

Leading Document File Formats for Research Reports

This document provides an overview of popular file formats used for compiling and distributing research reports.

| Format | Extension | Description | Typical Usage |
|--------------------------|-----------|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| Portable Document Format | .pdf | Fixed-layout, widely supported for viewing and printing. | Publishing finalized research documents. |
| Microsoft Word Document | .docx | Editable, supports rich text, images, and references. | Drafting and collaborative editing. |
| Rich Text Format | .rtf | Universal, lightweight text files with basic formatting. | Cross-platform text sharing and basic formatting. |
| LaTeX Source File | .tex | Markup language for scientific documents and typesetting. | Academic papers with complex math or structure. |
| Plain Text | .txt | No formatting, only raw text data. | Simplest documentation or notes. |

Important Notes

- Always follow institutional or publisher guidelines for preferred formats.
- PDF is most suitable for finalized, non-editable distribution.
- Include all supplementary figures, tables, and references in a compatible format.
- Check for font embedding and layout preservation when converting files.
- Consider accessibility features and file size for digital distribution.