

Completing PDF Forms

We are getting an increasing number of forms faxed to our office which need to be completed, but as they are not on line they are not fillable. What are the proper programs for making a form fillable?

Adobe Acrobat (Pro DC). Tell the senders to stop sending via fax and have them email the forms.

David Masters, Colorado

I use Acrobat X Pro. It has a feature to type on PDFs. Only issue is that you now often have to flatten the PDF to save the typed annotations.

I actually haven't bothered to look at why some PDFs must be flattened and some not.

Roger Traversa, Pennsylvania

I just discovered this week that the free Adobe Reader allows you type text on a .pdf and then save it. It works on most .pdfs that I have received lately. There is an icon on the horizontal menu at the top of the screen that looks like a paper and a pen. Click that, and then an option to add text will appear on the right side of the screen. This will allow you to add text on top of the .pdf, but you cannot edit the original .pdf. Works well for fill in the blanks.

Brian C. Hagner, Wisconsin

Some PDFs are sent "locked" and cannot be typed on. It's a source of endless frustration to me, because I certainly do not want to have to print and scan the document in order to be able to comment or fill it in.

Miriam Jacobson, Pennsylvania

Most all locked PDF forms can be unlocked. If you have one you want unlocked, email it to me and I will be happy to open it. There are also software applications that will do it. I have PDF Password Cracker version 3.1, which I have had for years. Don't know if it is still available, but it has worked 99%+ of the time.

Henry R. Reckler, Colorado

Second the vote for PDF Cracker. I use it sparingly, but sometimes you just need to strip security.

David Masters

Hmm, circumvention. Wonder how DMCA applies...

<https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/17/1201>

T.J. Ackermann

Hmmm. I guess I don't want to know. I never do it other than to fill it out and send it back to the person who sent it to me, etc.

Henry R. Reckler

I just use 'print as pdf' and then 'create pdf into form' to bypass locked forms. I'm interested in the DRM breaking legality however.

John Strong

This is the kind of nonsense that drove me to the EFF years before becoming a lawyer. And, as a lawyer, you not only want to know, you must know, because you, we, are held to a higher standard.

DMCA, in some eyes, criminalizes all such acts. In other eyes this is proof of DMCA's overreach. In a sane world you would be deemed innocent of wrongdoing until proved otherwise, but as with modern copyright law in the U.S., the DMCA, arguably, turns this principle on its head.

Robert Link, California

Print the PDF document to Microsoft XPS Document Writer and then reopen that document in your PDF software. It will come through unlocked and can be typed on.

Roger Traversa

OK, I tried it. I use Acrobat. Acrobat would not open the xps file.

Henry R. Reckler

You have to reprint the XPS document as a PDF document.

Roger Traversa

Almost any pdf creation tool can fill in "plain paper" look for the "typewriter" tool - position your curser over where you want to insert and type away.

Andrea Cannavina, not an atty.
