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pdftotext: Linux / UNIX Convert a PDF File To Text Format

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Question: I've downloaded configuration file in a PDF format. I do not have GUI installed on remote Linux / UNIX server. How do I **convert a PDF (Portable Document Format) file to a text format using command line** so that I can view file over remote ssh session?

Answer: Use pdftotext utility to convert Portable Document Format (PDF) files to plain text. It reads the PDF file, and writes a text file. If text file is not specified, pdftotext converts file.pdf to file.txt. If text-file is -, the text is sent to stdout.

[1]

Install pdftotext under RedHat / RHEL / Fedora / CentOS Linux

pdftotext is installed using poppler-utils package under various Linux distributions:

```
# yum install poppler-utils
```

OR use the following under Debian / Ubuntu Linux

```
$ sudo apt-get install poppler-utils
```

pdftotext syntax

```
pdftotext {PDF-file} {text-file}
```

How do I convert a pdf to text?

Convert a pdf file called hp-manual.pdf to hp-manual.txt, enter:

```
$ pdftotext hp-manual.pdf hp-manual.txt
```

Specifies the first page 5 and last page 10 (select 5 to 10 pages) to convert, enter:

```
$ pdftotext -f 5 -l 10 hp-manual.pdf hp-manual.txt
```

Convert a pdf file protected and encrypted by owner password:

```
$ pdftotext -opw 'password' hp-manual.pdf hp-manual.txt
```

Convert a pdf file protected and encrypted by user password:

```
$ pdftotext -upw 'password' hp-manual.pdf hp-manual.txt
```

Sets the end-of-line convention to use for text output. You can set it to unix, dos or mac. For UNIX / Linux oses, enter:

```
$ pdftotext -eol unix hp-manual.pdf hp-manual.txt
```

Further readings:

- man page pdftotext

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