

Adobe® InDesign® 2023 Scripting ReadMe

This document contains information about scripting in Adobe InDesign 2023, including:

- A summary of the InDesign scripting documentation (see [“InDesign Scripting Documentation” on page 1](#)).
- For UXP scripting details, refer to https://www.adobe.com/go/id_uxp_scripting
- Directions for running a script (see [“Running Scripts” on page 2](#)).
- A list and brief description of InDesign sample scripts (see [“Sample Scripts” on page 2](#)).
- A list of known issues in InDesign scripting (see [“Known Issues Related to InDesign Scripting” on page 9](#)).

For more information on InDesign scripting, go to the InDesign developer documentation page, <https://www.adobe.io/apis/creativecloud/indesign.html>, or visit the InDesign scripting User-to-User forum, http://forums.adobe.com/community/indesign/indesign_scripting.

For late-breaking InDesign scripting news, see the latest version of this file on the InDesign developer documentation page.

InDesign Scripting Documentation

InDesign scripting documentation can be downloaded as part of the Scripting SDK from the InDesign developer documentation page (listed above). The scripting documentation set for InDesign comprises the following:

- *Adobe InDesign Scripting Tutorial* — Shows how to get started with InDesign scripting. Covers AppleScript, JavaScript, and VBScript in one PDF document. The introductory scripts in this document are available as a single ZIP archive or can be copied from the PDF.
- *Adobe InDesign Scripting Guide* (AppleScript, JavaScript, and VBScript versions) — Discusses more advanced InDesign scripting topics. All tutorial scripts shown are included in a single ZIP archive, so there is no need to copy and paste scripts from the PDF. (Most scripts shown in the text are incomplete fragments demonstrating a specific property, method, or technique.)
- *JavaScript Tools and Features* — Covers using the ExtendScript Toolkit for JavaScript development, creating user interfaces with ScriptUI, using the File and Folder objects, and other features specific to the ExtendScript language (Adobe’s version of JavaScript).

There is no *Scripting Reference* PDF for InDesign; instead, use the object-model viewer included with your script-editing application (as described in *Adobe InDesign Scripting Tutorial*).

InDesign sample scripts are installed by default. They appear in the Scripts panel (Window > Utilities > Scripts).

Installing the scripting documentation scripts

In addition to the sample scripts, all scripts shown (in fragmentary form) in the scripting documentation are available for download from the InDesign developer documentation page.

After downloading the script ZIP archive and extracting the scripts, move the folder(s) for the language(s) that you want to work with (AppleScript, JavaScript, and/or VBScript) to your Scripts Panel folder. (For more on installing scripts, see the *Adobe InDesign Scripting Tutorial*.)

Running Scripts

To run a script, double-click the script name in the Scripts panel.

On Windows, you can run VBScripts (file extension `.vbs`) or JavaScripts (file extension `.jsx`). On Mac OS, you can run AppleScripts (file extension `.applescript`) or JavaScripts.

Sample Scripts

Make sure you save your work before running a sample script for the first time.

Before using sample scripts on important InDesign documents, experiment with them so you understand what they do.

InDesign includes the following sample scripts.

Script name	Description	For more information, see page ...
AddGuides	Adds guides around the selected object or objects.	4
AddPoints	Adds points to the paths of the selected object or objects.	4
AdjustPageItems	Moves objects by specified distances on right/left pages.	4
AlignToPage	Aligns objects to specified positions on a page.	5
AnimationEncyclopedia	Shows how to script animation features.	5
BreakFrame	Removes a selected text frame and its contents from a story.	5
CornerEffects	Redraws the path of the selected item(s) using a variety of corner effects. Corner effects can be applied to selected points on the path.	5
CreateCharacterStyle	Defines a complete character style based on the selected text.	6
CropMarks	Adds crop and/or registration marks around the selected object or objects.	6
ExportAllStories	Exports all stories in a document to a series of text files.	6
FindChangeByList	Performs a series of common text find/change operations by reading a tab-delimited text file.	7

Script name	Description	For more information, see page ...
ImageCatalog	Places all graphics in a specified folder in a “contact sheet” layout.	7
MakeGrid	Creates a grid by subdividing or duplicating the selected object or objects.	7
Neon	Applies a “blend” effect to the selected object or objects.	7
PathEffects	Changes the position of path points on the selected object or objects to add a creative effect.	8
PlaceMultipagePDF	Places all pages of a PDF.	8
SelectObjects	Selects objects on the active spread by their object type.	8
SortParagraphs	Sorts the paragraphs in the selection alphabetically.	8
SplitStory	Splits the text frames in the selected story into separate, unlinked text frames.	9
TabUtilities	Applies tab stops and indents to the selected text.	9

Script Descriptions

This section includes a brief description of each sample script.

AddGuides

Adds guides around the selected object or objects.

Demonstrates:

- Processing objects in the selection.
- Getting page coordinates from objects.
- Adding guides to a spread.
- Creating a layer (and checking whether a layer already exists).
- Creating a user interface. This example includes both a dialog box created using the InDesign dialog object and an optional dialog box created using the ExtendScript ScriptUI features.

AddPoints

Adds points to the paths of the selected object or objects.

Demonstrates:

- Processing objects in the selection.
- Bezier math and path-point manipulations.
- Using the “entire path” property.
- Creating a user interface.

AdjustPageItems

Moves objects by specified distances on right/left pages.

Demonstrates:

- Using the move method to move objects.
- Working with page ranges.
- Determining whether a page is a right or left page.
- Creating a user interface.

AlignToPage

Aligns objects to specified positions on a page.

Demonstrates:

- Using the move method to move objects.
- Working with page sizes and page margins.
- Creating a user interface.

AnimationEncyclopedia

Shows how to script animation features.

Demonstrates:

- Using timing settings, timing lists, and timing groups.
- Working with key frames and animated transformations.
- Using motion presets.

BreakFrame

Removes a selected text frame and its contents from a story.

Demonstrates:

- The duplicate method.
- Working with text-frame contents.

NOTE: BreakFrame does not work properly when the text frame contains a table that is continued from or continues to another text frame.

CornerEffects

Redraws the path of the selected item(s) using a variety of corner effects. Corner effects can be applied to selected points on the path.

Demonstrates:

- Working with the selection.
- Mathematical operations for simple path operations.
- Using the “entire path” property.
- Creating a user interface.

CreateCharacterStyle

Defines a complete character style based on the selected text.

Demonstrates:

- Processing objects in the selection.
- Creating a character style.
- Getting text-formatting attributes from a text object.
- Filling in character-style properties.

CropMarks

Adds crop and/or registration marks around the selected object or objects.

Demonstrates:

- Processing objects in the selection.
- Getting page coordinates from objects.
- Finding the bounding box of a series of selected items.
- Drawing graphic lines and ovals.
- Applying swatches (and the “Registration” color).
- Creating a layer (and checking whether a layer already exists).
- Creating a user interface.

ExportAllStories

Exports all stories in a document to a series of text files.

Demonstrates:

- Exporting text.
- Using JavaScript file/folder objects and methods (JavaScript only).
- Creating file names based on ID attributes.
- Creating a user interface.

FindChangeByList

Performs a series of common text find/change operations by reading a tab-delimited text file.

For more information, see the start of the script or the start of the FindChangeList.txt file. You can add your own find/change operations to the FindChangeList.txt file, or create your own file.

Demonstrates:

- Working with files and folders.
- Finding a file/folder relative to the active script.
- Using the text find/change methods (text, grep, and glyph).
- Reading tab-delimited text data from a text file.

ImageCatalog

Places all graphics in a specified folder in a “contact sheet” layout.

Demonstrates:

- Working with files and folders.
- Placing and fitting graphics.
- Creating a text frame and entering text.
- Creating a user interface.

MakeGrid

Creates a grid by subdividing or duplicating the selected object or objects.

Demonstrates:

- Duplicating and moving objects.
- Creating a user interface.

Neon

Applies a “blend” effect to the selected object or objects.

Demonstrates:

- Duplicating an object.
- Applying a stroke color.
- Grouping objects.
- Applying graphic-formatting attributes (color, stroke weight, tint).
- Creating a user interface.

PathEffects

Changes the position of path points on the selected object or objects to add a creative effect.

Demonstrates:

- Processing objects in the selection.
- Duplicating an object.
- Manipulating Bezier math and path points.
- Simple trigonometry.
- Creating a user interface.

PlaceMultipagePDF

Places all pages of a PDF.

Demonstrates:

- Working with PDF attributes.
- Placing graphics.
- Adding pages.
- Selecting a file.
- Creating a user interface.

SelectObjects

Selects objects on the active spread by their object type.

Demonstrates:

- Basic page-item traversal.
- Selection.
- Creating a user interface.

SortParagraphs

Sorts the paragraphs in the selection alphabetically.

Demonstrates:

- Text-object move method.
- Simple bubble sort.

SplitStory

Splits the text frames in the selected story into separate, unlinked text frames.

Demonstrates:

- Duplicating objects.
- Deleting objects.
- Iterating through each text frame in a story.

NOTE: SplitStory does not work properly when a text frame in the story contains a table that is continued from or continues to another text frame.

TabUtilities

Applies tab stops and indents to the selected text.

Demonstrates:

- Working with tab stops and indents.
- Getting page positions from text objects.
- Getting the text column containing the cursor.
- Creating a user interface.

Known Issues Related to InDesign Scripting

Location of JavaScript start-up scripts

User start-up scripts should be placed in the InDesign start-up scripts location (where they will run once each time the application is launched), not in the ExtendScript engine initialization scripts location (where they will run each time an engine is initialized).

To run scripts when InDesign starts, put them in the `startup scripts` folder inside the `Scripts` folder in your `InDesign` folder. (Create this folder if it does not already exist.)

Cannot set the midpoint location for an opacity gradient stop

If you try to set the midpoint location for the first opacity gradient stop in a gradient feather settings object, InDesign returns an error.

Scripts run outside InDesign cannot create persistent ExtendScript engines (JavaScript only)

As discussed in Chapter 2, “Scripting,” of *Adobe InDesign Scripting Guide: JavaScript*, ExtendScript scripts can create persistent instances of the ExtendScript engine. Functions and variables defined in the persistent engine can be used by other scripts that execute in that engine. To create a persistent ExtendScript engine, however, the script must be run from the InDesign Scripts panel—running the script

from the ExtendScript Toolkit or via BridgeTalk from another application does not create the persistent engine.

Event listeners added or removed during event propagation are not handled according to the W3C specification

The *W3C Document Object Model (DOM) Level 2 Events Specification* (see <http://www.w3.org/TR/DOM-Level-2-Events/Overview.html>) states:

“If an `EventListener` is added to an `EventTarget` while it is processing an event, it will not be triggered by the current actions but may be triggered during a later stage of event flow, such as the bubbling phase.

...

If an `EventListener` is removed from an `EventTarget` while it is processing an event, it will not be triggered by the current actions. `EventListeners` can never be invoked after being removed.”

In InDesign scripting, event listeners added to an event target during event propagation are not triggered for the duration of the event. Event listeners removed from an event target during event propagation are still triggered by the event (that is, the event listeners are removed when event processing is complete).

The ExtendScript toolkit does not show a list of InDesign scripts (Mac OS only)

By default, the ExtendScript Toolkit does not specify a target application when it starts. This means the list of available scripts in the Scripts panel (in the ExtendScript Toolkit, not in InDesign) is not populated with available InDesign scripts. Set the target application to InDesign, and the ExtendScript Toolkit populates the Scripts panel.

Documents must be saved before packaging

You must save a document before using the `package` method. If you do not save the document, InDesign generates an error.