You've decided to add a form to a PDF document, but how do you go about creating it? Donna Baker, author of several Adobe® Acrobat® books, suggests that before you even add your first form field, you should “plan ahead, storyboard the form, and decide what you want it to do.” Once you've come up with your master plan, you can use the Forms tools in Acrobat 7.0 to bring your plans to life.

In this tutorial, we'll show you how to build and configure form fields in Acrobat 7.0.

Create a form

Acrobat 7.0 includes a toolbar of form field creation tools. Click the Form Field tool to select it on the toolbar, drag a marquee on the document where you want to place the field, and release the mouse. The outline for the field displays on the document, and the Properties dialog opens for you to name the field and customize its properties and options (Figure 1). The contents of the Properties dialog vary according to the type of form field you are applying to the document.

![Figure 1: The Properties dialog for a field contains different options depending on the type of field you are creating.]

Choose Tools > Advanced Editing > Show Forms Toolbar. The available tools and their common uses are:

- **Button tool**—Use a button to initiate actions that can be used for everything from printing a document to submitting a form or playing a sound.

- **Check Box tool**—Where your user can choose one or more options, use a check box. For instance, if your form includes a list of favorite holiday destinations, your user might like to specify all three choices of Hawaii, Jamaica, and Tahiti.

- **Combo Box tool**—You can offer a list of items in a pull-down menu or let your user enter a custom value. For example, your order form can include several choices of countries where you commonly ship your products, as well as an option for customers to type their country name.

- **List Box tool**—Create a list of items from which your user can select; usually list boxes are designed to allow for multiple selections. For example, when building your dream car at an online site you can choose any or all items from a list of accessories—of course, that doesn’t mean you can afford them, but it is nice to dream.

- **Radio Button tool**—Add radio buttons when you want the user to make a single choice among two or more items. An example is a customer service form that lets the user choose among a range of responses, from “terrific” to “terrible.”

- **Text Box tool**—Use this tool to create a field in which users can type text, such as their names, addresses, or favorite colors.

- **Digital Signature tool**—Use this tool to add a special type of field used to apply a digital signature to the document.

When adding form fields to a document where the tag structure is very important (like one that connects to a database, for example), make sure that:

- You open the Tags pane, click the Options menu, and select Tag Annotations.

- You select the tag in the Tags pane that you want to be the parent of the form field you intend to add to the document (Figure 2).