

How to Scan Zines and Make PDF Files

These instructions are for zines on 8.5 x 11” paper, printed on both sides in booklet form (with fold in middle). Look for computer recyclers, college campuses and public libraries for access to a scanner. Computer recyclers usually have tons of scanners that work fine.

What you will need

A zine you would like to share

A Scanner hooked up to a computer

Scanner software (see manufacturer website with the scanners model number for software and drivers)

PDF maker software Adobe , Foxit, CoolPDF

A little time on your hands



Preparing to scan

Turn on scanner

Open scanner program

Choose “scan document” or “Scan Multiple Pages”

Choose “scan text and graphic as picture” (you want to make a jpeg picture out of each page scanned)

Setting the Dots per Inch or DPI on the scanner to a resolution you want for the zine you have. 300dpi is standard print. Most scanned zines at zinelibrary.info were scanned at 200 dpi to keep the file size down.

Some scanners are set to preview before scanning. Set your scanner to preview. In the preview you see what you are scanning, if it is lined up right and flat. At this point, you can also set the dimensions of the scanning so the page sizes are consistent. Most of the scanned zines at zinelibrary.info have a page dimension size of 10.73” x 8.2”. On each page scanned I try to get as close to those dimensions as possible. I try to prevent clipping as much as possible and make sure the fold is in the middle of the scan.

Remove the staple or other binding that holds the pages together

Zine Page Orientation

Have your zine on a table in front of you.

With cover facing up in folded position, open the zine to the first page. Remove that page as is and put it in your scanner positioned how you are holding it so that the cover is facing down against the glass in the scanner.

Preview and scan.

When scan completes a little box may pop up asking if you want to scan another page of your document. Then flip the page over and choose yes.

Preview and scan the other side. When that page scanning is done remove the page from the scanner to the table so that the cover side is down and the fold is open. You will want to put the zine pages back in order when you are done.

Remove the next page from the zine the same way and place on scanner.

Repeat until all pages are scanned.

When you complete scanning the zine choose “no” to add another page. It will then ask you if you want to save the document and what you want to call it.

Your document should be a folder of jpeg pictures in the order you scanned them. Save them. It should start processing the pictures and may take a minute or so to complete.

Some scanner programs let you save the scan job as a PDF. (Choose “save as” and see.) You can reorient the pages later in an PDF editor if they do not display properly.

Turning the scanned pages into a PDF file

You will need a program that can make PDF files (note you can't make PDF files with just a PDF reader.)

Open the PDF file program.

Choose create PDF from multiple pages.

Make sure the pages are in numeric order. Page one is your cover page, page two is the inside cover page. (Some PDF makers put the first page last and last page first)

Choose make PDF file.

When PDF file is made, check to see if the pages are in the right orientation. Sometimes pages are sideways. If a page is not oriented correctly it can be changed by going to “Document” and “Rotate Pages”. Choose what direction the page is rotated. Then save the PDF again.

Posting the PDF file to zinelibrary.info

Hit the publish button at the top right.

Choose Zines

Fill out the zine information and categories. Make sure to fill out the “media type” category to be listed under “latest zines” or appropriate media type. Please don't select tons of categories to make your zine popular.

Under “File Attachments” choose the PDF file you want to add by browsing of the file. When file is uploaded and attached and info filled out, hit the “submit” button.