

pdfbook2 is a command-line program that can turn an ordinary PDF into a booklet.

You'll often see zine PDF files distributed in two formats: A **screen reading** PDF looks like an ordinary file, with all the pages in order. A **print-imposed** PDF is designed to be printed double-sided and folded into a booklet.

Adobe Acrobat has a print option that lets you turn a screen reading PDF into a booklet. But for some reason it adds padding around the edges, making each page slightly off-center.

pdfbook2 solves that problem, generating print-imposed PDFs easily. You'll need to use the command line, but it's simple enough for a beginner.

➔ Install pdfbook2 on Ubuntu (and similar)

Open a terminal window and run the following command to install **texlive-extra-utils**, a collection of utilities for the TeX typesetting environment. Installation will take a few minutes.

```
sudo apt-get install texlive-extra-utils
```

➔ Install pdfbook2 on macOS

If you haven't already installed the **Homebrew** package manager, go to <https://brew.sh> and copy the provided line of code. Open **Terminal**, paste the line of code into the window, and press enter. You'll need to enter your password to continue.

You'll be asked to install **XCode Command Line Tools**, which requires 3 GB of hard drive space. When installation is done, follow the prompts in the terminal to finish installing Homebrew.

Run the following command to install **MacTeX**, a version of the TeX typesetting environment for macOS. It uses 1.3 GB of hard drive space.

```
brew install --cask mactex
```

Restart your computer, then reopen Terminal.

➔ Create a print-imposed booklet PDF

To check whether pdfbook2 is installed properly, type the following command in the terminal and press enter. You should see a brief list of options.

```
pdfbook2 --help
```

Move your zine PDF to the desktop. Since you're making a booklet with four pages per sheet of paper, the number of pages in your document should be a multiple of four.

Now run the following command in the terminal, which will change your current directory to the desktop. (That's a tilde before the slash.)

```
cd ~/Desktop
```

Run the following pdfbook2 command, replacing "My_Zine.pdf" with the filename of your PDF.

```
pdfbook2 "My_Zine.pdf"
```

When the program finishes running, you'll see a new PDF file on your desktop that ends with "-book.pdf". When you open the file, it should look like this:



You can add options to your command to adjust the margins, paper size, and whether to use the short-edge setting when printing. Here's an example, which should be entered as one line:

```
pdfbook2 --paper=letterpaper --short-edge  
--outer-margin=20 --inner-margin=20  
--top-margin=20 --bottom-margin=20 "My_Zine.pdf"
```

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