Note: This discussion is based on the latest version of macOS Sonoma, 14.6.1. Some illustrations may differ when using other versions of macOS. Also, some illustrations may be from screenshots on my iMac or MacBook Pro. Credits: See the credits at the end of this presentation.
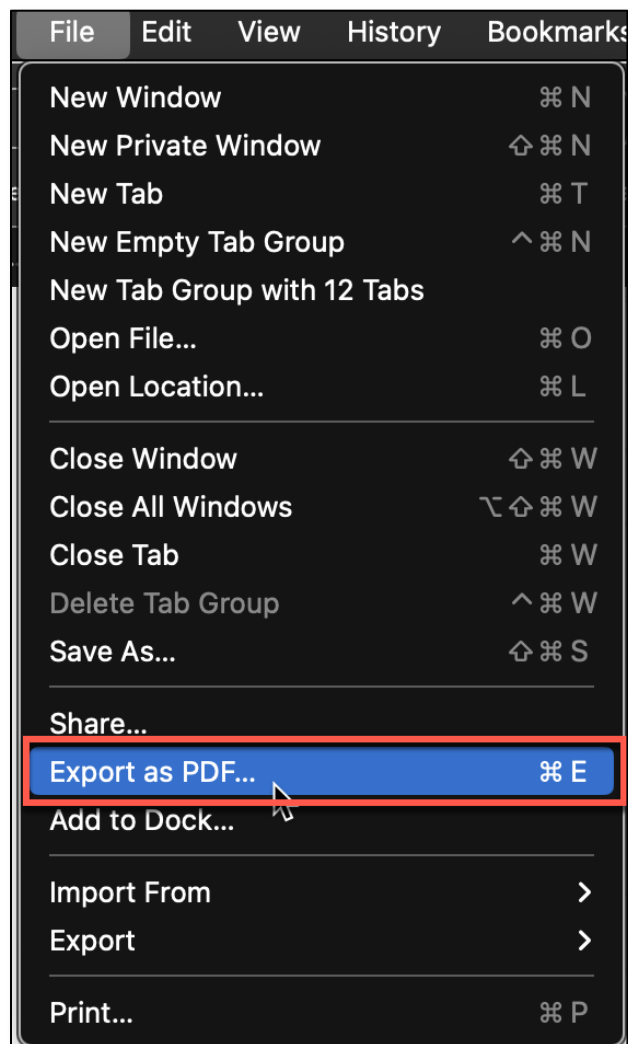
Adobe's PDF (Portable Document Format) has been around since 1992 and has become a universal standard for saving content and documents of all kinds.

I read a lot of content, especially web articles about the Mac, and I save a lot of them as a PDF for reference. Also, as you've seen from my Beginners SIG/Mac Basics postings on the Double Click website, I also save my Microsoft Word and other files as a PDF. There are several ways to create these PDF files, and that's the topic of this presentation.

Save a Safari Webpage as a PDF

All web browsers (like my preferred one, Safari) offer a way, more or less, to save a webpage as a PDF. In Safari, there are a couple:
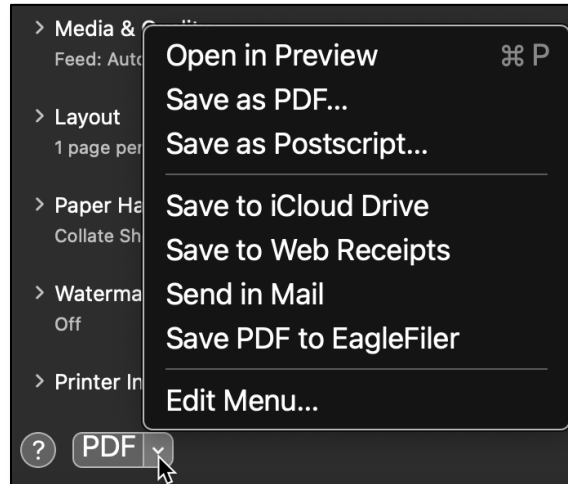
1. Go to the **File** menu and select the **Export as PDF...** option (keyboard shortcut: **Command+E, ⌘E**). The **Save** dialog is then displayed, giving you the option where to save the PDF file.

Safari: File > Export as PDF...

2. Go to the **File** menu and select the **Print…** option (keyboard shortcut: **Command+P**, ⌘**P**). When the Print dialog is displayed, there are two more options both of which involve the **PDF** button at the bottom of the dialog:

- Click on the small downward-pointing arrow that's part of the PDF button to display another dialog.

Safari: File > Print > Click PDF Arrow

- One of the options is **Save as PDF…** again displaying the **Save** dialog giving you giving you the option where to save the PDF file.

- The other option is to choose **Open in Preview**. This will open the PDF file in the **Preview** app where you can do some editing if desired before saving the PDF file. This is the setting I prefer to use, especially to highlight items. I'll discuss Open in Preview in the next section.

- What happens if you skip the small downward-pointing arrow that's part of the PDF button and click on the PDF button instead? Doing this brings up the **Save** dialog to choose a location to save the PDF file.
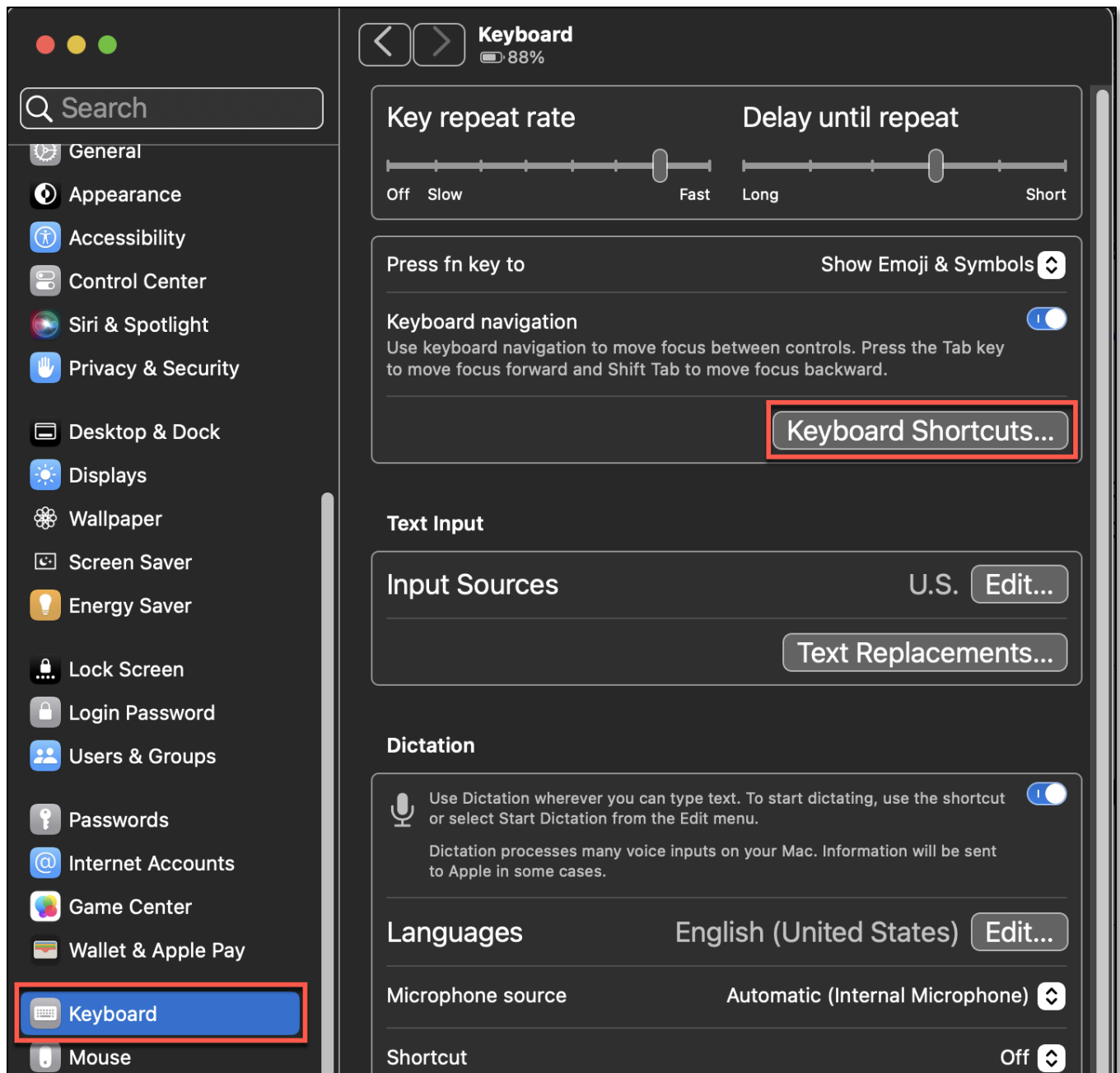
Safari "Open in Preview" Shortcut

Among the various options in Safari's PDF button dialog, you may have noticed that mine has a **Command+P** (⌘**P**) keyboard shortcut next to the **Open in Preview** option. This allows me to hold down the **Command** key and tap **P** twice quickly to go through the Print dialog and open the PDF in Preview. I discussed this in my January 2023 presentation, so I'll summarize briefly here.

To assign the **Command+P** (⌘**P**) keyboard shortcut to the **Open in Preview** option, do the following:

- Open the **System Settings** app.
- Choose **Keyboard** from the list on the left.
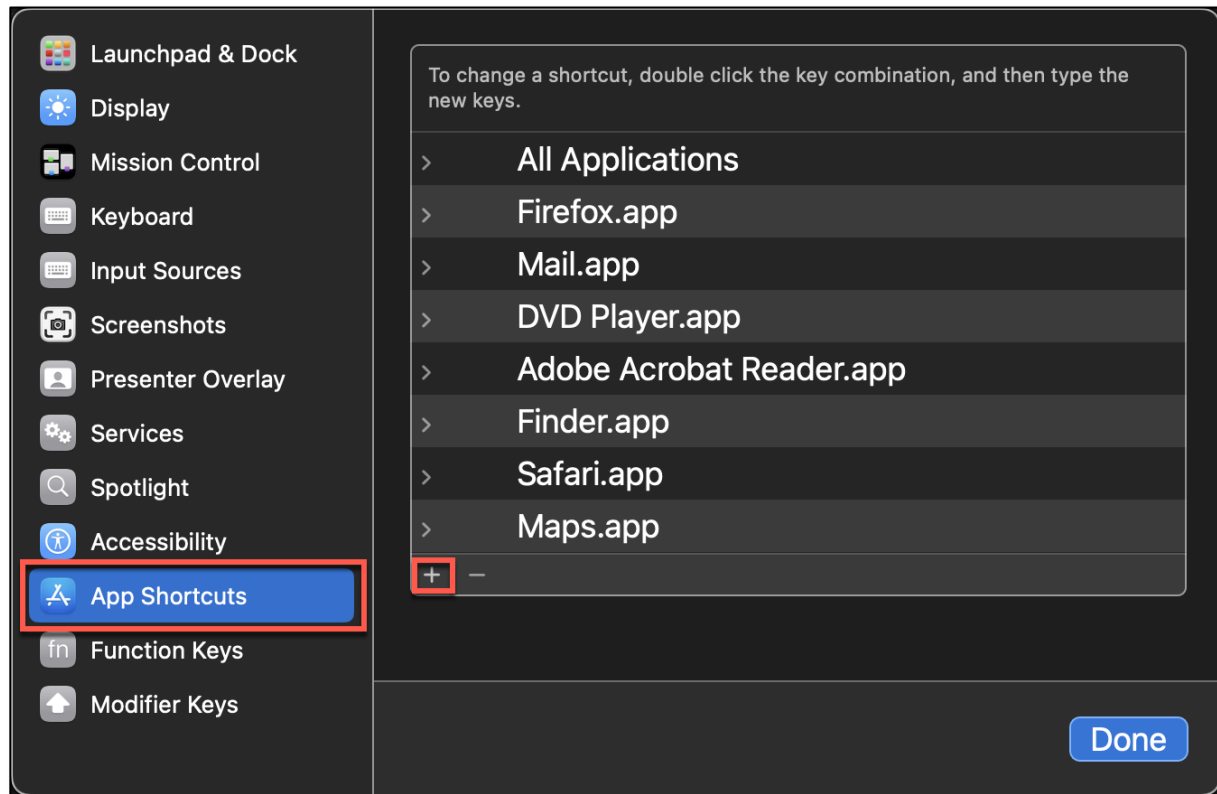- In the second group on the right, click the **Keyboard Shortcuts…** button. (See the image on the next page.)

System Settings > Keyboard > Keyboard Shortcuts
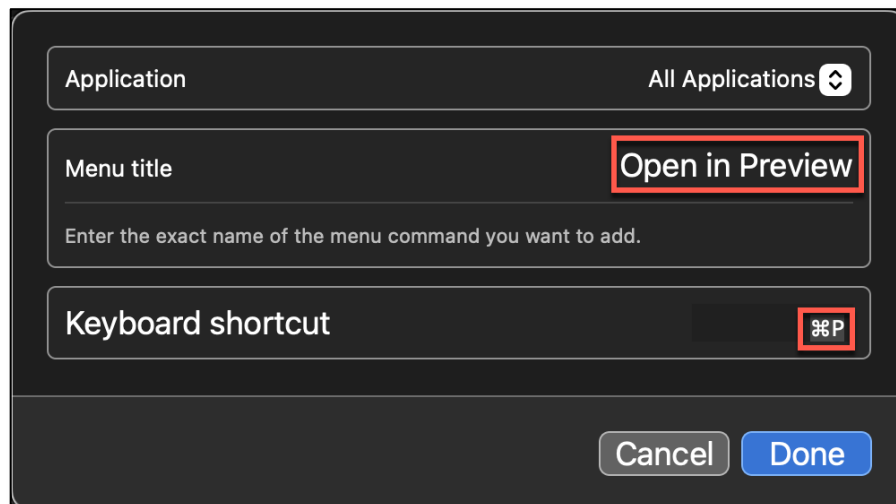
- In the dialog that's presented, choose **App Shortcuts** from the list on the left.

- In the group on the right, click the small **+** button at the bottom left corner.

System Settings > Keyboard > Keyboard Shortcuts > App Shortcuts > + Button

- Another dialog is then displayed with the first item in the group, **All Applications**, selected by default. In the **Menu title** section, type **Open in Preview**. (If you would rather use the **Save as PDF...** option instead, type that. (Then in the Keyboard shortcut section, type ⌘**P**. Next, click the **Done** button.

System Settings … Keyboard Shortcuts > App Shortcuts > Open in Preview
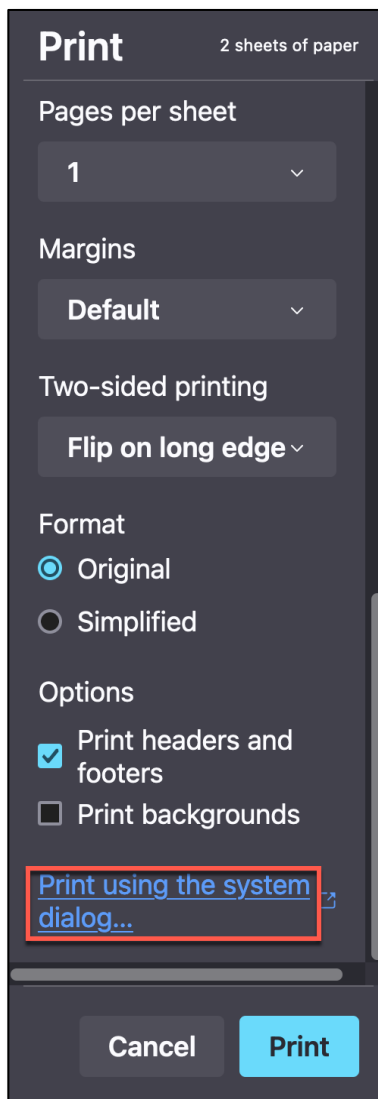
- Finally, close the System Settings app.

The **Open in Preview** keyboard shortcut is now ready to be used. I find this shortcut so handy that I turned it into a macro (using the Keyboard Maestro app). I invoke it with a keyboard shortcut to run the macro and center the resulting PDF on my screen.

Save Other Web App Pages as a PDF

The Firefox and Chrome web apps are popular (and the two that I use occasionally), so here's how to use them to save a webpage as a PDF:

Firefox. This app doesn't have a convenient **Export as PDF** option. You must use Firefox's **Print** option:
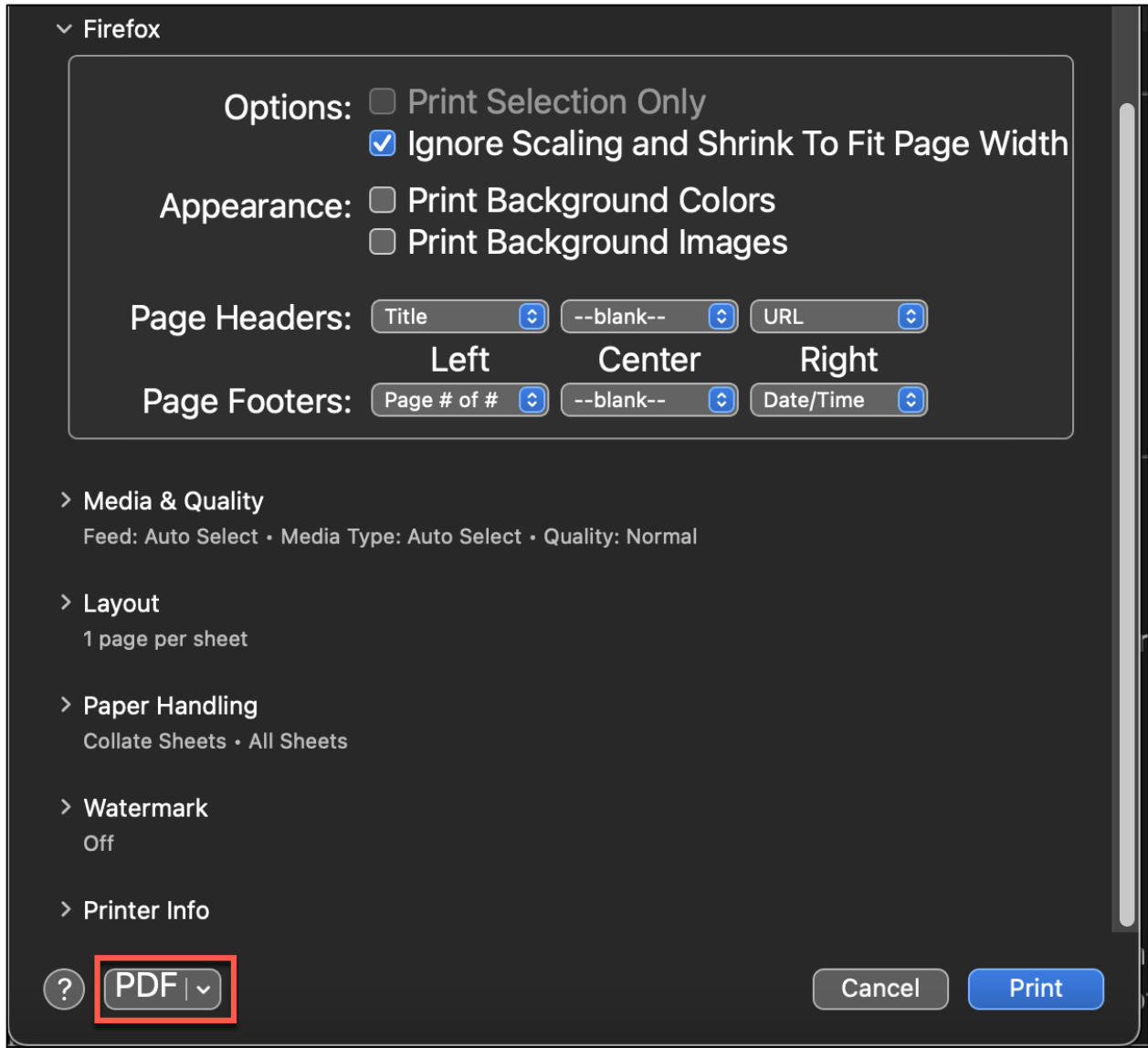
- Go to the File menu and select the **Print...** option (⌘**P**).

- Then in the Print dialog, scroll to the bottom of the list on the right and click on the **Print using the system dialog...**. This will bring up the same Print dialog as you're used to seeing (like in Safari).

Firefox > Print using the system dialog...

- In the resulting Print dialog, Firefox adds some additional options as shown in the image below. Still, the PDF button and its the small downward-pointing arrow is present at the bottom of the dialog.
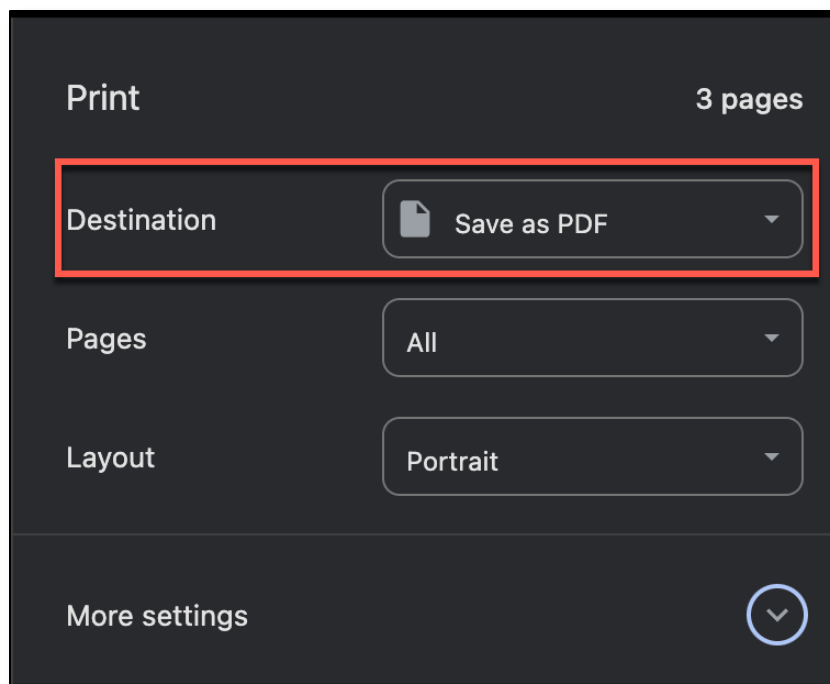

Firefox > Print Dialog > Additional Items & PDF Button

Google Chrome. Like Firefox, Chrome doesn't have a convenient **Export as PDF** option. You must use it's **Print** option:
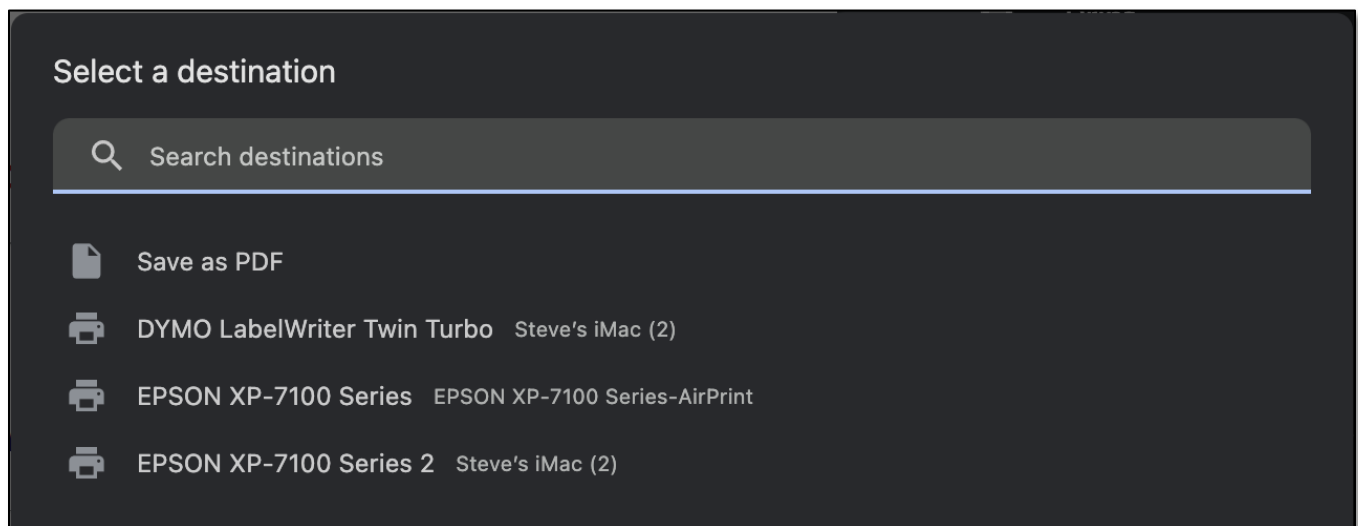
- Go to the File menu and select the **Print...** option (⌘**P**).

- Then in the Print dialog in the list on the right next to the **Destination** item, you will find a **Save as PDF** button. Then just click on **Save** or **Cancel**. (See the image on the next page.)

Chrome > Print Dialog > Destination

- If **Save as PDF** isn't displayed, click on the **Destination** button to reveal all its options (your default printer and a **See more...** option). Choosing **See more...** brings up a **Select a destination** window with options to choose one your printing devices, if you have more than one, in addition to Save as PDF. There's also a **Cancel** button to close the window.

Chrome > Print Dialog > Destination > Select a Destination

What About Using "Save" or "Save As" in Web Browsers?

You might expect one of these options under an app's **File** menu might offer the option to save a file as a PDF. Unfortunately, this doesn't appear to be the case for web browsers. "Save as PDF" is occasionally found in other apps, although so far, I've only found it in Microsoft Word.

Summary

There are several ways to create PDF versions of files created by various apps. All involve using the app's **File** menu and then choosing between whichever PDF options are available (**Export to PDF** and/or using the PDF option available under the **Print** dialog).

Next Presentation

This presentation focused on web apps. Next month, we'll look at saving files as a PDF in other apps.

Have a favorite Mac Tip or utility? Please feel free to pass it along, and I'll see if I can work it into a future presentation.

If you have any suggestions for presentation topics, including macOS utilities, please contact me at slp4668@gmail.com.

–Steve Parker

Credits:

How to Turn Almost Anything Into a PDF on a Mac
https://macmost.com/how-to-turn-almost-anything-into-a-pdf-on-a-mac.html