

Nutrient

SDK

Clc

CONTACT SALES

BLOG

SDK

HOW TO EMBED A PDF VIEWER IN YOUR WEBSITE

SDK TUTORIALS

Embed PDF in HTML: 6 methods (including enterprise solutions)



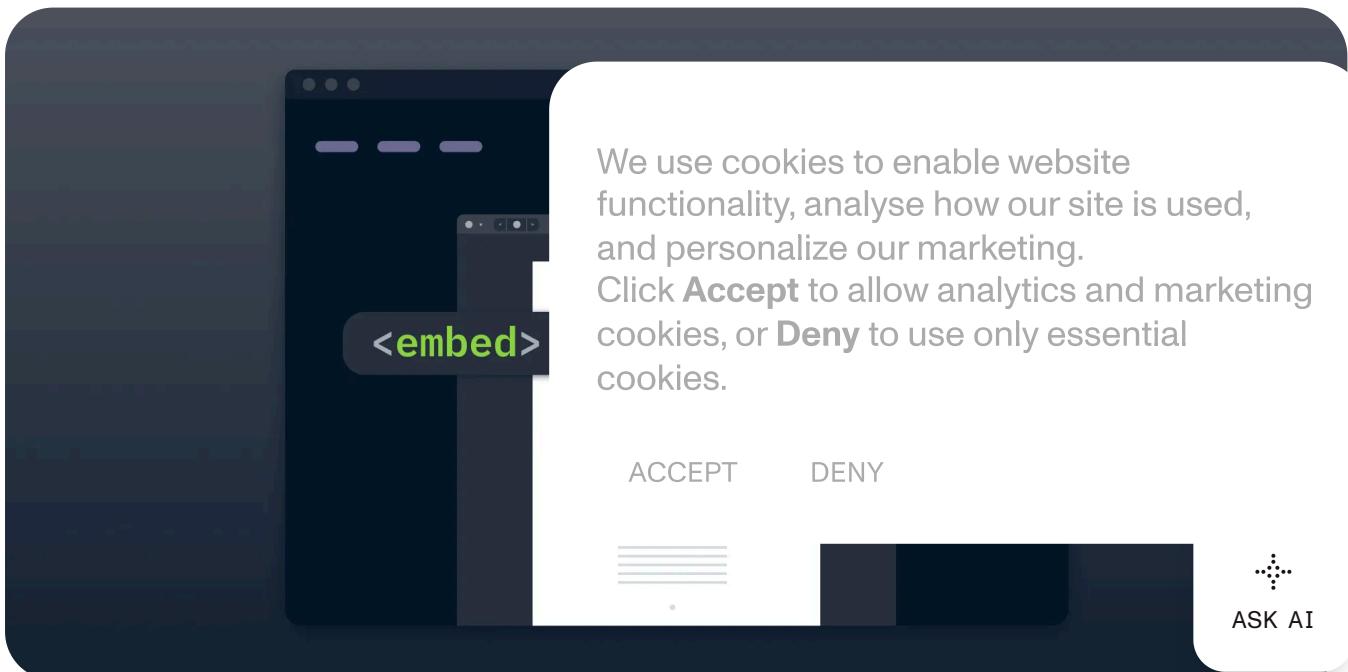
HULYA MASHARIPOV

UPDATED: AUGUST 12, 2025

CONTENTS



Need to display a PDF inside a webpage? This guide shows you how to embed a PDF document in HTML in five different ways. It starts with pure HTML tags (`embed`, `iframe`, `object`, and `a`) and finishes with an advanced, fully customizable viewer built with [Nutrient Web SDK](#).



TL;DR

You can embed PDFs in websites using basic HTML methods, but these lack the professional features modern businesses need. **Nutrient Web SDK** transforms basic PDF embedding into powerful, interactive web experiences with enterprise-grade security, mobile optimization, and advanced features like annotations and digital signatures that free solutions simply cannot match.

PDF files are widely used in industries like healthcare, education, and government. Displaying PDFs directly on your website ensures seamless document sharing without requiring users to download files first. However, embedding PDFs can be tricky due to the differences between HTML and PDF formats.

Embedding PDFs on websites is a practical way to deliver content without downloads. Common applications include:

User manuals — Provide product guides directly on websites for easy access.

Contracts — Display fillable legal documents for seamless online submission.

Marketing materials — Showcase brochures or catalogs interactively.

Educational resources — Share eBooks, research papers, or training materials.

Reports — Present financial statements or annual reports professionally.

Event flyers — Embed schedules or promotional materials for quick viewing.

With tools like **Nutrient Web SDK**, these PDFs become more interactive, secure, and user-friendly, making it easier to enhance the viewer experience.

Transform your P basic to enterpris

Stop settling for limited HTML methods
experience your business deserves - wi
solutions can't match.

We use cookies to enable website functionality, analyse how our site is used, and personalize our marketing. Click **Accept** to allow analytics and marketing cookies, or **Deny** to use only essential cookies.

START FREE TRIAL

ACCEPT

DENY

Additionally, you can follow along with our step-by-step video tutorial for detailed guidance.

5 Ways To Embed a PDF Viewer Into Your Website



Method 1 – Embed a PDF document in HTML with the embed tag

The `<embed>` tag is used to load external content, including PDFs, directly into a webpage. Here's an example:

```
<embed  
    src="document.pdf"  
    type="application/pdf"  
    width="100%"  
    height="1000"  
    title="Embedded PDF Viewer"  
/>
```

Key attributes

`src` — Specifies the PDF file's location.

ACCEPT DENY

`type` — Defines the file type (for PDFs, use `application/pdf`).

`width` and `height` — Controls the viewer's size within the parent container.

We use cookies to enable website functionality, analyse how our site is used, and personalize our marketing. Click **Accept** to allow analytics and marketing cookies, or **Deny** to use only essential cookies.

Use case

This method is simple to implement and works well in most modern browsers. Ensure the parent container has defined dimensions to avoid display issues.

Example for embedding PDF documents using the `<embed>` tag:



Method 2 – Use the object tag to embed a PDF document in HTML

The `<object>` tag provides a versatile way to embed PDF documents in HTML, even in unsupported browsers:

We use cookies to enable website functionality, analyse how our site is used, and personalize our marketing. Click **Accept** to allow analytics and marketing cookies, or **Deny** to use only essential cookies.

```
<object
  data="document.pdf"
  type="application/pdf"
  width="100%"
  height="1000"
  title="Embedded PDF Viewer">
```

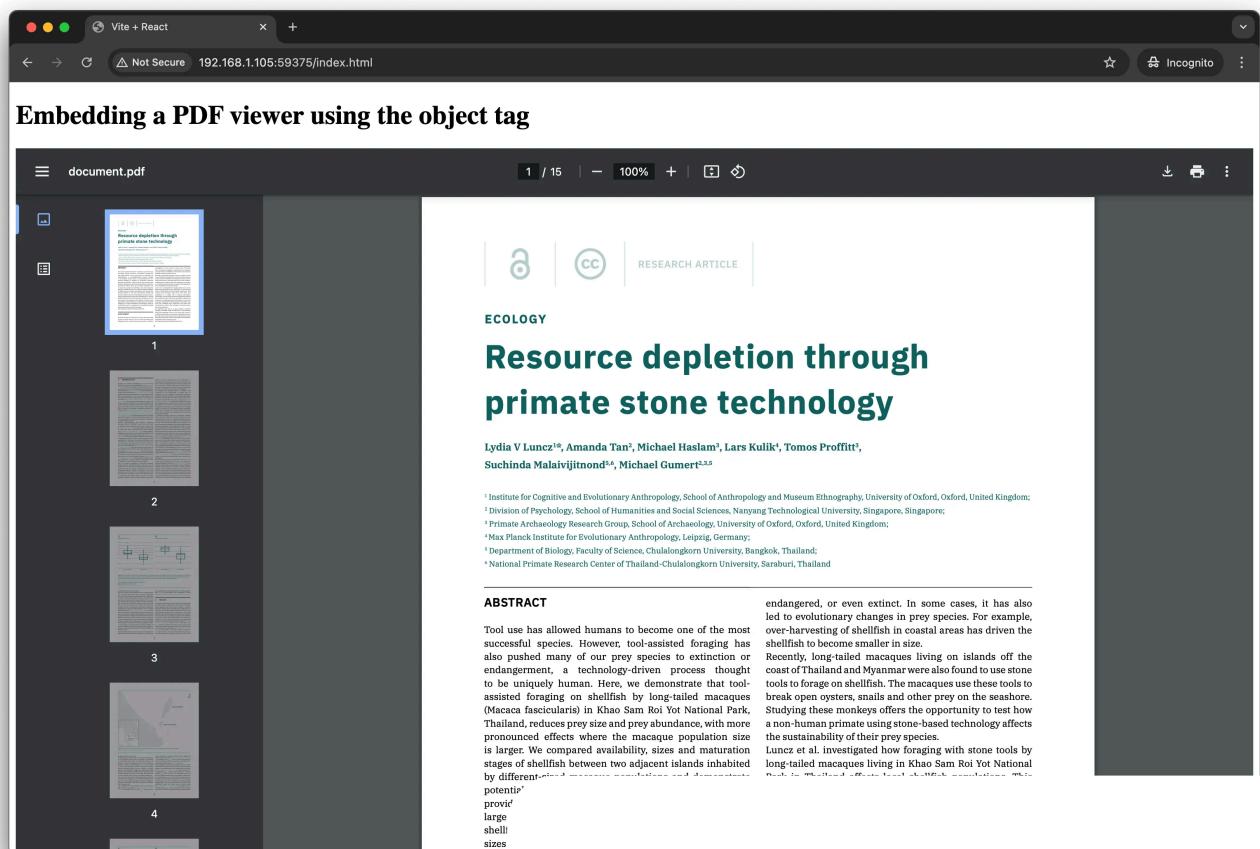
[ACCEPT](#) [DENY](#)

```
<p>
Your browser does not support PDFs. [Download the PDF
document](document.pdf)
</p>
</object>
```

Key features

data — Specifies the PDF file's location.

Fallback content — Displays alternative text or links when PDFs aren't supported.



Use case

Ideal for environments requiring backw

We use cookies to enable website functionality, analyse how our site is used, and personalize our marketing. Click **Accept** to allow analytics and marketing cookies, or **Deny** to use only essential cookies.

ACCEPT

DENY

Try it free

For the most powerful and flexible way to embed PDF documents in HTML, explore our interactive Nutrient Web SDK demo and see it in action.

[OPEN DEMO](#)

Method 3 – Display a PDF document in HTML with an iframe

An `<iframe>` embeds web content, including PDFs, into a webpage. Example:

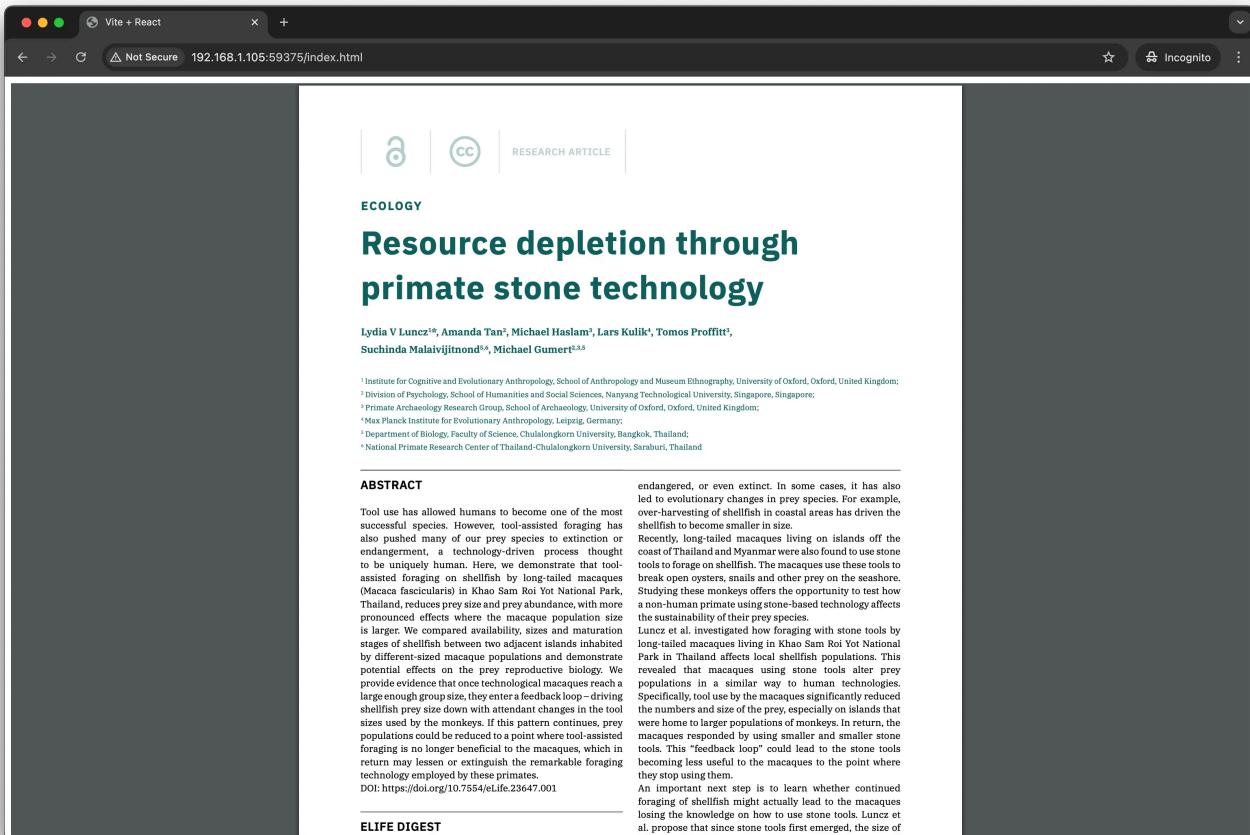
```
<iframe  
    src="document.pdf"  
    width="100%"  
    height="100%"  
    style="border:none"  
    title="Embedded PDF Viewer"  
></iframe>
```

To disable the toolbar, append `#toolbar=0` to the `src` attribute:

```
<iframe  
    src="document.pdf#toolbar=0"  
    width="100%"  
    height="100%"  
    style="border:none"  
    title="Non-downloadable PDF Vie  
></iframe>
```

We use cookies to enable website functionality, analyse how our site is used, and personalize our marketing. Click **Accept** to allow analytics and marketing cookies, or **Deny** to use only essential cookies.

[ACCEPT](#) [DENY](#)



Use case

Highly customizable for modern web applications. Offers flexibility in layout and URL parameter-based configurations.

Method 4 — Fail-safe embedding: object with iframe fallback

Combining `<object>` and `<iframe>`
an example:

```
<object
  data="document.pdf"
  type="application/pdf"
  width="100%"
  height="100%"
  title="Embedded PDF Viewer">
</object>
<iframe
```

We use cookies to enable website functionality, analyse how our site is used, and personalize our marketing. Click **Accept** to allow analytics and marketing cookies, or **Deny** to use only essential cookies.

ACCEPT **DENY**

```

src="document.pdf"
width="100%"
height="100%"
style="border: none"
title="Fallback PDF Viewer"

>

<p>Your browser does not support PDFs. [Download the PDF](document.pdf)</p>
</iframe>
</object>

```



Use case

Best for ensuring maximum compatibility with the customization options of <if>

We use cookies to enable website functionality, analyse how our site is used, and personalize our marketing. Click **Accept** to allow analytics and marketing cookies, or **Deny** to use only essential cookies.

Method 5 – Link out you can't embed the PDF

[ACCEPT](#)

[DENY](#)

The simplest approach is linking to the PDF directly using an <a> tag:

```
<p>  
  Open a PDF document:  
  <a href="document.pdf" target="_blank" rel="noopener noreferrer">  
    View PDF document  
  </a>  
</p>
```

Use case

Useful when embedding isn't necessary, and direct access to the PDF file suffices. Best for scenarios prioritizing simplicity.

Why basic HTML methods fall short in professional applications

While the HTML embedding methods above work for simple PDF display, they create significant challenges for professional websites and business applications:

Security vulnerabilities

No access control — Basic HTML methods cannot prevent unauthorized PDF downloads or printing

No user authentication — Anyone with the PDF URL can access the document directly

Browser-dependent security — Se
and unreliable

Direct file exposure — PDFs are a
website's security

We use cookies to enable website functionality, analyse how our site is used, and personalize our marketing. Click **Accept** to allow analytics and marketing cookies, or **Deny** to use only essential cookies.

Poor user experience on mobile devices

Inconsistent rendering — HTML n
dramatically across devices

ACCEPT DENY

No touch optimization — Lack of mobile-friendly navigation like pinch-to-zoom and swipe gestures

Loading failures — Many mobile browsers fail to display embedded PDFs, showing blank spaces instead

Accessibility issues — Screen readers and assistive technologies struggle with browser-rendered PDFs

Limited functionality and customization

No annotation capabilities — Users cannot highlight, comment, or mark up documents

Basic navigation only — Limited to simple page scrolling without advanced search or bookmarks

Inconsistent UI — Cannot match your website's branding or design system

Performance and reliability problems

Slow loading — Large PDFs cause browser freezing and poor page load performance

Memory issues — Browser PDF rendering consumes excessive RAM, especially on mobile devices

Cross-browser inconsistencies — Different rendering engines produce varying display quality and features

No progressive loading — Entire PDF must download before display, unlike streaming solutions

Business and compliance limitations

No digital signatures — Cannot support secure document signing workflows

No form interaction — Interactive PDF viewers

We use cookies to enable website functionality, analyse how our site is used, and personalize our marketing. Click **Accept** to allow analytics and marketing cookies, or **Deny** to use only essential cookies.

Method 6 — Advanced embedding with Nutri

While the previous HTML methods work for enterprise-grade PDF embedding. Nutri offers customization that basic HTML cannot.

ACCEPT DENY

Ready to see the difference? Try our interactive demo:



Loading content...

Upload a PDF and try drawing freehand, adding notes, or applying digital signatures to experience the advanced capabilities.

Below is a breakdown of why you might choose Nutrient over native HTML methods.

1. Enhanced PDF viewer features

Advanced navigation — Nutrient offers interactive navigation options such as custom page modes (single page, continu) superior to the basic zoom and pa

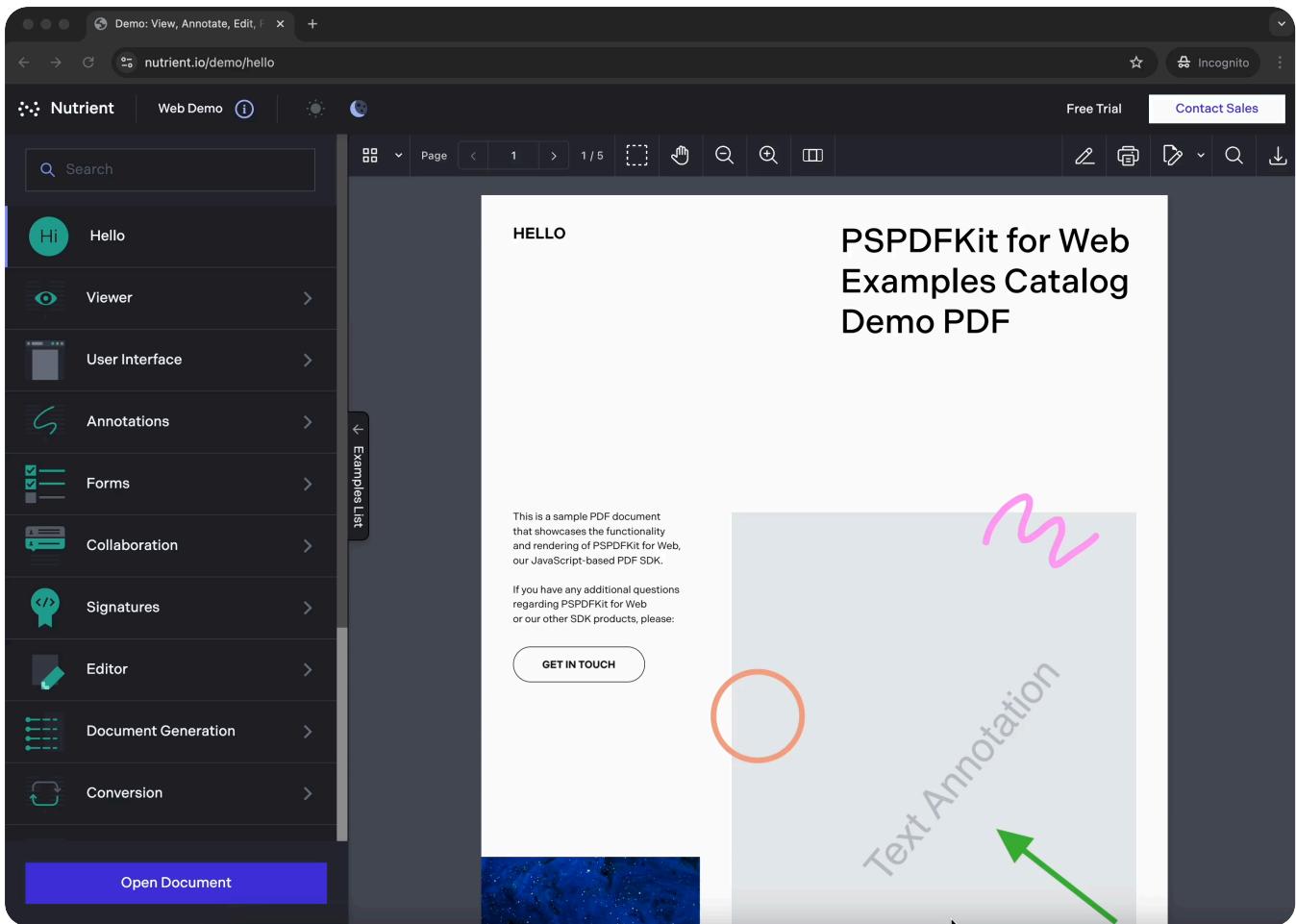
Annotations and markups — Nut highlights, text, and other markup HTML embedding.

Advanced text search — Nutrient search for text within a PDF docun

We use cookies to enable website functionality, analyse how our site is used, and personalize our marketing. Click **Accept** to allow analytics and marketing cookies, or **Deny** to use only essential cookies.

ACCEPT

DENY



2. Customization

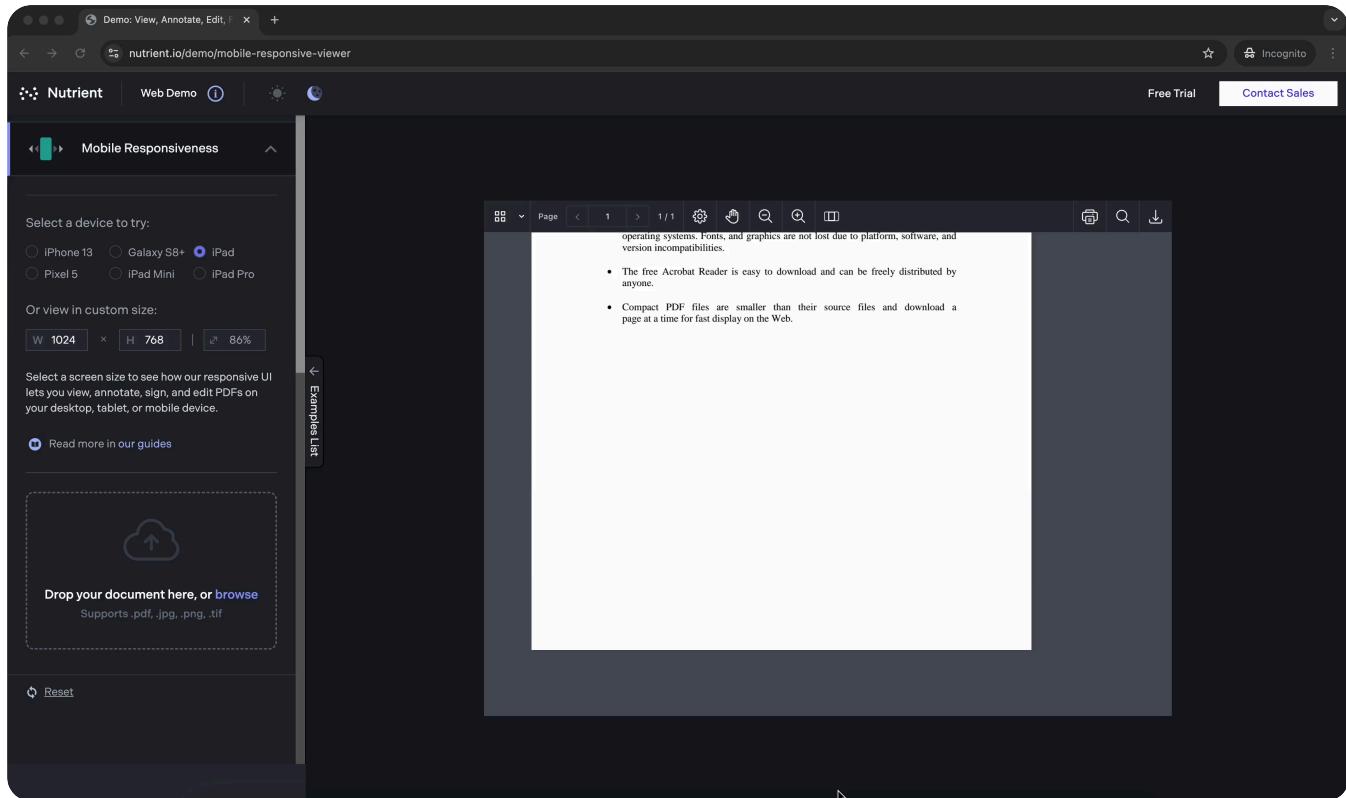
UI customization — With Nutrient's SDK, developers can customize the viewer's UI to match their website design, offering a more seamless integration. Basic HTML embedding methods, on the other hand, provide limited customization of the viewer.

Responsive design — Nutrient's viewer automatically adjusts to various screen sizes, offering a more mobile-friendly experience compared to basic embedding tags.

We use cookies to enable website functionality, analyse how our site is used, and personalize our marketing. Click **Accept** to allow analytics and marketing cookies, or **Deny** to use only essential cookies.

ACCEPT

DENY



3. Security

Secure PDF viewing — Nutrient's SDK allows developers to implement secure viewing features like encryption, password protection, and restricted access to certain PDF features. This is crucial for organizations handling sensitive or confidential information. In contrast, native HTML methods offer no security features.

No file download option — With Nutrient, developers can disable PDF downloads entirely, preventing unauthorized distribution of a document, while basic HTML tags allow users to easily download embedded PDFs.

4. Performance optimization

Faster load time — Nutrient is optimized for performance, particularly when dealing with large documents. While some native methods might suffer from slow load times, Nutrient's approach is designed to be faster.

We use cookies to enable website functionality, analyse how our site is used, and personalize our marketing. Click **Accept** to allow analytics and marketing cookies, or **Deny** to use only essential cookies.

5. Cross-browser compatibility

Native browser integration — Nutrient's approach ensures compatibility across all major browsers without relying on native PDF viewers. By using a web-based viewer, Nutrient handles any quirks or inconsistencies in different browser environments, providing a consistent user experience.

[ACCEPT](#)

[DENY](#)

6. Interactive elements

Form filling and data extraction — Nutrient allows for form filling and data extraction from interactive PDFs, a feature unavailable with basic HTML tags. Our PDF form builder enables creation of these forms. This makes it ideal for applications requiring user input, such as surveys, contracts, or other interactive documents.

Comparison of PDF embedding methods

This table summarizes the pros and cons of each embedding method:

METHOD	PROS	CONS	BEST FOR
<embed>	- Simple to implement- Supported across most major browsers	- Limited control over viewer features- Some browsers may not display PDFs if plugins are disabled	Basic displays
<object>	- Provides fallback content- Better compatibility with older browsers	- Fallback content can affect user experience- Limited control over viewer features	Legacy support
<iframe>	- Highly customizable- Control over appearance with URL parameters- Flexibility with width and height	- #toolbar=0 may not be supported by all	Quick prototypes
<a>	- Extremely simple- Ensures user access the PDF	We use cookies to enable website functionality, analyse how our site is used, and personalize our marketing. Click Accept to allow analytics and marketing cookies, or Deny to use only essential cookies.	
		ACCEPT DENY	
<object> + <iframe>	- Provides a fallback for unsupported	- More complex to implement- May	Maximum compatibility

browsers- Combines benefits of both <code><object></code> and <code><iframe></code>	result in duplicate content if both methods are supported		
 Nutrient Web SDK	- Enterprise security & analytics- Mobile- optimized & responsive- Interactive annotations- Custom branding & UI**	- Requires commercial license- Slightly more complex initial setup	Professional applications

Getting started with Nutrient

Ready to upgrade your PDF embedding? [Start a free trial](#) and follow our [getting started guide](#) to implement enterprise-grade PDF viewing in minutes.

Conclusion

This post taught you how to embed a PDF viewer into your website. With `<embed>`, `<object>`, `<iframe>`, and `<a>` HTML5 elements, it's possible to show a PDF in your web app with ease. This is supported in most browsers and requires no JavaScript at all, making it a perfect approach for adding PDF support if no advanced features are necessary.

However, for use cases that require support for every browser, customization, or more advanced PDF features — such as [PDF annotations](#), [interactive PDF forms](#), and [digital signatures](#) — we recommend you look into commercial [a'](#).

At Nutrient, we offer a commercial, feature-rich [viewer library](#) that's easy to integrate across various use cases. Check out our PDF library to see what's possible.

We use cookies to enable website functionality, analyse how our site is used, and personalize our marketing. Click **Accept** to allow analytics and marketing cookies, or **Deny** to use only essential cookies.

FAQ

[ACCEPT](#) [DENY](#)

How do I embed a PDF document in HTML without plugins?

How can I prevent PDF downloads when embedding?

What's the best method for mobile PDF viewing?

Why choose Nutrient over free PDF embedding methods?



Hulya Masharipov

TECHNICAL WRITER

Hulya is a frontend web developer and technical writer who enjoys creating responsive, scalable, and maintainable web experiences. She's passionate about open source, web accessibility, cybersecurity privacy, and blockchain.

Explore related topics

WEB HTML HOW TO PDF VIEWER

FREE TRIAL

We use cookies to enable website functionality, analyse how our site is used, and personalize our marketing. Click **Accept** to allow analytics and marketing cookies, or **Deny** to use only essential cookies.

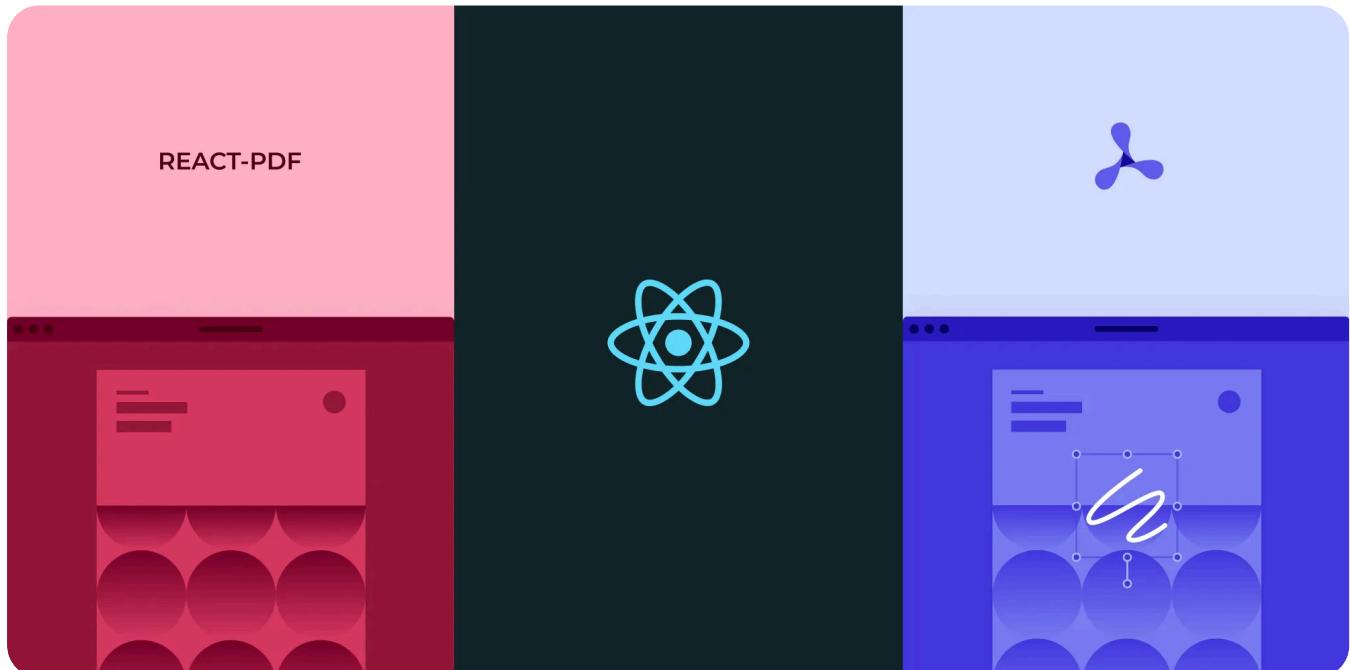
Ready to get

ACCEPT DENY



Related SDK articles

EXPLORE MORE

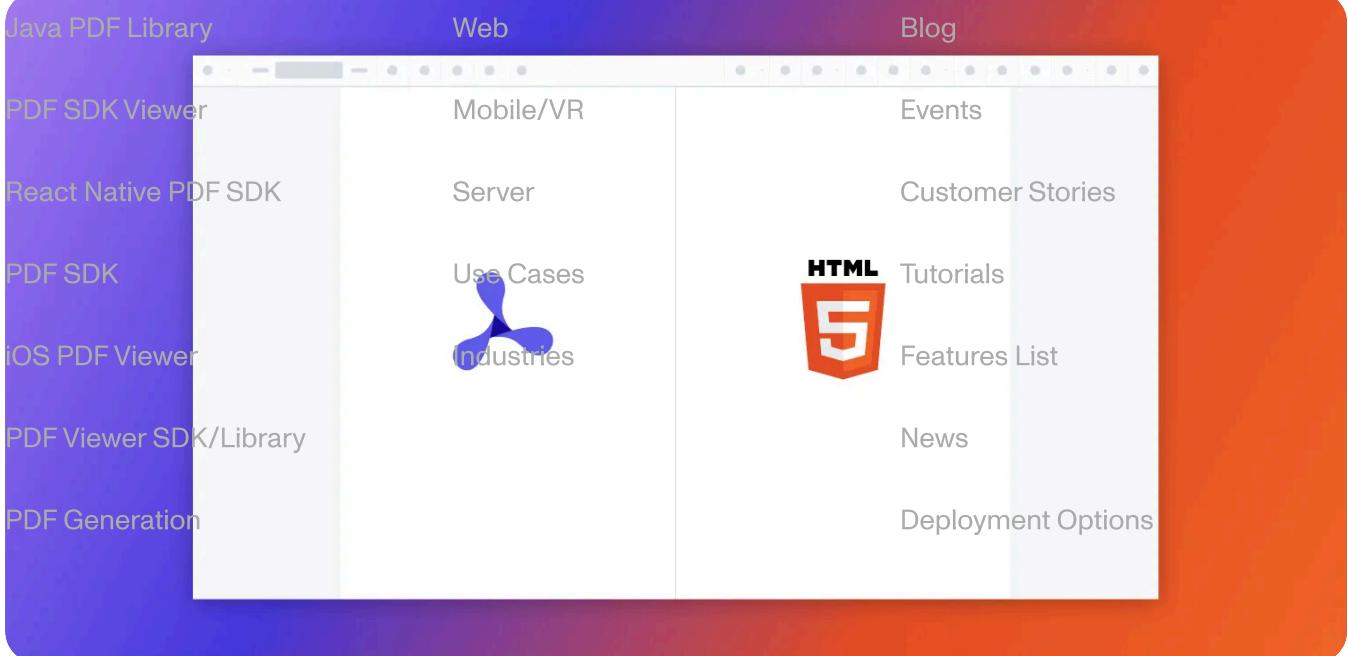


React PDF viewer: Complete guide to building with react-pdf

We use cookies to enable website functionality, analyse how our site is used, and personalize our marketing. Click **Accept** to allow analytics and marketing cookies, or **Deny** to use only essential cookies.

ACCEPT

DENY



COMMUNITY

How to build an HTML5 PDF viewer

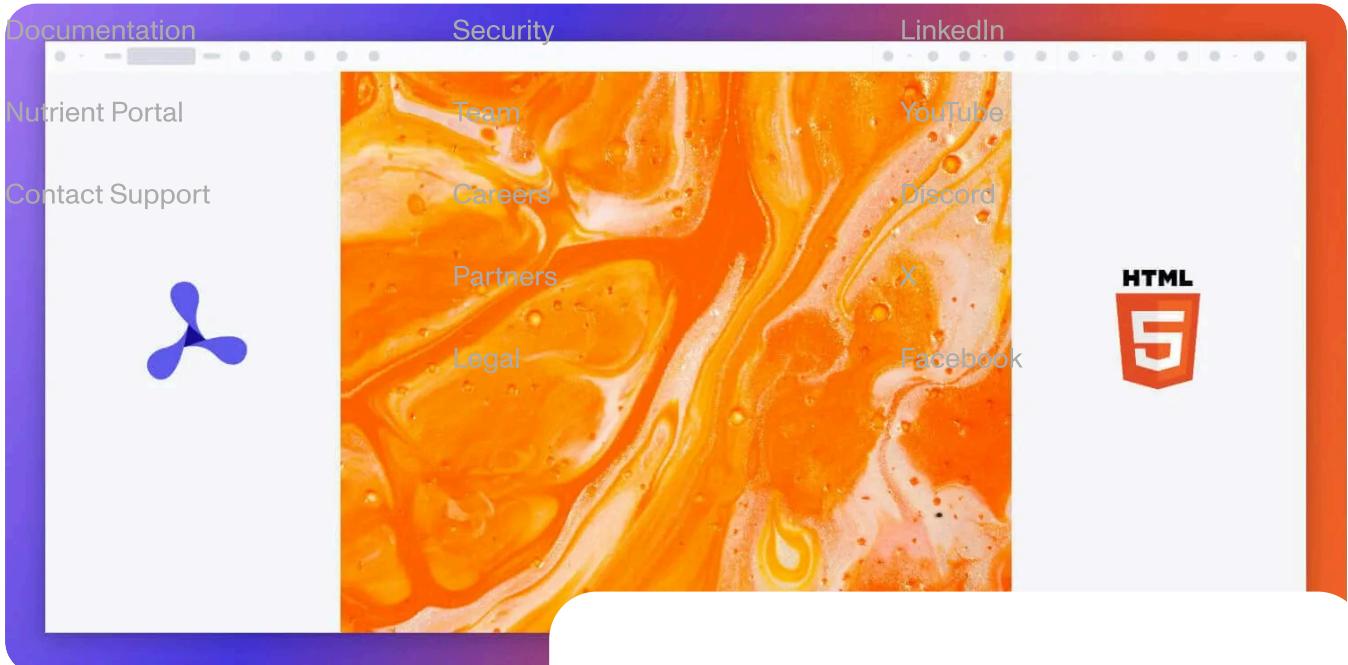
Free Trial

About

COMPANY

Contact

CONNECT



How to build an HTML

Copyright 2

We use cookies to enable website functionality, analyse how our site is used, and personalize our marketing. Click **Accept** to allow analytics and marketing cookies, or **Deny** to use only essential cookies.

ACCEPT**DENY**