

# How to Scan a Document in Windows 10

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A great way to preserve sensitive, written documents like W9s, contracts, and living wills is to store them digitally. This guide shows you how to scan a document in Windows 10 without installing third-party tools.

Typically, you can scan a document using the software provided by manufacturers. Printers and scanners usually ship with an optical disk containing the necessary drivers and tools. Manufacturers also make their drivers and tools available online if your PC doesn't include an optical drive.

For instance, this guide uses Epson's Expression Premium XP-7100 all-in-one printer as an example. In addition to drivers, the software suite installs eight separate tools for printing CD labels, scanning, updating software, and more.

Because manufacturers don't supply identical software suites across all printers and scanners, this guide uses two "native" Windows-based tools instead: Microsoft Scan and Windows Fax and Scan.

Of course, always default to your manufacturer's software for an experience customized to your specific scanner. If you don't want third-party tools installed on your PC, however, Microsoft's two solutions should do the trick.

**RELATED: [How to Set Up a Shared Network Printer in Windows 7, 8, or 10](#)**

## Is Your Scanner Windows 10 Compatible?

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Before moving on, we need to make a couple of points. First, your scanner's manufacturer may supply drivers for Windows 10, but the device itself may not specifically support the platform.

For example, we tested the following tools using Canon's PIXMA MG3520 all-in-one printer with a built-in scanner. The "recommended" drivers date back to July 2015, though Canon released a newer suite six months later. That's still three-year-old software.

That said, the scanner portion of this AIO printer would not appear in the native Windows tools but worked correctly—using a wireless connection, in fact—through Canon's software.

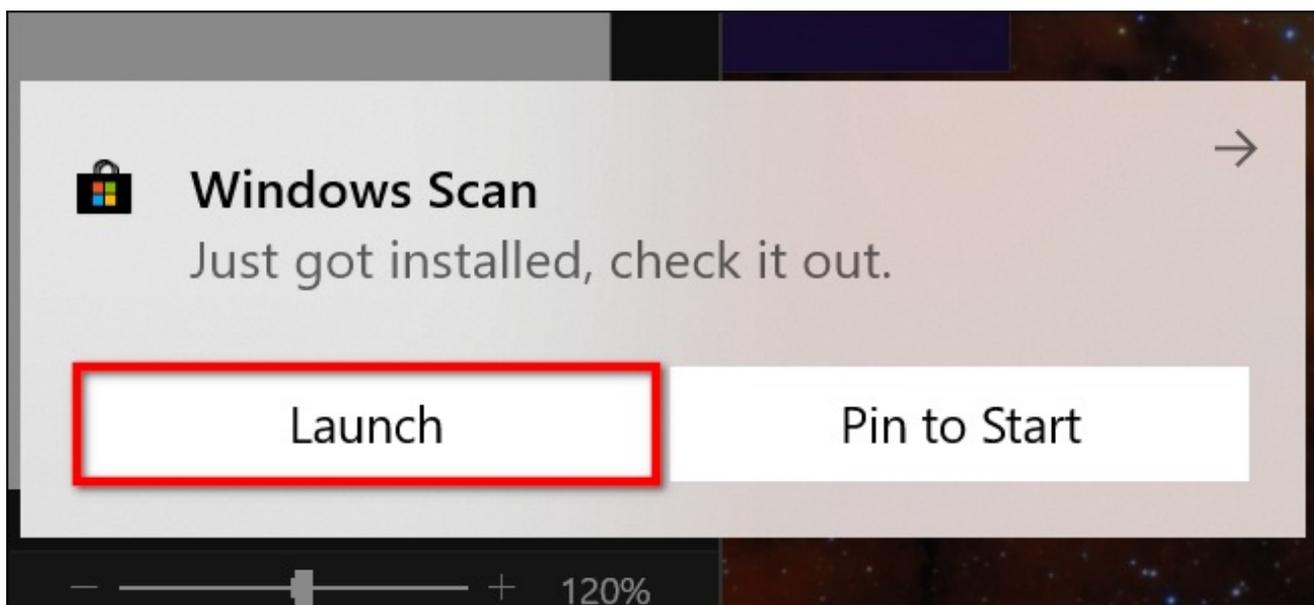
If you run into similar problems, you may have an older printer or scanner that's not fully compatible with Windows 10. The device may also require a direct USB-based connection if used outside the manufacturer's third-party tools. For AIO printers, you may need to tweak its networking settings, so your Windows 10 PC recognizes the scanner component in addition to the overall printer unit.

## Microsoft Scan

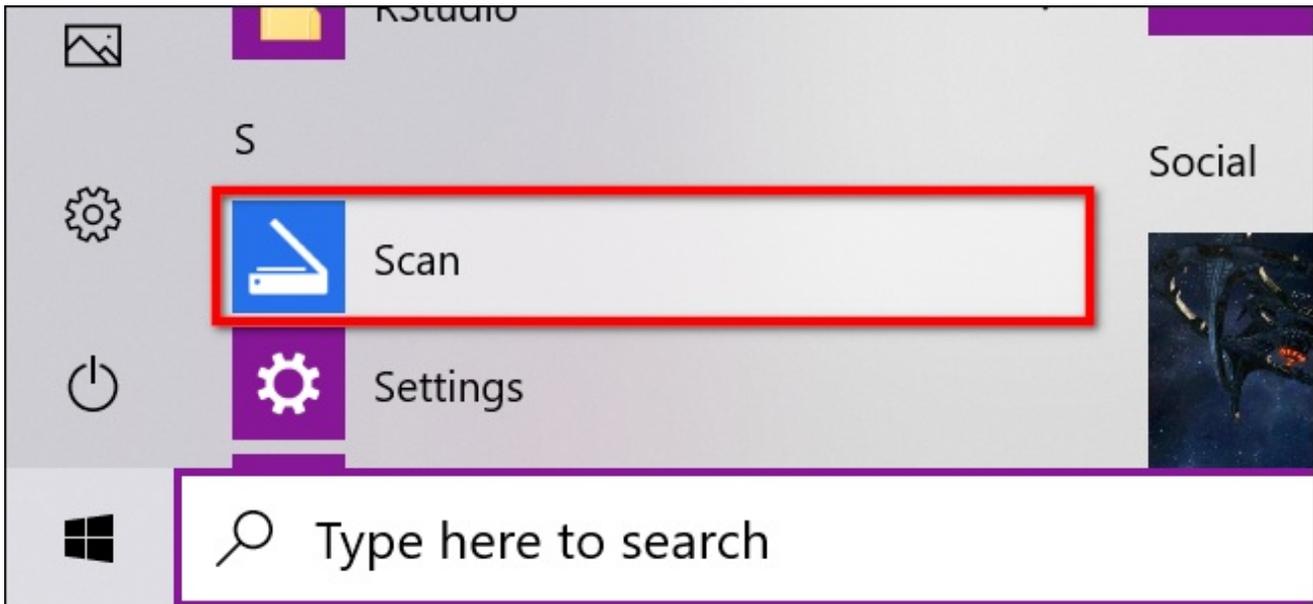
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This tool is a visual upgrade to Microsoft's older Fax and Scan tool. It provides most of the same features, depending on your printer, but removes the fax and email components.

Head to the [Windows Scan app listing on the Microsoft Store](#) (free) and click the blue "Get" button. Once it installs on your PC, click the "Launch" button in the pop-up notification on Windows 10.



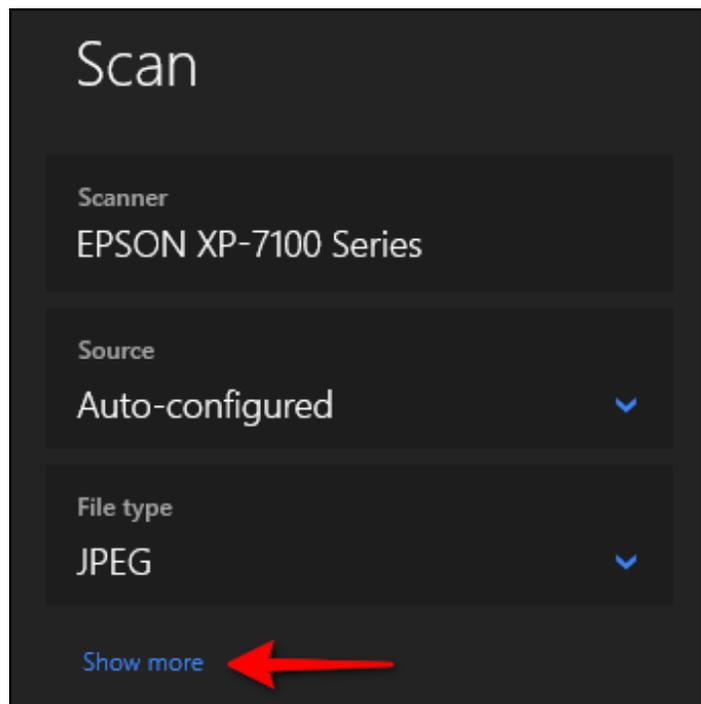
You can also access the new app—simply labeled as "Scan"—from the Start Menu.



With the app open, your scanner should appear listed on the left. As previously stated, this guide uses Epson’s Expression Premium XP-7100 all-in-one printer as an example. You’ll also see an option for “File Type” along with a “Show More” link. Click this link for the Scan app’s full menu.

For starters, you may see a “Source” category. Since our example printer has both a flatbed scanner and an automatic document feeder, both options are available for scanning a document. In this case, the default setting is set to “Auto-Configured.”

This “Auto-Configured” setting limits what you can do, locking you to “File Type” and “Save File To” options. If you select the “Flatbed” option as your source, or it’s the only source available, you’ll see two additional options appear on the list: “Color Mode” and “Resolution (DPI).”



With “Color Mode,” you can scan documents in full color, in grayscale, or a stark black and white. Meanwhile, the “Resolution (DPI)” setting allows you to switch from 100 to 300 DPI.

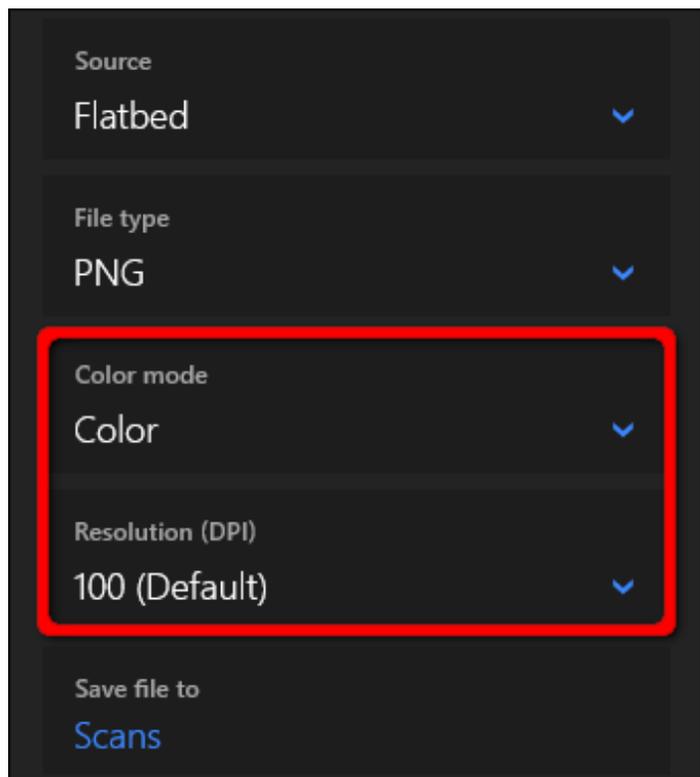
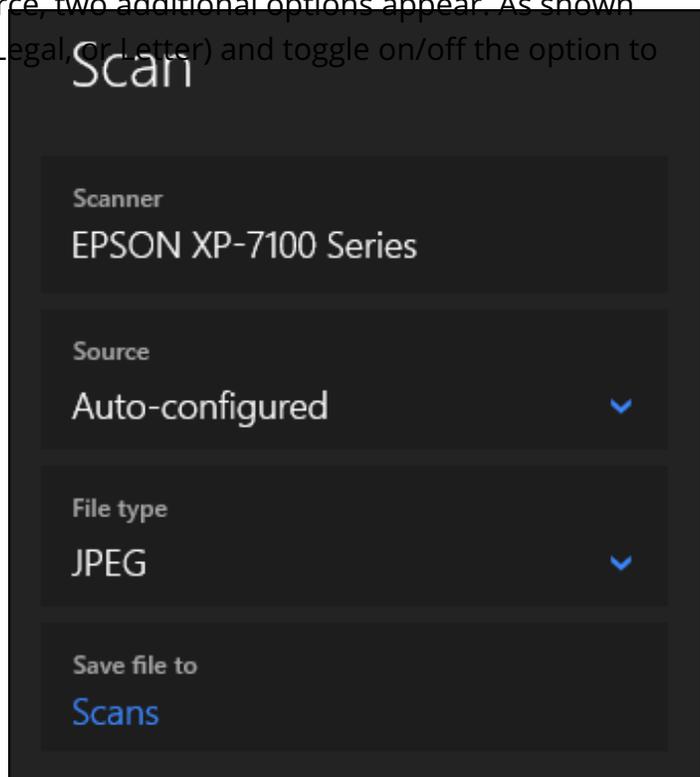
If you select “Feeder” as your scanning source, two additional options appear. As shown below, you can choose the paper size (A4, Legal, or Letter) and toggle on/off the option to scan both sides of your document.

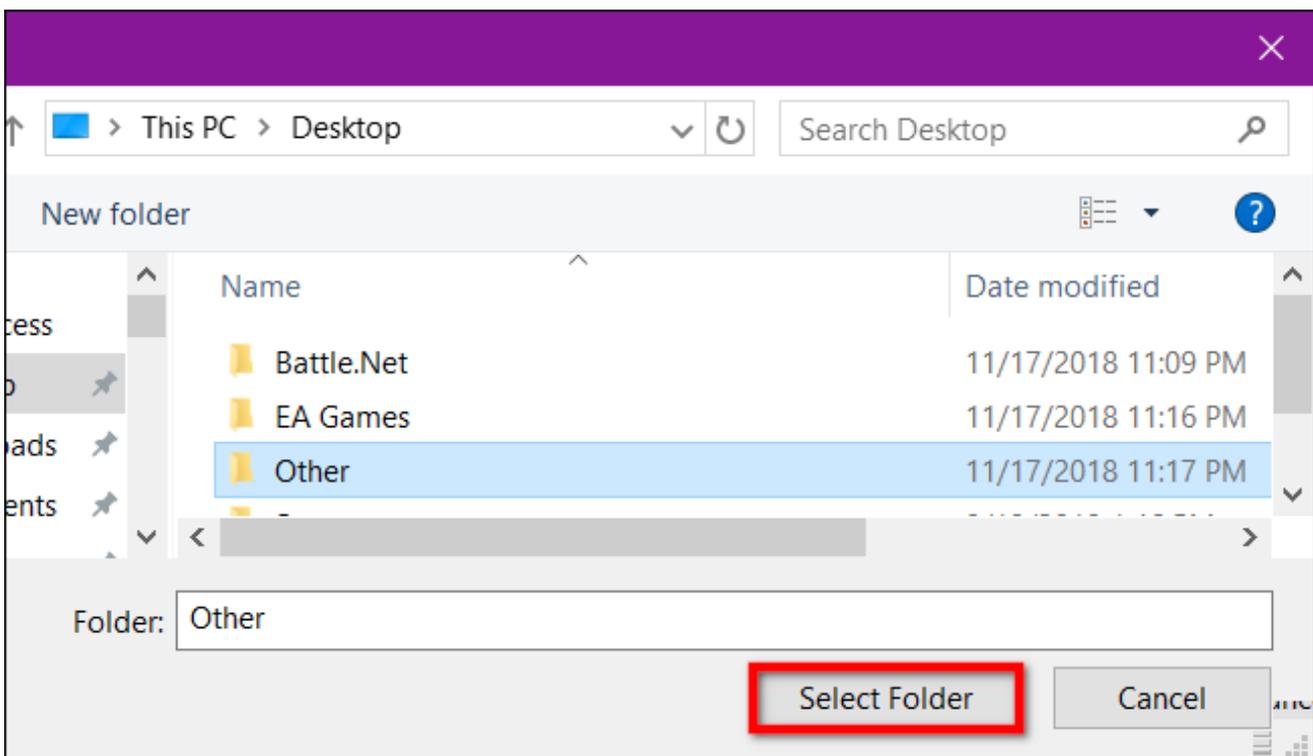
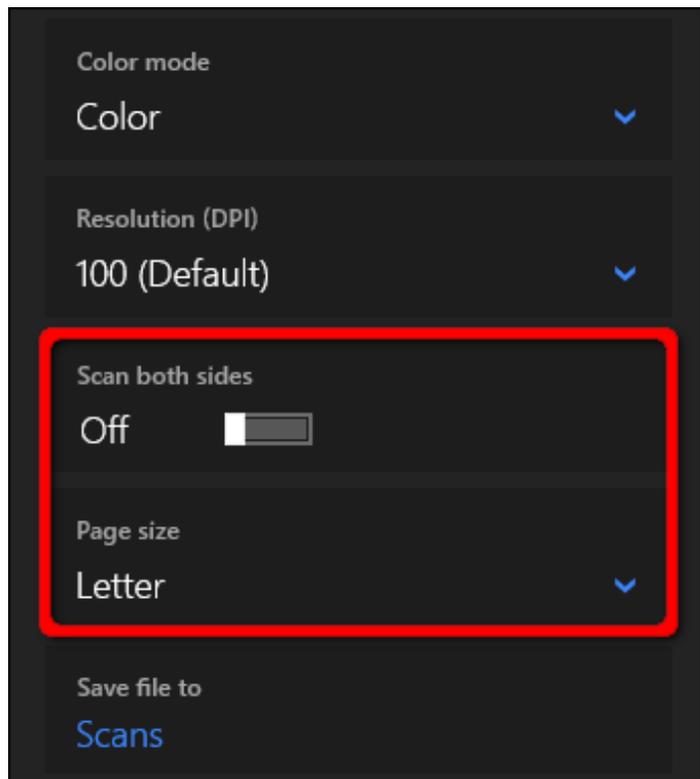
With all three sources, the “File Type” setting provides four options: JPEG, PNG, TIFF, and Bitmap. We provide [a separate article explaining the benefits of each format](#). In short, however, the JPEG and TIFF formats typically offer high-quality results, though TIFF files also support transparent backgrounds. PNG files are ideal for posting online, and BMP files are raw, uncompressed images.

Finally, you’ll see the “Save File To” option. It’s set to “Scans” by default and places your scanned documents in a “Scans” folder located within your “Pictures” folder. The proper path is:

C:\Users\youraccount\Pictures\Scans

Click the “Scans” link, and File Explorer appears. Here you can create a new folder or select a current location and click the “Select Folder” button.

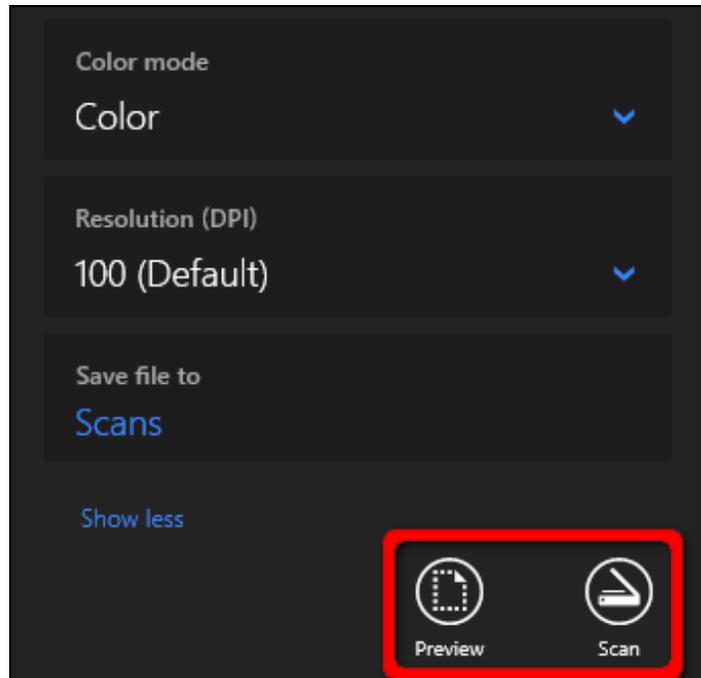




When you're ready to scan, insert your document into the feeder, or lift the scanner's lid. For the latter, place the document face-down on the glass and close the lid.

With the "Flatbed" option set as your source, you can click "Preview" to test the scan and make adjustments if needed before finalizing with the "Scan" button. If you're using the "Feeder" source, the "Preview" option does not appear.

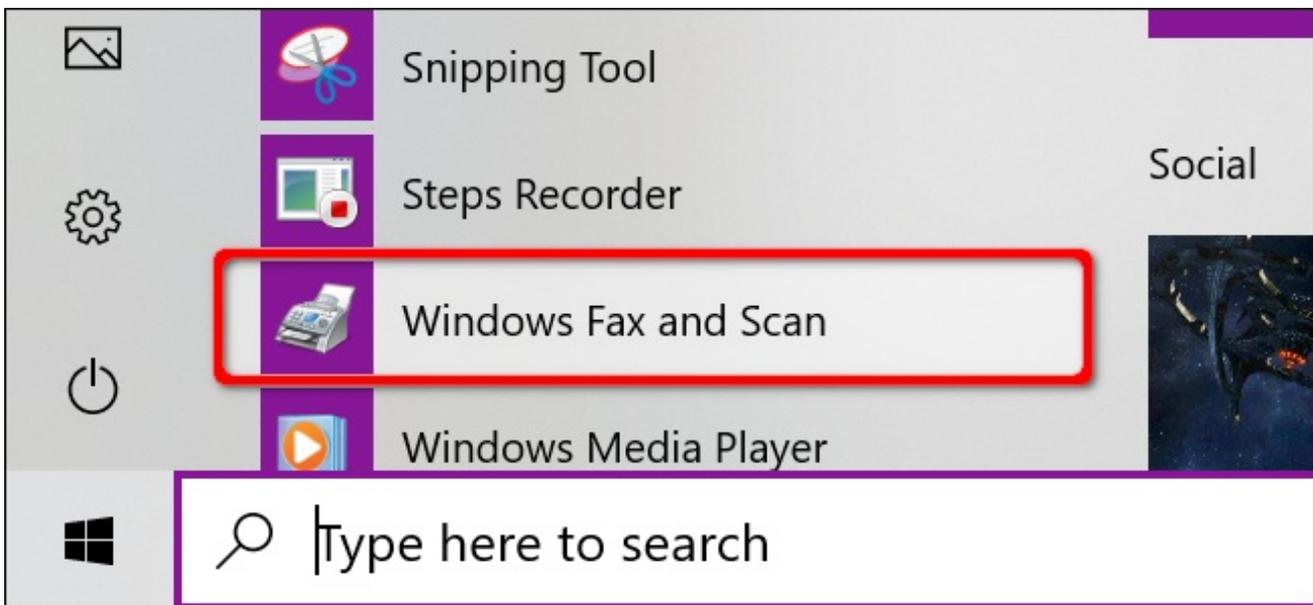
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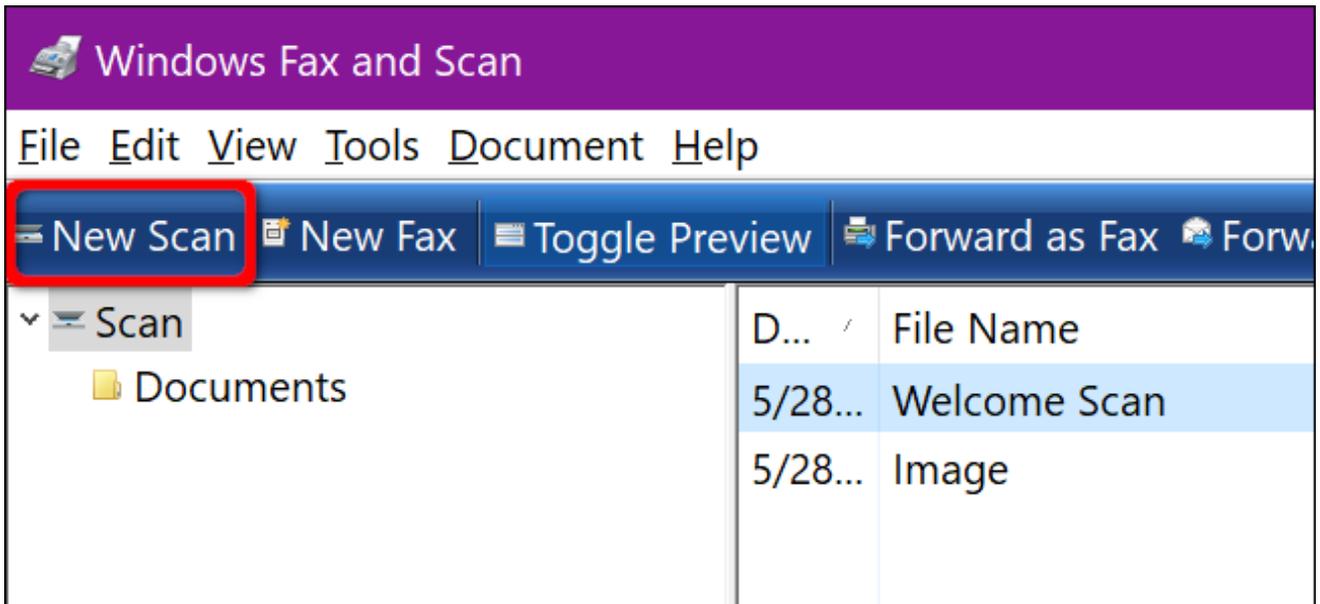
## Windows Fax and Scan

This program first appeared in Windows Vista. Unlike Microsoft's newer Scan app, this version provides additional settings, like a built-in tool for emailing your scan, so you're not searching for the file through the Mail app, browser, or third-party email client.

You can find the Fax and Scan program located within the Start Menu's "Windows Accessories" folder.

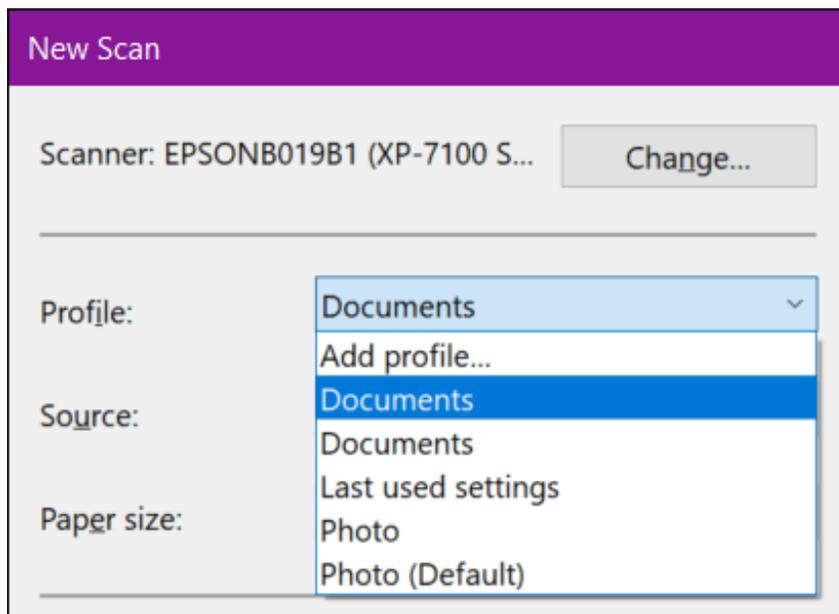


Once it's opened, click the "New Scan" option on the toolbar.

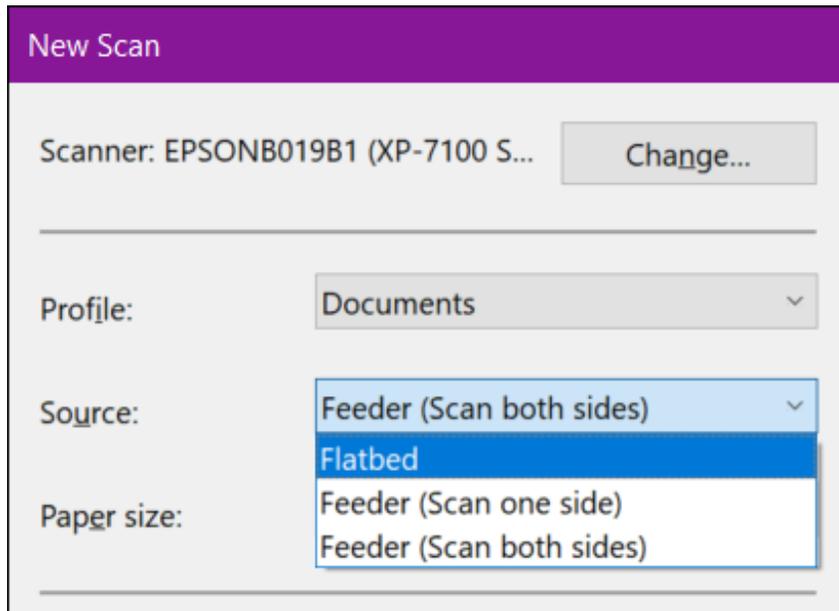


In the “New Scan” popup window, make sure the program is set to your default scanner. If not, click the “Change” button.

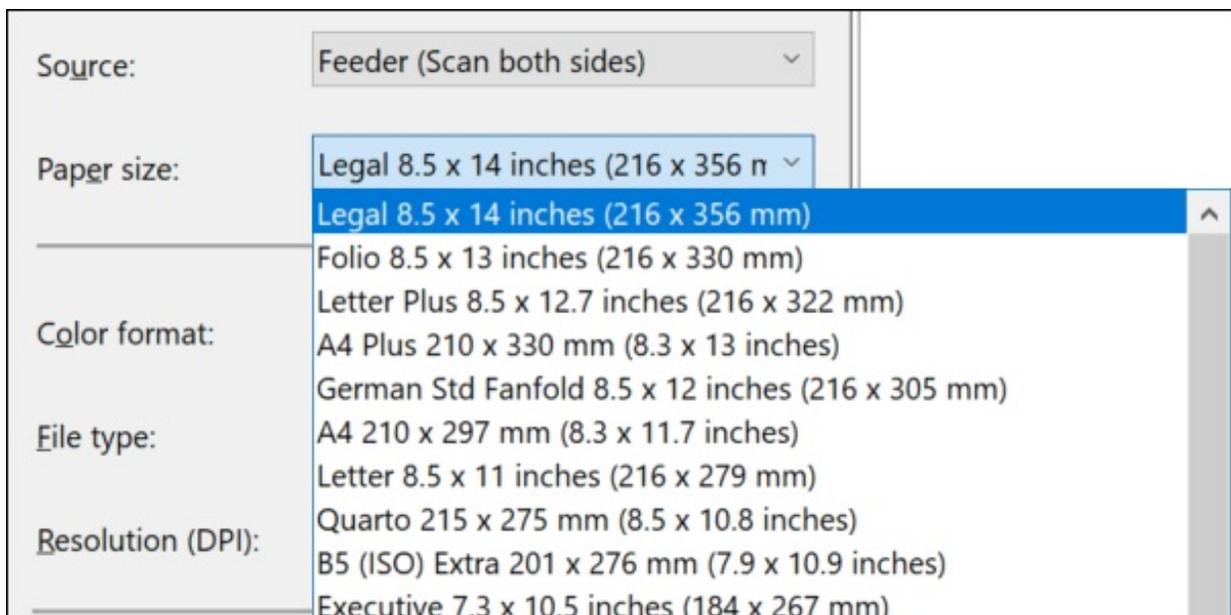
Next, select a scan profile: “Photo,” “Documents,” or “Last Used Settings.” As an option, click the “Add Profile” selection on the list to create a custom profile to use repeatedly.



Select your scanner’s source. This option may simply read “Flatbed.” If you have an AIO printer that includes a feeder, however, you may see two additional options: “Feeder (Scan One Side)” and “Feeder (Scan Both Sides).”



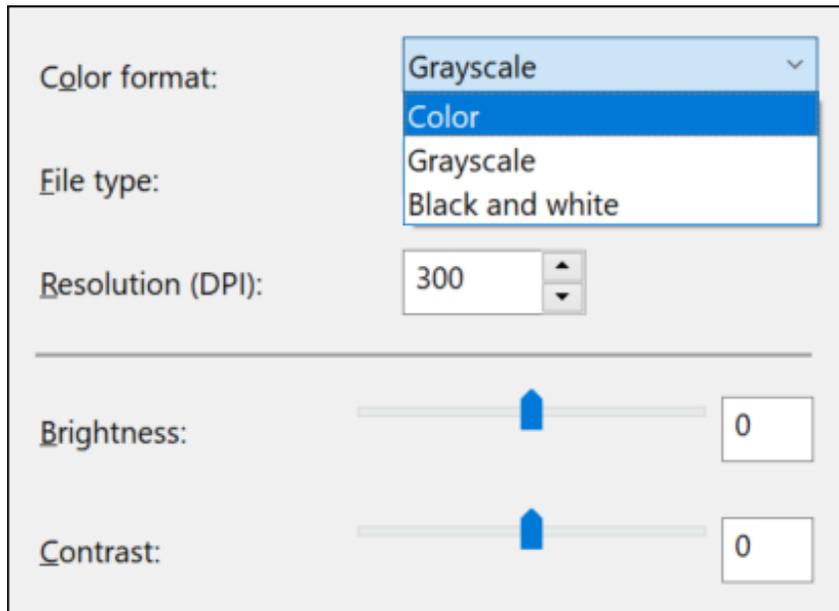
If your printer or scanner supports a feeder and you select that option, you will see a setting for the target paper size. Click the setting, and a long list of sizes appears.



Next, select your color format (Color, Grayscale, or Black and White) followed by file type (BMP, JPG, PNG, or TIF) and resolution.

For resolution, the default setting is 300, but you can manually raise or lower the number of dots the printer crams into every inch. Typically, the higher the number, the better the resolution. If you're scanning a low-grade document, however, bumping up the resolution won't help.

Finally, adjust the brightness and contrast accordingly.



When you're done, click the "Preview" button to see the results. If the pre-scan looks great, then click the "Scan" button. If not, adjust your settings and click the "Preview" button again for another test. Click the "Scan" button when you're satisfied with the settings.

