



Convert HTML Page To a PDF Using Open Source Tool [Linux / OS X / Windows]

last updated January 21, 2017 in [Command Line Hacks](#), [Howto](#), [Open Source](#)

Do you need a simple open source cross-platform command line tool that converts web pages and HTML to a PDF file? Look no further, try wkhtmltopdf.

From the project home page:



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Simple shell utility to convert html to pdf using the webkit rendering engine, and qt. Searching the web, I have found several command line tools that allow you to convert a HTML-document to a PDF-document, however they all seem to use their own, and rather incomplete rendering engine, resulting in poor quality. Recently QT 4.4 was released with a WebKit widget (WebKit is the engine of Apples Safari, which is a fork of the KDE KHtml), and making a good tool became very easy.

Software features

1. Cross platform.
2. Open source.
3. Convert any web pages into PDF documents using webkit.

4. You can add headers and footers.
5. TOC generation.
6. Batch mode conversions.
7. Can run on Linux server with an XServer (the X11 client libs must be installed).
8. Can be directly used by PHP or Python via bindings to libwkhtmltox.

A note about Debian / Ubuntu Linux user

You can install wkhtmltopdf using apt-get command:

```
$ sudo apt-get install wkhtmltopdf
$ sudo ln -s /usr/bin/wkhtmltopdf /usr/local/bin/html2pdf
```

Sample outputs:

```
[sudo] password for vivek:
Reading package lists... Done
Building dependency tree
Reading state information... Done
The following NEW packages will be installed:
  wkhtmltopdf
0 upgraded, 1 newly installed, 0 to remove and 10 not upgraded.
Need to get 116 kB of archives.
After this operation, 303 kB of additional disk space will be used.
Get:1 http://debian.osuosl.org/debian/ squeeze/main wkhtmltopdf amd64 0.9.9-1 [116 kB]
Fetched 116 kB in 2s (49.4 kB/s)
Selecting previously deselected package wkhtmltopdf.
(Reading database ... 274164 files and directories currently installed.)
Unpacking wkhtmltopdf (from .../wkhtmltopdf_0.9.9-1_amd64.deb) ...
Processing triggers for man-db ...
Setting up wkhtmltopdf (0.9.9-1) ...
```

Install wkhtmltopdf on MacOS unix

Type the following command:

```
$ brew install wkhtmltopdf
```

OR

```
$ brew cask install wkhtmltopdf
```

Download wkhtmltopdf

Visit this [page](#) to grab wkhtmltopdf for Linux / MS-Windows / Apple Mac OS X. You can also use the [wget command](#) as follows:

```
$ wget http://wkhtmltopdf.googlecode.com/files/wkhtmltopdf-0.11.0_rc1-static-amd64.tar.bz2
```

Sample outputs:

```
Resolving wkhtmltopdf.googlecode.com... 74.125.135.82, 2404:6800:4001:c01::52
Connecting to wkhtmltopdf.googlecode.com|74.125.135.82|:80... connected.
HTTP request sent, awaiting response... 200 OK
Length: 11175276 (11M) [application/octet-stream]
Saving to: `wkhtmltopdf-0.11.0_rc1-static-amd64.tar.bz2'

100%[=====>] 1,11,75,276 480K/s in 23s

2012-10-04 01:21:43 (477 KB/s) - `wkhtmltopdf-0.11.0_rc1-static-amd64.tar.bz2'
```

Install wkhtmltopdf under Linux

Type the following [tar command to extract files](#):

```
$ tar xvf wkhtmltopdf-0.11.0_rc1-static-amd64.tar.bz2
```

Sample outputs:

```
wkhtmltopdf-amd64
```

Install the same in your private ~/bin/ directory or in /usr/local/bin directory:

```
$ mv wkhtmltopdf-amd64 ~/bin/
ln -s ~/bin/wkhtmltopdf-amd64 ~/bin/html2pdf
```

OR

```
$ sudo mv wkhtmltopdf-amd64 /usr/local/bin/
ln -s /usr/local/bin/wkhtmltopdf-amd64 /usr/local/bin/html2pdf
```

How do I use wkhtmltopdf?

The syntax is as follows:

```
html2pdf http://www.cyberciti.biz/path/to/url.html output.pdf
html2pdf http://www.cyberciti.biz/blog/print/url-slug.html output.pdf
html2pdf -option1 -option2 http://www.cyberciti.biz/blog/print/url-slug.html c
```

OR

```
wkhtmltopdf http://www.cyberciti.biz/path/to/url.html output.pdf
wkhtmltopdf http://www.cyberciti.biz/blog/print/url-slug.html output.pdf
wkhtmltopdf -option1 -option2 http://www.cyberciti.biz/blog/print/url-slug.ht
```

Example: Simple html to pdf file

In this example, convert out [bash for loop page](#) to a pdf file:

```
$ html2pdf http://www.cyberciti.biz/faq/bash-for-loop/print/ /tmp/bash.for.loop.pdf
```

Sample outputs:

```
Loading pages (1/6)
Counting pages (2/6)
Resolving links (4/6)
Loading headers and footers (5/6)
Printing pages (6/6)
Done
```

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To view generated [pdf file click here](#). Verify pdf file, enter:

```
$ file /tmp/bash.for.loop.pdf
```

Sample outputs:

```
/tmp/bash.for.loop.pdf: PDF document, version 1.4
```

Use the [pdftk command](#) to prints the contents of the 'Info' dictionary (plus some other useful information) from a Portable Document Format (PDF) file:

```
$ pdftk /tmp/bash.for.loop.pdf
```

Sample outputs:

```
Title:           Frequently Asked Questions About Linux / UNIX » Bash For Loop Ex
Creator:
Producer:        wkhtmltopdf
CreationDate:    Thu Oct  4 01:29:33 2012
Tagged:          no
Pages:           4
Encrypted:       no
Page size:       595 x 842 pts (A4)
File size:       98792 bytes
Optimized:       no
PDF version:     1.4
```

Grayscale pdf

The following PDF will be generated in grayscale:

```
$ html2pdf -g http://www.cyberciti.biz/faq/bash-for-loop/print/ bash.for.loop.pdf
```

Set orientation to Landscape or Portrait

Use the following syntax:

```
$ html2pdf -O Landscape http://www.cyberciti.biz/faq/bash-for-loop/print/
bash.for.loop.pdf
```

Where,

- -O Landscape|Portrait. The default is Portrait.

How do I set page size?

Use the following syntax:

```
$ html2pdf -S SIZE http://www.cyberciti.biz/faq/bash-for-loop/print/ bash.for.loop.pdf
```

Where,

- -s Size : Set paper size to: A4, Letter, etc. (default A4)

How do I generate table of content?

A table of content can be added to the document by adding a toc the command line option.

For example:

```
$ html2pdf toc http://www.cyberciti.biz/faq/bash-for-loop/print/ bash.for.loop.pdf
```

Sample outputs:

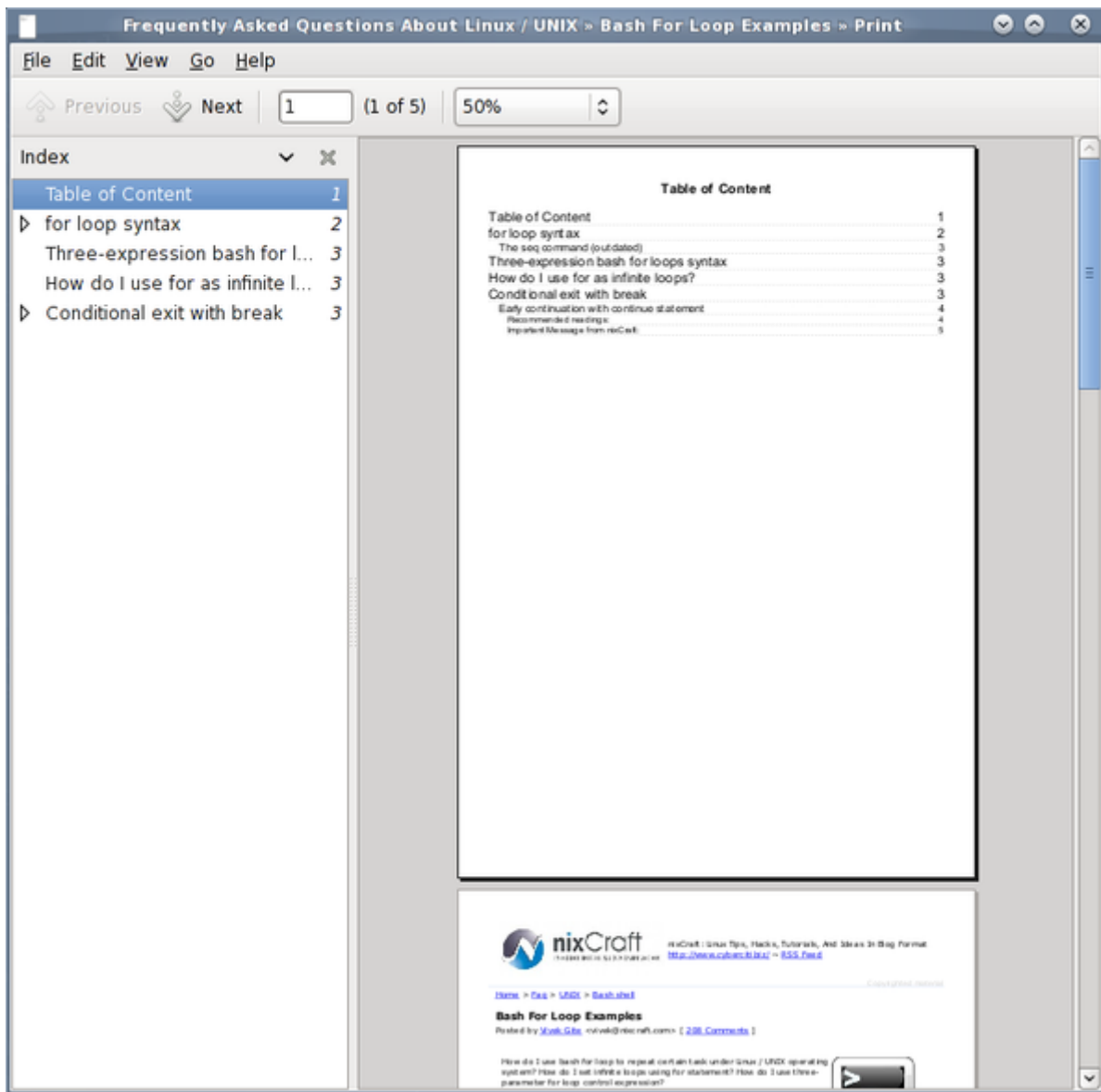


Fig.01: wkhtmltopdf in action

Please note that the table of content is generated based on the H tags in the input documents.

How do I see all available options?

You can see a list of commonly used options, enter:

```
$ wkhtmltopdf --help
```

OR see all available options i.e. display more extensive help, detailing less common command switches, run:

```
$ wkhtmltopdf -H | less
```

References:

- [wkhtmltopdf](#) project home page.

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Posted by: Vivek Gite

The author is the creator of nixCraft and a seasoned sysadmin, DevOps engineer, and a trainer for the Linux operating system/Unix shell scripting. Get the **latest tutorials on SysAdmin, Linux/Unix and open source topics** via [RSS/XML feed](#) or [weekly email newsletter](#).

Tagged as: [Apple](#), [Linux](#), [MS-Windows](#), [Unix](#), [wkhtmltopdf](#)

 17 comment

Alexey Ratnikov January 29, 2015 at 9:05 am

Error on Debian 6.0: QPixmap: Cannot create a QPixmap when no GUI is being used

Sergio June 19, 2014 at 7:09 pm

Thanks... Excelent program, but it throw error: wkhtmltopdf: cannot connect to X server. Is posible to make it to use only in therminial

Rakhi Dhavale April 28, 2013 at 10:02 am

thanks!!! Great very useful!!

meow December 6, 2012 at 11:44 am

html to pdf is but not big deal, otherwise, pdf2htmlex as the name self-explained which is a truly magnificent tool that should be noticed.

deoren October 8, 2012 at 9:01 pm

Great tutorial. I'll definitely refer to this again. :)

Ahmad October 4, 2012 at 9:37 am

Thanks... Now can i convert a normal text file (non html) to PDF using this program? I tried and it threw an error.

Vivek Gite October 4, 2012 at 10:13 am

This [may help you](#). [eprg.org]

battila.hu October 4, 2012 at 8:04 am

Hey,

I use htmldoc:

```
Package: htmldoc
Status: install ok installed
Priority: optional
Section: web
Installed-Size: 512
Maintainer: Ubuntu Developers
Architecture: amd64
Version: 1.8.27-4.1ubuntu2
Depends: libc6 (>= 2.7), libfltk1.1 (>= 1.1.6), libgcc1 (>= 1:4.1.1), libjpeg62
Description: HTML processor that generates indexed HTML, PS, and PDF
 HTMLDOC is a program for writing documentation in HTML and producing
 indexed HTML, PostScript, or PDF output (with tables of contents).
 It supports most HTML 3.2 and some HTML 4.0 syntax, as well as GIF,
 JPEG, and PNG images.
Homepage: http://www.htmldoc.org/
Original-Maintainer: Teff Licquia
```


Vivek Gite October 4, 2012 at 7:44 am

I tested this with wkhtmltopdf v0.11.0 rc1. I think this will get fixed in next release. I suggest you use stable version (amd64):

```
wget http://wkhtmltopdf.googlecode.com/files/wkhtmltopdf-0.9.9-static-amd64.t
tar wkhtmltopdf-0.9.9-static-amd64.tar.bz2
./wkhtmltopdf-amd64 www.cyberciti.biz/open-source/html-to-pdf-freeware-linux-
Loading pages (1/5)
Resolving links (2/5)
Counting pages (3/5)
Printing pages (5/5)
Done
```

Nikesh May 24, 2013 at 12:32 pm

I installed wkhtmltopdf in my local computer in which GUI is installed. It's working properly.

Next I installed the same in a Dedicated server in Remote Location, which is not having GUI interface..

I'm getting the below error message while I try to run wkhtml2pdf. and It's creating an empty pdf file with OKB. Do you know how to fix this error ?

Printing pages (6/6)

QPixmap: Cannot create a QPixmap when no GUI is being used==] Page 1 of 1

QPixmap: Cannot create a QPixmap when no GUI is being used

QPixmap: Cannot create a QPixmap when no GUI is being used

QPixmap: Cannot create a QPixmap when no GUI is being used

QPixmap: Cannot create a QPixmap when no GUI is being used

PNA Prasanna October 4, 2012 at 5:47 am

Good stuff.

Rahul Bansal October 4, 2012 at 5:37 am

Really nice. I think combining with ghostscript, we can use it for “webpages to screenshot” like use-cases.

nanchor October 4, 2012 at 2:40 am

I use ‘Print to file’ mode in Linux and it can save a web page as pdf. Maybe wkhtmltopdf output has better quality?

Alex Ken October 3, 2012 at 11:58 pm

Thank you, very useful.

Still, have a question? Get help on our forum!



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