

MAC BASICS SUPERGUIDE

Leopard
Edition



Macworld

\$12.95

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Foreword



We're very lucky here at *Macworld*. In both print and on the Web, we've got an amazingly diverse readership. Among our readers are some incredibly geeky, tech-savvy people who can write programming code in their heads and disassemble a MacBook Pro with only a paper clip. But we've also got a lot of readers who consider themselves novice Mac users and who avidly read what we write in order to flex and improve their Mac skills.

Believe it or not, this book is for both kinds of readers. If you're someone who's struggling with the basics of operating a Mac, or someone who's a new user of Mac OS X, the *Mac Basics Superguide* book will get you up to speed.

This book is filled with easy-to-follow, detailed tips and information about using the Finder and the Dock, switching between programs, using Apple's Spotlight search tool, opening and saving your files, and setting up system preferences and user accounts. We've tossed in some basic security and troubleshooting advice to keep your Mac up and running smoothly. And our own Dan Frakes, who pens the *Mac Gems* column in print and on the Web, has assembled a list of 24 great low-cost programs that will enhance your Mac experience.

So that covers the novice users. But what about those geeky Mac experts? Why is this book for them?

The answer is simple: It's for them because it helps everyone they know. It's for all of their friends and family members who use them as the be-all, end-all Mac resource. The reality is, a Mac expert can only be in one place at any given time. This *Mac Basics Superguide* can always be around as a handy reference when there's no flesh-and-blood expert nearby. And with any luck, the expert will also be getting fewer calls as his or her friends and family start to master their Macs on their own.

Or to put it another way, this is the book I gave to my mom so that she could figure things out on her Mac when I'm not available to help.

With this edition of the *Mac Basics Superguide*, we've updated the entire book to reflect the changes in Apple's latest version of Mac OS X, "Leopard." Leopard adds some exciting new features and makes some changes to the familiar Mac interface. This book covers it all. And if you find yourself wanting more, please consider the other books in our Superguide series, *Total Leopard* and *Mac OS X Hints, Leopard Edition*.

I hope you enjoy the book—no matter which kind of Mac user you are.

—Jason Snell, editorial director, *Macworld*
San Francisco, May 2008

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COVER PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER BELANGER

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Are you worried about viruses, malicious hackers, nosy coworkers, and other computer dangers? This chapter is filled with steps you can take to keep your Mac healthy, safe, and secure.

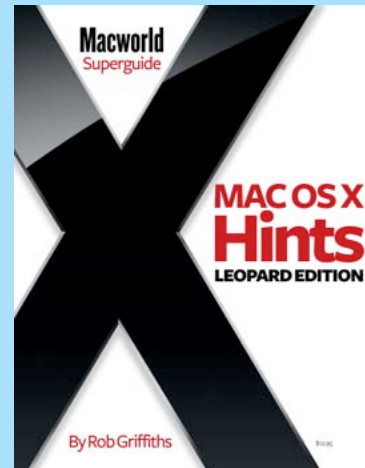
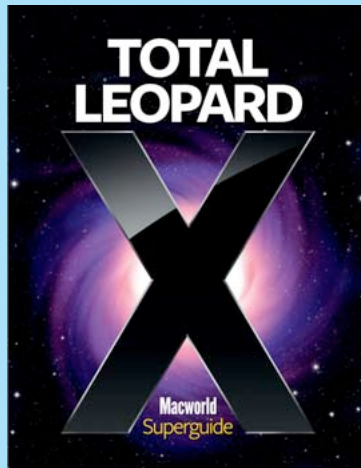
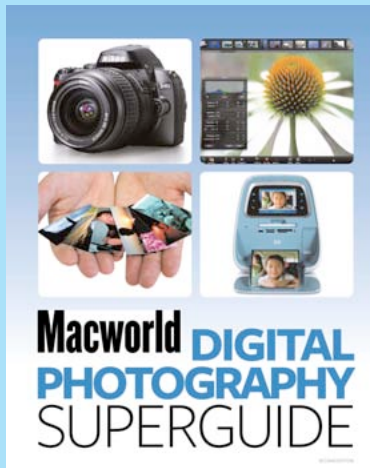


83 Great OS X Add-Ons

Sometimes you need features that don't come with OS X and you have to look to other software makers. This is a list of some of the most useful third-party utilities, for everything from managing shortcuts to converting media files.



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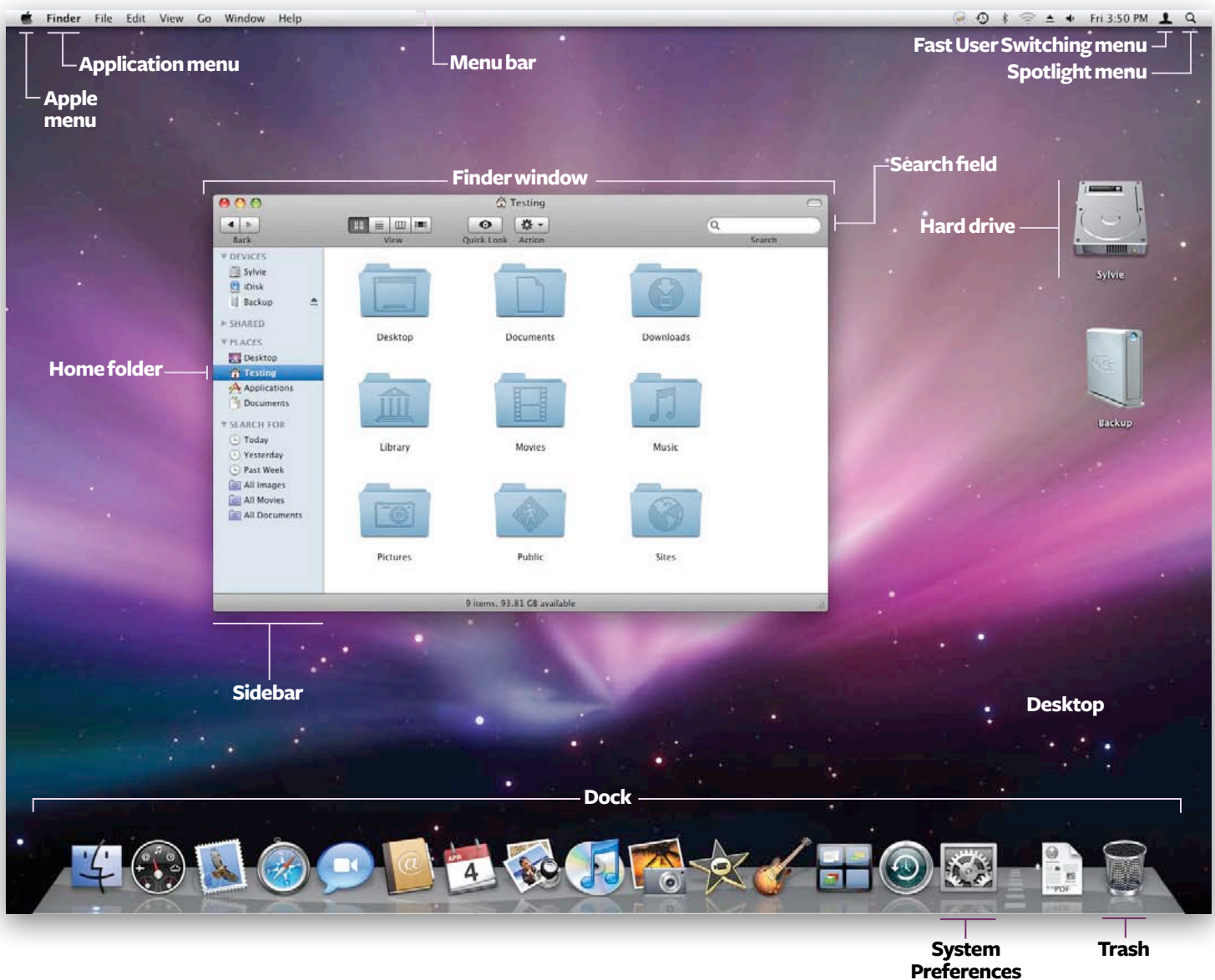
PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF APPLE

MAC OS X AT A GLANCE

A Quick Guide to Leopard's Most Important Interface Elements

Getting acquainted with any new operating system—even one as elegantly designed as Apple's Mac OS X—can be a challenge. Newcomers face strange terms, unfamiliar interface elements, and a host of seemingly inexplicable features. Wondering what longtime

Mac users mean when they refer to the *sidebar* or to the *Spotlight menu*? Not sure what to call the list of applications at the bottom of your screen? Here's a quick look at some common OS X interface elements—items we'll refer to again and again in the pages of this book.



YOUR MAC'S PORTS AT A GLANCE

A Quick Guide to Connecting External Hardware

Not sure where all of those cables go? Here's a quick guide to the ports and plugs found on current Macs.



MAGSAFE POWER PLUG Found on Apple's latest laptops, this power plug uses magnets to secure the connection.

This creates a snug link between the laptop and the cord and prevents damage if a passerby snags the cord—it easily disconnects when too much tension is placed on it. There's no up or down to this connector—you can plug it in either way.



ETHERNET Current Macs include Gigabit Ethernet ports but no modems. To connect a Mac to your DSL router or to a wired network, plug an Ethernet cable into this port.



FIREWIRE 400 The original version of FireWire, FireWire 400 is how many digital video cameras and external hard drives connect to the Mac. You can also connect two Macs via FireWire for easy networking or to use one of the Macs as an external hard drive (to do this, connect the Macs with a FireWire cable and then start up the Mac you want to use as an external hard drive while holding down its T key).



FIREWIRE 800 This version of FireWire is twice as fast as FireWire 400. It's generally found on Apple's high-end Macs, such as the Mac Pro and the MacBook Pro.



USB Current Macs include version 2.0 of the Universal Serial Bus (USB) standard, which is significantly faster than the original 1.1 version. However, these ports will accept USB 1.1 connections. Apple's current iPods connect to the Mac via USB, as do most printers, digital cameras, keyboards, and mice.



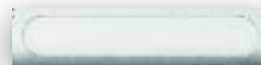
AUDIO INPUT Connect a 1/8-inch minijack plug to this port to input audio from analog microphones, tape decks, and other hardware.



AUDIO OUTPUT Plug your headphones or standard computer speakers into this port using a 1/8-inch minijack plug. If you have an Intel Mac mini, iMac, MacBook, or MacBook Pro, you can also use a mini-Toslink adapter to connect home theater speakers or other equipment that uses standard Toslink optical connectors.



OPTICAL DIGITAL AUDIO-IN AND -OUT TOSLINK You can use these ports to hook up high-end desktop Macs to surround-sound speaker systems and to capture audio from digital sources that use a Toslink cable.



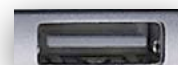
EXPRESSCARD/34 This slot, which is included on the MacBook Pro, can hold third-party cards such as wireless modem cards. The 34 refers to the width of the card modules (34mm) that fit in the slot.



DVI Use this port to connect a digital LCD to your Mac. To connect an analog display, such as a CRT, you'll need a DVI-to-VGA connector.



DVI/VGA Found on the iMac and MacBook, this port lets you connect an extra display to your system with the help of a special adapter (not included).



MICRO-DVI Use this port—found on the MacBook Air—to connect a display to the laptop via a micro-DVI-to-DVI or micro-DVI-to-VGA adapter. It supports external monitors as large as Apple's 23-inch Cinema display.

FINDING YOUR WAY IN OS X

Use the Finder to Locate Files, Create New Folders, and Master OS X

When many people new to the Mac first hear the name Finder, they assume that the Finder is OS X's search feature. But in fact, the Finder is the space where you interact with your Mac—it is OS X's metaphorical face (it's even represented in the Dock by a smiling blue face). When you look at your desktop or at a window showing your files and folders, you're looking at the Finder.



You'll use the Finder for many of your day-to-day tasks. For instance, it's where you create new folders to organize your files; review information about the size of files; move, duplicate, and delete files; burn files to CD-R or DVD-R discs; and browse your Mac's hard drive. And yes, the Finder can actually help you find files—it's tied to the systemwide Spotlight search feature (see the *Searching Your Mac* chapter).

OPEN A FINDER WINDOW

To navigate to files, folders, applications, and anything else on your Mac, you'll use a Finder window. To open a new window, first click on an empty part of your desktop. Now click on File in the menu bar at the top of the screen, and select New Finder Window, or press ⌘-N . You'll also get a new Finder window whenever you click on the Finder icon in your Dock, or double-click on a folder icon on the desktop or on your hard drive's icon on the desktop.

THE DIFFERENT FINDER VIEWS

OS X gives you four different ways to browse through your files in a Finder window—the icon, list, column, and new cover flow views (see “Window with a View”). You control a window's view by using the Finder's View menu or by clicking on the small View icons at the top of a Finder window. Deciding which view to use is partly a matter of personal preference and partly dependent on what you're looking at in the Finder.

COVER FLOW VIEW New in Leopard, cover flow view helps you browse files quickly in the Finder, just like in iTunes. When you click on the Cover Flow button (or press

⌘-4) in a Finder window, you'll get a scrollable preview of every file or folder in the currently selected location—making it a great way to quickly browse for an image or a movie in a crowded folder (see “Window with a View”). In this view you can page through PDFs and text files and play movie files (but not audio files).

ICON VIEW You're already familiar with the icon view—that's what you see when you look at your Mac's desktop. In this view, you can arrange little representations of your files and folders as you please, just as if you were working in real space. The icon view is particularly handy if you have a folder of photos, for instance. Each photo's icon will be a small version of the image—a thumbnail—so it's easy to tell which shot is which at a glance.

If you aren't happy with the default (wide) grid spacing, you have the option of changing it in this view. Go to View: Show View Options and drag the Grid Spacing slider to the left. If you tighten spacing up a bit from the default, you can see many more icons in the same amount of space, with no loss of readability. In the View Options window you can also tinker with the size of your icons, font size, label position, and background color.

LIST VIEW But the icon view isn't always the most practical choice. You can also choose the list view, which shows a list of files and folders on alternating rows of white and light blue backgrounds. Next to each folder is a disclosure triangle. Click on the triangle, and you'll see the contents of the folder without having to open it.

This view is particularly useful for sorting your files according to a specific criterion—for example, alphabetically, by date, or by file size. Say you want to see the file you've just saved to the desktop. Open a Finder window, and click on the Desktop icon on the window's sidebar on the left side. After choosing the list view, click on the Date Modified column header—it should default to newest-to-oldest order. If it puts the list in oldest-to-newest order, just click on the header again, and the sort order will reverse. (This works for all the list view's column headers: click once to sort by that attribute; click twice to reverse the sort order.)

USING THE DOCK

Access Your Important Applications, Files, and Commands with the Click of a Mouse

Start up a new Mac, and you'll see a thin, reflective shelf filled with icons at the bottom of your screen. (If you come from the world of Windows, you'll notice a resemblance to the taskbar you left behind.) This indispensable collection of shortcuts is called the Dock. You can use the Dock to quickly launch and switch between applications, see at a glance which applications are open and which open files are minimized, or access frequently used folders and files. It shows applications on the left side, and minimized windows, stacks, and your Trash on the right. Like most OS X features, it has many other tricks up its sleeve (see "Meet the Dock").

ADDING PROGRAMS TO THE DOCK

You don't need to root around in your Applications folder every time you want to open a frequently used program. By putting those applications in the Dock, you can get to each with just one click.

The Dock comes prestocked with programs that Apple considers to be the most important. The Finder (represented by a blue face) is to the far left. You'll also see Mail, Safari, iChat, iTunes, System Preferences, and others. But you're not restricted to these.

Whenever you launch a program, its icon automatically gets added to the Dock. When you next quit the program, that icon will vanish—unless you add it permanently. If you want a running program's icon to remain in the Dock, control-click on the program's Dock icon and select Keep In Dock from the contextual menu.

To add an icon for a closed application to the Dock, open your Applications folder and drag the program's icon to any spot to the left of the Dock's divider bar. The existing Dock icons will shuffle out of the way to make room

for the newcomer. When the icon is where you'd like it to reside, release the mouse button. Items added in this manner will remain in your Dock whether or not the program is running. You can move an icon at any time by dragging it to another spot on the Dock. Note that if you move a running application to another spot on the Dock, it will become a permanent addition to the Dock without the need to use a menu.

OPENING, CLOSING, AND CONTROLLING PROGRAMS

The Dock provides you with a fast and convenient way to access programs in OS X. Once you've filled it with your preferred applications and folders, you can use the Dock to execute basic commands like Open, Close, Force Quit, and more in one click.

LAUNCHING APPLICATIONS Click once on any application's icon in the Dock, and the application will bounce once and then launch. (When an icon bounces multiple times it means a program needs your attention.) If you're not sure which application an icon represents, hover your cursor over the icon, and the application's name will appear above it.

The Dock can come in handy when you want to open a file in an application other than its default application. For instance, if you want to open an image in Photoshop instead of Preview, drag the file onto Photoshop's icon in the Dock and let go. If the application you've dragged the file onto doesn't recognize it (say, an image dragged onto Quicken by mistake), the file won't open.

A white dot with a blue halo appears underneath an application icon to indicate that the program is currently running. You can quickly switch between open applications



C Meet the Dock Use the Dock (at the bottom of your screen) to get one-click access to applications such as iTunes **A**, or your folders **B**, and files. Keep track of which programs are running by looking for the white dots under icons **C**. You can switch between active programs by clicking on their Dock icons. Drag files you no longer need to the Trash **D**.

MODIFYING SYSTEM PREFERENCES

Customize Your Mac and Alter Important System Settings

No two Mac users are exactly alike. Thankfully, Mac OS X offers countless ways to customize your Mac's settings so they better reflect your personal tastes (including the colors you see and the sounds your Mac makes) and your setup's specifics (such as your network settings and security preferences).

These settings are easy to access. OS X stores them in a single program—the System Preferences utility. For people familiar with Windows, System Preferences is like the Control Panels item in the Start menu. For former Mac OS 9 users, it's similar to the Control Panels submenu in the Apple menu. It's your one-stop shop for everything from selecting a screen saver to controlling access to your Mac.

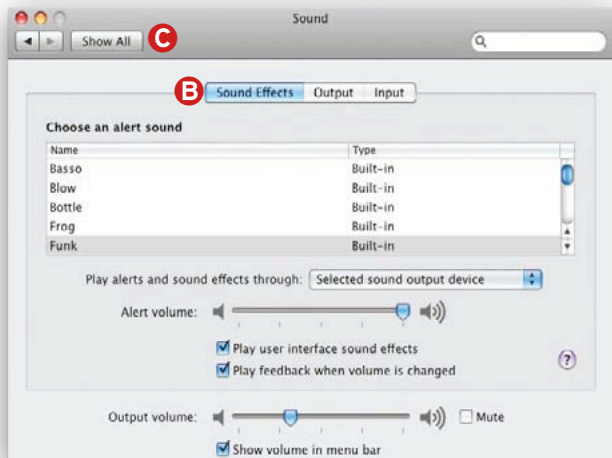


ACCESSING YOUR PREFERENCES

The System Preferences utility resides in your root-level Applications folder. However, there are a couple of ways to access it more quickly. You can select System Preferences from the Apple menu or simply click on the System Preferences icon in the Dock (it looks like a group of gears).

Within the System Preferences window, you'll see rows of icons divided into general categories. Each of these icons represents a preference pane that provides access to a specific group of related settings—Appearance, Displays, Accounts, and so on. When people talk about the Sound preferences, for instance, they're referring to the preference pane that appears when you click on the Sound icon in the System Preferences window (see “Sound Off”).

When you click on a preference pane's icon, the System Preferences window displays that pane's settings. In the Appearance pane, for example, are options for changing OS X's accent color, text-highlight color, scroll-arrow position, font-smoothing style, and more. Some System Preferences panes include more than one screen. For example, if you click on the Desktop & Screen Saver icon, the resulting screen will feature two tabs at the top—one



Sound Off Each icon in the System Preferences window (top) represents a preference pane that contains a group of related settings. For example, clicking on the Sound icon **A** opens the Sound preference pane (bottom), which contains Input, Output, and Sound Effects tabs **B**. Click on the tabs to switch between groups of sound settings. Click on Show All **C** to return to the main System Preferences window.

SETTING UP USER ACCOUNTS

Protect Personal Files and Settings on a Shared Mac

Mac OS X lets you create separate identities—known as *user accounts*—on your Mac. User accounts are great for a group of people who want to work on the same computer but who have unique needs. Each user controls his or her own settings, desktop space, and system preferences. And each user controls access to his or her files.



Your user account controls your entire working environment in OS X. Each account has its own Home folder (also called the user folder), which holds the user's personal files—documents, music, and photos, for example—and the preference files that record customizations to the Finder (such as the desktop background and screen saver) or to individual applications. But that's not all. Your user account also stores your e-mail address and password, the home page for your Web browser, your iChat account name, and much more.

If you're the only person working on your Mac, you may have just one user account. But you can create as many accounts as you need for friends, family members,

colleagues, or even guests. And other users can't view or open your files, so your user account gives you privacy.

TYPES OF USER ACCOUNTS

If you're the only user on your Mac, you have an *administrator* (or admin) account. Your Mac set up this account for you the first time you installed OS X. This type of account lets you install software in the root-level Applications folder, change preferences that affect the entire system, and create and delete other user accounts. You can have as many admin accounts as you want—in fact, all your accounts could be admin accounts. But all admin accounts have the power to install and delete files and applications, as well as to modify and remove other accounts, so be careful about who gets this kind of access (see “Many Users”).

The other types of user accounts limit these powers. A *standard* account, for example, lets the user work with the Mac freely, install applications in his or her Home folder, and modify some benign System Preferences settings—the desktop pattern and alert sound, for example. (System preferences that can't be modified without an administra-

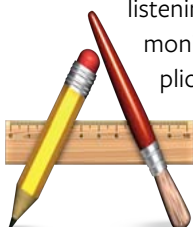


Many Users This Mac has four users, each with a different type of account. Only the administrator can add new users and make systemwide changes. This prevents the Mac's other users from accidentally harming the system. You must have administrative powers to add a new account.

WORKING WITH APPLICATIONS

The Best Ways to Install, Update, and Delete Mac Software

A new Mac comes with more than 40 applications and utilities installed: standards such as programs for checking your e-mail, surfing the Web, and managing contacts; creative tools for editing photos, listening to music, and designing Web sites; system monitors; and more (for help using some of these applications, see the *Get Started with OS X's Programs* chapter). You can also install applications from Apple and from third-party developers (such as Adobe and Microsoft) to add features that don't come built-in.



INSTALLING NEW APPLICATIONS

New software can come in a couple of different formats:

FROM A DISC Most software you purchase on a disc—a CD or DVD—will come with an installer application. Just double-click on the installer, and it will walk you through the steps for installing the software.

Instead of an installer, some discs include an icon of the program along with a note that tells you to drag the icon to your Applications folder. To quickly put the software in the right place, click on the clear oval button in the upper right corner of the disc's window. This exposes the window's sidebar, where you'll see the Applications folder. Then just drag the application's icon to this folder.

FROM THE WEB Many companies let you download new software right from their Web sites. This type of software often comes in the form of a disk-image file—a file with a .dmg file extension. This is like a virtual hard drive. Just double-click on this .dmg file, and a picture of a virtual removable drive will appear on your desktop and in the sidebar (see “Image Is Everything”). Note that if you've set Safari to open downloaded files automatically (by selecting the Open “Safe” Files After Downloading option in Safari's General preferences), Safari will mount the disk image for you. Double-click on this disk image, and you'll



Image Is Everything An application downloaded from the Internet will usually appear on your desktop as a .dmg file **A**. When you double-click on this file, the Finder will mount a disk image **B**, in which you'll find the program's installer **C**. In many cases, you can simply drag the program icon into your Applications folder. If you can't see the sidebar, click on the clear button **D** to reveal it. Click on the eject button **E** to eject the disk image.

GET STARTED WITH OS X'S PROGRAMS

How to Get Up and Running with Safari, Mail, and Other Apple Software

There are countless Mac applications—for work, for play, and for everything in between. But just about every Mac user needs certain core applications—such as a Web browser, an e-mail program, a contact manager, a calendar, and so on. Thankfully, Mac OS X includes software for all these tasks and many others. Although taking you step-by-step through everything these applications can do would take up an entire book, here are the basics you need to know.



Safari

In a world where we get a rapidly increasing amounts of our news, information, and entertainment from the Internet, a Web browser is an absolute necessity. Apple's Web browser is called Safari, and it's represented by a compass icon in the Dock.

OPEN MULTIPLE PAGES

Like most applications, Safari lets you have multiple windows open simultaneously. Just select File: New Window

to open a new browser window; each can display a different Web page.

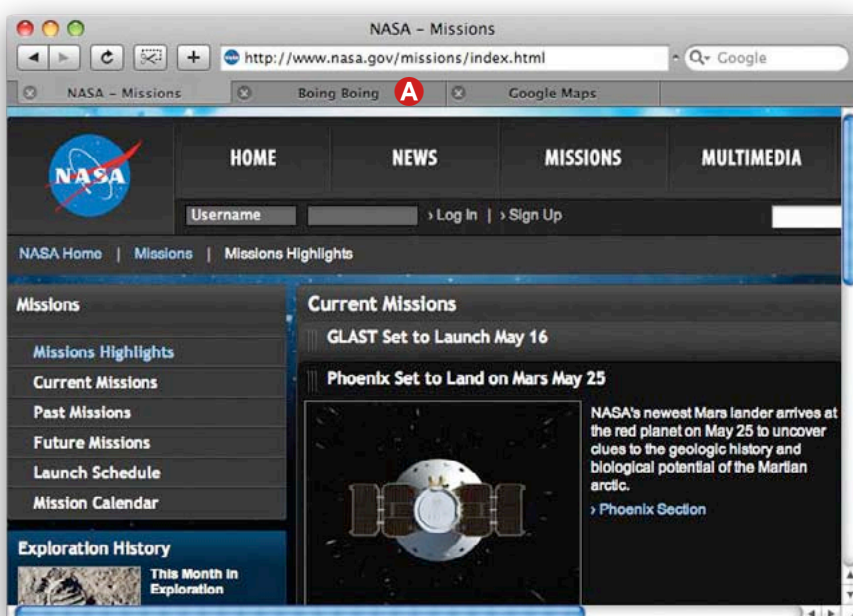
To open a link in a new window that will appear in front of the current window, hold down the ⌘ key as you click on the link (or control-click on the link and choose Open Link In New Window from the contextual menu). To open a link in a new browser window that will appear behind the current window, hold down ⌘-shift as you click on the link.

To keep all of those open windows orderly, make sure you've blocked pop-up ads. Just choose Block Pop-Up Windows from the Safari menu.

USE TABBED BROWSING

Too many open windows can clutter your screen and cause confusion. Thankfully, Safari offers a solution—tabbed browsing. Tabbed browsing lets you open pages in separate tabs that appear just below Safari's Bookmarks bar (see "Opening a Tab"). To switch from page to page, click on the appropriate tab (the name of the page appears on its tab).

When you ⌘-click on a link, the link will open in a new



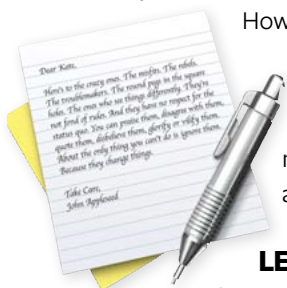
Opening a Tab When Safari's tabbed-browsing feature is turned on, you can open multiple Web pages within the same browser window. Control-click on a link to open it in a new tab **A**. Click on the name of a tab to move between the Web pages.

OPENING, SAVING, AND PRINTING

Learn the Basics of Working with Files on Your Mac

Once you start working with applications, your next challenge will be managing all the files you create. Opening files is easy—just double-click on one in the Finder, or choose File: Open in the appropriate application and navigate to the file you want. But what if you want to change which application opens the file?

How can you be sure that a Windows-using family member will be able to open the files you create? And what should you do when your Mac can't seem to communicate with your printer? We've got the answers to these questions and more.



LEARN MORE ABOUT A FILE

When you save a file, OS X stores not only the file's contents but also information about the file—such as its permissions, its modification date, and which application to open it with. To see this information, click on the file in the Finder and then choose File: Get Info (or press ⌘-I). Click on the disclosure triangle next to the Open With header to see the file's default application.

CHANGE A FILE'S DEFAULT APPLICATION

To open a file in an application other than the one assigned to it, control-click on the file in the Finder and select Open With from the contextual menu. You'll see a list of applications compatible with that file type. To choose an application that's not on the list, select Other and use the Choose Application dialog box to locate the appropriate app (see “Opening Statement”).

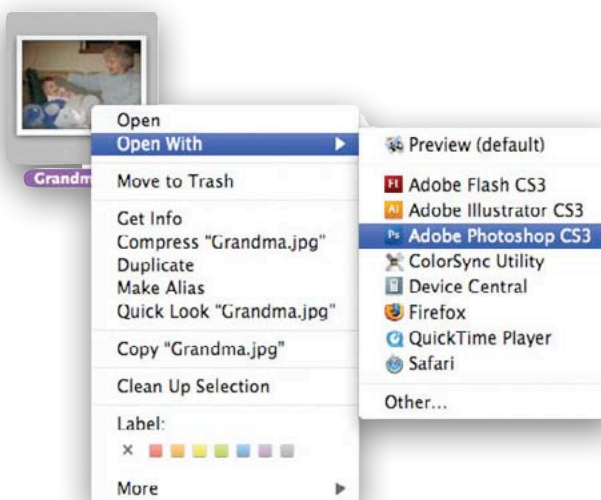
You can also choose to *always* have an application other than the default app open a particular type of file. For example, if you want to open PDF files with Adobe Acrobat Reader instead of Apple's Preview (the default), choose a PDF file in the Finder and select File: Get Info. In the Open With section of the Info window, select Acrobat Reader from the pop-up menu, and then click on Change All. Now whenever you double-click on a PDF file, OS X will open it in Acrobat Reader.

PREVIEW A FILE WITHOUT OPENING IT

Sometimes you want to view a file without going to the trouble of opening it in its related application. Leopard's new Quick Look feature lets you do just that. Simply click once on the file you'd like to see and press the spacebar. A new window will open and display the file's contents. This trick works with nearly any kind of file, including text files, movies, images, videos, PDFs, and even MP3s. If you decide you'd like to open a file while checking it out in Quick Look, press ⌘-O. To close the Quick Look window, just press the spacebar again.

SAVE A FILE

When it comes to picking a place to save your files, it's mostly up to you. Apple gives you a strong hint that it would like you to save your documents in particular locations, as evidenced by the Documents, Movies, Music, Pictures, Public, and Sites folders within your user folder (also known as your Home folder). But you're welcome to create a folder just about anywhere you like—on the desktop or at the root level of your hard drive, for example—



Opening Statement To open a file in an application other than its default app, control-click on the file and select the Open With menu.

SEARCHING YOUR MAC

Use Spotlight to Track Down Files, Messages, Events, and More

First introduced in Tiger, Spotlight provides a quick and easy way to locate and open files, documents, and even applications scattered around your Mac's hard drive. With Spotlight, you can quickly track down the e-mail message you sent to your friend

Jim about the latest Brad Mehldau album, find out when you last saw your eye doctor,

or locate a Microsoft Word document whose name you've forgotten, simply by searching for a unique word or phrase. Spotlight searches PDF files, bookmarks (in Safari and some other Web browsers), Address Book contacts, applications, preference panes, music files, movies, and more. You can

even save a search and then run it again

later to see what new files match your search criteria.

In Leopard, Spotlight's searching prowess is even more powerful than before. It includes useful additions such as Boolean searches, new keywords to help you home in on a greater variety of content, and the ability to search by specific dates. Spotlight is an indispensable tool for finding anything you seek on your Mac. All you need to do is learn its tricks.

How Spotlight Works

Spotlight isn't a single application or menu item. Instead, it works behind the scenes—popping up in many different places throughout OS X.

When you first start up a new Mac or a Mac that's just been updated to OS X, Spotlight indexes all your files. This means that it scans your files and creates a database containing their names, their content, and other information about them.

Every time you add a file to your Mac—when you create a new word processor document, receive an e-mail, or save a bookmark—Spotlight immediately indexes that file, adding information about it to the database. If you modify a file and save it, Spotlight sniffs it out and records

HIDE YOUR FILES

You've got lots of files on your Mac, but that doesn't mean you want Spotlight to search them all. You may want to keep some of your more sensitive files from turning up in a search (especially if you share a user account with someone else). Or perhaps it's just a matter of expediency: You don't want to waste time having Spotlight search backups or archives that live on a second partition or hard disk.

Spotlight indexes every drive you connect to your Mac: external hard disks, removable media (if they're writable), and even iPods (if they're set to work in disk mode). You can, however, choose to exclude certain folders or volumes. In the Spotlight preference pane, click on the Privacy tab. If you want to exclude a folder or volume on your Mac (such as one containing private information), drag it to this list, or click on the plus sign and select it. If you want to exclude an external volume, first connect the drive, then add it to the list. When you do this, Spotlight deletes any current index for the folder or volume and adds this item to a list of areas it won't index or search.

If you need to search that external hard disk down the line, connect it, remove it from the Privacy list, then wait while Spotlight reindexes the device.

the changes; if you delete a file, Spotlight jumps into action and removes its information from the database.

By the way, if you have multiple users on your account, you don't have to worry about them using Spotlight to access your private files. Spotlight looks out for your privacy. If another user is logged in on your Mac and runs a Spotlight search, he or she won't get any of your files as results—assuming those files are tucked away in your Home folder (see the *Setting Up User Accounts* chapter for more on this topic). In addition, you can exclude certain folders from the Spotlight index if you want (see "Hide Your Files").



KEEPING YOUR MAC SECURE

How to Protect against Viruses, Hackers, and Snoops

Viruses. Spyware. Internet hackers and wireless prowlers. We live in a dangerous world. And although your Mac is the safest personal computer on the market, it's by no means invulnerable. Even if you primarily use your Mac just to surf the Web and send e-mail messages to friends, you're storing valuable and potentially vulnerable information on it—credit card numbers, passwords, bank data, and more. But with a little work, you can keep your personal information out of the wrong hands—and keep your Mac out of trouble.



Common Threats

The key to not becoming a paranoid basket case is to know your enemies and protect yourself accordingly. Here are the biggest threats to your Mac.

VIRUSES

Mac users have enjoyed a long, glorious stretch without serious threats. But that doesn't mean we can afford to let down our collective guard. If there is a virus attack, users with good, up-to-date antivirus software installed, like Norton Antivirus (symantec.com), will have the best odds of remaining unscathed.

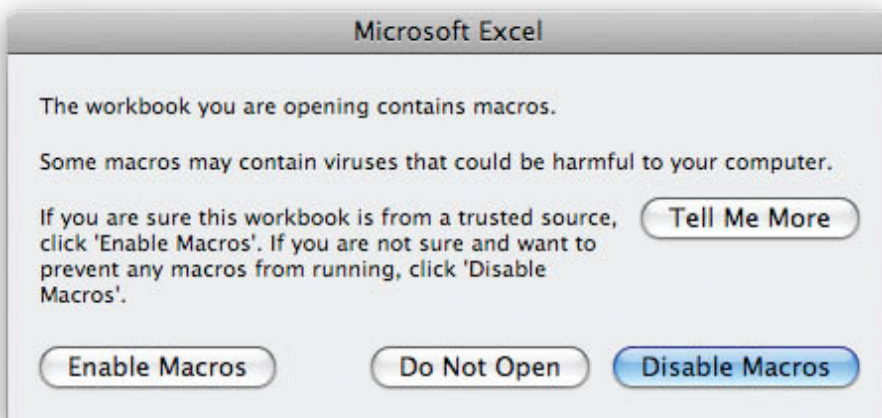
Just as important as having the software is making sure its virus definitions—the information that antivirus

software uses to recognize viruses—are up-to-date. The best way to do this is to check for updates regularly. If you use software that has an automatic update feature (most antivirus programs do), make sure it's turned on and set to check for updates frequently. A weekly schedule should be adequate for most users, but if you access files from many different sources—via e-mail, file servers, or Web downloads—you may want to check for updates daily.

FILES VIA E-MAIL

Most of the malicious scripts that travel in e-mail attachments affect only Windows machines. So if you accidentally click on one, it's unlikely that anything will happen. However, there is some cause for concern when you're opening Office 2004 and earlier Excel and Word documents that contain macros. Macros are scripts that let you simplify or automate repetitive actions, but miscreants can also use them to spread misdeeds between computers and across platforms. A document innocently passed along by a Windows-using friend, for instance, could include a macro that turns all your Word documents into locked templates (see "Good Macro, Bad Macro").

Protect yourself by turning on the Warn Before Opening a File That Contains Macros option in each Office program (*application menu*: Preferences: Security). But be aware that not all macros are malicious—the person who sent you the document might have intentionally included a



Good Macro, Bad Macro Not all macros are bad; just ask the person who sent you the file whether it's supposed to contain macros before you open it.

TROUBLESHOOTING YOUR MAC

Protect Your Data and Recover from Common OS X Problems

Most of the time, your Mac is the picture of health—it crunches numbers, plays music, and tackles the most difficult tasks without so much as a hiccup. But hundreds of things can go wrong with such a complicated system. When something does go wrong, a good backup of your system can help give you peace of mind and get you back on your feet quickly—which is why Apple has included a user-friendly new backup program in Leopard called Time Machine. We'll show you how to get started with Time Machine and walk you step by step through solving persistent crashes, stalls, and other OS X maladies.



Backing Up with Time Machine

The first step in any maintenance plan should be setting up a reliable backup routine. Backing up your data regularly won't prevent Mac disasters, but it will help you get back on your feet quickly when something does go wrong, whether it's a dying hard drive, corrupted data, or accidental deletions.

But while everyone knows they *should* back up their data, too few actually do. Leopard's Time Machine hopes to remedy that. Using a unique 3-D interface, Time Machine attempts to turn the complex and sometimes confusing processes of backing up and restoring into simple, visual operations. Once activated, Time Machine works behind the scenes to automatically create time-based snapshots of your Mac, letting you instantly retrieve archived versions of files, folders, and programs.

HOW TIME MACHINE WORKS

Time Machine copies the files on your computer to a destination you designate—such as an external hard drive or a second drive inside your Mac. Then, once per hour, the program runs again, updating your backup to include whatever files have changed since last time.

With each hourly backup, Time Machine makes a

snapshot of your entire system. If you look through the folders on your backup disk, you'll see what appears to be a complete copy of all your files for each of numerous backup sessions. But to some extent that's an illusion; Time Machine copies to your backup disk only those files and folders that are different from the ones in your previous backup. That way, your disk doesn't fill up with multiple copies of files that haven't changed.

Time Machine keeps every hourly backup for 24 hours. Then it begins to delete older versions to save space. You can count on it to keep the first backup of any given day for an entire month. Even after a month, it preserves the

IS TIME MACHINE ALL YOU NEED?

Having any backup system is better than none. But don't let Time Machine provide you with a false sense of security. After all, someone who breaks into your office and steals your Mac will probably pick up the hard drive sitting next to it, too. Likewise, disasters like fires and floods won't spare your backup drive. If you're really serious about protecting important data, it's best to include some sort of off-site backup—for example, using an online backup service (see macworld.com/3300 for recommendations) or storing a bootable duplicate at your sister's house—in your plan.

Also keep in mind that even though Time Machine backs up every file on your disk to another hard drive, you can't start up your computer from your Time Machine backup. That means if your internal hard drive is damaged or corrupted, you'll have to spend hours restoring your data before you can get back to work. You can use any of numerous programs, such as Shirt Pocket's \$28 SuperDuper (www.shirt-pocket.com) to create a bootable duplicate of your hard disk. (For instructions, go to macworld.com/2596.) Keep in mind that you must store the duplicate on its own drive or partition in order for it to be bootable.

GREAT OS X ADD-ONS

24 Useful Programs to Make Your Mac More Powerful and Easier to Use



Leopard is chock-full of useful features, but chances are it still can't do everything you want, exactly the way you want. Thankfully, there's a lot of inexpensive third-party software out there just itching to add powerful new features to your Mac; here are some of our favorites. For even more suggestions, check out our Mac Gems Weblog at www.macworld.com/macgems.

INTUITIVE FILE CONTROL

DEFAULT FOLDER X

OS X's Open and Save dialog boxes are perfectly serviceable when it comes to finding files to open and designating where to save them. However, you may eventually want more options, and Default Folder X (🔑🔑🔑🔑) provides them. It lets you assign a default folder for each application, so you don't have to navigate through subfolders. It also makes it easy to access recently or frequently used files and folders, as well as those folders currently open in the Finder. Default Folder X also remembers the last folder and file you worked with in each application, as well as the size and position of each dialog box, and lets you apply labels and Spotlight comments to files from within navigation dialogs (\$35; St. Clair Software, macworld.com/1420).

KEYBOARD SHORTCUT LOCATOR

KEYCUE ▾

If you're new to the Mac, you're probably learning—slowly—the various keyboard shortcuts offered by the OS and applications. KeyCue (🔑🔑🔑🔑) makes this learning process much easier: hold down the ⌘ key, and up pops a handy list of all the keyboard shortcuts available in the current application. It also displays custom menu shortcuts you've defined through OS X's Keyboard & Mouse preference pane and third-party utilities (€20; Ergonis, macworld.com/1424).



PAYMENT REQUESTED

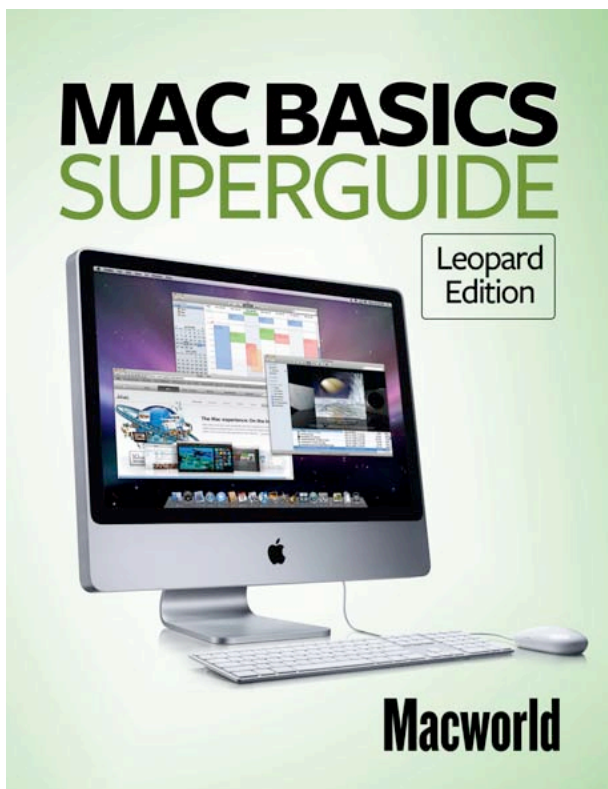
Many useful programs and add-ons for Mac OS X are created by individuals or small developers who don't charge a set price for their software. Instead, they ask users to pay (some developers prefer the word *donate*) whatever the user feels the program is worth. For these types of products, we list the price as "payment requested." Note that even though you can use many of these products without paying, they aren't free; we encourage you to pay for the software, as doing so allows the developer to keep up the good work.



HARD-DRIVE BACKUP AND CLONING

SUPERDUPER

One approach to backing up your data, and a nice complement to Time Machine, is to create a bootable clone—an exact copy of your hard drive on another drive—so you can get up and running again in no time if disaster strikes. Since you can't just copy an OS X drive via drag and drop, you need a cloning utility that understands all of OS X's peculiarities. SuperDuper (🔑🔑🔑🔑) is both the best and the easiest to use. Simply choose a source drive and a destination drive, then start the copy; you can even synchronize an existing clone with an original that has changed. It also has a number of advanced—but accessible—features, such as scheduling and the ability to save backup procedures as scripts (\$30; Shirt Pocket, macworld.com/1422).



Nobody spends more time with Apple's computers and software than the writers and editors at *Macworld*, the world's foremost Mac authority.

Now *Macworld's* team of experts has used its knowledge to create this straightforward guide to getting started with your Mac running OS X 10.5 (Leopard). Whether you're new to the Mac, just need a refresher course, or suspect that you've only scratched the surface of your Mac's potential, the *Macworld Mac Basics Superguide* will give you the step-by-step advice you need to become a Mac whiz.

Inside these pages, you'll find detailed tips and information about navigating your system using the Finder and the Dock; running and switching between programs; using Apple's Spotlight search tool; opening, saving, and printing files; and setting up system preferences and user accounts. Our experts also give you vital troubleshooting and security advice—and even recommend 24 inexpensive add-on utilities that can improve your Mac experience in ways you've never thought possible. To help you take advantage of Apple's built-in programs, we've also included helpful tips on getting started with Safari, Mail, iChat, and other included software.

Let *Macworld's* team of experts show you how to get the most out of your Mac.



[Click here to buy the full 90-page "Macworld Mac Basics Superguide, Leopard Edition" for \\$12.95!](#)