

# PDF Exporting from Scribus

## Overview

The power and versatility with the PDF Export in Scribus is one of its notable features. Documenting all its features requires almost a chapter by itself. I encourage you to read this introductory part thoroughly to become familiar with all the PDF features and options, along with viewing some of the PDFs created with Scribus on-line at [www.scribus.net](http://www.scribus.net) in the download section.

The platform neutral nature of PDF enables Scribus users to overcome a number of potential barriers to Linux and DTP. Scribus reliably exports high quality, "press-ready" PDF including advanced PDF 1.4 features, ISO compliant PDF/X-3 and ICC color managed PDFs, thanks to little cms. If your printer is skeptical, point them to Scribus Pre Press. This is a downloadable PDF which outlines pre-press tests on Scribus, along with other supplementary info.

If Scribus only created high resolution commercial grade PDFs, that alone would make Scribus a great application. The bonus is all the easy to use versatility such as: creating presentations á la Powerpoint or creating web-enabled PDF interactive forms which can be used with electronic document exchange, the ability to use JavaScript to control elements within the PDF. Scribus provides other user friendly touches like annotations, bookmarks and optionally, document security, if needed.

While PDF in one sense is a proprietary standard, it is also widely available on most every computing platform. It is also extremely well documented. The PDF 1.5 reference manual is a mere 1100 pages. The PDF abilities in Scribus enables for repurposing a document. One document can be produced for printing, web download or for presentation like StarOffice Impress or MS Power point. That this is a future trend in publishing is indicated by the same strategy in Adobe's InDesign 2.0+ and the new PDF capabilities in Quark Xpress 6 and Adobe Illustrator 10+. In electronic publishing and pre-press production, both have seen many enhancements to PDF, which often overcome the limitations of HTML and traditional PostScript, respectively.

Your best viewing/printing results will be with the newest version of Acrobat Reader 5.0.10 or Adobe Reader 7.0.8 for Linux and version 6.0+ on other platforms, where it is available. Please also note, gv and derivatives are not suitable viewers for Scribus EPS or PDFs. Similarly, Adobe Reader on MacOSX is given preference over the built-in Preview app.

One of the challenges with PDF and EPS viewers on Linux, is that Scribus creates high end PS level 3 and PDF 1.4, with capabilities beyond most of the open source viewers. Some of these features are only supported in commercial pre-press or DTP tools. Moreover, none of the open source viewers are capable of correctly interpreting color managed PDF. Two plus years of working with Scribus has led me to the current conclusion that the following three viewers are the most reliable at displaying PS/EPS/PDF created by Scribus:

**PDF  
Viewers**

Adobe Reader 5.0.10+ for Linux - The best and sometimes the only choice for PDF viewing. Detailed notes and hints: [Adobe Reader](#).

GSview 4.8+ - with the latest version of Ghostscript available. This combination is your best choice for viewing EPS files, PS files and most PDFs. In addition, GSview has many other very useful capabilities with add-ons like pstoeedit and epstool. For more detailed notes and hints: [GSview](#). I consider it an essential tool for DTP on Linux.

Kpdf 3.5+ - This updated PDF viewer from KDE 3.5 has a new rendering engine and is capable of viewing PDF 1.5 files.

If any other PDF or EPS viewer you choose cannot display PDFs from Scribus, but they do view properly in Acrobat Reader, file a bug with the upstream author. In virtually all cases I have tested, it is a limitation of the viewing application. Scribus PDFs are tested daily with specialist pre-press software to validate their adherence to the published PDF specifications.