Creating a digital signature on PDF documents

What is a digital signature?

A digital signature is an electronic, encrypted stamp of authentication on digital information such as email messages or electronic documents.

It confirms that the information originated from the signer and has not been altered since it left them.

The following is an example of a signature line.



How can I create one on a PDF?

The easiest method is to copy the following link into your Windows search field:

C:\Program Files\Microsoft Office\root\Office16\selfcert.exe

If you are not sure where the search field is, it is in bottom left of your screen and is indicated by a magnifying glass icon. It will either be just the icon or will be a longer box:



Once you have pasted **C:\Program Files\Microsoft Office\root\Office16\selfcert.exe** into the search field, you should get this screen:



Click on the 'Run' command

A digital certificate creation box appears, telling you that the program creates a self-signed digital certificate that bears the name you type below.

Create a digital signature certificate by typing your name into the box that appears.

Create Digital Certificate		
This program creates a self-signed digital certificate that bears the name you type below. This type of certificate does not verify your identity.		
Since a self-signed digital certificate might be a forgery, users will receive a security warning when they open a file that contains a macro project with a self-signed signature.		
Office will only allow you to trust a self-signed certificate on the machine on which it was created.		
A self-signed certificate is only for personal use. If you need an authenticated code signing certificate for signing commercial or broadly distributed macros, you will need to contact a certification authority.		
Click here for a list of commercial certificate authorities		
Your certificate's name:		
OK Cancel		

Then click OK.

You will see a message box telling you that a certificate has been created in your name.

SelfCert Success	×
Successfully created a new certifi	icate for Maxine Craig

What happens when I sign the PDF?

When you now sign a PDF that needs a digital signature, you click into the Signature field and the 'Sign with a Digital ID' box appears.

Click the blue button next to the digital ID that you want to sign with (you are likely to have only one).

Sign with	a Digital ID	×
Choose the	Digital ID that you want to use for signing:	Refresh
	Maxine Craig (Windows Digital ID) Issued by: Maxine Craig, Expires: 2028.01.01	View Details
?	Configure New Digital ID	Cancel Continue

And click 'Continue'.

Adobe will show you what it is going to put into the signature field:

Sign as "Maxine Craig"		×
Appearance Standard Text	~	Create
Maxine Craig	Digit by N Date 12:0	ally signed laxine Craig 2022.01.21 3:15 Z
Review document content that may affect	signing	View Certificate Details Review Back Sign

Click the blue 'Sign' button.

→ 🗠 🛧 📙 « Users	> maxine.craig > Downloads	د	Search Downloads
ganise 👻 New folder			
Quick access	Name	Date modified	Туре
🔜 Desktop 🔹 🖈	 F4F Visit Report test (1) 	21/01/2022 12:09	Adobe Acrobat D
 Documents Pictures 	✓ Yesterday (1)	20/01/2022 16:44	Adobe Acrobat D
Guides and Videos 🗲	V A long time ago (2)		
 Phase 2+ Enablem # 1) Guides 	Certificate_of_Insurance_200135859 version control good practice	29/11/2021 12:14 08/09/2021 15:15	Adobe Acrobat D Adobe Acrobat D
Encryption guidance OneDrive - Barnardo's			
Windows and O365	v <		
File name: F4F Visit	t Report test (1)		
Save as type: Adobe P	DF Files (*.pdf)		

Your File Explorer area will then open for you to save your signed PDF copy.

Choose where you want it to be saved and what you want to name it. If you wish to keep the original name of the PDF document and the original is saved in the same folder, you will get a message asking if you want to save both or replace the first copy.

Confir	irm Save As		
	F4F Visit Report test (1).pdf alre Do you want to replace it?	ady exist	s.
		Yes	No

Your updated PDF document saves with your digital signature applied.



What does the recipient see?

When someone clicks onto your 'signature' they will see this message telling them that the signature is valid and the document has not been modified since your digital signature was put onto it.

Signature	Validation Status
<u>k</u> o	Signature is VALID, signed by Maxine Craig. - The document has not been modified since this signature was applied. - The document is signed by the current user.
	Signature Properties Close

If they click further onto 'Signature Properties', they get more information if they need it.

Signature Properties	×	
Signature is VALID, signed by Maxine Craig. Signing Time: 2022/01/20 16:44:19 Z		
Validity Summary		
The document has not been modified since this signature was applied	d.	
The certifier has specified that Form Fill-in, Signing and Commenting allowed for this document. No other changes are permitted.) are	
The document is signed by the current user.		
Signing time is from the clock on the signer's computer.		
Signature was validated as of the signing time: 2022/01/20 16:44:19 Z		
Signer Info		
Path validation checks were successful.		
Revocation checking is not performed for Certificates that you have directly trusted.		
Show Signer's Certificate		
Advanced Properties Validate Signature	Close	