

# Tech Tips from Mr G

## Converting Files with Zamzar



It happens to all of us. Someone sends us a file that's written in **Microsoft Works** (don't get me started), and all we have is **Word**. Or you created a presentation on your Mac at home, using **Keynote**, but the computer you're working on now only has **PowerPoint**. Instead of silently cursing the person who sent you the incompatible file for not saving it into a more standard format, and ripping out your hair, there may well be a solution to the problem. And that solution's name is **Zamzar**.

### What is Zamzar?

Let's go back for a moment and talk about an author by the name of Franz Kafka. He wrote a short story called **The Metamorphosis**, in which a character by the name of Gregor Samsa woke up one day to find out that he had been turned into a giant cockroach. At least that's the way my 8<sup>th</sup> grade teacher, Mr D'Antonio, told us the story. **Zamzar** takes its name from Gregor Samsa, who was changed, because it changes your files from one format to another.

Now that you know that, let's get down to what Zamzar really is. It's a web-based program that can convert one file format to just about any other file format, and you can find it at **www.zamzar.com**.



### How Do You Use Zamzar?

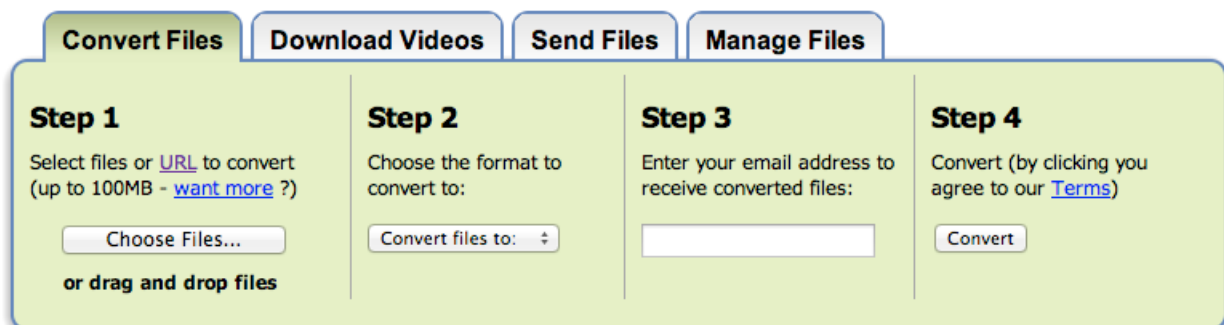
There are four steps, as shown in the graphic from their website.

The first step is to select the file you want to convert. This can either be a file stored locally on your hard drive or flash drive, or it can be a file stored somewhere on the Internet. If it's a local file, simply click on **Choose Files** to find and upload the file you want to convert. If it's a "remote file," click on the word **URL**, and then you'll get a box where you can enter (or paste) the URL of the file you want to convert.

The next step is to choose the format you want to convert to. Zamzar supports a lot of conversion types, but not all of them.

Step three is relatively easy: enter the address that you want your converted file sent to. Actually they don't really send you the converted file; what they do is to send you a link to the converted file, and then you download it from their server.

Finally, agree to their terms of service, click on the **Convert** button, and wait a few minutes for a message from them to arrive in your inbox. Your file will remain on their server for 24 hours.



## How Much Does it Cost?

Basic Zamzar is free. But everything that's free comes with a cost. The cost here is that you're limited to files that are 100mb or less that only stay on their server for 24 hours (so download them as soon as you get the email message). You also have to deal with reading and listening to the ads on their site when you go to download your converted file. I haven't had any need to convert anything larger than 100mb, and I close the window as soon as I'm done downloading, so I haven't had any problem with these limitations.

## What Kinds of Conversions Can You Do?

The **Conversion Types** link near the top of their homepage gives you a pretty exhaustive list of what can be converted from and to what. But here's a quick table of the most popular conversion types

### Word Processing

- LibreOffice to Microsoft Word
- Microsoft Works to Microsoft Word
- OpenOffice to Microsoft Word
- Pages to Microsoft Word
- WordPerfect to Microsoft Word

### Spreadsheets

- LibreOffice to Microsoft Excel
- Microsoft Works to Microsoft Excel
- Numbers to Microsoft Excel
- OpenOffice to Microsoft Excel

### Presentations

- Keynote to Microsoft PowerPoint
- LibreOffice Presentation to Microsoft PowerPoint
- OpenOffice Presentation to Microsoft PowerPoint

### eBooks

- The **azw** Kindle eBook Format to **ePub** Format used by everyone else
- The **ePub** format to the **mobi** format used by the Kindle

In case you're wondering why there are no conversions from Microsoft to anything else, that's because most programs can read Microsoft files, since they're the de facto standard.

## Need More Help?

Check out the **FAQ** at the top of the page at [www.zamzar.com](http://www.zamzar.com).

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