Which Scanner Should I Use?
Selecting the proper equipment.

There are only three types of scanners to consider:

1. **Sheet feed, high volume scanner.** (A stack of documents is placed in a sheet feeder for scanning).
   - ✔️ Good for high volume office sized documents, especially letter and legal size
   - ✔️ May be able to scan both sides of the document simultaneously
   - ✔️ Very fast
   - ✗ Can damage fragile documents or thin paper
   - ✗ Quality may not be as high as flatbed or overhead digital, though adequate for office use

2. **Flatbed scanner.** (Each document is laid on a plate of glass for scanning.)
   - ✔️ May be able to scan larger documents than a sheet feed scanner
   - ✔️ Safe to use on fragile documents or thin paper
   - ✔️ May scan at a higher resolution (higher quality) than sheet feed scanners
   - ✔️ Small footprint makes it possible to place on a desk
   - ✗ Slower scan time than other types of scanners

3. **Overhead digital camera (digital scanning back).**
   - ✔️ Extremely high image quality is possible
   - ✔️ Very accurate color reproduction
   - ✔️ Can be made faster with the addition of a foot pedal to click the shutter
   - ✔️ Appropriate for very large documents, such as maps
   - ✔️ Safe for rare and fragile documents
   - ✗ Can require several seconds to several minutes to capture a high resolution image
   - ✗ Normally requires external lights and a scanning table, which consume space

Choose your scanner based on some simple criteria:

**A. The size of your paper documents.**
   - Office sized documents (1.2.3.)
   - Very large, oversized documents (3.)
   - Card files (1. 2.)

**B. The condition of your paper documents.**
   - Sturdy, modern office documents. (1.2.3.)
   - Rare documents (2.3.)
   - Onion skin and thin documents (2.3.)

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