

How to Scan Documents to PDF with Your Android Phone's Camera

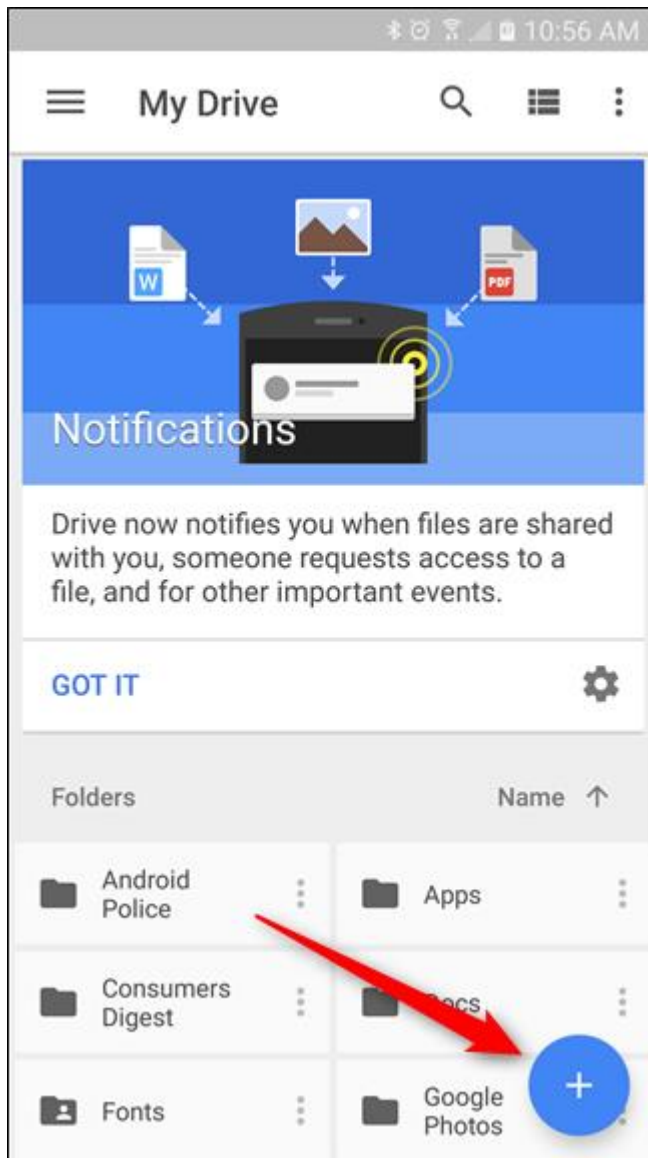
The phrase “scanning documents” used to mean spending a silly amount of time in front of a bulky machine, waiting for it to take a physical piece of paper and make it digital. But this is the mobile age, where nearly anything can be done with a phone. And scanning text-searchable documents is stupid easy with little more than your phone's camera.

To start scanning everything from receipts to recipes, you probably already have everything you need: an Android phone and the [Google Drive app](#). That's it. Note that we're talking about the full Google Drive app, not the standalone Sheets, Docs, or Slides apps.

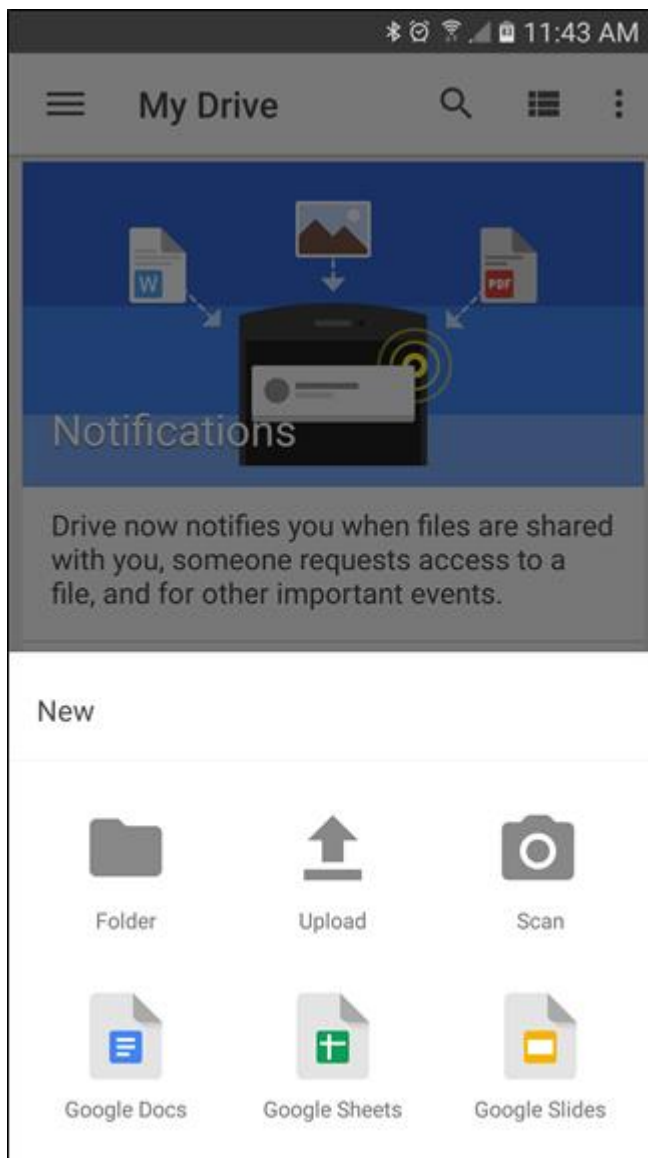
Now that you're all sorted, let's do this thing.

First, fire up the Drive app and navigate to the folder where you'd like your scan to be saved. In the interest of simplicity (and logic?), I usually just scan stuff to a folder called “Scans.” Super creative, I know.

In the bottom-right corner, there's a floating action button with a plus sign—tap that bad boy.

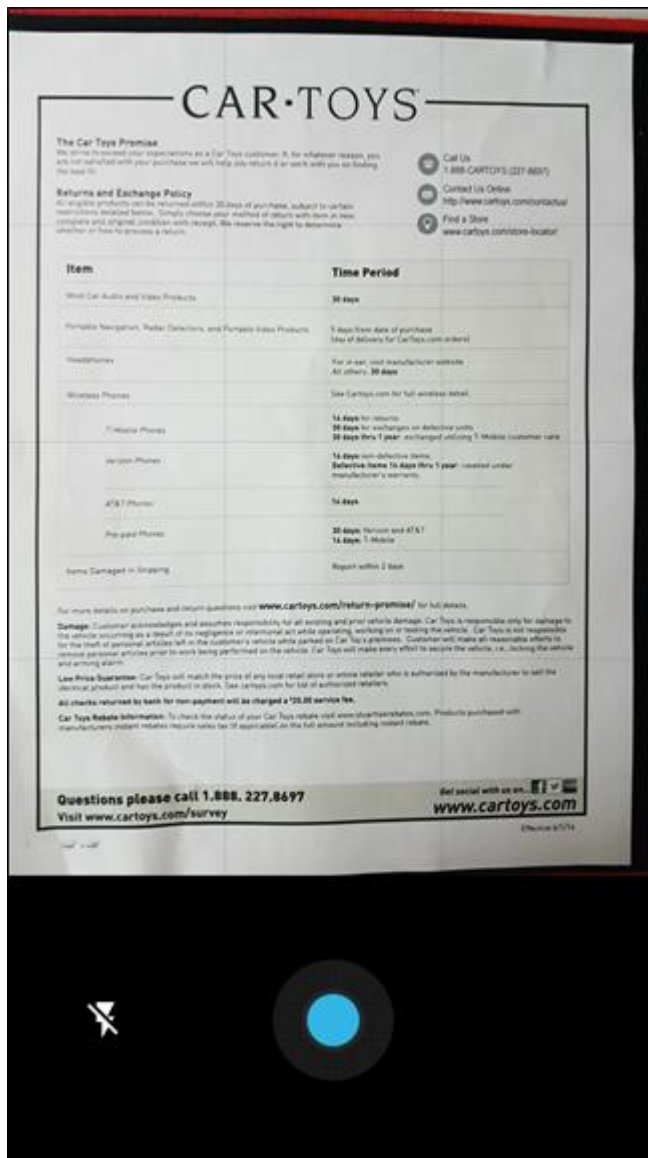


This will open the “New” dialog, and the third option in the top row is “Scan.” Give ‘er a tap!



The camera will open, and you're ready to scan away. Here are a few tips to be aware of before you start hitting that shutter button, however:

- **Use a contrasting background:** If you're scanning a white document, put it on a dark background. This will help the camera find the edges.
- **Try to get a straight-over shot:** If you need to place the paper on the floor to get a perfect overhead shot, do that. It'll result in a much cleaner scan.
- **Be patient, it may take more than one shot:** Sometimes the scan feature clips the edges off of a document, cutting part of it off. It may take a few tries to get it just right.



Once everything is good and you're ready to save the document, just tap the check. Drive will automatically open the folder where you told it to save and upload it. Once it's finished syncing, you'll be able to grab the scanned document from any other device with Drive installed.

Best of all: the contents of the saved PDF are also searchable in Drive. So, let's say you saved a recipe for Gourmet Chocolate Oatmeal Balls and you're ready to make them seventeen months later. Just fire up Drive, search for some keywords—like "chocolate oatmeal"—and Drive will kick back all the applicable results. This PDF will definitely be among those, so you can start cooking. Also, hit me up and I'll come over so I can have some of those Oatmeal Balls. Those sound pretty good.