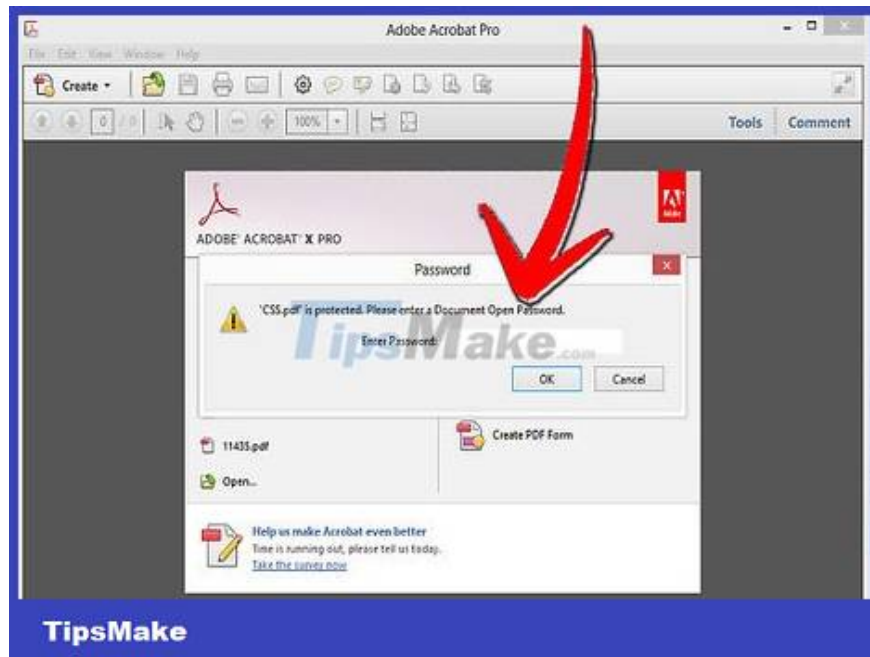


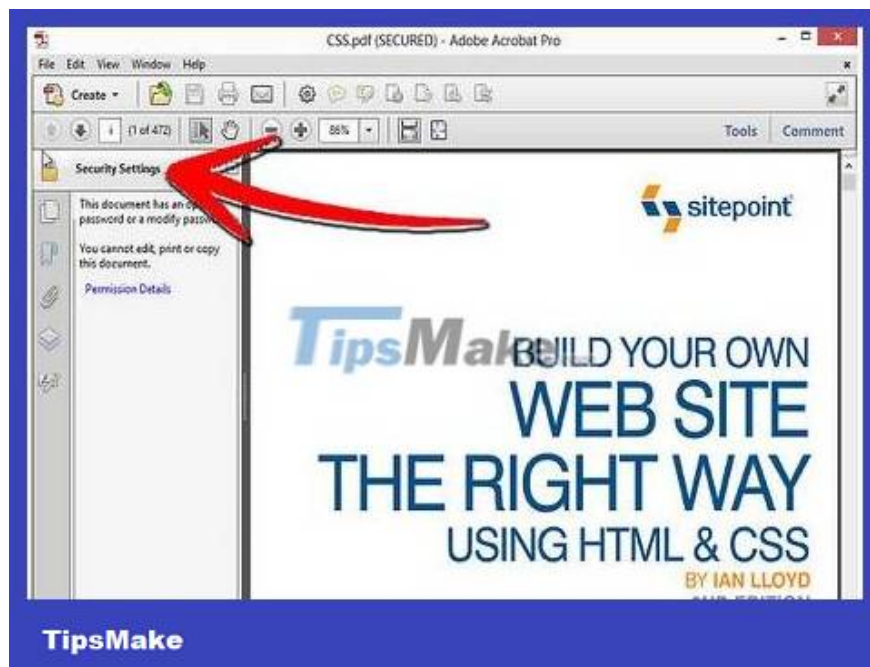
# How to Unlock PDF Files Securely

A secure PDF file enforces copyright law with features that prevent other users from reproducing or distributing. The owner or creator of a PDF file uses password protection to restrict actions from other users such as accessing, printing, copying text and editing the document. If you need to edit or copy text from a PDF file but don't have access permission from the owner, follow these instructions to unlock the PDF file.

## Begin

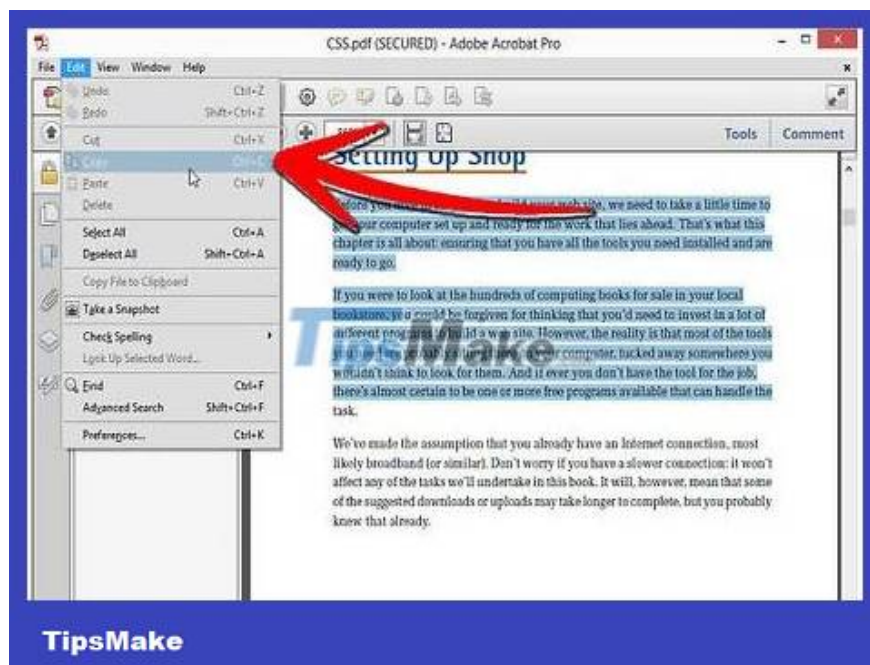


**Open the PDF file.** If you need a password to open the file, you will have to download encryption-breaking software. This method is CPU intensive, even a simple password takes several days to crack, and leaves the computer unable to do anything else while the software is running. For high encryption, this software has little chance of cracking.

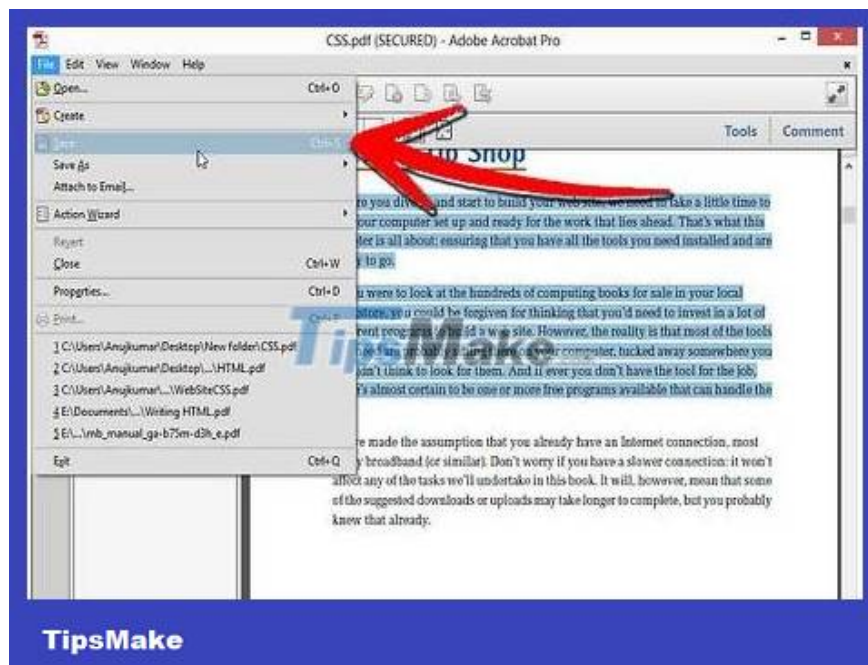


**Security check.** If you don't need a password to still be able to open the PDF file, you can check if the file is secure by looking for the lock icon. This icon will appear at the top right of the screen if the document is secure. Click on the icon to view restrictions.

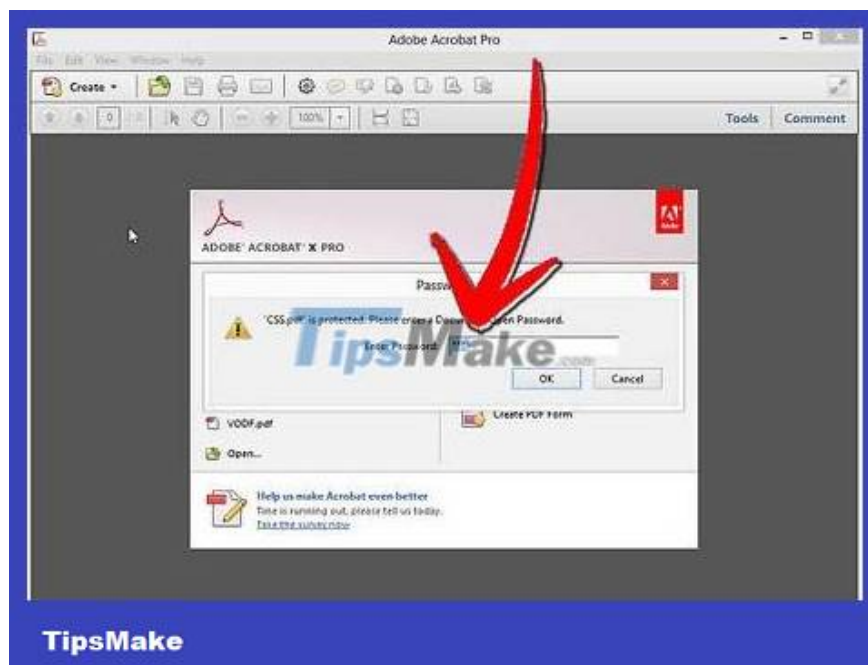
Try copying. Restricted documents are often protected from copying. If you can't highlight or copy a piece of text, the document is restricted.



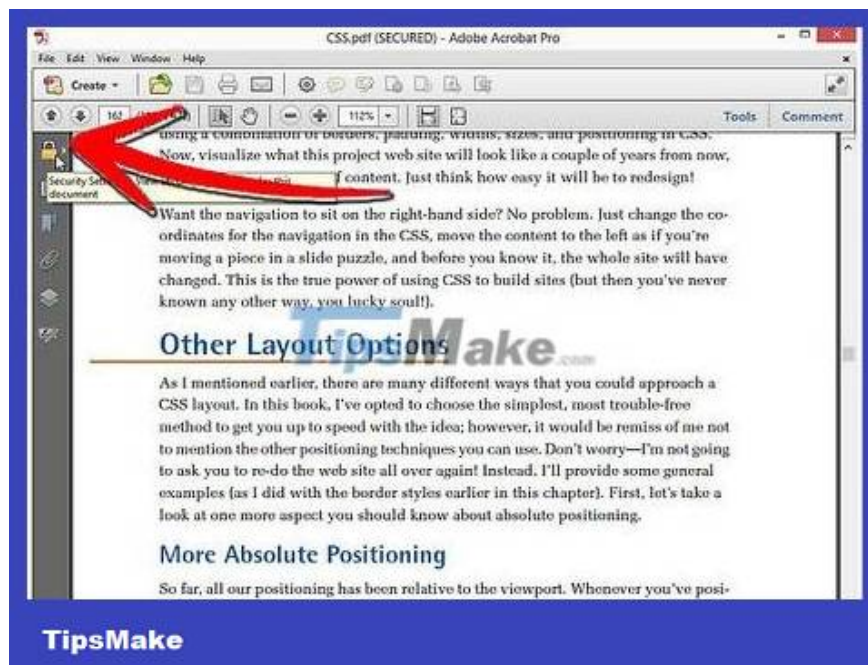
Try saving. You cannot save restricted documents as text files. To be able to convert formats, you need to unlock it first.



## Adobe Acrobat (As owner)

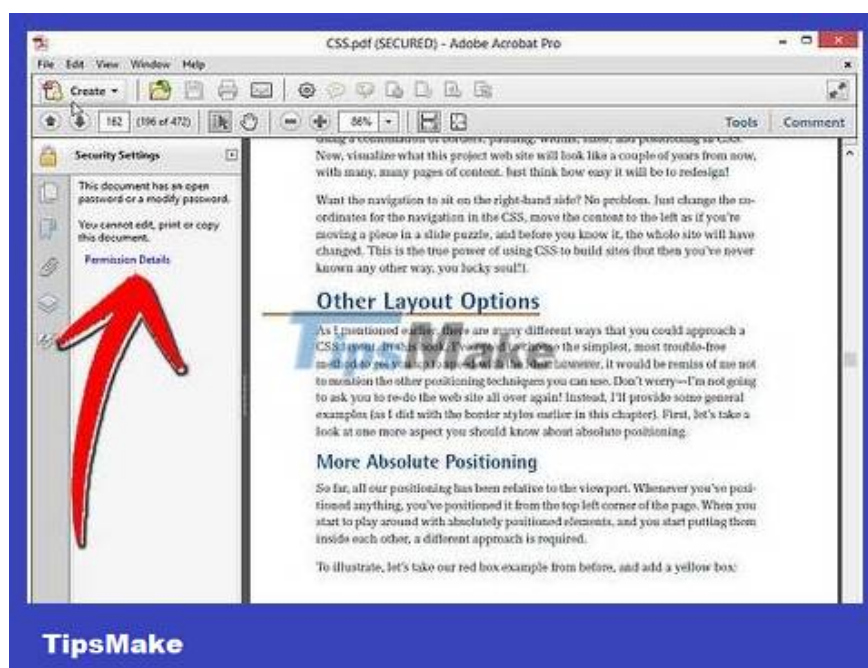


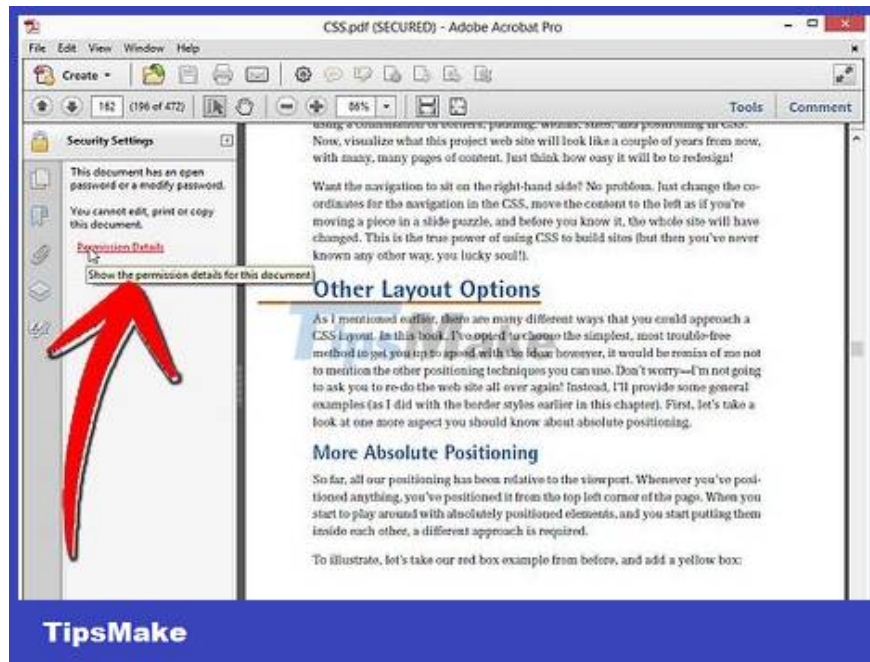
**Open secured PDF files.** You can use Adobe Acrobat software. However, you must be the creator of this file or have a password to perform this method.



**Click the Security button.** This button is located on the Tasks bar. You can easily identify this button thanks to the padlock icon.

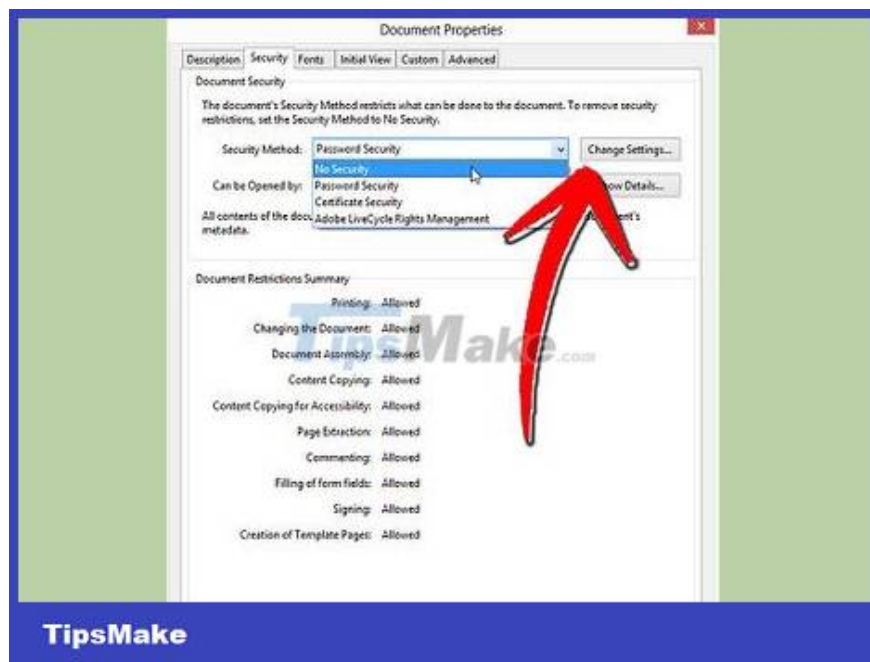
Select Remove Security if you want to completely disable the PDF file's security. If you previously set an Access Password to secure this file, you will have to enter the password to complete the process.



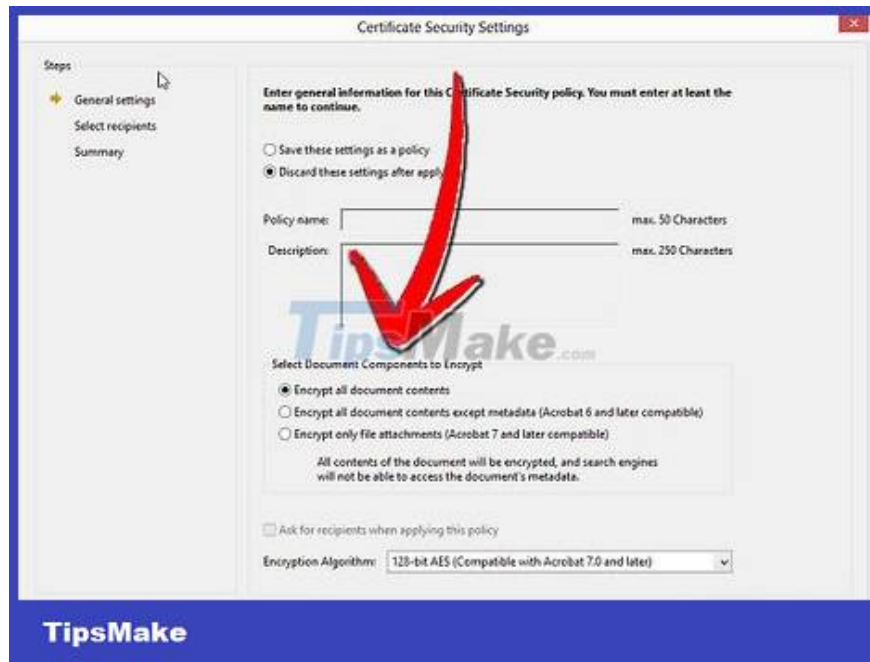


**Change encoding settings.** If you want to adjust the reverse encryption settings by disabling file security, click the "Access Details" link under the Security button.

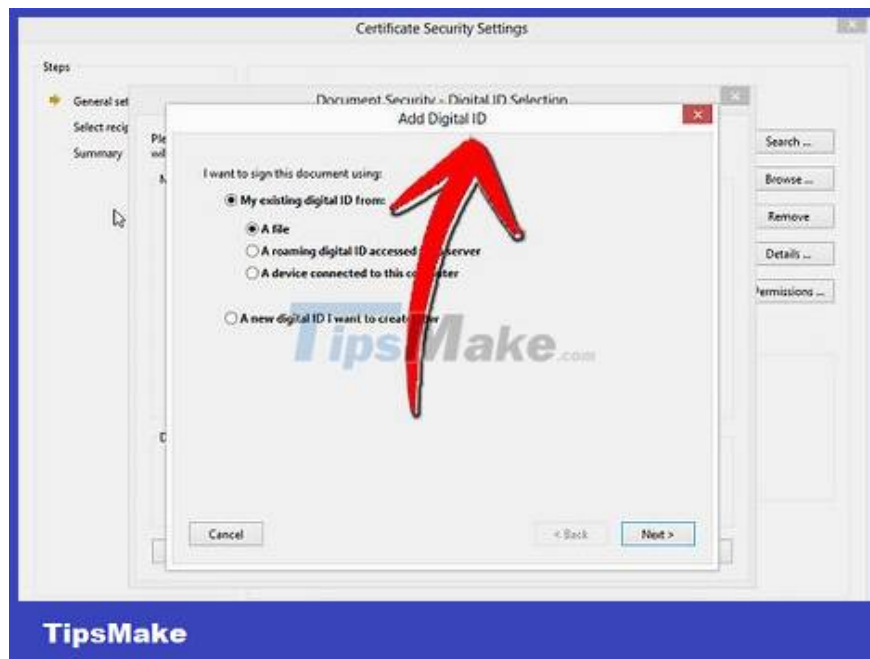
Click "Change Settings" in the Document section under the Security tab after selecting "Certificate security" in the list. You can also select "No Security" from the list to completely remove security.



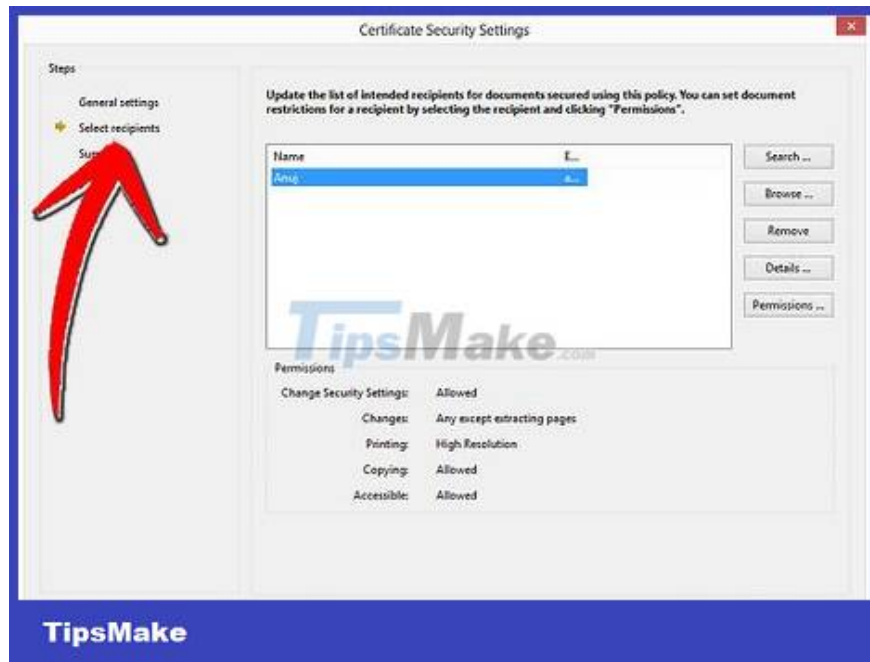
Select the encryption level and press next.



You will need your Digital Username to encrypt the document. You can use an existing username or create a new account.



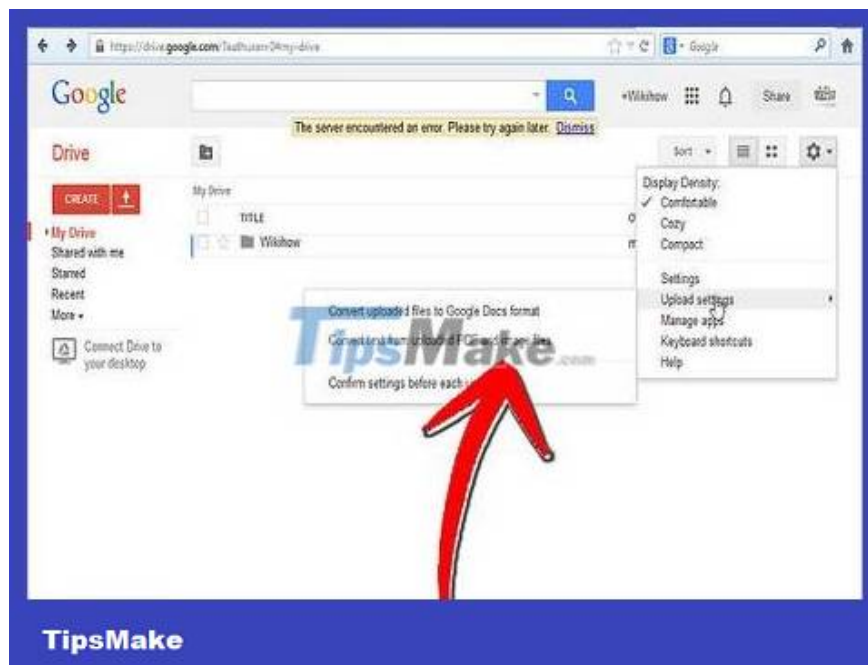
Check the recipient's trustworthiness, change access permissions, or remove the recipient if you want to change this, then click Next.



Click Finish and OK to save changes and close the document window. Save the PDF file to make changes.



Google Drive

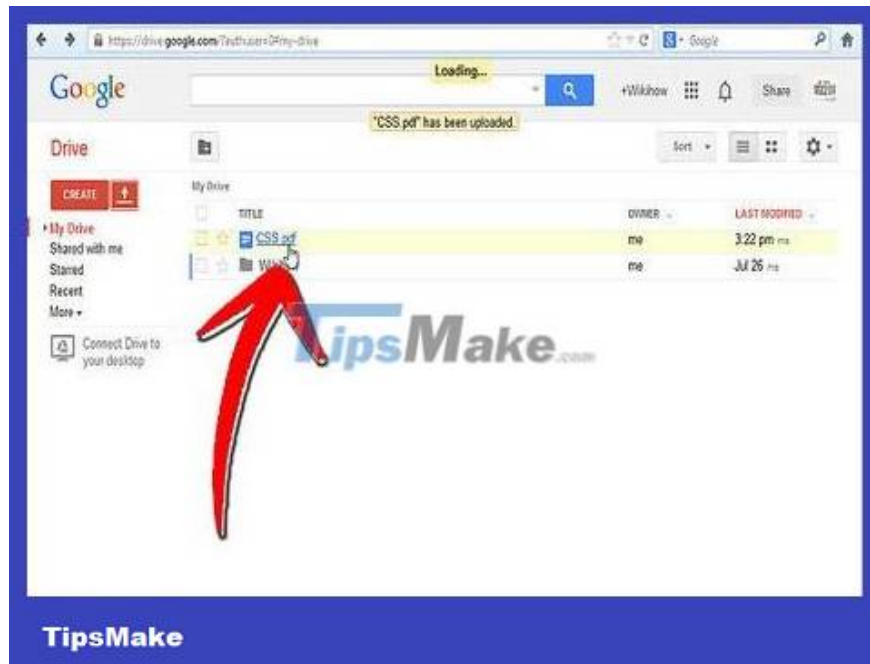


**Open Google Drive.** You need a free Google account to access Drive. First, you need to adjust the settings so that the files are converted correctly. In the upper right corner, click the wheel icon to open the Settings menu. In 'Upload settings' select 'Convert text from uploaded PDF and image files'.

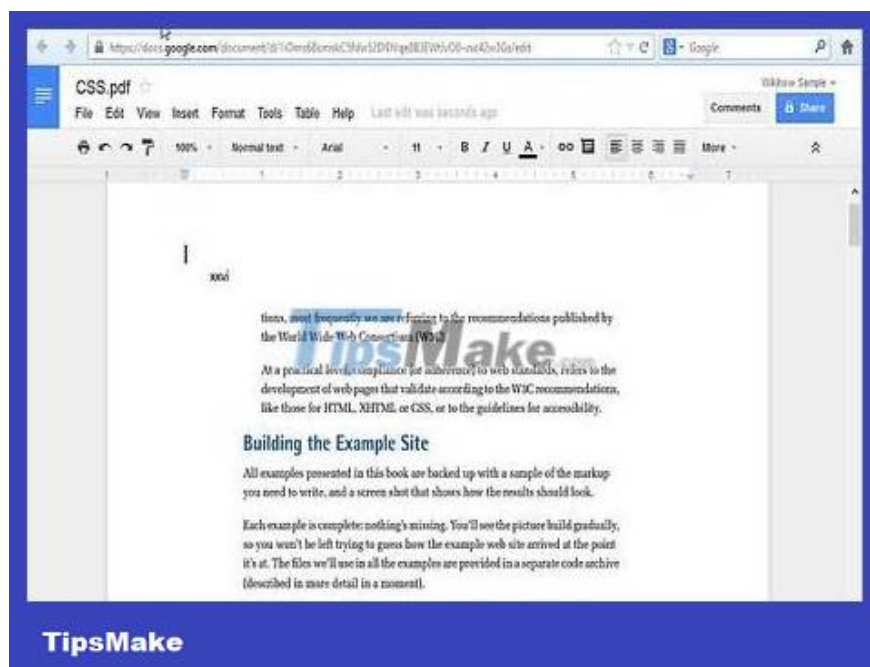


**Download PDF file.** In the left pane, click on the red button with the up arrow icon, located next to the Create button. Select 'Files.' in the menu list and navigate to the PDF file location you want to unlock. Drive will download and convert the document, creating a test document in the Drive folder.

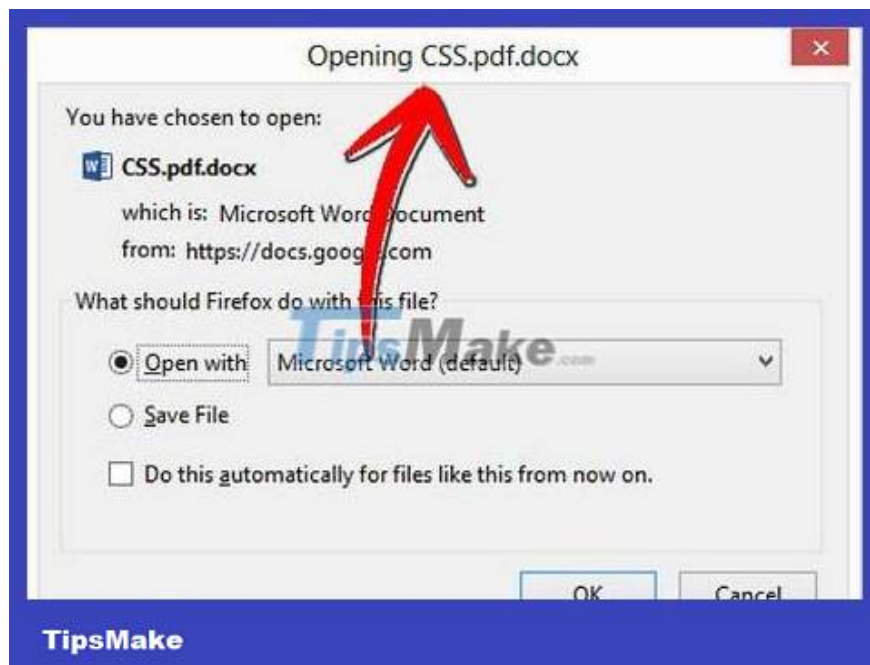
This method only works with PDF files restricted by the owner.



Not all formats can be saved.



Google Drive limits file upload size to 2MB.



## PDFUnlock



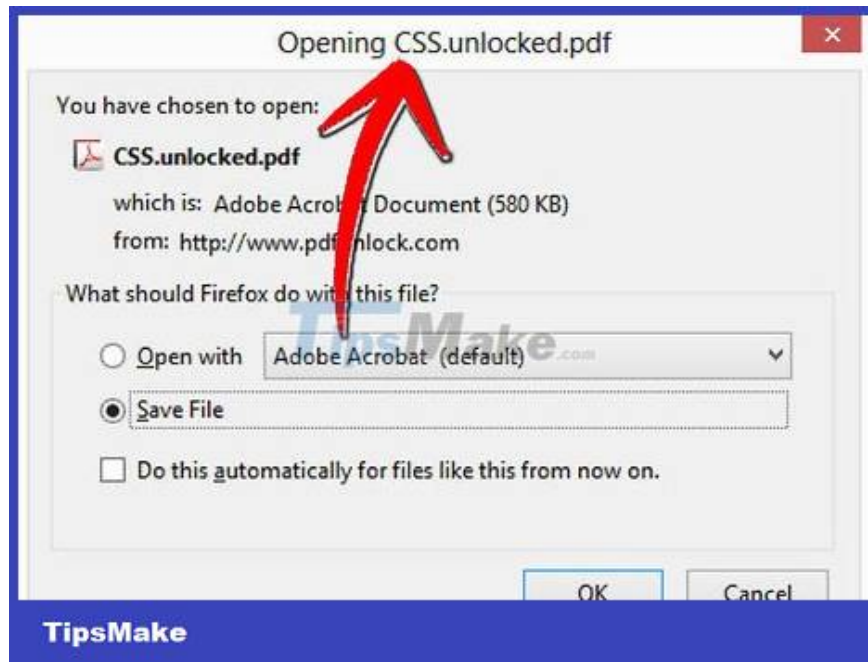
**Visit website.** Use your browser to access [www.pdfunlock.com](http://www.pdfunlock.com). This website will unlock PDF files smaller than 5MB for free. This method can only be used with owner-restricted PDF files.



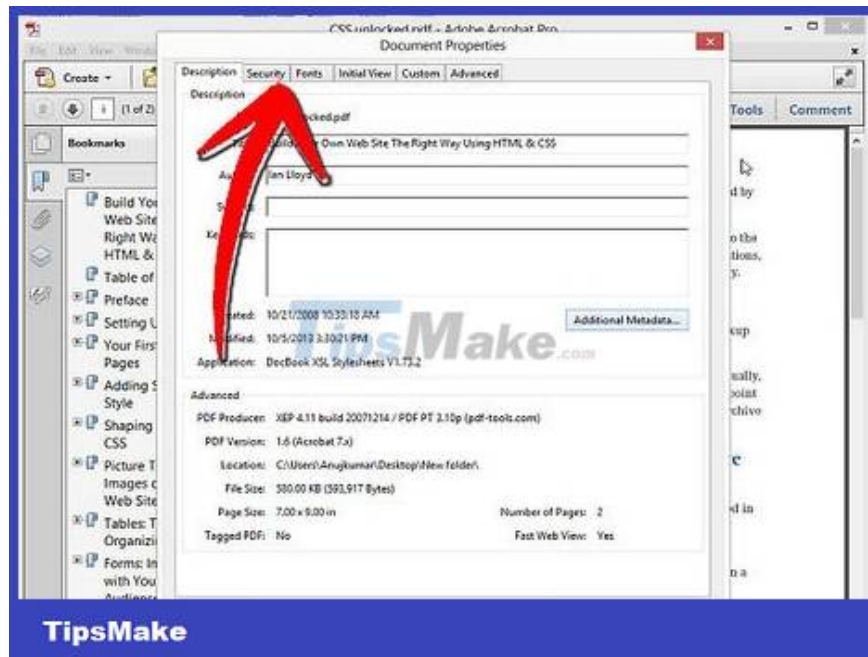
**Download file.** Drag files to the table or select files from within a folder. If you select 'My Computer' you can navigate to the location of the file on the system. If you choose 'Dropbox' or 'Google Drive', you need to log in to the respective account to select the files to convert.

Click on the 'Unlock!' button (Unlock!). Upload time depends on the connection speed and size of the PDF file.



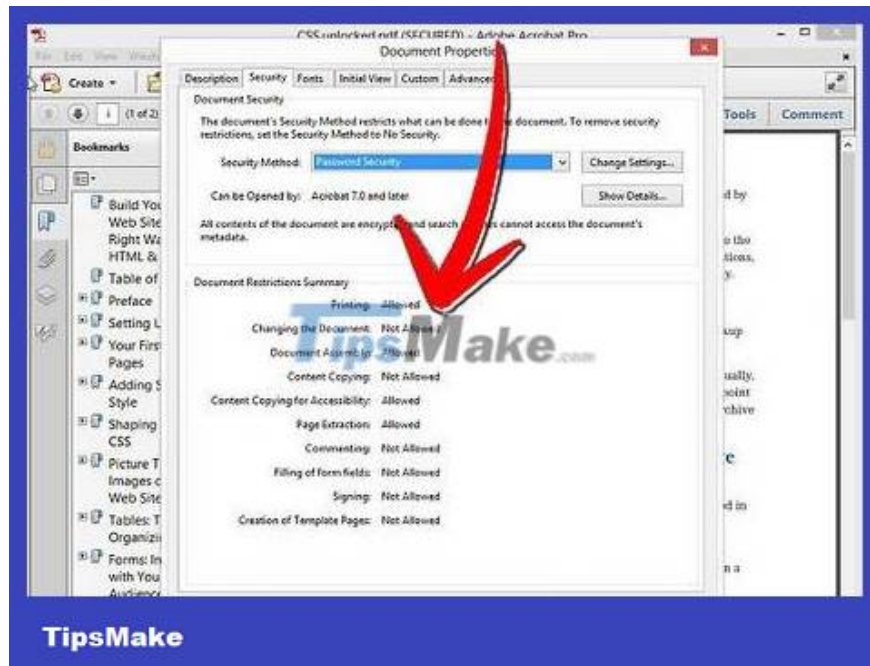


**Download the converted file.** After you upload the file, PDFUnlock will send you the converted file. Download the folder you want on your computer. You can distinguish files by the word 'unlocked' in the file name.

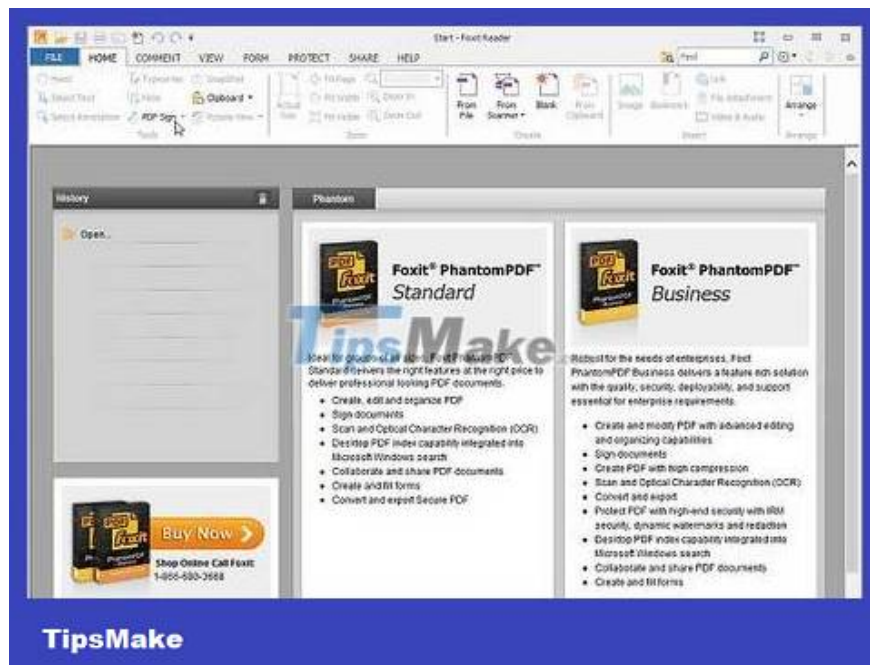


**Check access permissions.** Open the newly converted file. In the File section, select Properties. In the Security tab, the Security Method section will display the words No Security.

Merging, Signing Documents, and Creating Template Pages are still listed as Not Allowed. Because Adobe Reader cannot perform these actions, and they want you to pay for the Pro version.

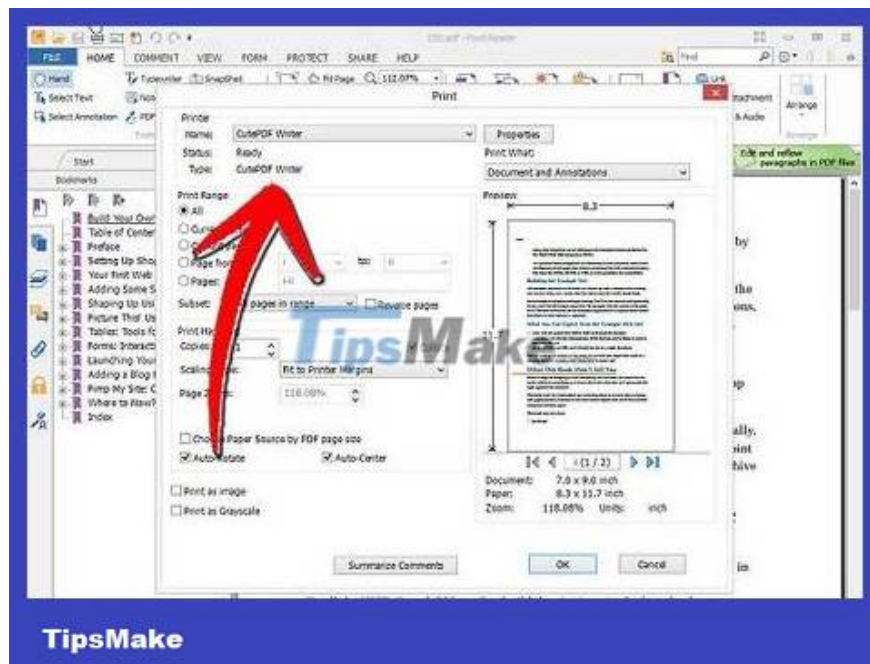
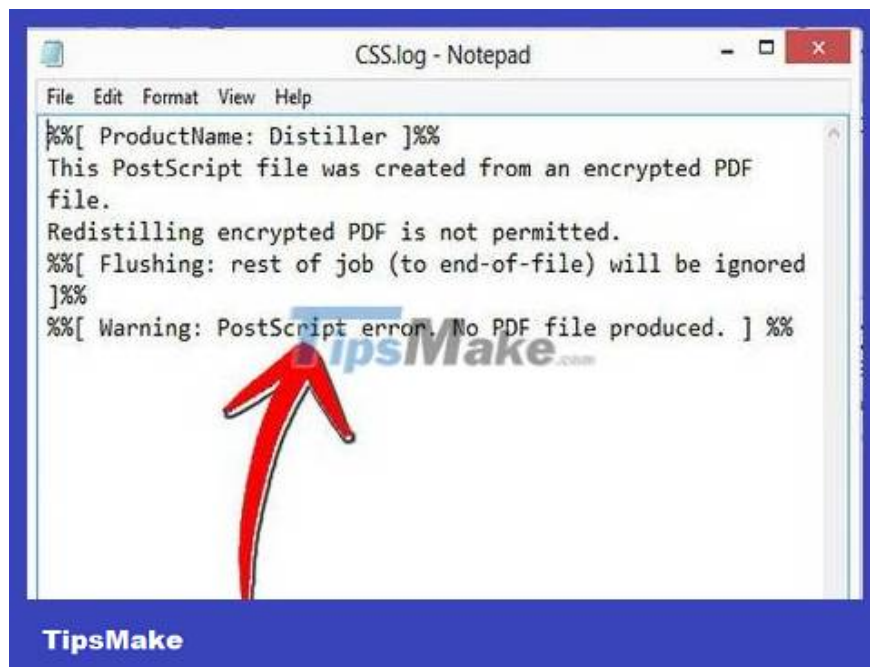


## Foxit Reader and CutePDF



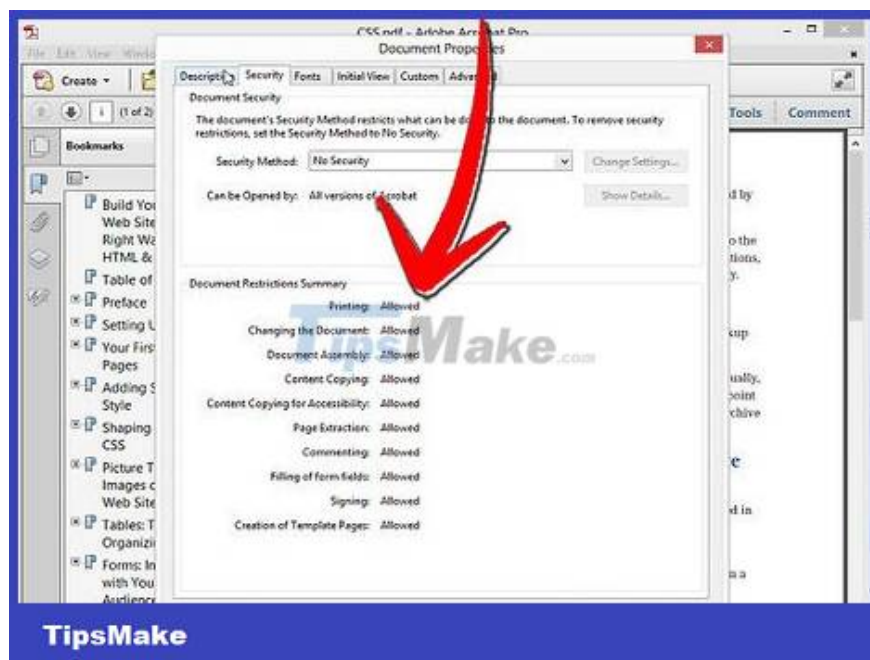
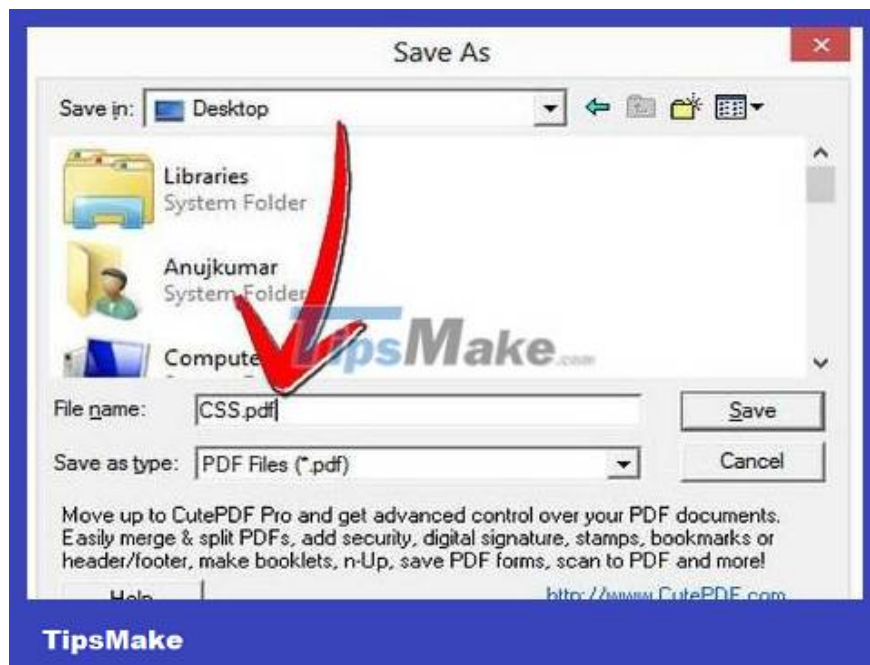
**Download the latest versions of Foxit Reader and CutePDF Writer.** Both of these software are free. Foxit Reader allows you to open PDF files and connect to a printer. Cute PDF Writer is a PDF printer so it can bypass security restrictions.

If this method is applied to Adobe reader software and the printer will be securely blocked during the writing process.



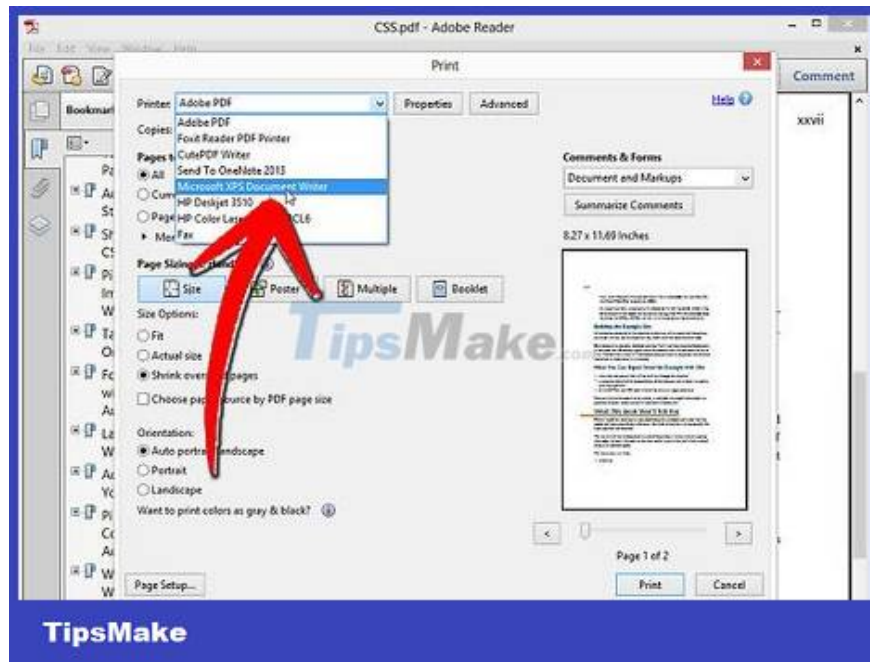
**Use Foxit Reader to open secure PDF files.** Select File, then Print to open the list of printers. Select CutePDF Writer from the list.

Save the printed file to your computer as a new PDF file.

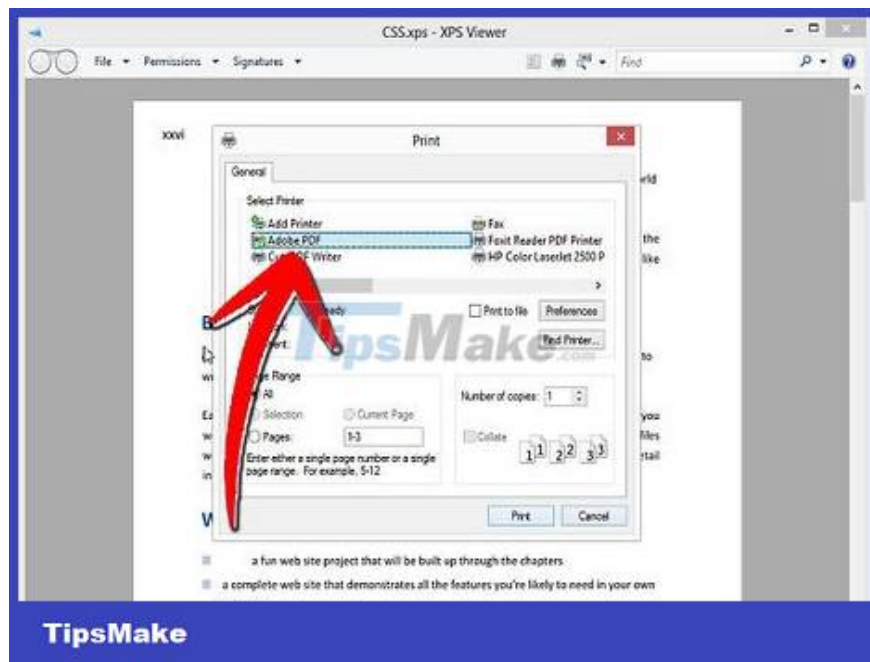


**Open new file.** You can check the security settings by clicking File, Properties. Security settings are listed in detail in the Security tab.

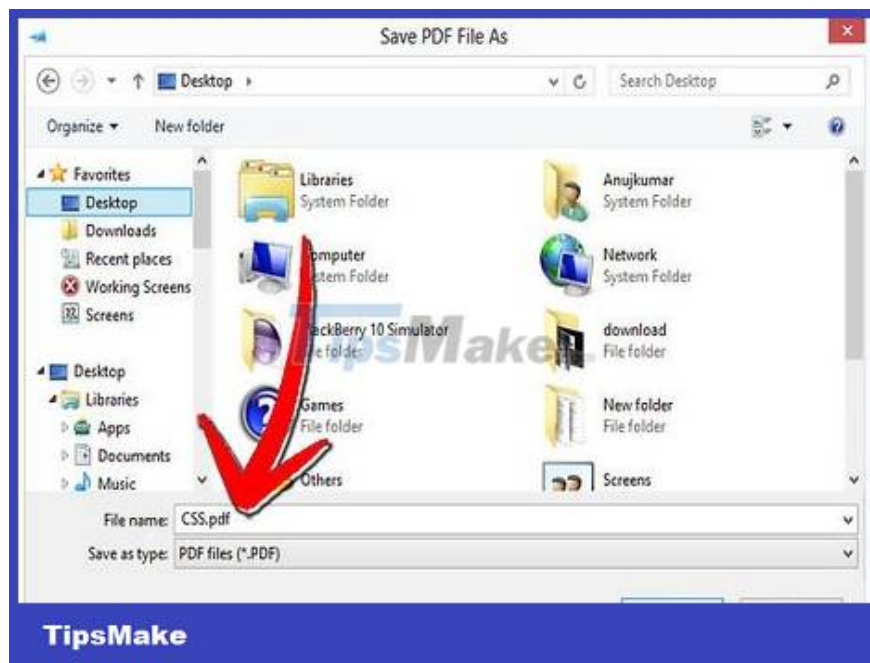
## Microsoft XPS Viewer



**Open PDF files with Adobe Reader program.** Select File, then select Print. In the list of connected printers, select Microsoft XPS Document Writer. This will convert the PDF file to XPS. When preparing to print, you will be asked to save the file.

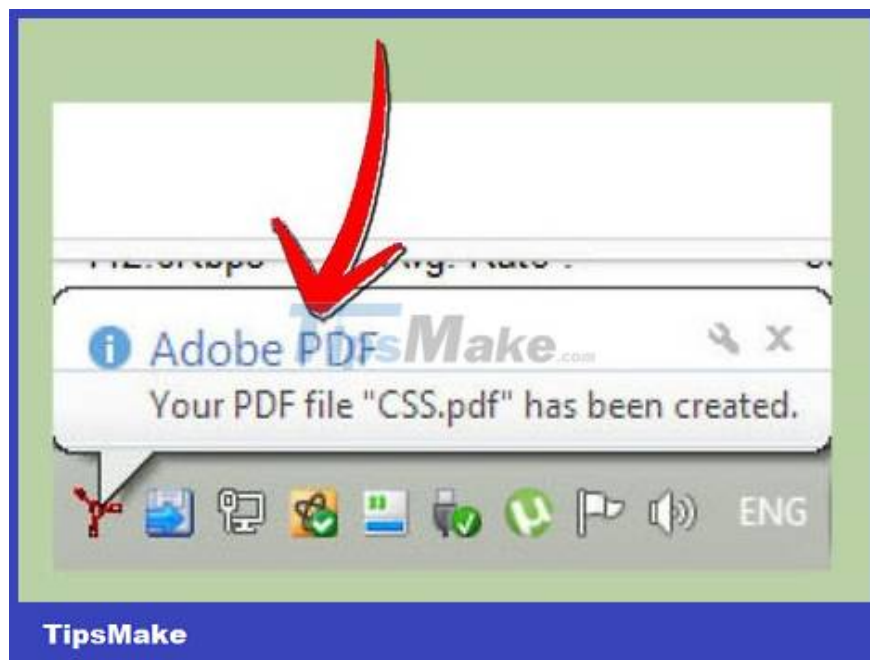


**Open XPS files with XPS Viewer software.** This program is pre-installed in Windows. On the Tools menu, select Print. Select PDF Printer in the list. You need Adobe Acrobat or another PDF editing software like CutePDF.

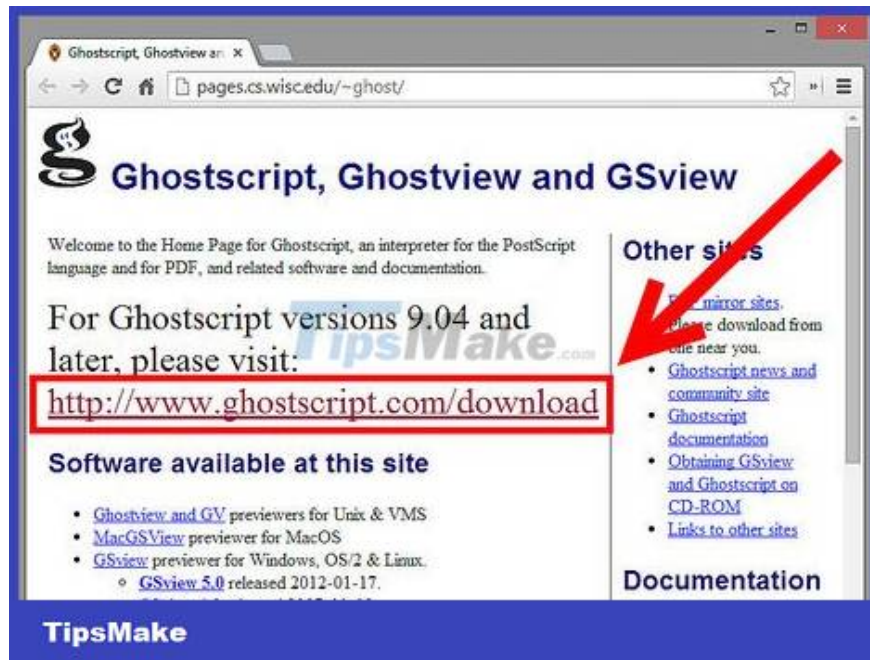


**Save the file.** After being asked for a name, the document will be converted to PDF format. The newly converted file has been unsecured.

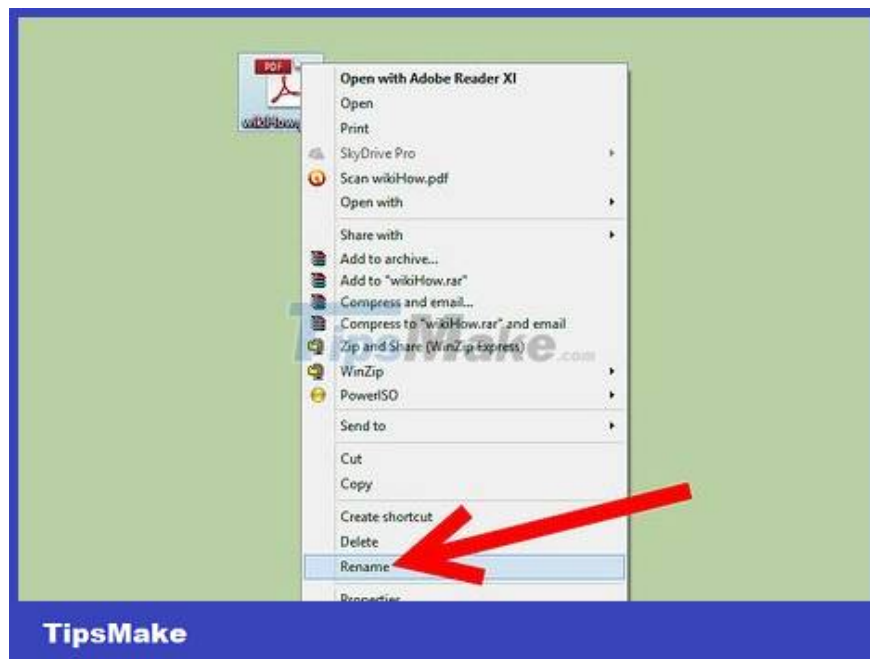
This method may not be possible with some security methods applied on the original secure PDF file.



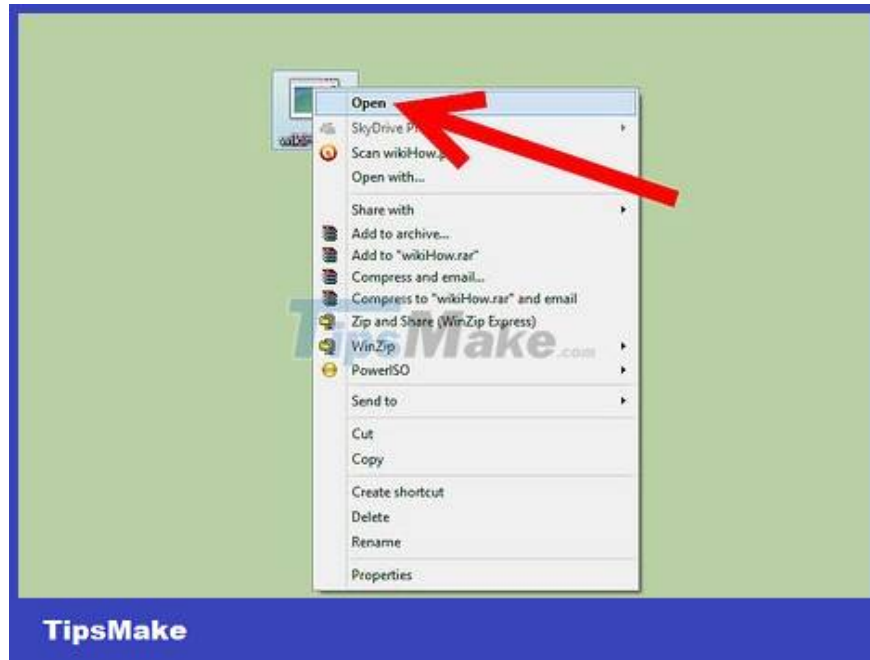
## Ghost Script and Ghost View



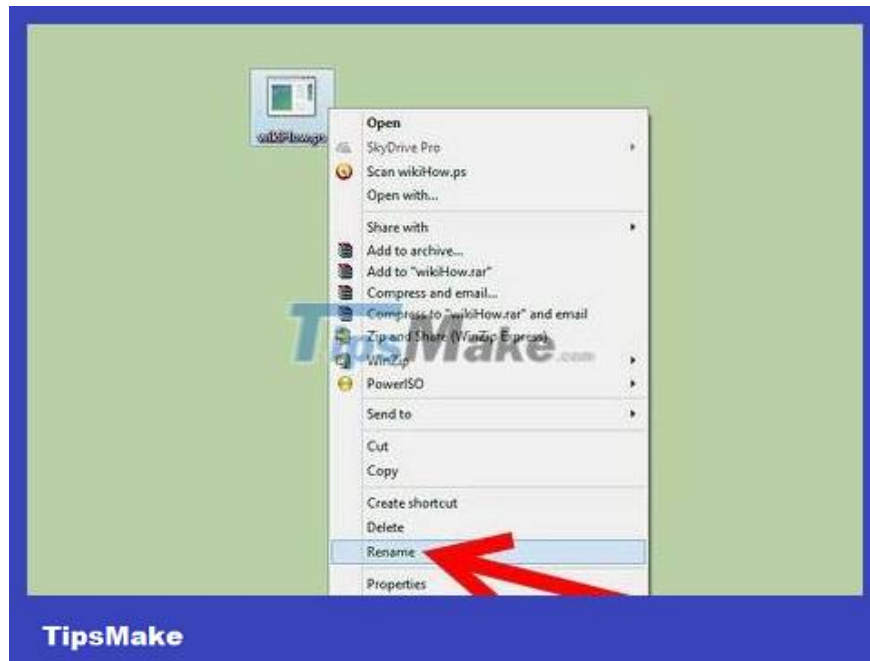
Download and install, depending on the operating system, download Ghostscript, Ghostview and GSview software from <http://pages.cs.wisc.edu/~ghost/> or mirrors.



Change the file extension from .pdf to .ps (file after script).



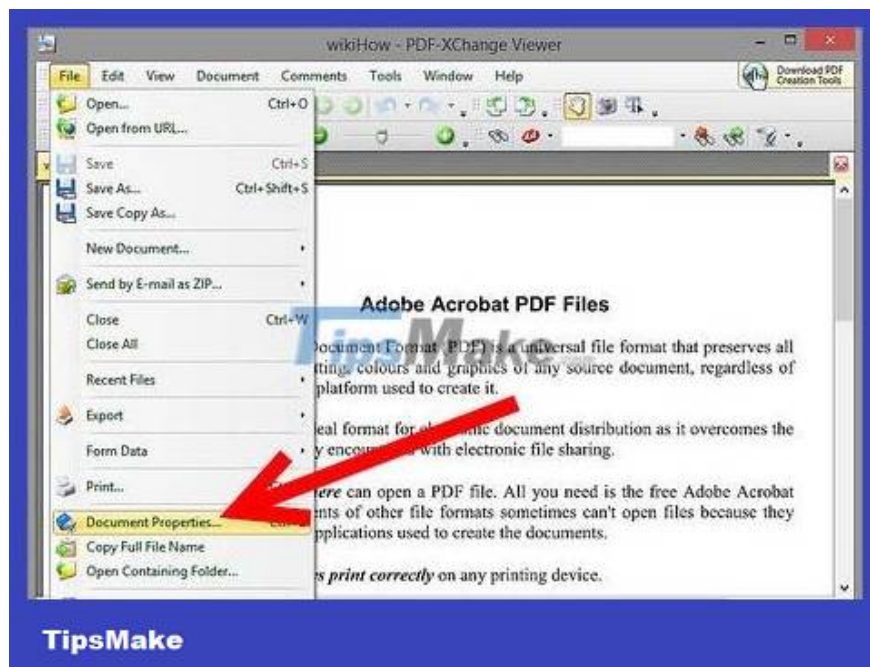
Open the .ps file and select file -> convert -> device (choose pdfwrite), resolution (choose 600dpi) and select OK, save the file in the folder with the extension is .pdf.



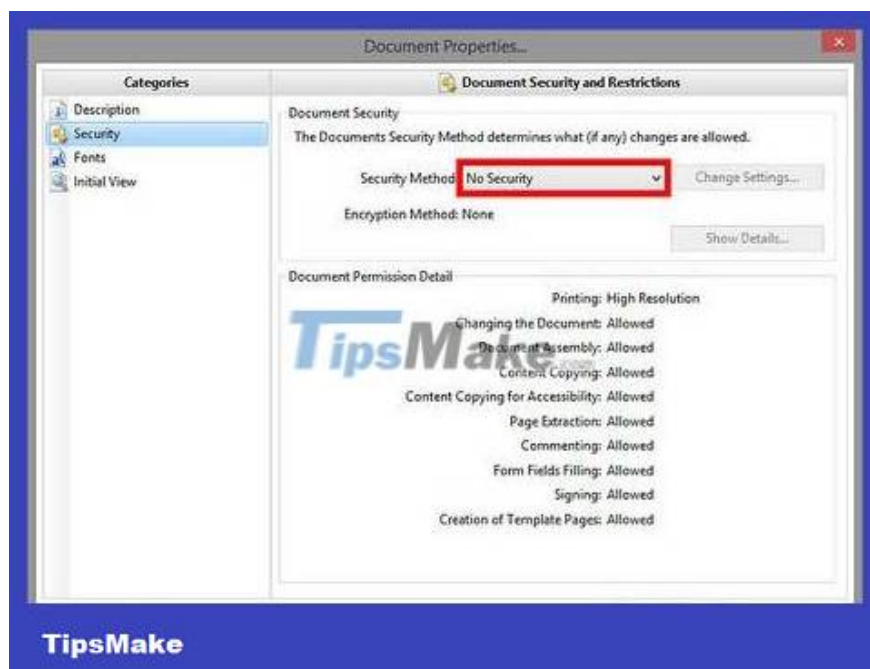
Change the extension from .ps to .pdf if necessary. This step is not required.

## PDF XChange Viewer

This method is only useful if you know the password.



Go to File -> Document Properties -> Security.

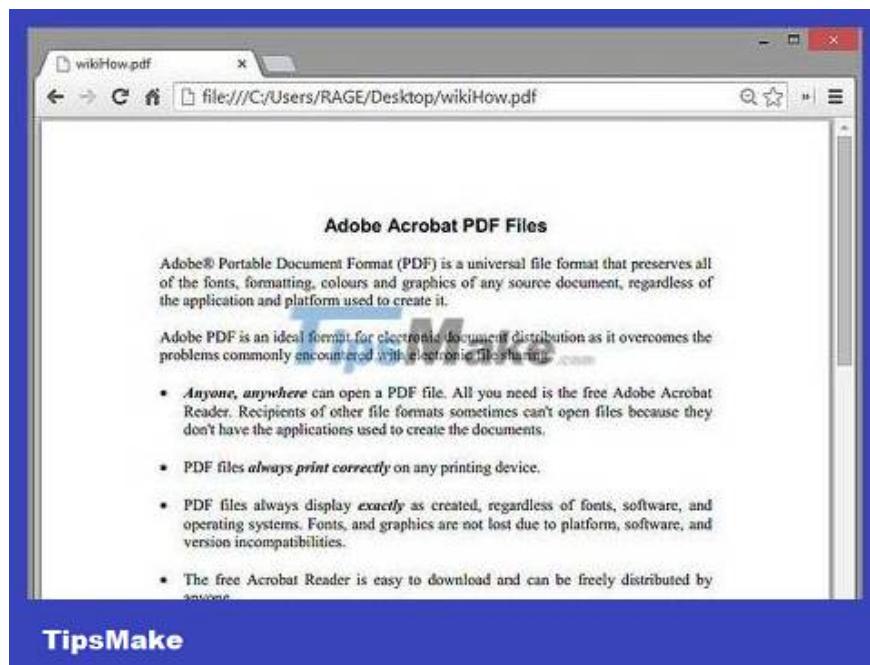


Change Password Security to "No Security".



Save the file. Complete.

Google Chrome

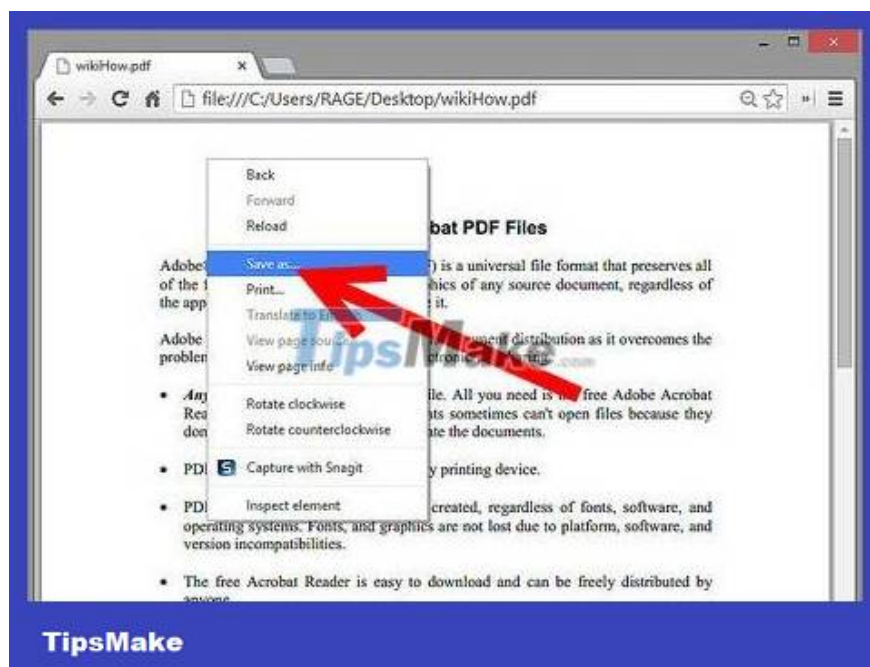


Open Chrome. Press ctrl+O, navigate to the pdf file location and open with Chrome browser.



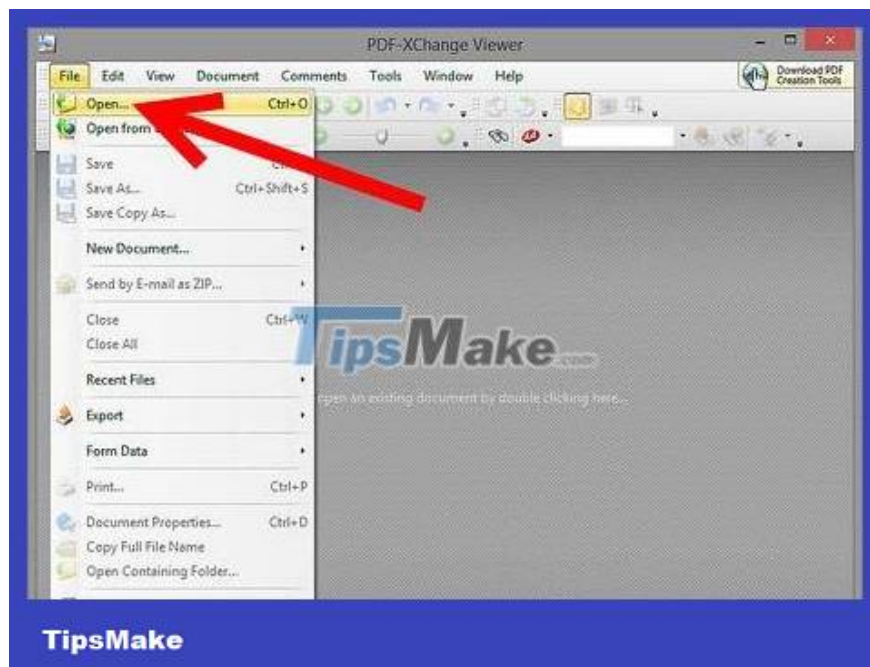
TipsMake

Right click. Select Print.



TipsMake

Select "Save as PDF". Save the file in the desired location, such as the desktop.



Open the newly created file with any PDF reader software. The file will be opened without a password.

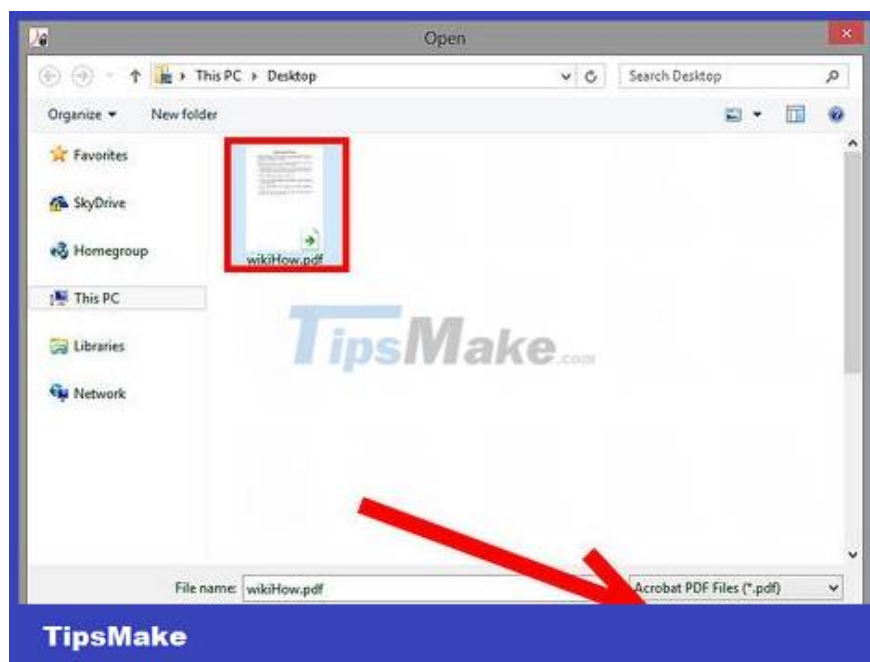
## SysTools PDF



Download PDF Unlocker software. This is a trial version, you need to pay if you want to continue using this software.



**Access to PDF files is limited.**



**Select the PDF file then click the 'Open' button.**



Select destination.



Then click the **Unlock** button. As a user, you can successfully unlock the entire PDF file.

**thepdf.com**



Open a web browser and visit <http://www.thepdf.com/unlock-pdf.html>.



Click the "Select" button and select the PDF file from your computer.



**Click on the "Unlock" button, then the website will upload the file and begin decryption.**

**Once completed, click the "Download" button to download the unlocked file.**

## **Take Screenshots**

This method will *not* allow you to edit the content of the document, but allows you to create a format that allows character filling, character recognition, character addition, highlighting, or editing, etc.

**Open the PDF file you want to unlock.**

**Take a screenshot of the PDF document.** (Can use "Snipping Tool" in Windows to capture)

**Save the photo.**

**Right-click the saved photo, select "Convert to Adobe PDF".**

**When the image is opened in PDF format, use Adobe to recognize the image.**

You can use Adobe's Tool functions to recognize characters, create formats to fill characters, etc.

You finished reading the article "**How to Unlock PDF Files Securely**" edited by the [TipsMake](#) team. We hope this article has provided you with many useful tech tips and tricks. You can search for similar articles on tips and guides. Thank you for reading and for following us regularly.