

How to embed fonts in a PDF file

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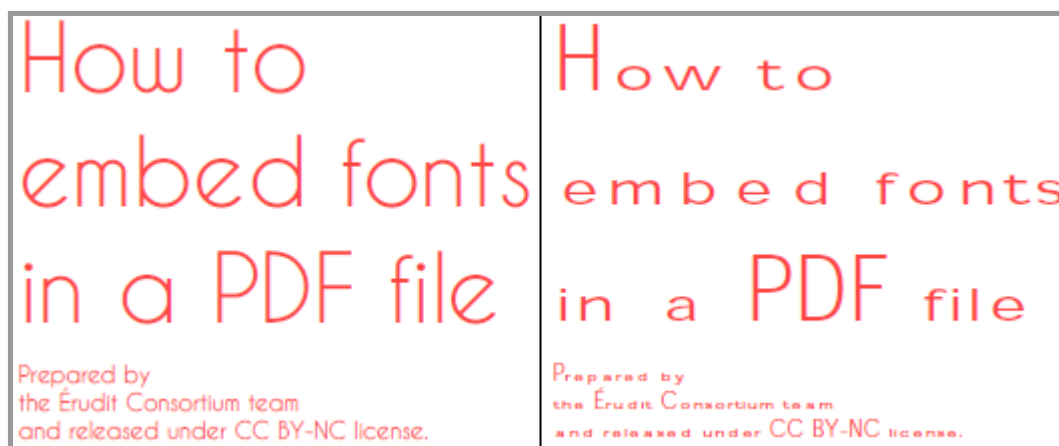
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1. Why should I embed fonts in my PDFs?

You need to embed the fonts you chose into your PDF file, even if it increases its file size. Doing so makes it possible for readers to see your file with its intended layout regardless of the device they are logged on. There will thus be no difference in how the PDF file is displayed, differences that might have depended on the readers' location, screen (smartphone, tablet, computer, etc.), or whether they are online or offline.

So what are the risks if you do not embed the fonts? The PDF reader will show your document with arbitrary substitution fonts, more standard the ones it does not recognize. Changing the fonts on the end-user's screen will impact the document's layout, or might replace certain characters (often accented ones) with special characters such as rectangle symbols.

The example below illustrates font substitution. The two screenshots come from a computer on which the font used is not installed. The image on the left shows a PDF with embedded fonts: there are no changes in the document's appearance. The image on the right shows the same PDF, but without embedded fonts: the document is displayed using another font.



Without font embedding, the long-term integrity of the file cannot be ensured: future changes in software or the PDF format could lead to the file becoming unreadable. Embedding the fonts thus contributes to the sustainability of the PDFs you make available, and therefore to the overall sustainability of your journal's articles.

Font embedding is sadly not automatic: you must change a parameter in your page layout software to activate it when you create PDFs.

2. How do I activate font embedding before I export a PDF?

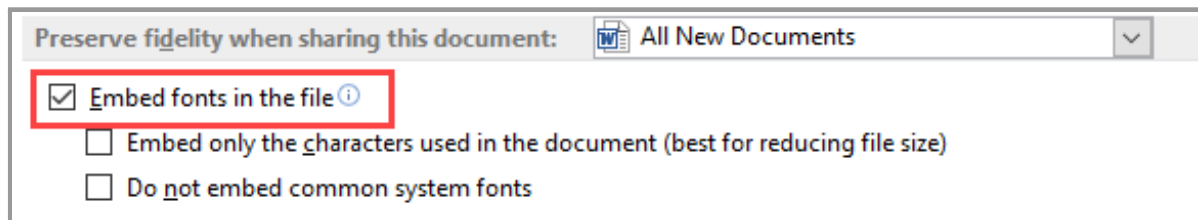
The procedure to embed fonts varies from software to software and depends on the version used and the operating system. This guide provides instructions for the most common cases.

- a. How to embed fonts in Word for PC;
- b. How to create a PDF/A file in Word for PC;
- c. How to embed fonts in Word for Mac;
- d. How to embed fonts in InDesign.

We do not recommend using the web-based software Google Docs nor the Mac word processor Pages because they do not support font embedding.

a. How to embed fonts in Word for PC

- Open your Word file.
- Select *File > Options* (in the bottom left corner of the dialog box).
- Click on the *Save* tab in the left-hand column.
- In the bottom, under *Preserve fidelity when sharing this presentation*, select the *Embed fonts in the file* check box.



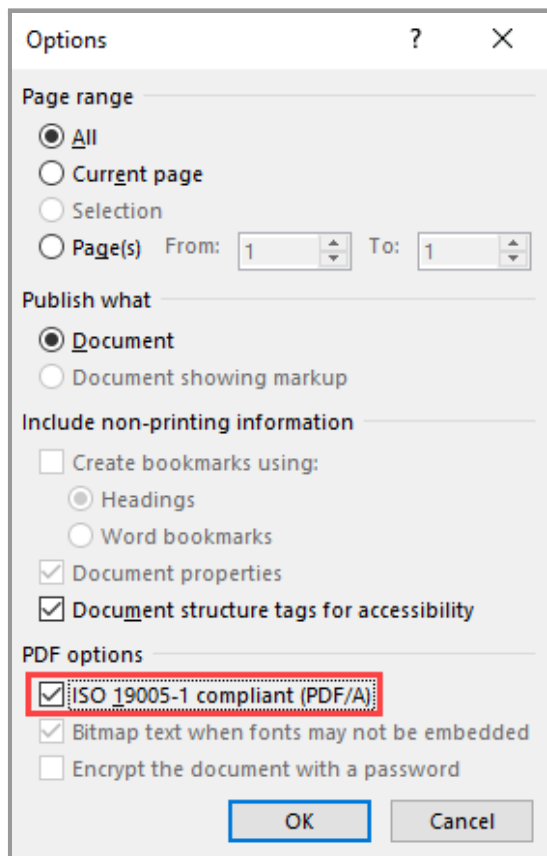
Screenshot using Word 2013

- Select neither the *Embed only the characters used in the presentation (best for reducing file size)* check box nor the *Do not embed common system fonts* check box. These options limit how other users can edit the file.
- Click *OK*.

b. How to create a PDF/A file in Word for PC

We recommend, if possible, to save your PDF in the **PDF/A** format. This version of the PDF format ensures the file has greater autonomy because it integrates all the information needed for it to always be rendered in its original form. The PDF/A format preserves hyperlinks and the embedded fonts among other things. It thus meets compliance standards for long-term archiving and preservation.

- Open your Word file.
- Select *File > Save as*.
- Choose the location and click *OK*.
- Select the *PDF (*.pdf)* format type and then click on *Options*.
- In the *Options* dialog box, select the *ISO 19005-1 compliant (PDF/A)* check box.



Screenshot using Word 2013

- Click *OK*.
- Click *Save*.

c. How to embed fonts in Word for Mac

- Open your Word file.
- In the Word menu, select *Preferences*.
- In the dialog box, under *Output and Sharing*, click *Save*.
- Under *Font Embedding* at the bottom of the dialog box, select the *Embed fonts in the file* check box.
- Do not select the *Embed only the characters used in the presentation (best for reducing file size)* check box. This function limits how other users can edit the file.

For more information on embedding fonts in Word for Mac, see the Microsoft [guide](#).

d. How to embed fonts in InDesign

InDesign is configured to facilitate font embedding. Fonts are automatically embedded when the file is exported to PDF if the terms of the license set by the font creators permit it (see p. 7-8).

To check that all the fonts were included in the document when it was turned into a PDF:

- Open your InDesign file.
- Select *File > Export*.
- Choose the location, select the *Adobe PDF (print)* format type and click *Save*.
- In the *Export Adobe PDF* dialog window, click on the *Advanced* tab.

In the *Fonts* panel, you should see the following notice: “All fonts with appropriate embedding bits will be embedded.”. It confirms that all the characters from each of the fonts you chose were embedded when the file was exported.

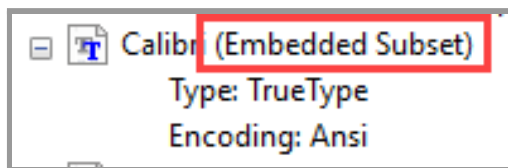
For more information on how to create PDFs with InDesign, see the Adobe [guide](#).

3. How do I check that the fonts were successfully embedded in the PDF file that I exported?

Regardless of the software you used, do take the time to check that the fonts were successfully embedded in the PDF file that you exported.

- Open your PDF using Acrobat Pro or Acrobat Reader.
- Select *File > Properties*, then click on the *Fonts* tab.

Embedded fonts are followed by “(Embedded Subset)”.



Screenshot with Word 2013

If there is nothing written next to certain fonts, that means they were not properly embedded.

4. What should I do if fonts are not embedded in the PDF file that I exported?

Step 1. Check that the fonts are properly installed on the computer on which you created the file.

- Check if they appear in your computer's font directory.
For instance, *C:\Windows\Fonts* or *Macintosh HD/Library/Fonts*.
- If they do not, download them and drag-and-drop them into the directory.
- Create a new PDF using the instructions above.

Step 2. Check the license of the fonts you used.

The fonts you have chosen might not be embeddable. In line with intellectual property principles, font designers have the right to limit the dissemination of their creations. The font's license explains the embedding possibilities.

The procedure to find out how fonts installed on a computer can be embedded differs from one operating system to the next. Below are the instructions for Windows and Mac.

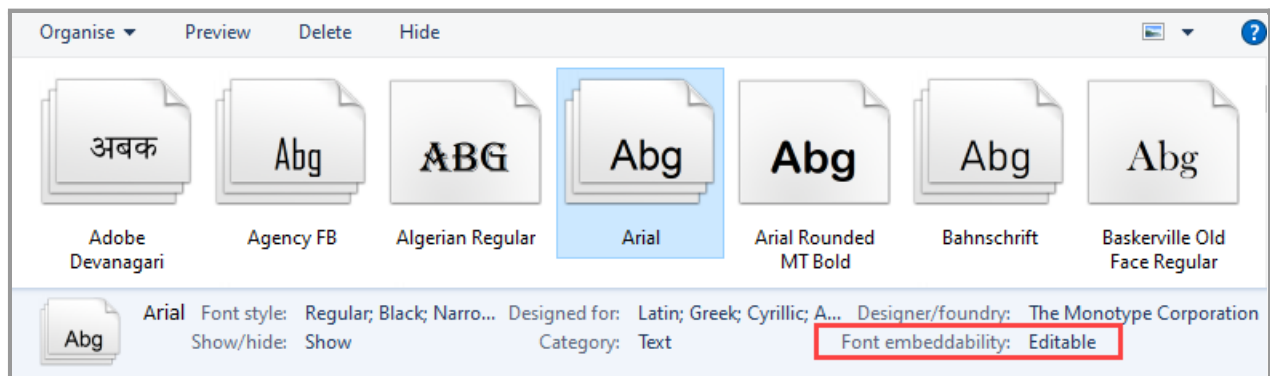
On Windows:

To check a font's license:

- Open the *Font settings*.
- Click on the target font to see its metadata.
- Check the embedding possibilities as indicated in the license description.

On Windows, there is also another path to see the embedding possibilities:

- Open the font directory located at *C:\Windows\Fonts*.
- Click on the target font.
- Check the font embeddability shown at the bottom of the window.
 - *Non-embeddable*: forbids font embedding.
 - *Preview/Print, Editable, or Installable*: authorizes font embedding.



Screenshot with Word 2016 on Windows 10

On Mac:

- Open Finder and select *Applications > Font Book*.
- Click on the **i** icon (*Information* button) in the top left corner of the dialog box.
- In the list of fonts, click on the one whose license you want to check.
- Check the embedding possibilities described in the right panel under the *License* section.

Step 3. Substitute the fonts.

If the fonts you have chosen cannot be embedded because of the license chosen by their creators, you need to substitute them for fonts under licenses that allow font embedding before you create the PDF.