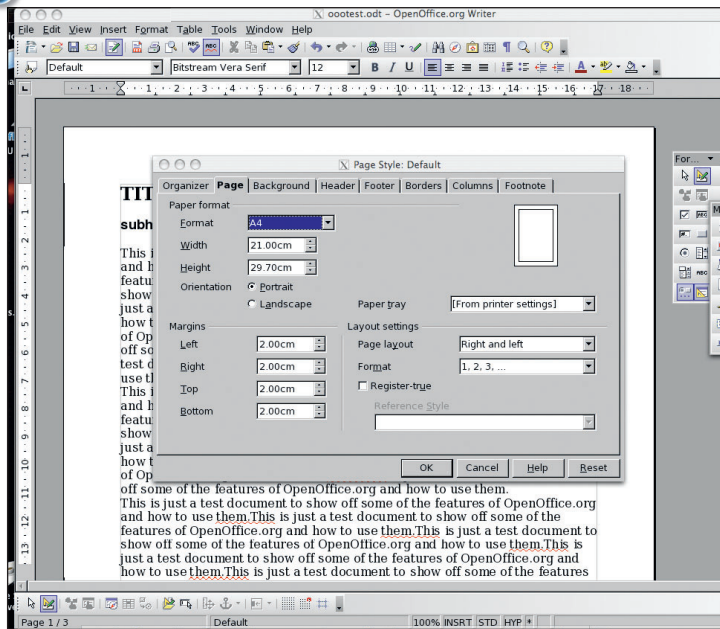
Values are selected here

Mono, CMYK etc

Colour options are set here

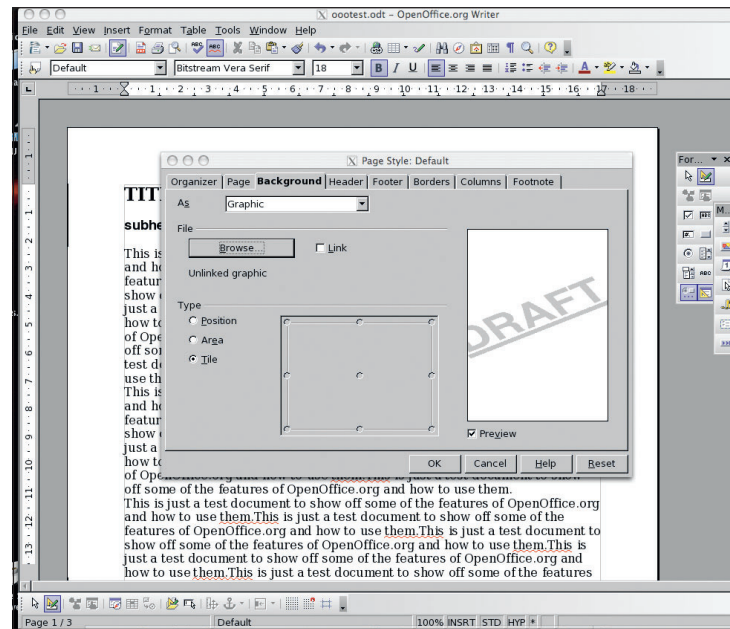


OpenOffice.org: preparing to print



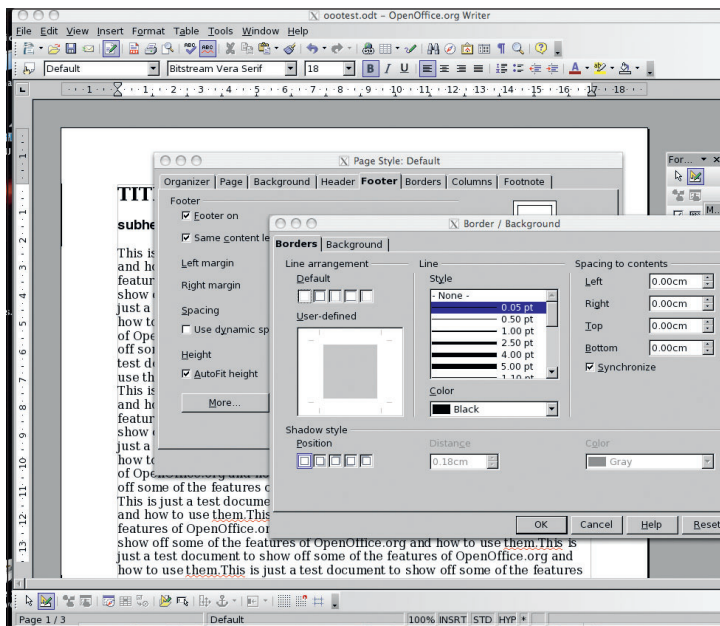
1 Format the page

Before you actually print out your document, you should check that it is set up properly! this means that you should actually choose Format > Page from the menu. This will bring up a dialogue box for you to set up specifics of the document you are working on. In *OOo*, some of the options you might expect to find in the printer dialog are actually here. If you can, it is best to set up the page information here (size *etc*).



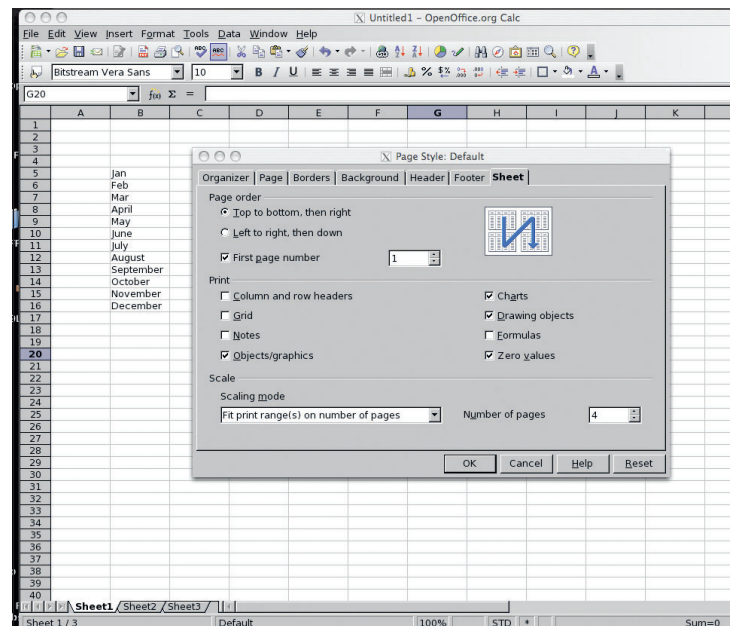
2 Apply effects

At first glance, the Background option may not seem quite so useful – sure, a flat colour in the background might give the effect of special coloured paper, but unless your printer goes right up to the edge, there is not much point. However, if you want to watermark your documents (eg have a huge, pale grey 'DRAFT' stamped across it as in the example above, or whatever), you can select the Graphic tab and import an image for this.



3 Check furniture

This is also the place where you set up headers and footers for the whole document, make sure you enter any values (like the special page number character) into the footer first. When you think you have set up the document properly, it is a good idea to check by using the File > Print preview option. this will show side-by-side views of pages as they will print, for a final check before you commit to paper.



4 Printing from Calc

All of the *OOo* applications have slightly different options. *Calc* is probably the one worth paying most attention to though, as the others are mostly subsets of *Writer's* features. *Calc* has a special, different tab at the end of the Format > Page dialog. As well as being able to do things like change the print order, the most useful thing here is the ability to scale to the output to fit on a specified number of pages – invaluable to save all that fiddling around with column widths and suchlike. **LXP**