

BEST PRACTICES FOR TRANSLATING PDFs IN PAIRAPHRASE

OVERVIEW

PDFs can be a little tricky because they aren't all built the same way. Follow these best practices to get the cleanest, most accurate translations in Pairaphrase.

1. UNDERSTAND THE TYPES OF PDFs

1. **Digital PDFs** are created on a computer—think Word, Google Docs, or InDesign exports. The text is fully editable and searchable, and these are the easiest to translate accurately.
2. **Layered PDFs** retain design layers—text, images, and backgrounds are separate elements. You can usually extract content cleanly, but layout can get tricky during translation.
3. **Scanned PDFs** are just pictures of pages—the 'text' is actually a photo of text. You can't select or copy the words. These files need OCR (Optical Character Recognition) to extract the text.
4. **OCR'd PDFs** are scanned files that have already been processed through OCR. That means they're technically searchable, but accuracy still depends on how "clean" the OCR was.
5. **Flattened PDFs** are basically "glued together". Text, images, and backgrounds are fused—so you can't easily edit or extract anything. These usually require OCR.
6. **Interactive PDFs** include things like forms, buttons, or clickable elements. While these can sometimes be editable, they may also come with complications during translation.
7. **Hybrid PDFs** are mixed—some pages or parts are editable, while others are scanned images. You'll need to handle each section differently.
8. **Secured PDFs** have password protection or restrictions on copying, editing, or printing. You may need permission or to unlock them before processing.

2. WHENEVER POSSIBLE, UPLOAD THE ORIGINAL FILE

If the PDF was created in another program (e.g., InDesign, Word, or PowerPoint), upload the **original file** instead of the PDF. This helps Pairaphrase preserve the formatting and layout much more faithfully than converting from a flattened or scanned PDF.

3. PDF CONVERSION SETTINGS: RETAIN FLOWING TEXT VS. PAGE LAYOUT

In your Pairaphrase **User Profile**, you'll find two settings for how PDFs are processed:

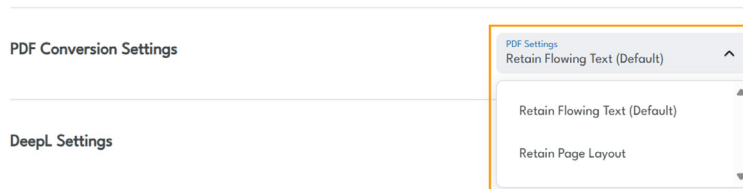
Retain Flowing Text

- Best for digital PDFs created in Word, Google Docs, or other text-based software.
- Focuses on keeping the text easy to edit and flow naturally in the translated file.
- Ideal if you need to reuse or reformat the translation later.

Retain Page Layout

- Best for PDFs that are heavily formatted, generated by specialized software, or include charts, tables, or database outputs.
- Focuses on making the translated file visually match the original layout as closely as possible.
- May result in less “flowing” or editable text, but preserves the look of the document.

Tip: Try both options with the same file to see which result best meets your needs. Sometimes one option produces cleaner text, while the other keeps the design intact.



4. HOW PAIRAPHRASE HANDLES PDFs BEHIND THE SCENES

When you upload a PDF, Pairaphrase converts it into a Word (.docx) file for translation. After you finish post-editing, you can:

- **Download as a Word file** (default), or
- **Save to Google Drive as a PDF** to get your translated file back in PDF format.

5. RUN A QUICK CHECK AFTER TRANSLATION

Always give your translated PDF a once-over:

- Make sure no text is missing or duplicated.
- Check spacing, line breaks, and special characters.
- If the OCR was applied, double-check names, numbers, and unusual words, they can be misread.

SUMMARY

- Use original source files when possible.
- Choose **Flowing Text** for editable documents, **Page Layout** for design-heavy documents.
- Check carefully the final output when translating scanned or flattened PDFs, since the OCR was applied.
- Download as Word if you need to make adjustments to the layout (many by simply reducing the font size, most things are solved) or export back to PDF via Google Drive.

With these best practices, you'll get smoother, faster results translating PDFs in Pairaphrase.

Contact:

For more information or support for your translation needs, [contact us](#)