

The art of *following an idea*

A FIELD GUIDE TO READING WITH PIPIT

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Abstract

Reading a technical paper is rarely a straight line. An equation points to a definition; a citation opens another conversation. This guide is a small, real PDF for exploring a workspace that keeps those connections close and your place intact.

1. Read at the speed of thought

Start with the page. The interface stays at its edges, leaving a generous space for text, diagrams, and the pauses between them. Scroll with j and k. Press / to search, and n to move through matches. Use the command palette whenever a shortcut escapes you.

The value of a reading tool is not how many controls it shows. It is how easily you can follow an idea and return. The simple model in equation (2) illustrates this workflow. The bibliography entry [1] is another place to begin.

Try it: press e, enter 2, then press Enter to peek.

Open equation (2)

Open reference [1]

2. A map, not a maze

Open the document outline with `t`. Chapters give you a map, while bookmarks leave a trail of your own. Press `b` to bookmark a page, `m` followed by a letter to set a named mark, and apostrophe followed by that letter to return.

Navigation has a history. After following a reference or jumping to another page, press `Alt+Left` to return to the exact scroll position you left. `Alt+Right` retraces your path. Page numbers are one-based, just as they appear in the toolbar.

Keyboard essentials

<code>j / k</code>	Scroll down / up
<code>d / u</code>	Move half a viewport
<code>gg / G</code>	First / last page
<code>p</code>	Go to a page number
<code>e / c</code>	Equation / citation lookup
<code>f / Shift+f</code>	Follow a link / preview a link
<code>:</code> / <code>Ctrl+k</code>	Search every command

3. Keep the context

A reference preview is a second view into the same document. The main page stays exactly where it is. Open a preview from an equation or citation result, inspect the original typesetting, and press Escape to return to reading.

A small model

For this illustrative example, let the reading time be composed of time spent understanding an idea and time spent finding its context. This is a demonstration of navigation, not an empirical result.

$$T = T_{read} + T_{find} \tag{1}$$

$$T_{find} = N_{jumps} \times t_{return} \tag{2}$$

Equation (2) makes the motivation concrete: a tool that keeps a return path can make navigation less disruptive. Use Shift+Enter in the lookup panel to jump to the original location instead of opening a preview.

A reference is most useful when the way back is obvious.

4. Follow the connections

PDFs come in many forms. Some contain proper internal links, bookmarks, and selectable text. Others are scanned images. Pipit follows embedded links directly and uses extracted text to find likely equation numbers, figure captions, and bibliography entries.

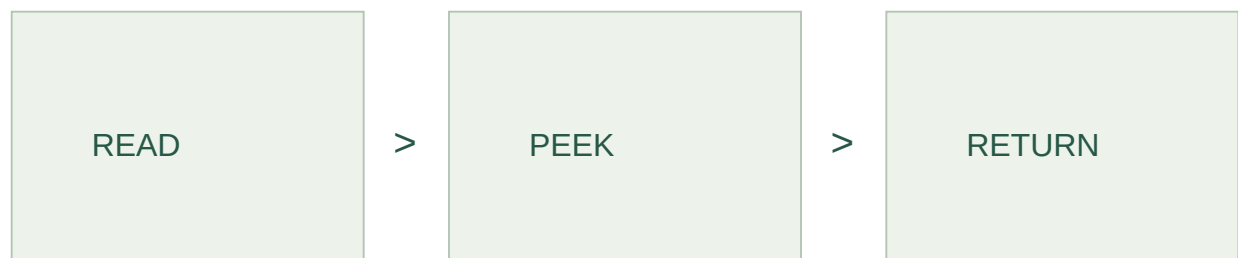


Figure 1. The reading loop: context stays within reach.

Press **v** to look up figure captions. Press **f** to label the links on the visible pages, then type the hint to follow one. **Shift+f** opens an internal link in the preview pane. The same actions are available from the command palette.

5. Make room for focus

Paper, Sepia, Night, and twenty terminal-inspired themes change the workspace and document colors. Open Reading settings to choose your own colors, preserve the original PDF, or map source colors to a replacement palette.

Hover over the compact dock to expand its tools. Press `z` for focus mode and `z` again to return. `Ctrl+scroll` changes the PDF size. Press `r` for a reading ruler and use the bracket keys to move it. Select a passage and press `q` to keep it in your notebook.

Your reading position, named marks, and bookmarks stay in this browser. Documents are not uploaded. Download saves the original PDF. The standalone web app opens local PDFs; the Chrome extension can also intercept normal PDF navigations.

A note on trust

Text-based lookup is a useful shortcut, not a semantic proof. Check the preview before relying on a reference. Image-only documents need OCR from another tool before text search or equation lookup can work.

References & further reading

- [1] Bush, V. As We May Think. The Atlantic, 1945.
- [2] Engelbart, D. C. Augmenting Human Intellect. SRI, 1962.
- [3] Sioyek. Documentation: commands and reference navigation.
- [4] Mozilla. PDF.js: a general-purpose platform for parsing PDFs.

This field guide is original demo content. The numbered equations are deliberately simple so that you can explore reference lookup, previews, and navigation history before opening your own research.

Your next paper is one shortcut away.

Press o to open a PDF from your computer.