

METHODS TO SAVE PDF FORMS

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SUMMARY

There are the following basic methods to save PDF Forms:

Method-1 (Save): *Save Form* to HD by *File Menu*. *Save* or *Save As* item can be selected by the Acrobat full program or Acrobat Reader *File Menu*.

Method-2 (Export by Forms Menu): *Export Data* to HD by *Forms Menu*. *Export Data* item can be selected by the Acrobat full program *Forms Menu*.

Method-3 (Export by JavaScript): *Export Data* to HD by JavaScript. *Export as FDF* action can be called by a button (or text) field created by a form creator.

Method-4 (Submit): *Submit Data* to a Web server by a field action. *Submit Data* action can be called by a button (or text) field created by a form creator. This will export data into a file automatically created and submitted to a Web server to be processed by a server-side software. After processing the file can be downloaded by a form user directly to computer hard drive (HD) or emailed to a recipient.

Method-5 (Email): *Export Data* to HD by using a JavaScript and email server. *Email Data* JavaScript action can be called by a button (or text) field created by a form creator. This will export data into a file automatically created in a computer hard drive and appearing as an attachment in an open email window. This attachment can just remain in computer hard drive or be emailed to a recipient.

Method-6 (Global Variables): *Export Data* to HD by *Global Variables*. *Copy Data to Global Variables* JavaScript action can be called by a button (or text) field created by a form creator. This will export data into a file automatically created in user's computer hard drive.

Method-7 (Copy/Paste): *Copy/Paste Data* to HD by JavaScript. *Copy Data to Clipboard* JavaScript action can be called by a button (or text) field created by a form creator. This will

export data into a Clipboard. The user can paste data from the Clipboard into any file in user's computer hard drive.

There are pros and cons of each method, depending on:

- Whether a method is available in both the Acrobat full program and Reader or in the Acrobat full program only.
- Whether a method allows to save data together with the form, or to save data only (without the form).
- Whether a method allows to save data typed into form fields, or to save data typed into a flat (field-less) space, or both.
- Whether a method allows to save data directly to a computer hard drive (without using email or Web server), or to save data by using an email server, or to save data by using a Web server.
- Whether a method allows to save the values of the fields together with the properties of the fields, or to save the values of the fields only (without the properties).
- Whether a method creates a file (containing a saved data) automatically or the file must be created by a form user.

Feel free to contact us for any questions or help: help@USA-Federal-Forms.com

METHOD-1 (SAVE): SAVE FORM TO HD BY FILE MENU

Is this method available in the Acrobat full program? Yes.

Is this method available in the Acrobat Reader? Yes (with some restrictions described below).

How does this method work? *Save* or *Save As* item can be selected by the Acrobat full program or Acrobat Reader *File Menu*.

What is the extension of a file containing the saved data? PDF.

Does this method create the above file (containing a saved data) automatically? Yes.

Does this method allow to save data typed into form fields? Yes.

Does this method allow to save data typed into a flat (field-less) space? Yes.

Does this method allow to save data together with the form? Yes.

Does this method allow to save data only (without the form)? No.

Does this method allow to save data directly to computer hard drive, without using email or Web server? Yes.

Does this method allow to save the values of the fields together with the properties of the fields? Yes.

Does this method allow to save data typed into form fields of a Acrobat PDF form (Acroform), in Reader versions 10 and lower? Yes, but only if Reader Extensions are enabled.

Does this method allow to save data typed into form fields of a Acrobat PDF form (Acroform), in Reader versions 11 and later? Yes, regardless of whether Reader Extensions are enabled or not.

Does this method allow to save data typed into a flat (field-less) space of a Acrobat PDF form

(Acroform), in Reader versions 11 and later? Yes, but only if Reader Extensions are not enabled.
Does this method allow to save data typed into form fields of a dynamic or static XFA form?
Yes, but only if Reader Extensions are enabled (regardless of Reader version).

Note 1: Reader Extensions allows users to save data typed into form fields and prevents users from saving data typed into a flat (field-less) form.

Note 2: The data typed into form fields of a (dynamic or static) XFA form cannot be saved in Reader without using Reader Extensions. In contrast, the data typed into form fields of a PDF Acrobat form can be saved in Reader 11 and later without using Reader Extensions.

METHOD-2 (EXPORT BY MENU): EXPORT DATA TO HD BY FORMS MENU

Is this method available in the Acrobat full program? Yes.

Is this method available in the Acrobat Reader? No.

How does this method work? *Export Data* item can be selected by the Acrobat full program Forms menu.

What is the extension of a file containing the saved data? This method allows to export data in various formats (such as *.fdf, *.xfdf, *.xml, *.txt).

Does this method create the above file (containing a saved data) automatically? Yes, a form user just need to select a format.

Does this method allow to save data typed into form fields? Yes.

Does this method allow to save data typed into a flat (field-less) space? No.

Does this method allow to save data together with the form? No.

Does this method allow to save data only (without form)? Yes.

Does this method allow to save data directly to computer hard drive, without using email or Web server? Yes.

Does this method allow to save the values of the fields together with the properties of the fields? No.

METHOD-3 (EXPORT BY JAVASCRIPT): EXPORT DATA TO HD BY JAVASCRIPT

Is this method available in the Acrobat full program? Yes.

Is this method available in the Acrobat Reader? Yes, but only if the corresponding usage right are enabled by Adobes LiveCycle Reader Extensions.

How does this method work? *Export as FDF* action can be called by a button (or text) field created by a form creator.

Is there an item to be selected by the Acrobat menu? No.

What is the extension of a file containing the saved data? FDF.

Does this method create the above file (containing a saved data) automatically? Yes.

Does this method allow to save data typed into form fields? Yes.

Does this method allow to save data typed into a flat (field-less) space? No.

Does this method allow to save data together with the form? No.

Does this method allow to save data only (without form)? Yes.

Does this method allow to save data directly to computer hard drive, without using email or Web server? Yes.

Does this method allow to save the values of the fields together with the properties of the fields?

No.

METHOD-4 (SUBMIT): SUBMIT DATA TO WEB SERVER BY JAVASCRIPT

Is this method available in the Acrobat full program? Yes.

Is this method available in the Acrobat Reader? Yes.

How does this method work? *Submit Data* action can be called by a button (or text) field created by a form creator. This will export data into a file automatically created and submitted to a Web server to be processed by a server-side software. After processing the file can be downloaded by a form user directly to computer hard drive or emailed to a recipient.

Is there an item to be selected by the Acrobat menu? No.

What is the extension of a file containing the saved data? This method allows to export data in various formats (such as *.fdf, *.xfdf, *.xml, *.txt).

Does this method create the above file (containing a saved data) automatically? Yes.

Does this method allow to save data typed into form fields? Yes.

Does this method allow to save data typed into a flat (field-less) space? No.

Does this method allow to save data together with the form? No.

Does this method allow to save data only (without form)? Yes.

Does this method allow to save data directly to computer hard drive, without using email or Web server? No, a Web server processing is needed.

Does this method allow to save the values of the fields together with the properties of the fields? No.

METHOD-5 (EMAIL): EXPORT DATA TO HD BY JAVASCRIPT AND EMAIL SERVER

Is this method available in the Acrobat full program? Yes.

Is this method available in the Acrobat Reader? Yes.

How does this method work? *Email Data* action can be called by a button (or text) field created by a form creator. This will export data into an file automatically created in users computer hard drive and appearing as an attachment in an open email window. This attachment can just remain in computer hard drive or be emailed to a recipient.

Is there an item to be selected by the Acrobat menu? No.

What is the extension of a file containing the saved data? This method allows to export data in various formats (such as *.fdf, *.xfdf, *.xml, *.txt).

Does this method create the above file (containing a saved data) automatically? Yes.

Does this method allow to save data typed into form fields? Yes.

Does this method allow to save data typed into a flat (field-less) space? No.

Does this method allow to save data together with the form? No.

Does this method allow to save data only (without form)? Yes.

Does this method allow to save data directly to computer hard drive, without using email or Web server? No, an email server processing is needed.

Does this method allow to save the values of the fields together with the properties of the fields? No.

METHOD-6 (GLOBAL VARIABLES): EXPORT DATA TO HD BY GLOBAL

VARIABLES

Is this method available in the Acrobat full program? Yes.

Is this method available in the Acrobat Reader? Yes.

How does this method work? *Copy Data to Global Variables* JavaScript action can be called by a button (or text) field created by a form creator. This will export data into an file automatically created in users computer hard drive.

Is there an item to be selected by the Acrobat menu? No.

What is the extension of a file containing the saved data? JS.

Does this method create the above file (containing a saved data) automatically? Yes.

Does this method allow to save data typed into form fields? Yes.

Does this method allow to save data typed into a flat (field-less) space? No.

Does this method allow to save data together with the form? No.

Does this method allow to save data only (without form)? Yes.

Does this method allow to save data directly to computer hard drive, without using email or Web server? Yes.

Does this method allow to save the values of the fields together with the properties of the fields? No.

METHOD-7 (COPY/PASTE): COPY/PASTE DATA TO HD BY JAVASCRIPT

Is this method available in the Acrobat full program? Yes.

Is this method available in the Acrobat Reader? Yes.

How does this method work? *Copy Data to Clipboard* JavaScript action can be called by a button (or text) field created by a form creator. This will export data into a Clipboard. The user can paste data from the Clipboard into any file created or existing in users computer hard drive.

Is there an item to be selected by the Acrobat menu? No.

What is the extension of a file containing the saved data? A user can paste data from the Clipboard into a text file or a file with any extension.

Does this method create the above file (containing a saved data) automatically? No.

Does this method allow to save data typed into form fields? Yes.

Does this method allow to save data typed into a flat (field-less) space? No.

Does this method allow to save data together with the form? No.

Does this method allow to save data only (without form)? Yes.

Does this method allow to save data directly to computer hard drive, without using email or Web server? Yes.

Does this method allow to save the values of the fields together with the properties of the fields? Yes.

PROS AND CONS OF EACH METHOD

Pros of Submit, Email, Global Variables, Copy/Paste methods. These methods are available in both the Acrobat full program and all versions of Acrobat Reader without need to enable Reader Extension.

In contrast:

- *Save* method (while available in both the Acrobat full program and Acrobat Reader) is available in Reader versions 10 and lower only if Reader Extensions are enabled and is available in Reader versions 11 and later (regardless of whether Reader Extensions are enabled or not).
- *Export by Menu* method is available in the Acrobat full program only. It is not available in the Acrobat Reader.
- *Export by JavaScript* method (while available in both the Acrobat full program and Acrobat Reader) is available in Reader if the corresponding usage right are enabled by Adobes LiveCycle Reader Extensions.

Pros of Save and Copy/Paste methods. These methods save not only the values but also all the properties of the fields. In contrast, other methods export the values of the fields without the properties. This may affect the reliability: if some properties of a field are changed by a form user after exporting the value of that field, then the value can imported incorrectly. For example, if the text size, text font, or multi/single-line property is changed by a form user, then the imported value of that field can be too long to fit the field space.

Cons of Save method. This method saves data together with the form. In contrast, all other methods save data only (separate from the form). Saving data together with the form affects portability: a file containing a saved data together with the form is much larger than a file containing the exported data only.

Cons of Submit method. This method is based on server-based processing and thus depends on Internet connection, Web server functionality, and quality of the server-based software. Accordingly, it is less reliable and less safe than all other methods which are not server-based.

Cons of Email method. This method depends on availability of properly set email client. Accordingly, this method is less reliable than non-email-based methods (Save, Export by Menu).

Feel free to contact us for any questions or help: help@USA-Federal-Forms.com

ALL U.S. AIR FORCE FORMS: <http://www.USA-Federal-Forms.com/Air-Force-Forms.html>
This includes multiple versions of each form. Visit the page to check for updates.

U.S. AIR FORCE FORMS WEBSITE: <http://www.e-publishing.af.mil>
The U.S. Air Force Forms Website has some significant limitations in form browsing functionality.

HELPFUL ARTICLES FOR USERS OF FORMS:

Review of U.S. Air Force forms:
<http://www.USA-Federal-Forms.com/Air-Force-Forms-Review.html>

Comparison of methods to fill out PDF forms:
<http://www.USA-Federal-Forms.com/Methods-to-Fill-PDF-Forms.html>

Comparison of methods to save PDF forms:
<http://www.USA-Federal-Forms.com/Methods-to-Save-PDF-Forms.html>

HELPFUL ONLINE CONVERSIONS OF PDF FORMS & DOCUMENTS:

<http://www.USA-Federal-Forms.com/Conversions.html>

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