TASK 7: Identify and Remove Suspicious Browser Extensions

Objective: Learn to spot and remove potentially harmful browser extensions.
Tools: Any web browser (Chrome, Firefox)

Internship: Elevate Labs,
Prepared by: P. SUSMITHA,
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About Browser Extensions

- **Browser Extensions:** Browser extensions are small software modules that add extra features and functionalities to your web browser.They can:
    - Block ads,
    - Manage passwords,
    - Translate web pages,
    - Capture screenshots,
    - Or customize your browsing experience.

Identification of Suspicious Browser Extensions:

1. Unknown Source or Developer:

Extension not from a trusted publisher or official web store & Developer's website or name looks unfamiliar or fake.
Shows "Added by a third party" (like your WPS PDF example).

2. Excessive Permissions:

Requests unnecessary access like:
"Read and change all your data on all websites"
"Access your clipboard"
"Manage your downloads"
"Control your browser settings or extensions"
Such permissions may allow spying, data theft, or malware injection.

3. Installed Automatically:

Extension gets installed without your consent when you install another program.
For example: WPS Office, antivirus, or download managers often add extensions silently.

4. Poor Reviews or Low Ratings:

Check reviews on the Chrome Web Store or Firefox Add-ons page.

Multiple users reporting “adware”, “redirects”, “privacy issues”, or “fake” extension are major red flags.

5. Unusual Browser Behavior:

Browser becomes slow or crashes frequently.

Unexpected pop-ups or ads appear.

Homepage or search engine changes automatically.

Redirects to unwanted or spam websites.

6. Outdated or Unmaintained Extension

Not updated for months or years.

Old extensions may have unpatched vulnerabilities that attackers can exploit.

7. Suspicious File Names or Icons:

Extension name doesn’t match its function (e.g., “Update Manager” or “Video Helper” but does something else).

Generic or copied icons (imitating popular extensions.

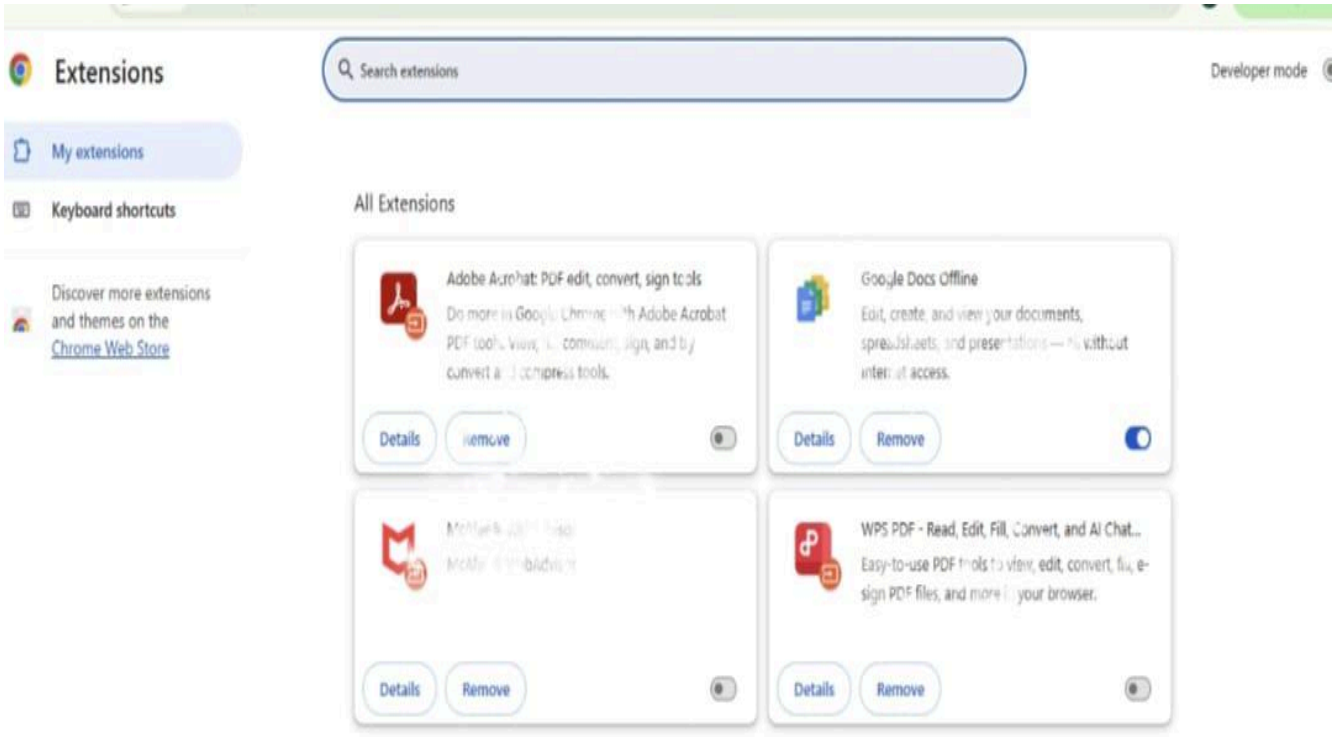
8. Hidden or System-Level Installations:

Some extensions don’t appear in the store or can’t be easily removed.

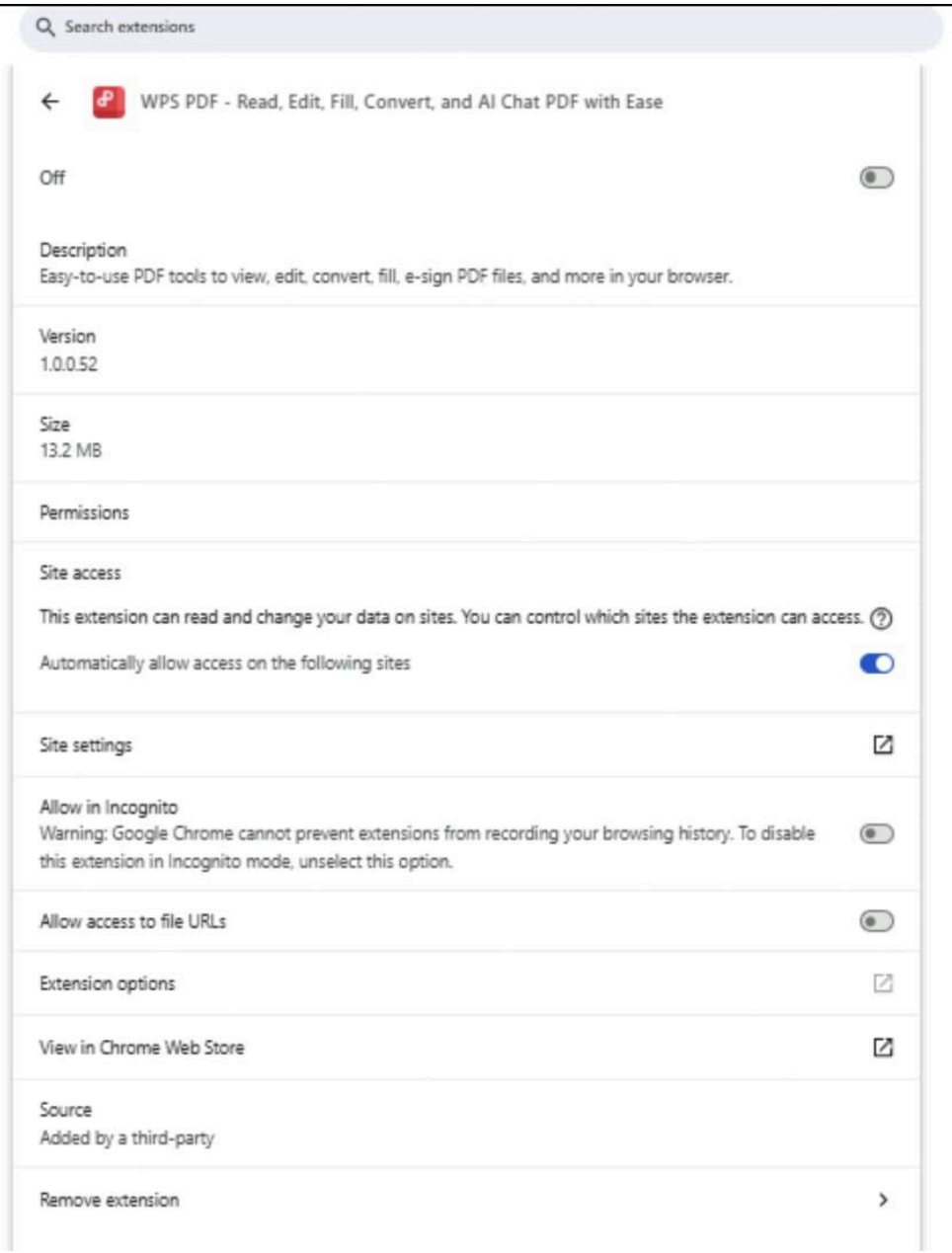
Chrome shows “Installed by your computer”, indicating system-level installation by another software.

Screenshots:

Figure(1): My Extensions in the Google Chrome



Figure(2): Extensions details of WPS PDF



Figure(3): Removing the WPS PDF, If the extension is suspicious.