



Create watched folders with Acrobat Distiller

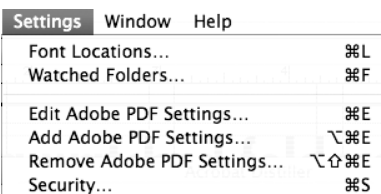
Did you know that the Acrobat Distiller software on your hard drive can automate the creation of PDFs?

This service is called "Watched" folders. The idea is to create a folder on your desktop where you save EPS files and let Distiller create the PDF with the settings you designate.

Let's go through the steps.

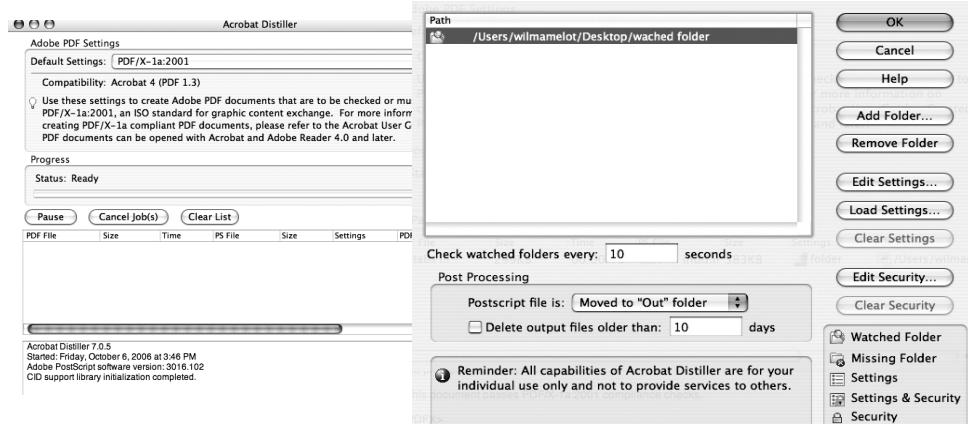
First, open Acrobat Distiller (pictured below is Version 7 but Watched folders were available in Version 5 – it just looks a little different). Next, go to the settings menu and open watched folders.

In this window click the "Add Folder"



button then lead the program to the place on your hard drive where you want the watched folder to reside and click OK. Most folks seem to prefer the desktop since it's easy to find.

In the main window of Distiller, the default settings should be set to PDF/X-1a, Press



computer notes
from the road

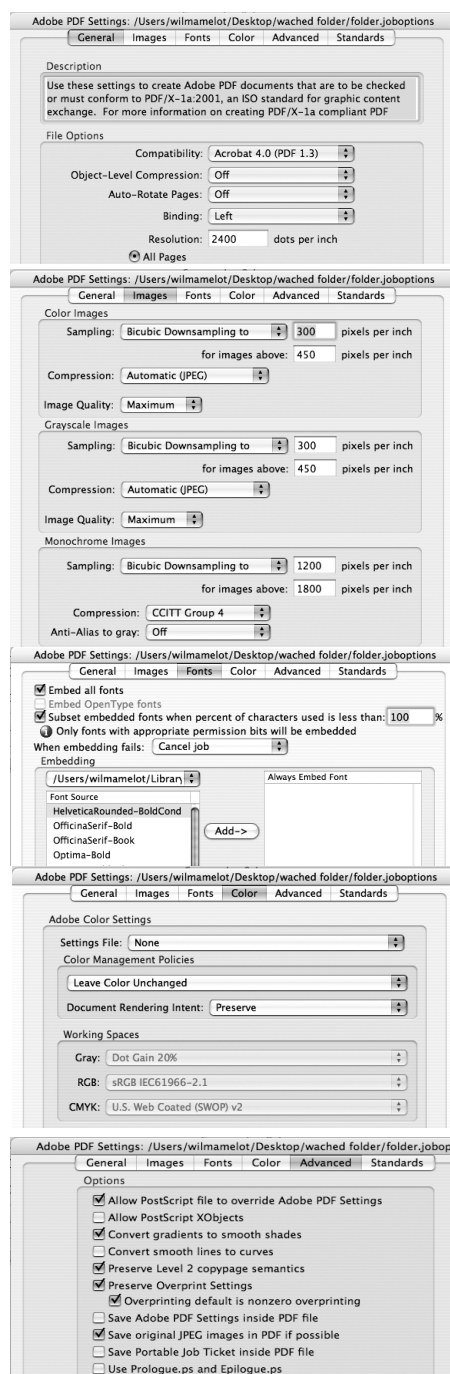
by WILMA MELOT

settings or the name of your paper's personal settings. To change the setting in your watched folder, open the Watched Folders menu (under Settings), click "Edit Setting" and put in your new settings.

Once you create an EPS file from your layout program and save it to the watched folder's inbox, Acrobat takes care of the rest.

The finished PDF ends up in your Watched folder, ready for you to upload.

For most papers, the load settings should look somewhat like the ones to the left.



Tabs and Indents give copy a clean, professional look

Most of us have worked with tab settings for years, but I still meet new people at newspapers who have never used them.

Try to teach all new employees how the tab ruler works in whatever program you use.

Tabs are very important because they are the only way you can line up lists. It goes back to the kerning of letters I discussed here last month.

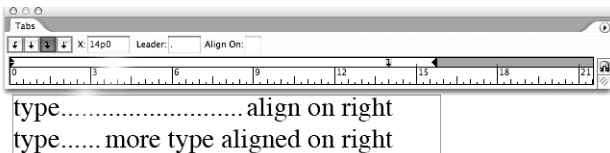
I'll be using InDesign CS2 tab rulers to demonstrate settings in this article.

Tab settings include left, center, right and decimal or special-character tabs. When you use the special-character tab, you can set a tab to align to any character you choose, such as a ":", a "\$" or, my favorite choice, the ".".

Let's try a simple list with leaders. Draw a type block and put in your list.

Under the "Type" menu, pull down to

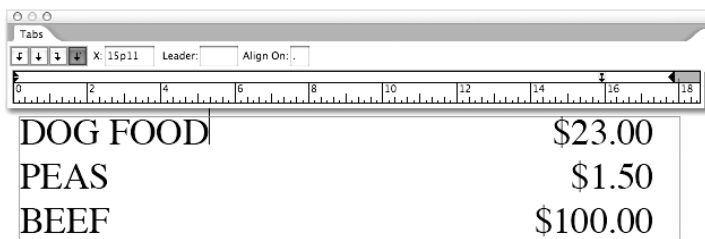
"Tabs." A ruler will appear above the type block where your cursor is flashing.



Hint: If you're trying to set up tabs for a specific area of type within a document, select just the text that you want to set tabs for.

For the first tab, click a tab-alignment button (left, right, center or decimal) in the Tabs palette to specify how text will align to the tab's position. When I use leaders, I generally use a right tab to align all type at the end of the line to the right.

Next choose type

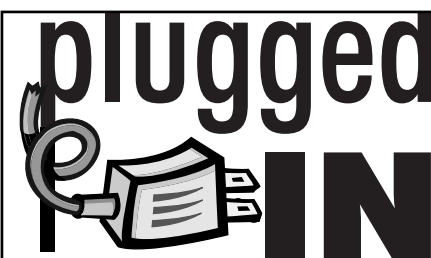


of leader you want to use and then do one of the following:

- Click a location on the tab ruler to position a new tab, or
- Type the position of the tab in the (x) box.

The final option of tabs lets you select any character to use as a tab setting. This is often used for lists of prices or items. Note: you must use the last tab type after the right tab. Put a period in the align on: (.) then type your list in the paragraph.

Play around with tabs and you'll soon get the idea. Just remember to select all the paragraphs you want to change.



Upgrading software

I want to remind Mac users that now is a good time to upgrade software if you plan on staying with Apple's Power PC versions.

Current software versions run well on the Power PC line of products for OSX, but you have to ask yourself if this is true of the next generation of releases.

Besides, if you update now you'll get free updates to the latest Intel versions due to be released in the spring, which is when Adobe says it will release Creative Suite software for Intel Macs.

It's a bit confusing, but trust me. Now is a good time to buy software.

Microsoft says it plans to upgrade Office for Mac in 2007-08. You should plan on purchasing the software just before the upgrade so you can get versions for your older machines as well as any new ones you may be planning on purchasing in the future.

Save mail settings

I often get calls from people who have lost their e-mail settings.

Whether it's due to a hard drive crash or a corrupt setting file, you're going to have to recreate the settings from scratch.

You can save yourself a lot of time and headaches by writing down the settings. In most e-mail programs, you can find settings by looking for the word "account" in the menu. However, settings also may be located in the preferences folder.

Once you locate the settings, write down the information or take a screen shot of the page and print it out. To take a screen shot on a Mac computer, hold down the command and option keys at the same time and press the number "4" on the keyboard. This changes your cursor and allows you to select a particular portion of the screen. The file is saved to the desktop in OSX (in OS9, the file is saved to the first level of the hard drive). The file is named Picture 1, Picture 2, etc. To print, just double click the file.

In Windows, hold down ALT + Print Scrn at the same time to capture the current window. To capture the entire screen, just press "Print Scrn." This copies what you have open to the clipboard.

Now, open a new document in Microsoft Word or Photo Editor, or Adobe Photoshop. Paste the screen shot in the document by holding down "CTRL and V" at the same time and then print the document.

Note: you may want to maximize the window that you capture.

