Step-by-step guide to sign a PDF digitally with Adobe Acrobat DC 2021

If you have an older version of Acrobat (Reader), see the previous version of this guide.

1. Open the PDF with Adobe Acrobat Reader DC, or Adobe Acrobat Pro DC. Digital signatures do not work well in alternative PDF reading programs.

2. Enter the required information, and/or check if you agree with the form's contents you will sign for.

3. Then, make sure you save an unsigned copy of the form (File – Save As) because in the signed version, the text fields will be locked for editing. By keeping an unsigned copy, you can update the form later.

4. When you are ready to sign, click the red pencil in the signature field that is intended for you. For example, if you are a student the field might look like this:

Student	
Name	John Doe
Signature	Sign digitally with Adobe Reader.
Date	16 August 2021

5. If you get the following screen, click "Configure Digital ID". If you do not get this screen, skip to step 9.

Digital ID Configuration Required									
This signature field requires a digital signature identity.									
Would you like to configure one now?									
Help Configure Digital ID	Cancel								

See page 3 for screenshots that show steps 6-8 (creating a new digital ID).

6. In the next screen, click "Create a new digital ID" unless you already have an ID (PFX-file) made on a different computer. If you have a PFX-file, click "Use a Digital ID from a file" to load it, and skip to step 9.

7. In the next screen, click "Save to File". In the next screen, enter your name, organization (UTwente), UT e-mail, and country NL.

8. In the next screen, select a folder to store your Digital ID file (PFX file) and enter a password to lock it.

9. You should now see the screen "Sign with a Digital ID". Choose the correct ID and click Continue. If you don't see the correct ID, click "Configure New Digital ID" and go back to step 6.



10. Enter the password for your digital ID and click the Sign button. You will be asked to save the PDF under a new filename. A common choice is the filename of the original PDF, with "signed" added to it.



11. Send the signed version of the PDF to the people who requested it. Keep the unsigned and the signed PDF in your own archive. Also keep your digital signature (PFX-file) and remember its password.

Appendix: screenshots of steps 6-8 (make new ID) in Acrobat DC 2021

Configure a Digital ID for signing		×	Select the destination of the new Digital ID		×			
A Digital ID is required to	Select the type of Digital ID:			Digital IDs are typically	•	Save to File		
create a logical signature. The most secure Digital ID are issued by trusted certificate authorities and are based on secure devices like smart card or token. Some are based on files. You can also create a new Digital ID, but they provide a low level of identity assurance.		Use a Signature Creation Device		that assure the validity of the identity. Self-signed Digital ID may not provide the same level of assurance and may not be accented in some use		Save the Digital ID to a file in your computer		
		Configure a smart card or token connected to your computer				Save to Windows Certificate Store Save the Digital ID to Windows Certificate Sto	re to	
		Use a Digital ID from a file Import an existing Digital ID that you have obtained as a file		cases.		be shared with other applications		
				if this is an acceptable form of authentication.				
	•	Create a new Digital ID Create your self-signed Digital ID						
?		Cancel Continu	e	0		Back	ontinue	
Step 6				Step 7				

Create a self-signed Digital ID ×			Save the self-signed Digital ID to a file	×
Enter the identity information to be used for creating the self-signed Digital ID. Digital IDs that are self- signed by individuals do not provide the assurance that the identity information is valid. For this reason they may not be accepted in some use cases.	Name Organizational Unit Organization Name Email Address Country/Region Key Algorithm Use Digital ID for	John Doe University of Twente j.doe@student.utwente.nl NL - NETHERLANDS 2048-bit RSA Digital Signatures	Add a password to protect the private key of the Digital ID. You will be saved at the following location : Your Digital ID will be saved at the following location : Big and ID. You will be found big and ID for in a known location so that you can copy it or back it up. ExJohnDoe.pfx Confirm the password to protect the Digital ID:	Browse
0		Back Continue	() Back	Save
Step 8 part 1			Step 8 part 2	

Written 16 August 2021, Arnoud Onnink (a.j.onnink@utwente.nl)