

This "PDF Survival Guide" focuses on the "how-to" without the fluff.

PDF Cheat Sheet: Edit Anything (Without Paying Adobe)

The Gold Rule:

If you just need to read or sign, use Adobe Reader (free). If you need to change text, use the tricks below!

1. The "Word Heist" (Best for Syllabi, Reports)

Use this when you have a PDF and want it to act like a normal Word document.

1. **Find** your PDF file on your computer.
2. **Right-Click** the file and select **Open with > Word**.
3. Click **OK** when it asks to convert the file.
4. Click **Enable Editing** at the top of the screen.
5. **Save** as a .docx when you are finished.

2. The "Google Wizard" (Best for Scanned Images)

Use this for old documents or "photos" of pages where you can't click the text.

1. **Upload** your PDF or Image to **Google Drive**.
2. **Right-Click** the file inside your Drive.
3. Select **Open with > Google Docs**.
4. **Wait 5 seconds**: Google will extract the text and paste it into a new doc for you.

3. The "Quick-Draw" (Best for Fast Notes & Signatures)

Use this to avoid opening any software at all.

- **In Firefox**: Open a PDF. Use the **Text (T)** and **Draw (Pen)** icons in the top right to write directly on the page. Hit **Save** & download the edited version.
 - **In Chrome**: Open a PDF. Click the **Pencil icon**
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Which Tool Should I Use?

If you want to...	Use this Tool	Why?
Change a date or typo	MS Word	It turns the PDF back into a document.
Get text from a scan	Google Docs	Its "OCR" magic reads images like text.
Sign a form quickly	Firefox	It's built-in and requires zero clicks to start.
Collaborate with others	Google Docs	Everyone can type at the same time.

Troubleshooting the "Final Bosses"

- "It's asking for a Credit Card!" → You clicked "Edit PDF" in Adobe. **Ignore it.** Close Adobe and use the **Word Heist** method above.
- "The layout looks messy!" → Word struggles with complex boxes. Try the **Adobe Online Converter** (acrobat.adobe.com) for better formatting.
- "I lost my changes!" → Browsers don't always auto-save PDFs. Always hit **Ctrl + S** before closing the tab!