

WORD HACKS™

*Tips & Tools for
Taming Your Text*



O'REILLY®

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HACK
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Make PDFs Without Acrobat

PDF has become a nearly universal file format for displaying documents. But while you can download Adobe Reader for free, you must shell out nearly \$300 for the full version if you want to create PDFs. Fortunately, you can use the free Ghostscript and GhostWord programs to create PDFs instead.

By taking advantage of some free utilities, you can easily create full-featured PDFs from Word files without purchasing the full version of Adobe Acrobat. The *Ghostscript* utility, a freeware program available for any platform, can create PDFs from PostScript files. PostScript is a page-description language understood by most printers, and it is usually the format your files are converted to behind the scenes when you send them to your printer.

From Word, you can print your document to a file instead of to a printer; the file that's created will likely be a PostScript file if the printer driver you use is for a PostScript-compatible printer. That means you can use Ghostscript to create a PDF from the file.

To see whether your printer is a PostScript printer, print a small document to file (select File → Print and check the “Print to file” box), then open the file in a text editor such as Notepad. Though Word will give the file a *.prn* extension, the file will still likely be a PostScript file. PostScript files will have a line beginning with the text `!PS` near the top of the file, as shown in Figure 3-41.

```
1 ! -12345X@PJL JOB
2 @PJL SET RESOLUTION = 600
3 @PJL SET BITSPERPIXEL = 2
4 @PJL SET ECONOMODE = OFF
5 @PJL SET HOLDKEY = "0000"
6 @PJL ENTER LANGUAGE = POSTSCRIPT
7 %!PS-Adobe-3.0
8 .....
9 %%Title: Microsoft Word - PDFs without Acrobat.doc
10 %%Creator: Windows NT 4.0
11 %%CreationDate: 18:39 7/4/2004
12 %%Pages: (atend)
13 %%BoundingBox: 13 13 599 779
14 %%LanguageLevel: 2
15 %%DocumentNeededFonts: (atend)
16 %%DocumentSuppliedFonts: (atend)
17 %%EndComments
18 %%BeginProlog
19
20 %%BeginResource: procset NTPSOct95
21 /NTPSOct95 100 dict dup begin/bd(bind def)bind def/ld(load def)bd/ed(exch def)
22 bd/a(currentpoint)bd/c/curveto ld/d/dup ld/e/eofill ld/f/fill ld/tr/translate
23 ld/gr/grestore ld/gs/gsave ld/j/asetlinejoin ld/L/lineto ld/M/moveto ld/n
24 /newpath ld/CP/closepath ld/rm/rmoveto ld/sl/setlinewidth ld/sd/setdash ld/g
25 /setgray ld/r/setrgbcolor ld/s/stroke ld/t/show ld/aw/awidthshow ld/im
26 /imagemask ld/MS{(moveto show)}bd/SF{findfont exch scalefont setfont}bd/SM{cmtx
27 def}bd/B{M exch dup 0 rlt exch 0 exch rlt neg 0 rlt}bd/CB{B cp eolip}bd/EA{1
28 index 0/G0 put 4 string 1 1 4 -1 roll{3 copy neg exch cvs dup 0 71 put cvn 3 -1
29 roll exch put}for pop}bd/rlt/rlineto ld/L2?/languagelevel where{pop
30 languagelevel 2 ge}{false}ifelse def end def
31 %%EndResource
```

Figure 3-41. A PostScript file viewed in a text editor

If you don't have a PostScript printer, don't worry; printer drivers are available from many printer manufacturers. For example, one such printer driver is available from Hewlett-Packard at <ftp://ftp.hp.com/pub/printers/software/lj485en.exe>.

Since you're using the driver only to print to files, you don't need the actual printer.

Once you've located or installed a PostScript printer or printer driver, you can use Ghostscript, Ghostview, and GhostWord together to create PDFs from Word files.



For more information on using PDFs, both with Word and in general, check out *PDF Hacks* (O'Reilly).

Getting Ghostscript and GSview

You can download Ghostscript free from the University of Wisconsin's web site (<http://www.cs.wisc.edu/~ghost/>). Ghostscript itself is a complicated command-line program that can be hard for novices to use. Fortunately, the site also has information on where to obtain a viewer to accompany Ghostscript, such as the free GSview viewer, available from <http://www.cs.wisc.edu/~ghost/gsview/index.htm>.

GSview provides a graphical interface to Ghostscript and can be used to view PostScript, PDF, and other file types. GSview is free to use, but you're asked to register the software for \$25. If you choose not to register, you'll have to dismiss a reminder dialog each time you launch the program.

You won't need GSview to run this hack, but it's a handy tool to have for viewing PostScript files.

Getting GhostWord

GhostWord is a Ghostscript interface that integrates with Word. It adds a toolbar button to Word that launches the GhostWord GUI, shown in Figure 3-42. Use the GUI to convert the currently active Word document to a full-featured PDF. You can also run the GUI from outside of Word. GhostWord even has a command-line interface.

GhostWord can add bookmarks, links, metadata, and display settings to a PDF. It also manages your Ghostscript settings. Select a hardcoded Ghostscript profile from the "Optimize PDF for" drop-down box or tweak Ghostscript settings individually under the Converter Settings tab. You can save these settings to a configuration file [Hack #67] for later retrieval.

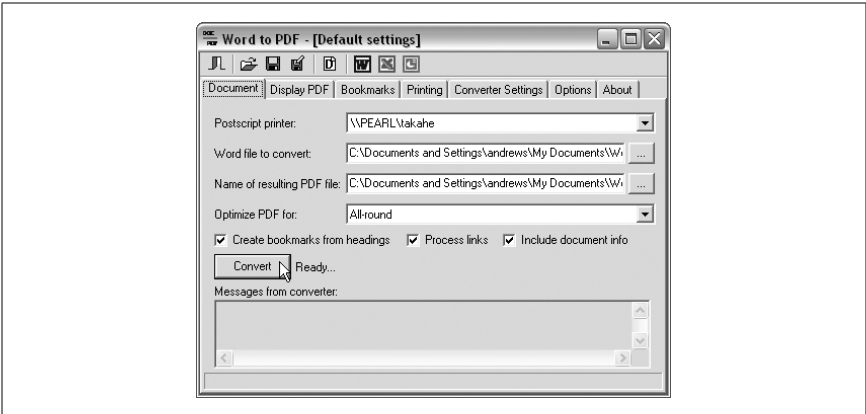


Figure 3-42. The GhostWord interface

GhostWord is distributed free of charge from <http://www.et.dtu.dk/software/ghostword>.