

**NAME**

pdftotext – Portable Document Format (PDF) to text converter (version 3.04)

**SYNOPSIS**

**pdftotext** [options] [*PDF-file* [*text-file*]]

**DESCRIPTION**

**Pdftotext** converts Portable Document Format (PDF) files to plain text.

Pdftotext reads the PDF file, *PDF-file*, and writes a text file, *text-file*. If *text-file* is not specified, pdftotext converts *file.pdf* to *file.txt*. If *text-file* is '-', the text is sent to stdout.

**CONFIGURATION FILE**

Pdftotext reads a configuration file at startup. It first tries to find the user's private config file, ~/.xpdfrc. If that doesn't exist, it looks for a system-wide config file, typically /usr/local/etc/xpdfrc (but this location can be changed when pdftotext is built). See the **xpdfrc(5)** man page for details.

**OPTIONS**

Many of the following options can be set with configuration file commands. These are listed in square brackets with the description of the corresponding command line option.

**-f** *number*

Specifies the first page to convert.

**-l** *number*

Specifies the last page to convert.

**-layout**

Maintain (as best as possible) the original physical layout of the text. The default is to 'undo' physical layout (columns, hyphenation, etc.) and output the text in reading order. If the **-fixed** option is given, character spacing within each line will be determined by the specified character pitch.

**-table** Table mode is similar to physical layout mode, but optimized for tabular data, with the goal of keeping rows and columns aligned (at the expense of inserting extra whitespace). If the **-fixed** option is given, character spacing within each line will be determined by the specified character pitch.

**-lineprinter**

Line printer mode uses a strict fixed-character-pitch and -height layout. That is, the page is broken into a grid, and characters are placed into that grid. If the grid spacing is too small for the actual characters, the result is extra whitespace. If the grid spacing is too large, the result is missing whitespace. The grid spacing can be specified using the **-fixed** and **-linespacing** options. If one or both are not given on the command line, pdftotext will attempt to compute appropriate value(s).

**-raw** Keep the text in content stream order. Depending on how the PDF file was generated, this may or may not be useful.

**-fixed** *number*

Specify the character pitch (character width), in points, for physical layout, table, or line printer mode. This is ignored in all other modes.

**-linespacing** *number*

Specify the line spacing, in points, for line printer mode. This is ignored in all other modes.

**-clip**

Text which is hidden because of clipping is removed before doing layout, and then added back in. This can be helpful for tables where clipped (invisible) text would overlap the next column.

**-enc** *encoding-name*

Sets the encoding to use for text output. The *encoding-name* must be defined with the unicodeMap command (see **xpdfrc(5)**). The encoding name is case-sensitive. This defaults to "Latin1" (which is a built-in encoding). [config file: **textEncoding**]

- eol** *unix / dos / mac*  
Sets the end-of-line convention to use for text output. [config file: **textEOL**]
- nopgbrk**  
Don't insert page breaks (form feed characters) between pages. [config file: **textPageBreaks**]
- opw** *password*  
Specify the owner password for the PDF file. Providing this will bypass all security restrictions.
- upw** *password*  
Specify the user password for the PDF file.
- q** Don't print any messages or errors. [config file: **errQuiet**]
- cfg** *config-file*  
Read *config-file* in place of ~/.xpdfrc or the system-wide config file.
- v** Print copyright and version information.
- h** Print usage information. (**-help** and **--help** are equivalent.)

## BUGS

Some PDF files contain fonts whose encodings have been mangled beyond recognition. There is no way (short of OCR) to extract text from these files.

## EXIT CODES

The Xpdf tools use the following exit codes:

- 0 No error.
- 1 Error opening a PDF file.
- 2 Error opening an output file.
- 3 Error related to PDF permissions.
- 99 Other error.

## AUTHOR

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## SEE ALSO

**xpdf**(1), **pdftops**(1), **pdftohtml**(1), **pdfinfo**(1), **pdffonts**(1), **pdfdetach**(1), **pdftoppm**(1), **pdftopng**(1), **pdfimages**(1), **xpdfrc**(5)  
<http://www.foolabs.com/xpdf/>