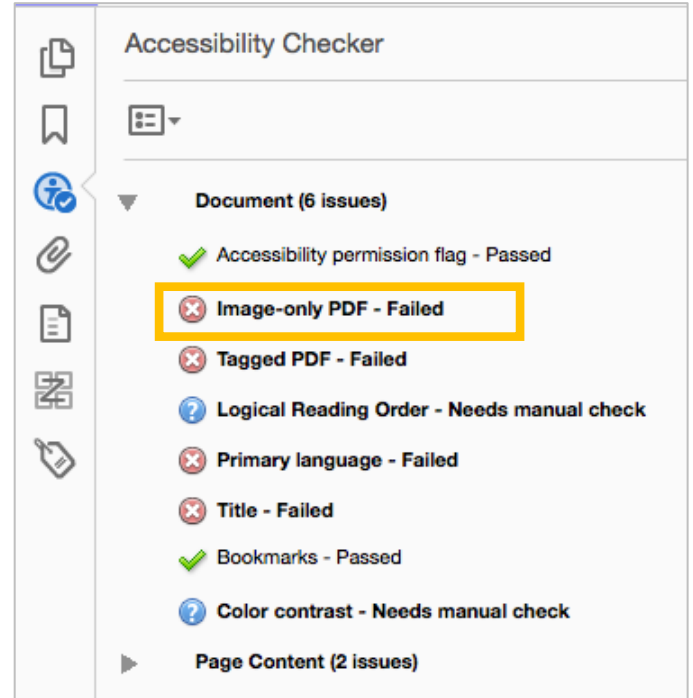# Fixing Image-only PDFS: Text/Character Recognition in Acrobat DC

Do I have an image-only PDF?

Often you will inherit a PDF file that was scanned as an image of text. This means that a sighted person can read it, but a screen reader cannot. You can tell if you are in this situation in a couple of ways. If you try to copy some of the text in your document and paste it into a new document, you will find you are unable to highlight just the text you want. Also, if you try to run the accessibility checker, you will get the Image-only PDF error. You will not be able to continue fixing accessibility until this error has been fixed.
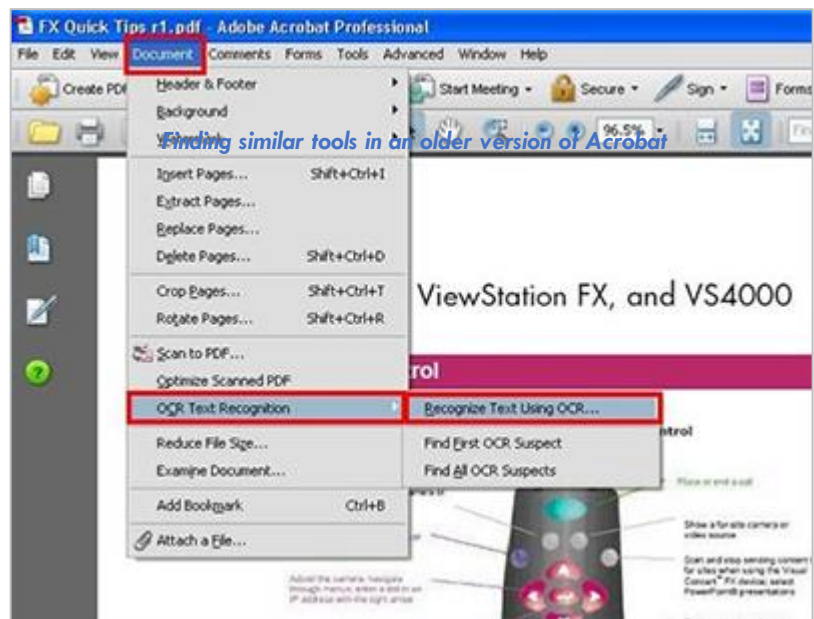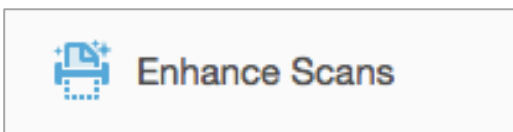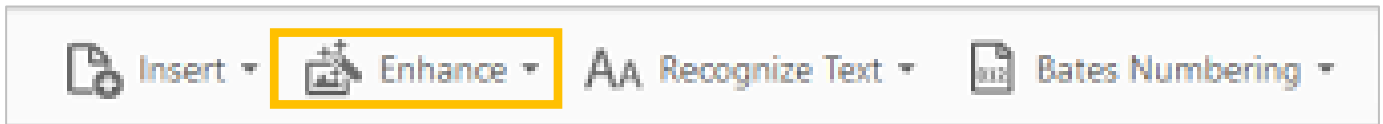

Fixing the Error

Once you 've established that you have an image-only PDF, you need to do a few things **before working on your other accessibility issues**.

1. Close the Accessibility toolset for now.

2. Open the *Enhance Scan* toolset (Older versions of Acrobat may not have this tool, but they might have *Text Recognition* or *OCR Text Recognition* toolset. These tools aren't as robust, but they may work with very clear scans, so they are worth a try).
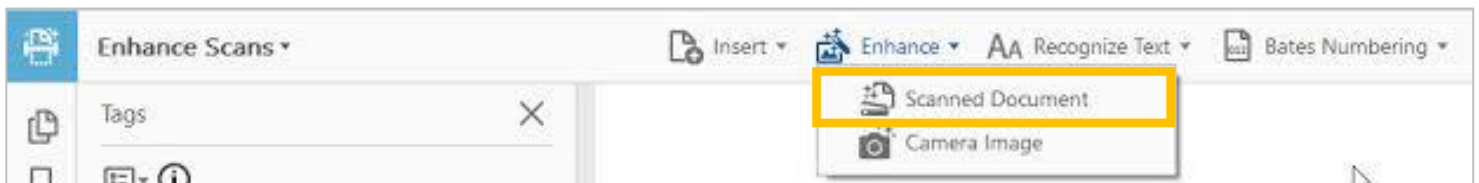
What the toolset button looks like in Acrobat Professional DC

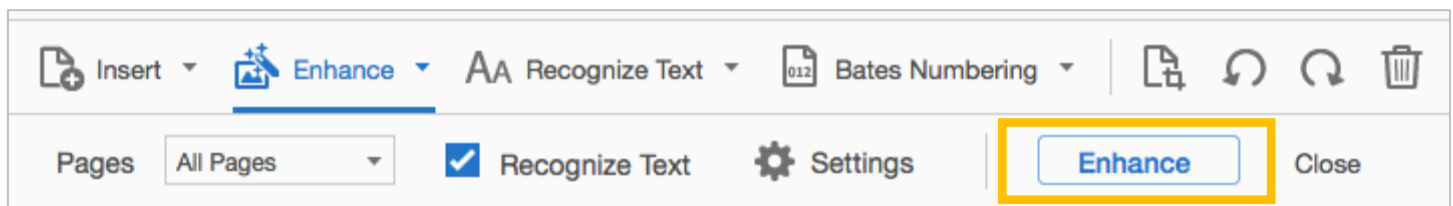*Finding similar tools in an older version of Acrobat*

3. A new toolset should appear across the top. Click on *Enhance*.

4. A pull-down menu should appear with options. Select *Scanned Document*.

5. A subset of tools should then appear below. Make sure to check the box for *Recognize Text* and then click the *Enhance* button.

6. The computer will process for a few seconds to a minute. It will straighten your image and enhance contrast to improve readability. Then Optical Character Recognition will automatically run and try to identify text in your image. When it is finished, you should be able to highlight your text. If all of the text can be highlighted, close the *Enhance Scan/Text Recognition* toolset and open your accessibility toolset.

7. Continue with the accessibility guide for PDFs.

Note: If your original image was of poor quality, you may not be able to highlight all of your text. If any text does not highlight, the computer was unable to process it. This means a screen reader will be unable to read it. At this point, please save the file **as a new version** and send it and the original to webaccessibility@brandeis.edu. We will evaluate if anything more can be done for the file.