

pdftk (manipulate PDF files)

This tool lets you do all sorts of things with PDF documents, such as split, merge or rotate them, apply a background watermark, burst documents into single pages, etc. I mostly use *pdftk* to split PDF files, which is done like so:

```
pdftk in.pdf cat 2-8 output out.pdf
```

This will extract pages 2 through 8 from *in.pdf* and save them as *out.pdf*. The input file *in.pdf* will not be altered. You can use any other page range in place of 2-8. Leave out the range to select the whole document.

Here is an example of how to merge PDF files:

```
pdftk in1.pdf in2.pdf cat output out.pdf
```

This will concatenate *in1.pdf* and *in2.pdf*, saving the result as *out.pdf*. If you want to merge individual page ranges, you have to assign handles to input files, like so:

```
pdftk A=in1.pdf B=in2.pdf cat A2-3 B4-5 \  
output out.pdf
```

This will merge pages 2-3 from *in1.pdf* with pages 4-5 from *in2.pdf* into *out.pdf*. The backslash means that the input is continued on the next line. You can use it when you type in long commands, but you don't have to.

This section has barely scratched the surface of what *pdftk* can do. The utility has an excellent →[*man*](#) page with lots of practical examples.