

Making acrobat accessable within your browser

or: what to do if you can't read a pdf file

Introduction:

Adobe's **Portable Document Format** (PDF) is swiftly becoming a standard for internet document exchange (among other uses) due to its platform independence and page layout abilities. The Adobe Acrobat Reader (which is free as of this writing) enables one to read (but not edit or create) files in the PDF format. It is relatively easy to configure your browser to automatically start Acrobat when you click on a link to a pdf file.

The first thing to try:

The first thing to try of course is to just click on a link to a pdf file and see if the Acrobat reader starts up. If so, you are all set and can stop reading now. Here is a [link to a pdf version of this page](#) so you can test your set up. If you cannot view this pdf file, you should follow the two steps below.

Do you have the software?

The first thing to check is to make sure the Acrobat Reader is correctly installed on your machine. Mac and PC users can use their respective "find" commands to look for "Acrobat". Unix users can type "which acroread". AOML users can rest assured the software is already installed on the Mac file server as well as the Suns and HPs.

If you can find the software, you are all set to go onto the next step. If not, you will have to first [download](#) and install the software from Adobe.

Once you have the software

Check the preferences for pdf files.

In Netscape 3.x (e.g. mobster):

1. Under the "options" menu, select "General Preferences"
2. look for an entry "application/pdf" in the "helpers" section of the general preferences window
3. if it doesn't exist add the following, if it does, make sure it looks like this (click on "edit")

Description: (can be anything)

Type: application/pdf

Suffix: pdf

Handle by: (can be either:)

a) plug in: nppdf.so

b) application: acroread

In netscape 4.x (e.g. samson, nuwave)

1. Under the "edit" menu, select "preferences"
2. on the preferences window select "navigator" then "applications".
3. look for an entry that has a description like "PDF something...."
4. if it doesn't exist add the following, if it does, make sure it looks like this (click on "edit")

Description: (can be anything)

[http://www.aoml.noaa.gov/phod/docs/
browser_info.html](http://www.aoml.noaa.gov/phod/docs/browser_info.html)

MIME Type: application/pdf
Suffixes: pdf
Handled by: Application: acroread %s

Be careful with the spaces and so forth when you type this in, netscape is kind of picky about that sort of thing....

That's it! You are all set to view pdf now.