

Free Stuff

Recommended FREE software, tools, widgets, gadgets and gizmos

CutePDF - create your own PDF files

May 19th, 2005



The problem: You have a document you want to share with other people, how do you make sure that everyone can read it and that what you send is **exactly** what they will see. Word files are not intended for the purpose, there is no guarantee that the layout will be anything like how you intended when someone else views the file. HTML is a good candidate, but notorious for rendering differently in different browsers.

The solution: PDF - a format specifically designed for sharing documents. For once what you see is not only what you get, but will be what everyone else gets too.

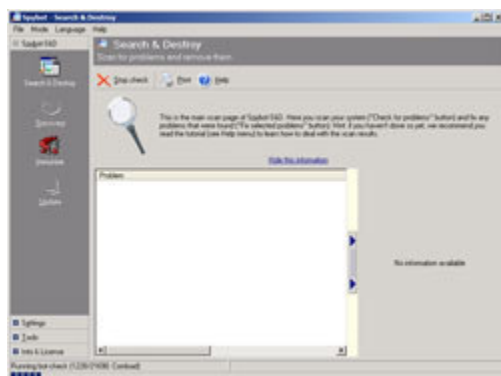
Adobe Acrobat, the professional PDF tool is very expensive and has a battery of powerful features, If you have the money to spare and you send a lot of files, then rush out and buy it. If, like me, you don't need the expensive features, but do want to be able to share documents reliably from time to time, then there are a number of other products which will do the job. I use [Jaws PDF](#), which is very good, has a PDF Editor available..... and a price tag attached. CutePDF is a good alternative, and (again, the magic word, FREE). highly recommended - everyone should get it. Installs as a printer driver and is painless to use.

From [CutePDF](#)

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Spybot-S&D

April 21st, 2005



“Spybot - Search & Destroy can detect and remove spyware of

different kinds from your computer. Spyware is a relatively new kind of threat that common anti-virus applications do not yet cover. If you see new toolbars in your Internet Explorer that you didn't intentionally install, if your browser crashes, or if your browser start page has changed without your knowing, you most probably have spyware. But even if you don't see anything, you may be infected, because more and more spyware is emerging that is silently tracking your surfing behaviour to create a marketing profile of you that will be sold to advertisement companies. Spybot-S&D is free, so there's no harm in trying to see if something snooped into your computer, too 😊”

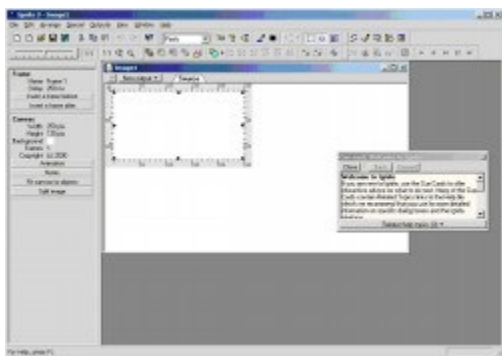
Gets rid of loads of hidden nasties, including ones you have been conned into, but may not have realised were there. Invaluable. Get it, and get it now.

Get it from [Patrick M. Kolla - Safer Networking](#)

Posted in [General](#), [Tim's Toys](#) | [Edit](#) | [No Comments](#) »

Ignite.

April 19th, 2005



The best recommendation I can make for Ignite is that I used it to optimise the photo you can see here. It does pretty nearly as good a job as Photoshop does, for a whole lot less money (it's what we call beerware, free to install, but the author would quite like it if you'd send him a tenner at some point 😊) and a lot smaller headache.

It's pretty straightforward to use, although you probably won't feel that way the very first time you use it, but trust me, it's worth persevering. And unlike most freeware, it actually has a help system, that even has information in it that works! Does it get any better than this?

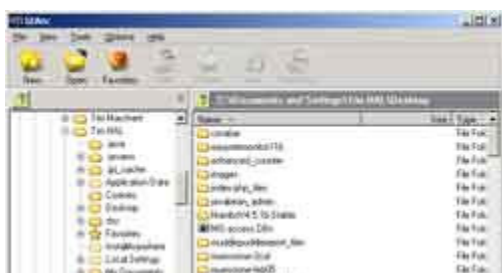
And as a final comment, I've got it, I've got it registered, with my real proper email address, and I haven't been pestered by the author any more than he says he will. Good eh?

Get it here - [Ignite](#)

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IZArk

April 19th, 2005





If you ever need to handle compressed archives this is just the ticket. Handles 7-ZIP, A, ACE, ARC, ARJ, B64, BH, BIN, BZ2, BZA, C2D, CAB, CDI, CPIO, DEB, ENC, GCA, GZ, GZA, HA, IMG, ISO, JAR, LHA, LIB, LZH, MDF, MBF, MIM, NRG, PAK, PDI, PK3, RAR, RPM, TAR, TAZ, TBZ, TGZ, TZ, UUE, WAR, XXE, YZ1, Z, ZIP, ZOO file types.

If you are using Windows XP, IZArk will manage zip files much faster than the native “compressed folders” seems able to.

A very handy application and the first software I can recall using which is produced in Bulgaria.

IZSoft says “*With a modern easy-to-use interface, IZArc provides support for most compressed and encoded files, as well as access to many powerful features and tools. It allows you to drag and drop files from and to Windows Explorer, create and extract archives directly in Windows Explorer, create multiple archives spanning disks, creating self-extracting archives, repair damaged zip archives, converting from one archive type to another, view and write comments and many more. IZArc has also build-in multilanguage support.*

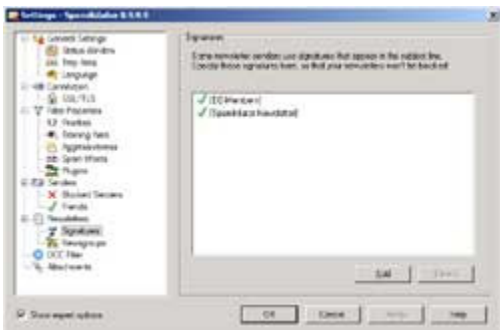
IZArc is the most complete archive utility available today.”

Get it from [IZSOft](#)

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[Spamihilator](#)

April 16th, 2005



Up until I installed this I was getting hundreds of spam messages a day, and a high percentage were conning their way through Outlook’s filters.

Spamihilator has only been on my machine a few hours as I type, so the jury is still out, as it were, but so far, this is a very impressive application. Its filters are very effective and it has an excellent, easy to use interface coupled with good documentation. So, for example, when I needed to work out how to permit newsletters to pass through unmolested, I found the answer in a few seconds.

...update 17th April 2005, it is a keeper, this one. It takes a little work to tune the powerful set of options to tell it to respect newsletters and such, but it is already purging well over 90% of the crap I had been getting...

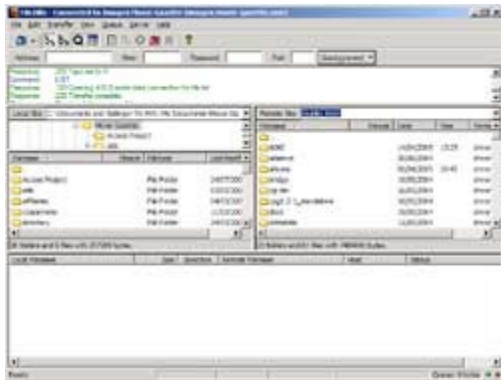
It works, it does what it says it does. Bloody good.

Get it from [Spamihilator](#)

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[Filezilla](#)

April 16th, 2005



I have tried various FTP clients over the years and for a long time I used [LeechFTP](#), it was a little bit clunky to use, but very reliable. I liked it, it was like an old friend and I was used to its little foibles, like occasionally throwing up an error message in German, when there was no error.

Leech is no longer being developed or supported so, in the end, I decided that I should move on. I tried various alternatives, including the leading commercial FTP product. Which I liked, right up until it stopped connecting after I ran a Windows Update. I couldn't figure out how to fix it, I simply couldn't find the relevant check box to tick. I did manage to fix Filezilla, quickly and easily.

I don't hesitate to recommend Filezilla. It is very good, reliable and well specced. But I don't think I will ever get to be as fond of it as I was of Leech.

Get [Filezilla](#)

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[Nvu WYSIWYG HTML Editor](#)

April 15th, 2005



Nvu (pronounced N-view, for a "new view") is a complete Web Authoring System that combines web file management and easy-to-use WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get) web page editing. Nvu is designed to be extremely easy to use, making it ideal for non-technical computer users who want to create an attractive, professional-looking web site without needing to know HTML or web coding.

When I create web pages, I normally code by hand using [Araneae](#), I fall back on Microsoft FrontPage, which does help with some tasks like manipulation of complex table layouts. Up until now, I had not seen a freeware WYSIWYG editor which convinced me that it was a worthwhile, usable tool and something which I could really recommend. I have suggested to people that they *try* Mozilla Composer, but I don't think it has ever been a very satisfying.

[Earth Screen Saver](#)

April 13th, 2005



I love this, I have it set to show the current view from over my house. Fantastic picture, and you can customise the view to show nightside lights and stuff. There really isn't much more to say about it. It's just a screensaver.

Get it from [Fourmilab](#)

Take a look at Fourmilab's craters screensaver, that is fun too.

If neither of those do it for you try:-

[Lizard's Lens](#), which I kept seeing in the computer dept in John Lewis. Creates a moving lens effect - not much cop if you are wanting to hide your stuff from prying eyes, but very pretty.



Or, how about [Johnny Castaway](#) a venerable, and very entertaining screen saver, I can't think that there are many other screen savers which have a web site dedicated to them!

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