Converting a PDF to Word

Microsoft offers a short tutorial, with video, on how to use Word 2013, 2016 or Office 365 to open a PDF in Word: Edit PDF content in Word

⚠️ The version of Word installed on Mac devices is not able to perform this type of conversion. Please look to CloudPC PDF to Word Conversion for instructions on using CloudPC when you have a Mac.

1. Open Word
2. Go to File > Open
3. Browse for the PDF file
4. Open
5. Word will tell you it is going to convert your PDF to an editable Word document. Note, it really will take a while! Click OK.
6. If you see the prompt to Enable editing, click it and again say OK when the "Word will convert" box pops up
7. Wait for the file to convert
8. File > Save As > make sure it's set to .docx > Save

Things to Know

🛇 PDF files are, essentially, images. Converting an image to text is not yet consistent.

When you convert a PDF to Word, there will be formatting challenges. Things like images or columns of text (especially if those columns do not have clear delineations between them) will cause challenges with the creation of the text file. You are almost guaranteed to be spending time double-checking the Word file for errors - this includes spacing, correct choice of an i or an l, etc. Be aware of these limitations and double check your converted file before sharing it.

As Microsoft points out, "The conversion works best with documents that are mostly text."

This conversion cannot handle sideways pages. Correct orientation before converting.

If needed, you can extract a single page (or section) from a PDF in PDF-XChange Editor to save as its own file, rotate, and convert.

This conversion cannot handle figures well, and will sometimes make mistakes with columns of text.

Saving a Word file as a PDF

1. Go to File > Save As
2. Choose your save location
3. Change your file name if needed
4. Change the Save as type (Windows)/File Format (Mac) to PDF
5. Save