

How to split PDF files from Linux Terminal with PDFtk

PDFtk can not only split PDF files but also edit and modify these files.

One of the best ways to split PDF files on Linux is not using GUI tools like Evince or Ocular. Instead, use a terminal application called **PDFtk** . Not only can it split PDF files, it can also edit and modify these files.

Install PDFtk

This application has been released for a while and can be easily installed on most Linux distributions. Open a terminal window and follow the instructions below to install the application.

Note: To install PDFtk, you must use Ubuntu, Debian, Arch Linux, Fedora or OpenSUSE. If you haven't run any Linux distributions yet, follow the instructions at the bottom.

Ubuntu

```
sudo apt install pdftk
```

Debian

```
sudo apt-get install pdftk
```

Arch Linux

PDFtk can be used on Arch Linux, but users will not be able to install software from the main sources of Arch Linux. Instead, interacting with Arch Linux AUR is a mandatory condition. To start installing PDFtk on Arch, open a terminal and use the **Pacman package manager** to synchronize the latest version of the Git tool.

Note: Having another PDFtk package on AUR makes it easier to install the program, because it decodes the program, instead of building from the source code. We do not recommend this option, as there are some problems with the built-in GCC-GCJ package.

```
sudo pacman -S git
```

Now that Git is working on Arch Linux, you will be able to use it to download the latest version of PDFtk AUR. In the terminal, use git clone to download the build guide file.

```
git clone https://aur.archlinux.org/pdftk.git
```


To make sure PDFtk is built correctly, make sure you have GCC, GCI and libgcj installed on Linux.

```
wget https://www.pdflabs.com/tools/pdftk-the-pdf-toolkit/pdftk-2.02-src.zip
```

Next, use the Unzip command to extract the **PDFtk Zip** folder into the Linux **Download** folder. If you have not installed the Unzip application, do this to "extract" the zip file and install it.

```
cd ~ / Downloads
unzip pdftk-2.02-src.zip
```

Extracting PDFtk will create a folder 'pdftk-2.02-src' in Downloads. In the terminal, use the CD command to enter.

```
cd pdftk-2.02-src
```

In the original PDFtk folder, you cannot manipulate much. To compile anything, we need to move the terminal to the subdirectory of PDFtk.

```
cd pdftk
```

The PDFtk subdirectory has dozens of dedicated Makefiles that users can use to automatically create different operating systems. Use the LS command, list the contents of the directory.

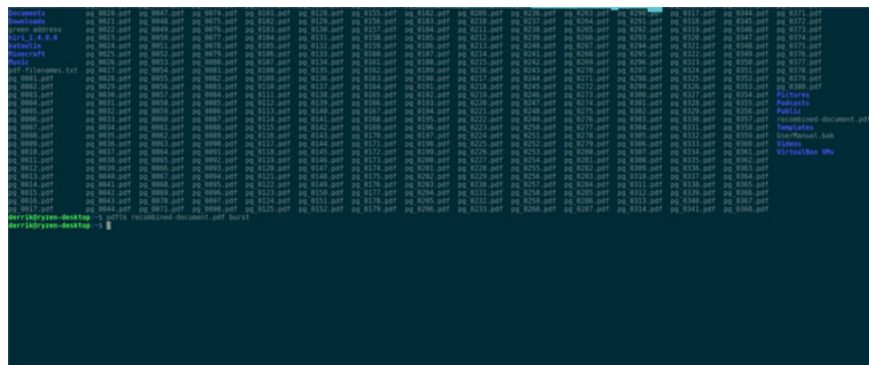
```
ls
```

Look over and find the specific Makefile you need and start the build process with the command below. Remember to change the " **Makefile.filename** " in the command below with the name of the Makefile you need to use.

```
make -f Makefile.filename
```

Use PDFtk

One of the main attractions of PDFtk is the ability to intervene and split PDF files. For example, to split a PDF file so that each page of the document becomes a separate file, try using the burst command:



```
pdftk testfile.pdf burst
```

PDFtk will export split files in the same location as the source file.

If you want to merge all PDF files broken down into a single file, start by renaming the original PDF file (to be safe).

```
mv testfile.pdf testfile.bak
```

Now, the tested PDF file is safe, combining everything with PDFtk. First, use the LS command to view the files in the directory.

```
ls
```

Next, run the LS command again, but this time use it to store all PDF files.

```
ls * .pdf >> pdf-filenames.txt
```

Assign the contents of the file **pdf-filenames.txt** to the Bash variable. The Bash variable in this case is not simply a wildcard when we join the PDF files but also marks the files in order.

```
value = $ (
```

Finally, combine PDF files with PDFtk and \$ values.

```
pdftk $ value cat output recombined-document.pdf
```

See more:

1. How to split PDF file without Vietnamese error
2. Split or merge PDF files in Linux
3. How to edit PDF file using FormSwift online

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