

Resources & Templates



How to Make One PDF File and Keep Your Documents Ready

Why this matters

When a position opens, you should not be using that moment to figure out how to scan papers, rename files, or combine attachments. The goal is to already have clean PDFs saved and to be able to create one complete application packet quickly. Adobe Scan is built for scanning paper documents into PDFs, Apple supports scanning documents on iPhone, and Mac Preview can combine PDFs into one file.

What every member should keep ready

You should keep your documents in **two formats**:

1. Separate PDF files for each document
2. One combined PDF with your full application packet

The separate files help when a program asks for only one or two items. The combined file helps when you need to send everything quickly in one attachment.

Tools like iLovePDF and Smallpdf are specifically designed to merge multiple files into one PDF, and Mac Preview can do this as well.

Best tools members can use

Option 1: Adobe Scan

Adobe Scan is a good option for members who need to turn paper documents into clean PDFs using a phone camera. Adobe describes it as a mobile scanner app for creating PDF scans.

Option 2: iPhone + Mac built-in tools

Apple supports scanning documents on iPhone, and Preview on Mac can combine PDFs by adding pages or entire files together. This is one of the easiest workflows for members already using Apple devices.

Option 3: iLovePDF

iLovePDF offers an online PDF merge tool that lets users combine PDF files into one document. This is a simple option for members who want a fast web-based tool.

Option 4: Smallpdf

Smallpdf also provides an online merge tool for combining PDF files, which is helpful for members who want a simple browser-based workflow.

Step-by-Step: How to make one PDF file

Step 1: Scan every paper document into PDF

If any document is still on paper, scan it first using a phone-based PDF scanner like Adobe Scan or a built-in iPhone scan feature. The goal is to make every document digital before you start combining files.

Step 2: Rename every file clearly

Before combining anything, rename each file so you know exactly what it is. Use names like:

- LastName_FirstName_CV
- LastName_FirstName_MSPE
- LastName_FirstName_Transcript
- LastName_FirstName_USMLE
- LastName_FirstName_ECFMG
- LastName_FirstName_Passport

This saves time later and makes your documents easier to send individually

Step 3: Put the files in the right order

Arrange your documents in the order you want a program to review them:

Cover letter

CV

Personal statement

ERAS application copy

Transcript

MSPE

USMLE or COMLEX transcript

ECFMG certificate if applicable

Passport copy

Step 4: Merge them into one PDF

Use Preview on Mac, iLovePDF, or Smallpdf to combine the files into one application packet. Apple explains how Preview can combine PDFs, while iLovePDF and Smallpdf both provide online merge tools.

Step 5: Save both versions

After you make the full packet, keep:

- the **combined PDF**
- the **separate PDFs**

That way you are ready whether a program asks for one file or several attachments.

Recommended Workflows by Device

If you use iPhone and Mac

Scan documents on iPhone, then combine them in Preview on Mac. Apple supports both of these steps directly.

If you use Android or Windows

Scan with Adobe Scan, then merge with iLovePDF or Smallpdf. Adobe provides the scanning tool, and iLovePDF or Smallpdf can combine the files online.

If you want one simple approach

Use one scanning app plus one merge tool:

- Scan with **Adobe Scan**
- Merge with **iLovePDF** or **Smallpdf**

Best practices for members

- Keep one folder with all current PDFs
- Keep one combined application packet ready
- Update your packet whenever a document changes
- Rename files clearly before sending
- Make sure every scanned file is readable and not blurry
- Keep both separate files and the combined file ready at all times

Email Template: Request for MSPE and Transcript

Subject: Request for MSPE and Medical School Transcript

Dear [Registrar / Dean's Office / Student Affairs Team],

I hope you are doing well. I am reaching out to request a copy of my MSPE and my official medical school transcript.

I did not match this cycle, and I am preparing my documents for post-SOAP and off-cycle residency opportunities. Some programs may request these materials directly outside of ERAS, so I would like to have them ready as soon as possible.

My information is below:

Full Name: [Your Full Name]
Date of Birth: [MM/DD/YYYY]
Graduation Date: [Month Year]
Student ID Number: [If applicable]

Please let me know the process for obtaining these documents, whether there are any required forms or fees, and whether they can be sent directly to me or to a residency program if needed.

Thank you very much for your help and support.

Sincerely,
[Your Full Name]
[Phone Number]
[Email Address]

Email Template: Request for an Updated Letter of Recommendation

Subject: Request for Updated Letter of Recommendation

Dear Dr. [Last Name],

I hope you are doing well. Thank you again for previously supporting me with a letter of recommendation. I truly appreciate your time and advocacy.

I did not match this cycle, and I am continuing to apply to post-SOAP and off-cycle residency opportunities. I wanted to ask whether you would be willing to provide an updated letter of recommendation dated for [Month Year].

Because some programs may request materials directly outside of ERAS, having an updated letter available would be very helpful. If you would prefer not to send the letter directly to me, I completely understand. In that case, would you be comfortable with me sharing your contact information with programs so they may reach out to you directly if needed?

Thank you again for your support. I sincerely appreciate your help during this process.

Warm regards,
[Your Full Name]
[Phone Number]
[Email Address]

Email Template: Applying to a Residency Program with Attached Files

Subject: Application for Open [PGY Level] [Specialty]
Position

Dear Dr. [Last Name] and Program Coordinator,

I hope you are doing well. I am writing to express my interest in the open [PGY level] position in [Specialty] at [Program Name].

I have attached my application materials for your review, including my cover letter, CV, personal statement, copy of my ERAS application, transcript, MSPE, score transcript, and supporting documents.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

I remain very interested in training in [Specialty], and I would be grateful for your consideration. I am [immediately available / available to start on ___] and can provide any additional documents right away if needed.

Sincerely,

[Your Full Name]

[Phone Number]

[Email Address]

Cover Letter Template for Post-SOAP or Off-Cycle Residency Positions

[Your Full Name]
[Phone Number]
[Email Address]
[City, State]
[Date]

Program Director
[Program Name]
[Institution Name]
[City, State]

Re: Application for Open [PGY-1 / PGY-2] Position in [Specialty]

Dear Dr. [Last Name],

I am writing to express my interest in the open [PGY level] position in [Specialty] at [Program Name]. I am very interested in this opportunity because [insert 1–2 specific reasons related to the program, location, mission, patient population, academic focus, or personal connection].

I am a graduate of [Medical School Name], and I remain committed to pursuing training in [Specialty]. Since my original ERAS application, I have continued to strengthen my candidacy through [recent clinical experience, work experience, research, volunteer work, observerships, certifications, Step 3, or other meaningful updates]. These experiences have helped me continue building my clinical knowledge, professionalism, and readiness for residency training.

I have attached my application materials for your review, including my [CV, personal statement, ERAS application, transcript, MSPE, official score transcript, ECFMG certificate if applicable, and any other supporting documents]. If any additional materials are needed, I would be happy to provide them promptly.

I would also like to highlight that I am [immediately available / available to relocate quickly / available to begin on ____]. I would be grateful for the opportunity to be considered for this position and to speak further about how I may contribute to your program. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

[Your Full Name]

Shorter Version

[Your Full Name]

[Phone Number]

[Email Address]

[City, State]

[Date]

Program Director

[Program Name]

[Institution Name]

[City, State]

Re: Application for Open [PGY-1 / PGY-2] Position in [Specialty]

Dear Dr. [Last Name],

I am writing to express my interest in the open [PGY level] position in [Specialty] at [Program Name]. I am a graduate of [Medical School Name] and remain committed to training in [Specialty].

Since my original application, I have continued to strengthen my candidacy through [brief update]. I have attached my application materials for your review and would be grateful for your consideration.

I am [immediately available / available to relocate quickly / available to begin on ___] and would be happy to provide any additional materials if needed. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

[Your Full Name]

Fill-in Guide for Members

Opening sentence:

State the exact position and program.

“I am writing to express my interest in the open PGY-1 position in Internal Medicine at [Program Name].”

Why this program:

Add 1–2 specific reasons. Examples:

- strong community-based training
- commitment to underserved populations
- academic environment
- location
- personal connection to the area
- program mission

What is new since ERAS (September 2025):

This is where members should explain updates not fully reflected in their ERAS application or ERAS CV.

Examples:

- Step 3 completion
- new clinical experience
- research
- observership
- volunteer work
- certifications
- stronger availability
- updated work experience

Availability sentence:

“I am immediately available and able to relocate quickly if needed.”

Attachment sentence:

“I have attached my application materials for your review and would be happy to provide any additional documents promptly.”

Strong closing line

Thank you for your time and consideration. I would be grateful for the opportunity to be considered for this position.

Best Practices

- Keep it to **one page**
- **Tailor it to the specific program**
- **Mention updates not shown in ERAS**
- **Use a professional PDF file name like:**

`LastName_FirstName_CoverLetter_ProgramName`

