Comparing PDF documents

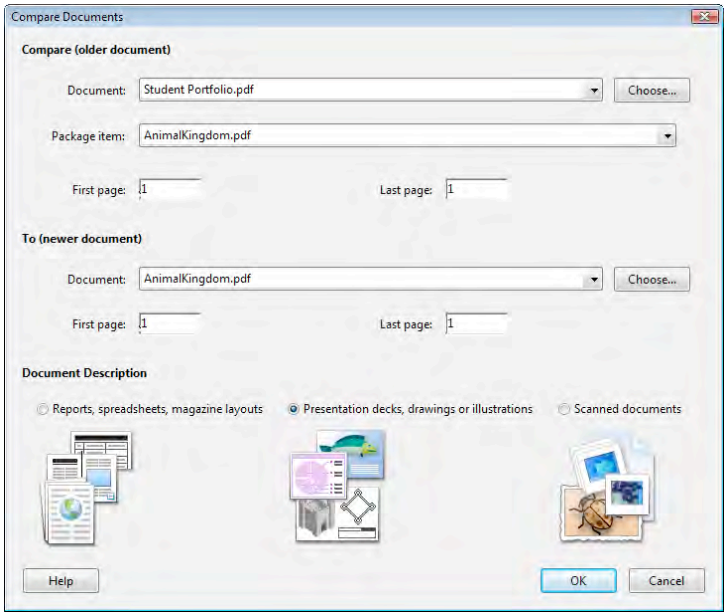
See how text, images, or the organization of a document has changed from one revision to another. Adobe® Acrobat® 9 Pro lists the differences between two documents and makes it easy for you to see those differences in context.

1. Select which documents to compare.

In Acrobat, choose Document > Compare Documents. Then, in the Compare Documents dialog box, click Choose to browse to and select documents in the Compare and To fields. Select the kind of document you're working with, and then click OK.

Which document type you select determines how Acrobat makes the comparison:

- Reports, Spreadsheets, Magazine Layouts is the default option. Use it when text flows from one page to another. The Compare feature looks for items that move between pages.
- Presentation Decks, Drawings, Or Illustrations is the option to choose if each page in your document is independent of other pages, as in a slide deck. The Compare feature will note if the pages change order.
- Scanned Documents is the one to use for scans. Acrobat compares the document pages as images.

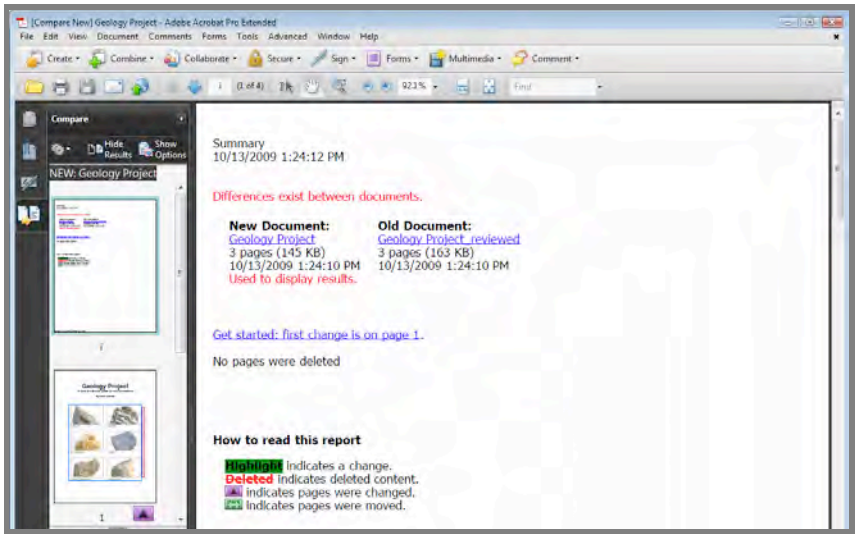


Select the documents to compare, and their description.

Tip: If you need to compare only part of a document, enter page numbers in the First and Last page fields.

2. Review the differences.

Acrobat creates a new PDF file, adding a Summary page to the beginning of the newer document. The Summary page lists the names of the files compared, whether there are differences, and a key to the symbols in the report. Click the Get Started link to view the first difference Acrobat identified.



Use the Summary page or the Compare pane to analyze differences.

You can also analyze differences using the Compare pane, on the left side of the screen. It displays thumbnails of the pages, with their differences highlighted. Click a page thumbnail to see the page in the Document panel.

Tip: To see the same page in each document, side by side, choose Synchronize Pages from the Options menu in the Compare pane.

Next Steps:

- Add comments to the document.
- Distribute the document for review.
- Restrict access to the document.

Sign up for the Acrobat Tips and Tricks Newsletter.