

1.5 Managing Acrobat Form Properties

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Generic Acrobat Form Properties

Once form fields have been arranged in Adobe Acrobat, their properties can be edited through the 'Form Field Properties' window. When using **Prepare Form**, either double-click the form element or right-click the form element and select 'Properties'. Fields of any type will have 'General', 'Appearance', 'Position' and 'Actions' tabs within this 'Properties' window. We will briefly cover the noteworthy features of each tab.

General

The form field name can be edited in the 'General' tab of the 'Properties' menu. Within this tab, users can also set the 'Tooltip' text (displayed when hovering the mouse cursor over a form field) and other common properties. The common properties include options for form field visibility, 'Orientation' (or rotation) and the ability to toggle the form field as 'Read Only' or 'Required'.

Appearance

In this tab, the form field border and input area can be adjusted for style and color. Input or displayed text pertaining to the form element can also be adjusted here for font size, style and color.

Position

The position of the top left corner of the selected form field can be adjusted here based on 'to-scale' measurements. Toggling 'Do not change height and width' will move the entire form field when adjusting its position.

Actions

Programmable functions for all form field inputs can be set in the 'Actions' tab. Here, a 'Trigger' can be selected, such as the click of a mouse or focus of a cursor. Once an action, such as opening a web page or file, is selected for that trigger, the action can be saved by selecting 'Add'.

Contextual Acrobat Form Properties

Some form field properties within Adobe Acrobat are unique to certain types of form elements. Most of these contextual features are often found in the 'Options' tab of each form field's 'Properties' dialogue window.

Text Field Properties

Settings specific to editing text fields are found in the 'Options' and 'Format' tabs of the 'Text Field Properties' window.

The Text Field Options Tab Includes:

- Alignment (for aligning typed inputs within the text field).
- The 'multi-line' checkbox (to enable multiple line text inputs).
- And the 'character limit' checkbox (for limiting the number of characters entered into form field inputs).

The Text Field Format Tab Includes:

- Forced format categories, including the 'Special' category. 'Arbitrary Mask', found in the 'Special' format category allows users to input special formatting codes for text field

inputs. The letter 'O', for example, can be typed in this options menu to limit the text field to only alphanumeric inputs.

Radio Button and Checkbox Properties

The radio button and checkbox form elements have an identical 'Check Box Properties' window. In the 'Options' tab of this window, the 'Check Box Style' can be selected from a dropdown menu.

Dropdown Menu and List Box Properties

Users can add line items to dropdown and list box form fields with the 'Options' tab of the 'Properties' menu.

To Add and Sort Line Items to Either Form Field:

1. In the 'Options' tab, type the item name under 'Item'. Select 'Add' and repeat this step for other list items.
2. To change the display order of listed items, a user can use the 'Up' and 'Down' arrows to move an item up or down the list.

Also located in the dropdown menu and list box 'Options' tab, 'Sort items' can be selected to alphabetically sort all list items. The 'multiple selection' checkbox can additionally enable multiple list items to be selected by the end-user.

Conclusion

In this module, we've covered general Acrobat form properties as well as form properties specific to text fields, checkboxes and list formats when editing PDF documents. This concludes the first unit of the Adobe Acrobat Accessibility Guide, *Getting Started with Adobe Acrobat*. The upcoming first module of *Making an Accessible PDF* will continue the tutorial series with an overview of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.