

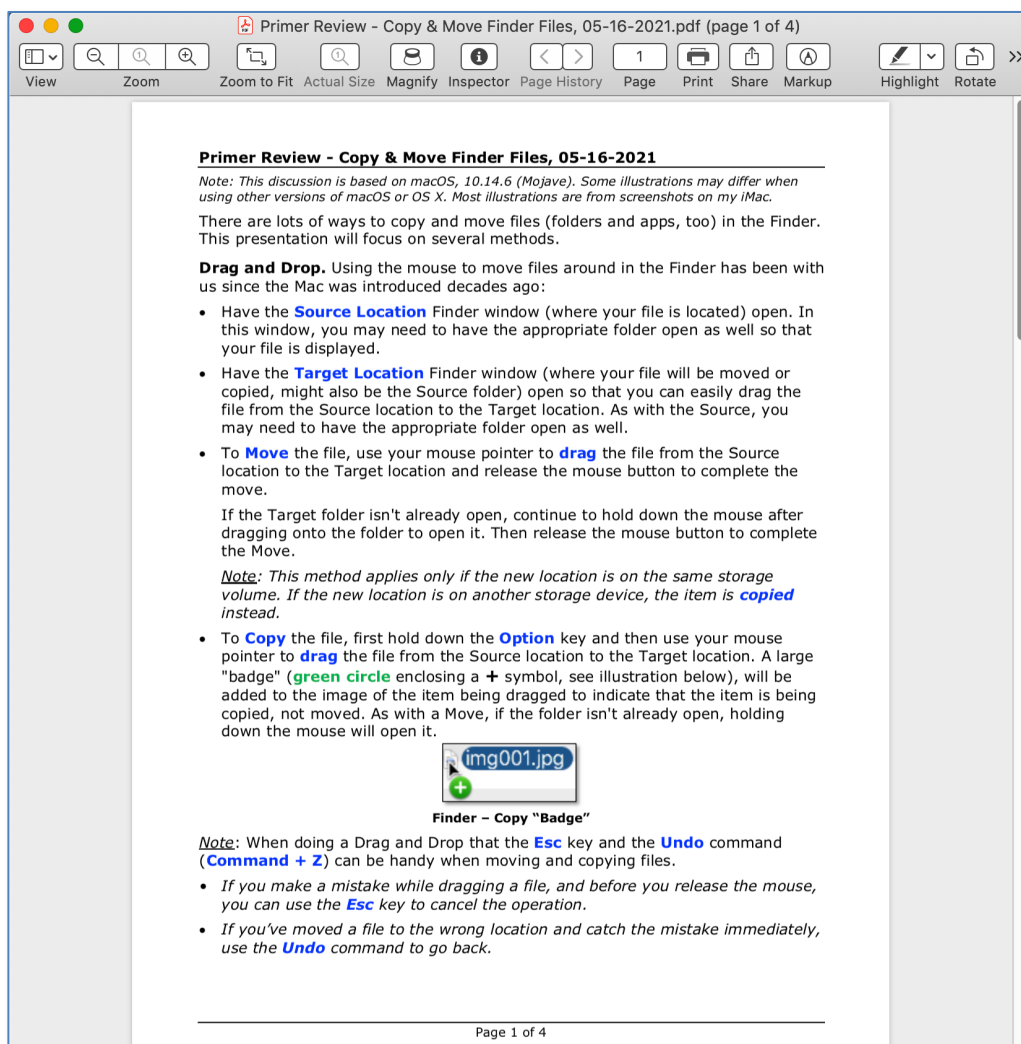
## Combining PDF Files, 09-18-2021

*Note: This discussion is based on macOS, 10.14.6 (Mojave). Some illustrations may differ when using other versions of macOS or OS X. Most illustrations are from screenshots on my iMac.*

I collect a lot of information from the web and usually store it as PDF files. On occasion, I need to combine several PDF files into one. I also need to rearrange the pages within a PDF. **Preview** has been my app of choice to do both of these, and I still use it to rearrange pages within a PDF. However, I find that I'm using a Finder **Quick Action** to combine PDFs (a topic that I touched on in my January 2021 presentation). Let's take a look at how to use these Preview and a Quick Action options. We'll also look at a third option in the Finder, using the **Show Preview** feature.

**Preview App.** A lot of us, me included, often use Adobe's Acrobat Reader to open PDFs. However, Apple's Preview is a pretty powerful app with lots of capability to edit PDF files including mark up, rearranging pages and combining PDFs from multiple source files.

**Use Preview to Rearrange Pages in a PDF.** To demonstrate this, I'll use copies of several presentations. When first opened in Preview, it looks like this:

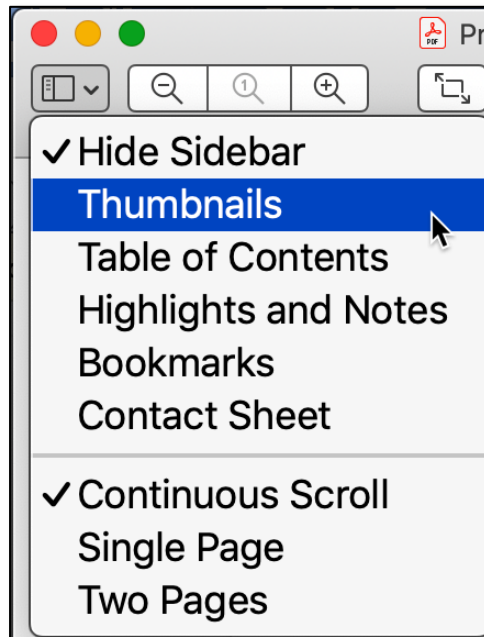


## Combining PDF Files, 09-18-2021

---

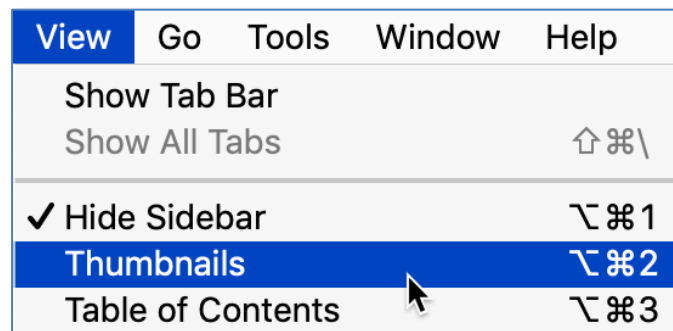
### PDF (Initial View When Opened)

In order to view the individual pages, use the dropdown icon at the left side of the toolbar to display the **Sidebar** and then select **Thumbnails**:



**Sidebar – Show Thumbnails**

Alternatively, you can go to Preview's **View** menu and select **Thumbnails** (keyboard shortcut: **Option + Command + 2**).



**View Menu – Thumbnails View Option Selected**

Once Thumbnails is selected, Preview will display Thumbnail views of the pages in the sidebar. (See the illustration on the next page.)

# Combining PDF Files, 09-18-2021

Primer Review - Copy & Move Finder Files, 05-16-2021.pdf (page 1 of 4)

View Zoom Zoom to Fit Actual Size Magnify Inspector Page History Page Print Share Markup Highlight Rotate

▼ Primer Review - Copy & Move Find...

Primer Review - Copy & Move Finder Files, 05-16-2021

**Note:** This discussion is based on macOS, 10.14.6 (Mojave). Some illustrations may differ when using other versions of macOS or OS X. Most illustrations are from screenshots on my iMac.

There are lots of ways to copy and move files (folders and apps, too) in the Finder. This presentation will focus on several methods.

**Drag and Drop.** Using the mouse to move files around in the Finder has been with us since the Mac was introduced decades ago:

- Have the **Source Location** Finder window (where your file is located) open. In this window, you may need to have the appropriate folder open as well so that your file is displayed.
- Have the **Target Location** Finder window (where your file will be moved or copied, might also be the Source folder) open so that you can easily drag the file from the Source location to the Target location. As with the Source, you may need to have the appropriate folder open as well.
- To **Move** the file, use your mouse pointer to **drag** the file from the Source location to the Target location and release the mouse button to complete the move.

If the Target folder isn't already open, continue to hold down the mouse after dragging onto the folder to open it. Then release the mouse button to complete the Move.

**Note:** This method applies only if the new location is on the same storage volume. If the new location is on another storage device, the item is **copied** instead.

- To **Copy** the file, first hold down the **Option** key and then use your mouse pointer to **drag** the file from the Source location to the Target location. A large "badge" (green circle enclosing a + symbol, see illustration below), will be added to the image of the item being dragged to indicate that the item is being copied, not moved. As with a Move, if the folder isn't already open, holding down the mouse will open it.

**Finder - Copy "Badge"**

**Note:** When doing a Drag and Drop that the **Esc** key and the **Undo** command (**Command + Z**) can be handy when moving and copying files.

- If you make a mistake while dragging a file, and before you release the mouse, you can use the **Esc** key to cancel the operation.
- If you've moved a file to the wrong location and catch the mistake immediately, use the **Undo** command to go back.

Primer Review - Copy & Move Finder Files, 05-16-2021

**Note:** When doing a Drag and Drop that the **Esc** key and the **Undo** command (**Command + Z**) can be handy when moving and copying files.

- If you make a mistake while dragging a file, and before you release the mouse, you can use the **Esc** key to cancel the operation.
- If you've moved a file to the wrong location and catch the mistake immediately, use the **Undo** command to go back.

Primer Review - Copy & Move Finder Files, 05-16-2021

**Note:** When doing a Drag and Drop that the **Esc** key and the **Undo** command (**Command + Z**) can be handy when moving and copying files.

- If you make a mistake while dragging a file, and before you release the mouse, you can use the **Esc** key to cancel the operation.
- If you've moved a file to the wrong location and catch the mistake immediately, use the **Undo** command to go back.

Page 1 of 4

## PDF (View With Thumbnails)

To rearrange pages, simply select the desired Thumbnail in the sidebar and drag it to a new position. Here, we'll drag page 2 to be ahead of page 1. (See the illustration on the next page.)

Page 3 of 12

**Primer Review - Copy & Move Finder Files, 05-16-2021.pdf (page 2 of 4)**

The screenshot shows the document's first page with the 'Finder - Copy' menu item highlighted. The document title is 'Primer Review - Copy & Move Finder Files, 05-16-2021'. The page number '2' is visible at the bottom right.

---

**Primer Review - Copy & Move Finder Files, 05-16-2021**

**Copy Using the Finder's Edit Menu.** Instead of dragging an item in the Finder, you can use the Copy and Paste menu items under the Finder's Edit menu. First, select an item from the Source location. Then choose **Edit > Copy file/folder name**:

Edit	View	Go	Window	Help
Undo				⌘Z
Redo				⇧⌘Z
Cut				⌘X
<b>Copy "img001.jpg"</b>				⌘C
Paste				⌘V

**Finder - "Copy"**

You can also use the familiar Copy keyboard shortcut, **Command + C**.

Now, move to and open the Target window/folder where you want to leave a copy of the item and choose **Edit > Paste item** or use the Paste keyboard shortcut, **Command + V**:

Edit	View	Go	Window	He
Undo Move of 22 Items				⌘Z
Redo				⇧⌘Z
Cut				⌘X
Copy "img001.jpg"				⌘C
<b>Paste Item</b>				⌘V
Select All				⌘A

**Finder - "Paste Item"**

**Move Using the Finder's Edit Menu.** To **Move** an item to a new location, the process is the same as for copying: Select an item from the Source location. Then choose **Edit > Copy file/folder name**, or use the keyboard shortcut, **Command + C**. Next, go to and open the Target location where you want to Move the file.

*Note: You might assume at this point that you can then paste the item there, but that's not the case. As we just discussed, that will Copy the item there, not Move it.*

Instead, hold down the **Option** key. The Finder's menu item will change to **Move Item Here (Edit > Move Item Here)**. Click this modified menu item to complete the move, or use the keyboard shortcut, **Option + Command + V**:

Edit	View	Go	Window	Help
Undo Move of 22 Items				⌘Z
Redo				⇧⌘Z
Cut				⌘X
Copy "Scans" as Pathname				⌘C
<b>Move Item Here</b>				⇧⌘V
Deselect All				⇧⌘A

**Finder - "Move Item Here" Menu Item**

Page 2 of 4

---

**Primer Review - Copy & Move Finder Files, 05-16-2021**

**Drag and Drop (Special Case: Using Finder Tabs).** If you have a Finder window organized using **Tags**, the Drag and Drop process likely changes because you're probably using a full screen window to maximize the space available for multiple tabs.



# Combining PDF Files, 09-18-2021

Here's the result of moving page 2 before page 1:

Primer Review - Copy & Move Finder Files, 05-16-2021.pdf (page 1 of 4) — Edited

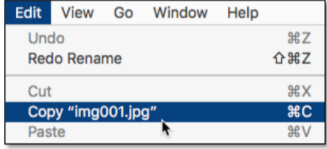
View Zoom Zoom to Fit Actual Size Magnify Inspector Page History Page Print Share Markup Highlight Rotate

▼ Primer Review - Copy & Move Find...

1

**Primer Review - Copy & Move Finder Files, 05-16-2021**

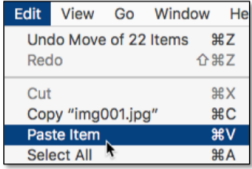
**Copy Using the Finder's Edit Menu.** Instead of dragging an item in the Finder, you can use the Copy and Paste menu items under the Finder's Edit menu. First, select an item from the Source location. Then choose **Edit > Copy file/folder name**:



**Finder - "Copy"**

You can also use the familiar Copy keyboard shortcut, **Command + C**.

Now, move to and open the Target window/folder where you want to leave a copy of the item and choose **Edit > Paste item** or use the Paste keyboard shortcut, **Command + V**:

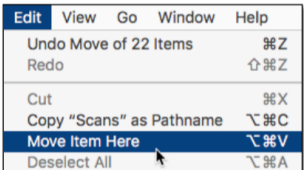


**Finder - "Paste Item"**

**Move Using the Finder's Edit Menu.** To **Move** an item to a new location, the process is the same as for copying: Select an item from the Source location. Then choose **Edit > Copy file/folder name**, or use the keyboard shortcut, **Command + C**. Next, go to and open the Target location where you want to Move the file.

*Note: You might assume at this point that you can then paste the item there, but that's not the case. As we just discussed, that will Copy the item there, not Move it.*

Instead, hold down the **Option** key. The Finder's menu item will change to **Move Item Here (Edit > Move Item Here)**. Click this modified menu item to complete the move, or use the keyboard shortcut, **Option + Command + V**:



**Finder - "Move Item Here" Menu Item**

2

Page 2 of 4

## PDF (Page 2 Now Moved Before Page 1)

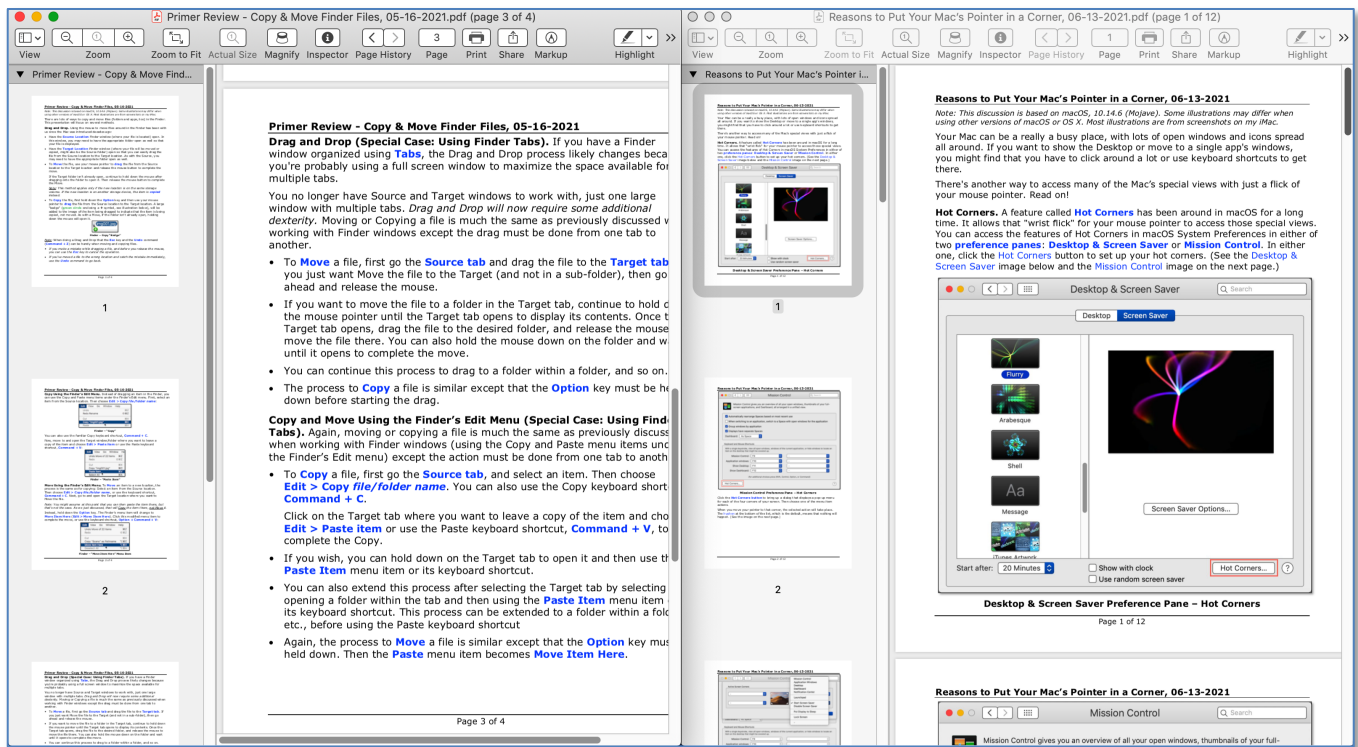
**Note 1:** You can select one or more pages to move by Command-Clicking or by Shift-Clicking.

**Note 2:** Once one or more pages have been selected, you may also delete them if desired.

Page 5 of 12

## Combining PDF Files, 09-18-2021

**Use Preview to Combine Two PDFs Into One.** To demonstrate this, I'll open two files in Preview and then display their Thumbnails:



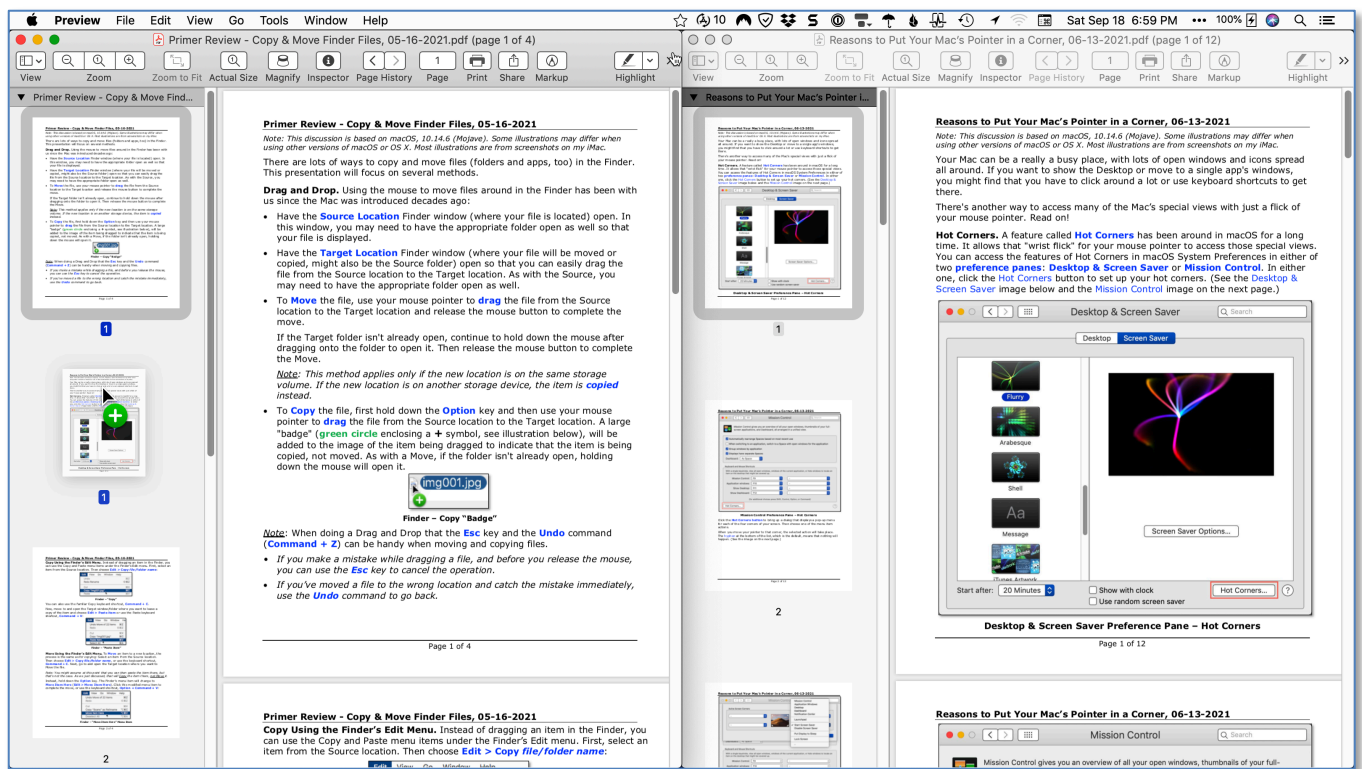
**Two PDFs (Side-by-Side)**

***Note:** Each PDF fills half the display screen. To accomplish this, I use a nice little utility called SizeUp (<https://www.irradiatedsoftware.com/sizeup/>), \$12.99 from the author.*

To combine the two PDFs, select one, some or all of the Thumbnails from one PDF and drag them to desired location in the Thumbnail sidebar in the other PDF. In this example, I'll drag a page 1 from one PDF to after page 1 of the other PDF. (See the illustration on the next page.)

I often use this technique when combining PDFs of sales order receipts (say, from a website and also an email acknowledgement, especially when I only want to save specific pages from each one) into one PDF for reference.

# Combining PDF Files, 09-18-2021

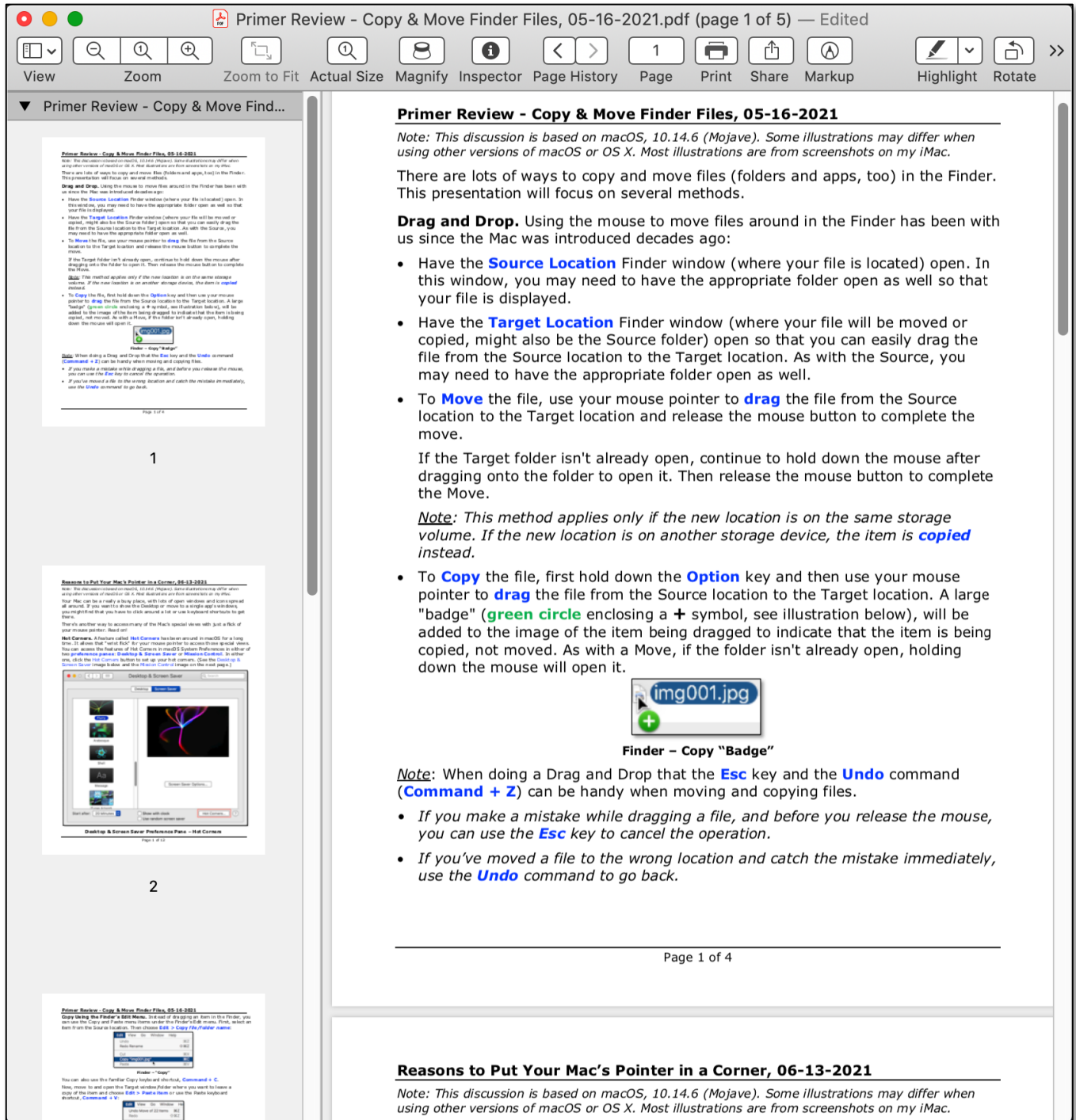


Drag Page 1 From One PDF to the Other PDF

(See the next page.)

## Combining PDF Files, 09-18-2021

Here's the result of moving page 2 of one PDF after page 1 of the other PDF:



### Result of Dragging Page 1 From One PDF to the Other PDF

Now save the PDF where the page was added. Then both PDFs may be closed.

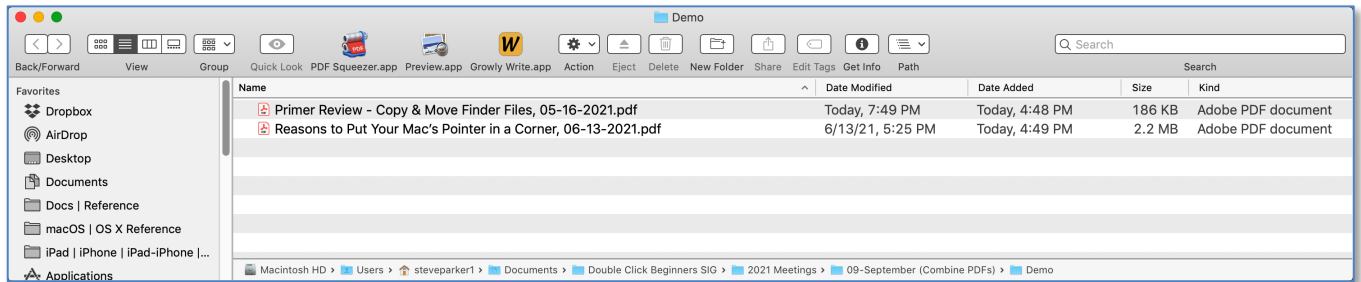
**Use the Finder "Create PDF" Quick Action to Combine PDFs.** Again, we'll use the same two PDF files demonstrate this. This technique involves *all* the contents of two or more PDFs, not just selected pages from each. However, after combining, you can still use Preview to delete any pages that you don't want to keep.

## Combining PDF Files, 09-18-2021

---

Here are the steps to follow:

1. Make sure that all the PDFs to be combined are moved/located in the same folder in the Finder:

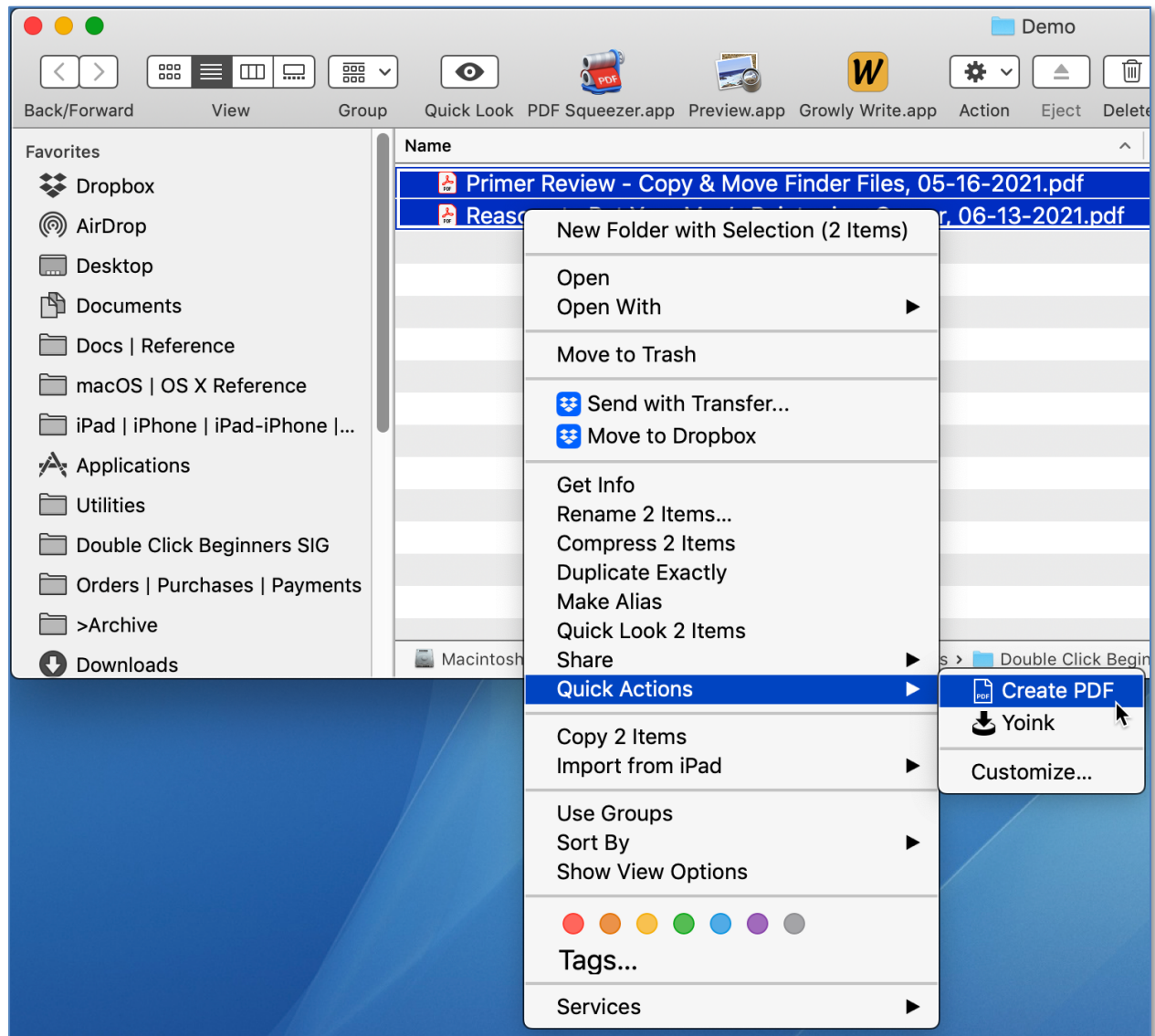


### All Files in the Same Folder

2. Command-Click or Shift-Click to select the desired files (just two in this example).
3. Next, Right-Click (Control-Click) to access various options from the pop-up menu.
4. Select the **Quick Actions** menu item and then choose **Create PDF** to combine the two PDFs into one. (See the illustration on the next page.)

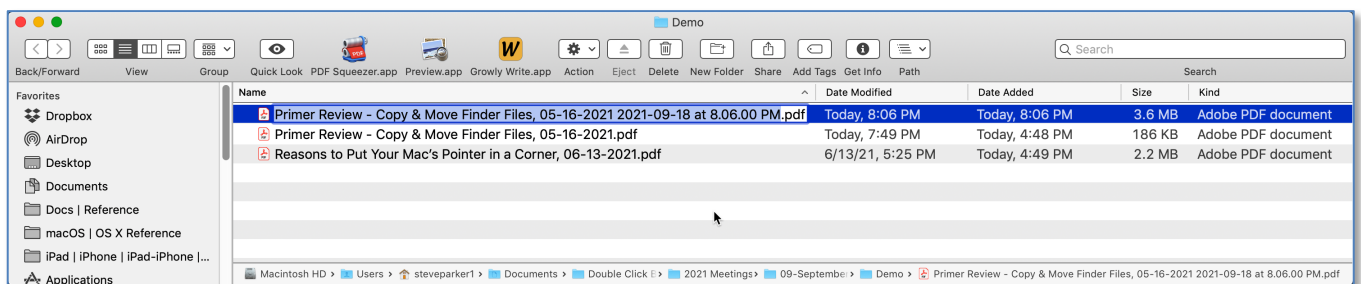


## Combining PDF Files, 09-18-2021



### Use Quick Action (Create PDF) to Combine Two PDFs

5. The newly-created combined file will be automatically created with a name similar to the first file you selected. At this point, you can choose to rename the new PDF (probably a good idea, given its long name).



### Newly-Created PDF Using Create PDF Quick Action

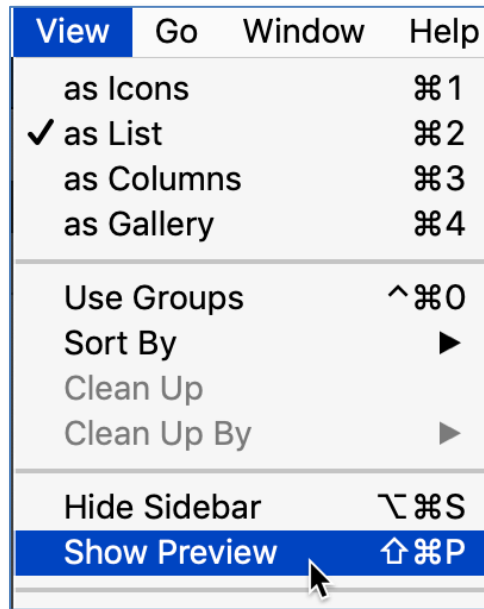
## Combining PDF Files, 09-18-2021

### Use the Finder's Show Preview Option to Combine Two PDFs Into One.

There's a third way to combine PDFs using the Finder's Show Preview option. To demonstrate this, I'll use the same two PDFs.

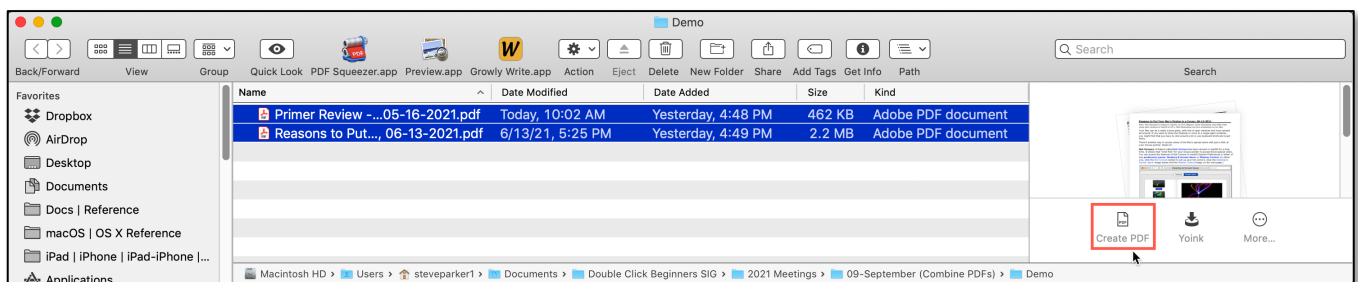
Here are the steps to follow:

1. Make sure that all the PDFs to be combined are moved/located in the same folder in the Finder. Then select them.
2. Go to the Finder's **View** menu and select the **Show Preview** menu item. (toggles with Hide Preview). Keyboard Shortcut: **Shift + Command + P**.



Finder – Show Preview

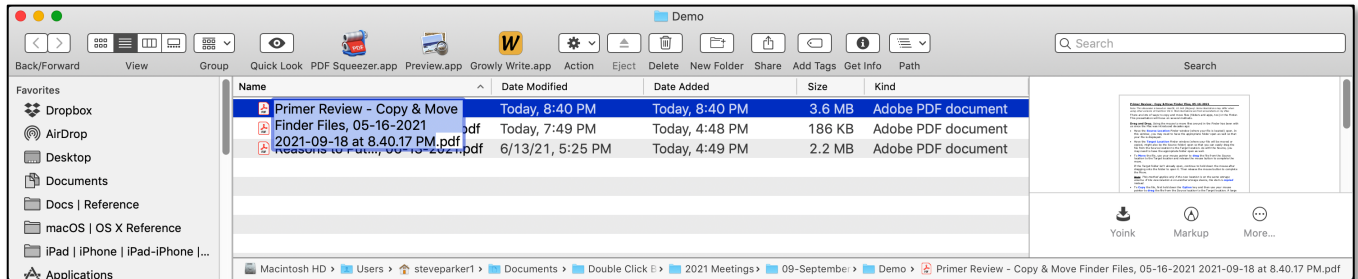
3. A **Preview pane** will be displayed at the right side of the Finder window. Depending how your Mac is configured, it will also likely have several buttons at the bottom of the pane.
4. One of these buttons will be **Create PDF**.



Show Preview With **Create PDF** Button

## Combining PDF Files, 09-18-2021

5. Click the **Create PDF** button to combine the selected PDFs into a new PDF:



### Newly-Created PDF Using Create PDF Quick Action

As with using the Finder's Create PDF Quick Action, the order in which the PDFs are selected will determine the name new PDF. Additionally, it can also be renamed.

## Summary

This presentation demonstrated the following:

1. how to rearrange pages in a PDF using the Preview app.
2. Three ways to combine selected PDFs into a new one (using the Preview app, a Finder Quick Action, and the Finder's Show Preview option).

Preview is a powerful app, and it has a lot capability to edit PDF files including mark up, rearranging pages and combining PDFs from multiple source files.

When it comes to combining multiple PDF files into one, the Finder offers convenient options (a Quick Action and the Show Preview option) that don't require a separate app or utility.

So, again, the Mac gives you multiple options from which to choose.

## Next Presentation

For the next presentation, we'll explore another Mac Basics topic.

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](mailto:slp4668@gmail.com).

*-Steve Parker*

Credit: "How to Combine Files Into a PDF on Mac"

<https://osxdaily.com/2021/01/05/how-combine-pdf-files-mac/>