

Take Control

of Sharing Files in Leopard

by Glenn Fleishman

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This is a free sample of "Take Control of Sharing Files in Leopard."
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READ ME FIRST

Welcome to *Take Control of Sharing Files in Leopard*, version 1.0.


This book helps you share documents among computers and over the Internet safely, using the file-sharing options available in Mac OS X 10.5 Leopard. This book was written by Glenn Fleishman, edited by Tonya Engst, and published by TidBITS Publishing Inc.

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In reading this book, you may get stuck if you don't know certain basic facts about Mac OS X or if you don't understand Take Control syntax for things like working with menus or finding items in the Finder. Please note the following:

- **Menus:** When I describe choosing a command from a menu in the menu bar, I use an abbreviated description. For example, the abbreviated description for the menu command that creates a new folder in the Finder is "File > New Folder."
- **Finding preference panes:** I sometimes refer to Mac OS X preferences that you may want to adjust. To change these system-wide settings, open System Preferences by clicking its icon in the Dock or choosing System Preferences from the  menu. You access a particular preference pane by way of its icon, or the View menu. For example, to see "the Sharing preference pane," you would launch System Preferences and then click the Sharing icon or choose View > Sharing.

- **Path syntax:** I occasionally use a *path* to show the location of a file or folder. Path text is formatted in bold type. For example, Leopard stores most utilities, such as Terminal, in the Utilities folder. The path to Terminal is: **/Applications/Utilities/Terminal**.

The slash at the start of the path tells you to start from the root level of the disk. You will also encounter paths that begin with ~ (tilde), which is a shortcut for any user's home directory. For example, if a person with the user name **glenn** wants to install fonts that only he can access, he would install them in his **~/Library/Fonts** folder, which is just another way of writing **/Users/glenn/Library/Fonts**.

What's Really Different in This Edition

In updating this book from Tiger to Leopard, I thought that I would make a number of changes along with new screen captures, and that was the case. What I didn't expect is that Apple would fundamentally change and dramatically improve how it handled file sharing.

That led to a large decrease in the page count of this edition, as workarounds to avoid roadblocks placed by Apple that took 1–10 pages in the Panther and Tiger editions, and often involved editing text configuration files, could simply be removed. Even so, you'll find this edition just as useful as the previous one. All the utility is still in the book—you should simply have less frustration in achieving the desired results.

As one small example, in previous editions of the book, I had several pages that explained how to enable and control guest (password-free) access to AFP and Samba (Window style) file service. In this edition, there's a brief entry on turning on file sharing for the default Guest account that's new in Leopard and a look at how to enable or disable broad access to particular folders.

Perversely, Apple did make it harder to modify settings manually for file services. Mac OS X now rewrites underlying configuration files based on settings you choose in the Leopard interface, overwriting any changes you make. In Tiger and earlier releases, configuration files were generally *static*, and you could edit those files to make changes. With Leopard's new *dynamic* files, your options are fewer. As a result, this book focuses on changes you make through the Mac OS X interface instead of in underlying text files.

INTRODUCTION

In the late 1980s, when only a few million academics and governmental types had easy access to a very slow Internet and even most business users couldn't afford pricey Ethernet gear, we *hoi polloi* had two ways to share files: sneakernet and snail mail. The algorithm for sneakernet was to insert a floppy disk, copy files to the floppy, eject the floppy, walk (in sneakers) across the room, insert the floppy, and copy files from the floppy. A little tedious, but it got the job done.

For distances beyond the reach of sneakernet, the algorithm changed. Instead of walking across the room, you inserted the floppy in a padded envelope and walked it to the post office or called FedEx.

Even today, sneakernet and snail mail are useful for transferring huge quantities of data—imagine the gigabits you can “transmit” when you send a bunch of hard drives by overnight mail or walk a DVD-R across a room—but most people share files through multiple accounts on the same computer, over local area networks comprised of wired Ethernet and wireless Wi-Fi links, or over the Internet using dial-up modems, broadband connections, and high-speed dedicated lines.

In *Take Control of Sharing Files in Leopard*, I help you identify the right computer setup for exchanging files among users in your situation, with a particular emphasis on users working on networked computers. I focus on Mac OS X 10.5 Leopard as the hub of these activities, but the principles are the same on all platforms, and many specifics are identical or quite similar in Mac OS X 10.4 Tiger.

I also explain how to connect to a Mac running Leopard from Windows XP and Vista and from Mac OS X 10.2 through 10.4.

NOTE To keep this book focused on file sharing, we broke out two related topics into full-length titles of their own:

- *Take Control of Users & Accounts in Leopard* examines setting up and managing users on a Mac running Leopard.
- *Take Control of Permissions in Leopard*, expected to be available in 2008, has a more technical focus.

SHARING FILES QUICK START

This book contains many details, not all of which may be relevant to your situation. You do *not* need to read every word before sharing files, but you should be familiar with the overall process first.

Prepare to share files:

- Before you think about the big world of sharing files on a network, you may wish to review techniques for sharing files among users on a single Macintosh. See [Share Files on the Same Mac](#) (p. 6).
- Learn how file sharing is different from using disks to copy files from computer to computer or using email attachments to move files around. See [What Is File Sharing?](#) (p. 8).
- Review reasons to share files, and see which match your situation. See [Reasons for File Sharing](#) (p. 11).
- Decide on the hardware or online service that you'll use as your file sharing server; see [What You Need to Serve Files](#) (p. 13).
- Determine which file sharing method makes sense for your goals, budget, and expertise. Learn about Apple Filing Protocol, FTP, Pando, and others. See [Decide on a File-Sharing Method](#) (p. 19).
- Take steps to manage security risks by becoming informed about what you expose when you share files over the Internet. See [Avoid File-Sharing Risks](#) (p. 32).

Start sharing files:

- Decide which folders and volumes to share, set up accounts for users, and choose their access privileges for viewing, storing, and modifying items. Learn about Apple Filing Protocol, Samba, FTP, and Web particulars for sharing files. See [Share Files](#) (p. 41).
- Start sharing photos and music from iTunes and iPhoto; see [Share Digital Media Files](#) (p. 59).

Access shared files:

- Access shared files from Mac OS 9, Mac OS X, Windows XP, and Windows Vista. See [Access Shared Files](#) (p. 69).

SHARE FILES ON THE SAME MAC

Although this book focuses on file sharing across a network, you can share files among users of the same Mac. In Leopard, not all users are created equally nor are all files meant to be equally accessible. Leopard purposely and appropriately restricts one user from viewing or modifying the contents of folders in another user's directory.

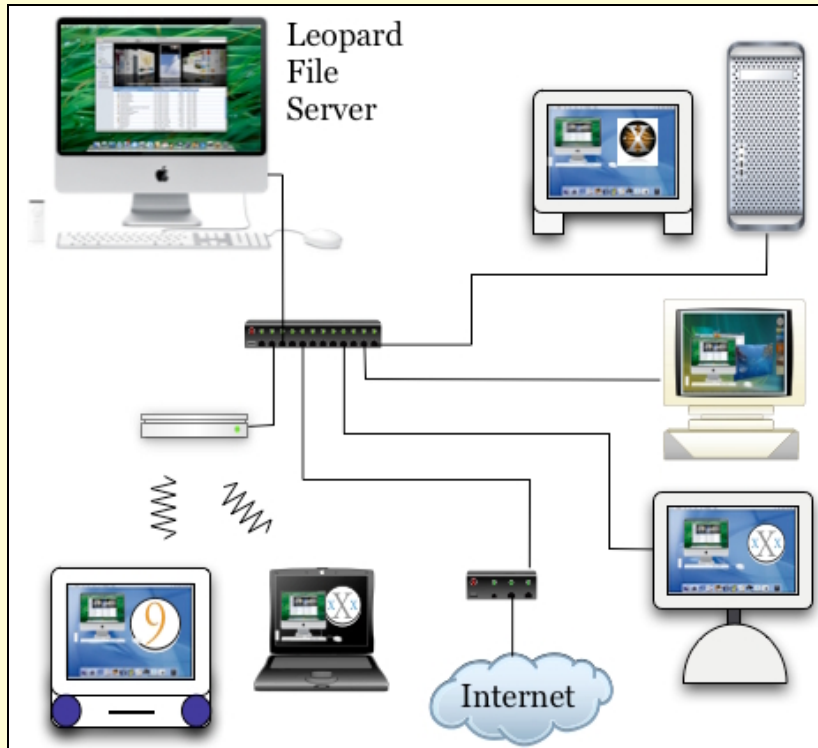
Users can exchange files on the same machine in one of three ways:

- **The Shared folder:** Located in the Users folder on your startup disk, the Shared folder is set up so that all users who have physical access to the computer and an active account may read and write any files in the Shared folder; this includes the Guest account user, for whom all other files are deleted when they log out. Users can't overwrite a file created by another user unless the default permissions on the file are changed by either the file's owner or an administrator. Using the Shared folder is the easiest method when you have just a few users, or all users need the same access.
- **Public folders:** For a little more control, use the Public folder found in each user's home directory. For instance, let's say a home iMac has two accounts for two roommates: one for Bob and another for Stephanie. Of course, when Bob logs in to the machine, Stephanie's files aren't accessible through the Finder; Bob sees a locked icon on most folders within her home directory. Bob can, however, copy files into Stephanie's Public folder's Drop Box folder, and he can copy files out of her Public folder.
- **Shared volume:** To avoid issues with permissions that crop up when using either the Shared folder or Public folders, you can instead use a separate volume as the repository for shared files, whether that volume is an internal or external fixed hard drive, a removable cartridge, or a second or subsequent disk partition on the boot drive. Starting in Leopard, volumes other than the startup disk are automatically set for all users to have full read and write access.

WHAT IS FILE SHARING?

File sharing means storing a set of files on a *fileserver*, which could be a central computer or a network-attached storage device, and making it possible for any number of people to retrieve those files over any type of computer network, just as if those files were located on their own hard disks (**Figure 1**).

FIGURE 1



Many different machines can access a file server, whether they're connected directly via Ethernet, over wireless AirPort (Wi-Fi), or via the Internet.

File sharing differs from emailing a file to a person or a group. When you email a document, the recipients are passive: they check their email routinely, and the document arrives. The burden of distribution falls on you.

File sharing eliminates the necessity of pushing a file to others. You place the file on a server whenever you like, and all the people who need to retrieve it can do so whenever they like without coordination. The burden of distribution falls on the recipients, who choose the time and method by which they retrieve the file.

REASONS FOR FILE SHARING

Now that you know the basics of what file sharing is and the advantages it offers, you can start taking control of sharing files by considering what you want to accomplish by sharing files, and with whom you need to exchange files. In this section, I break out reasons for file sharing into a few large categories.

NOTE Knowing what you want to accomplish may help you determine what hardware or bandwidth you need, covered in [What You Need to Serve Files](#). Also, it may influence your choice of a file-sharing technique, discussed in [Decide on a File-Sharing Method](#).

Coordinate Group Projects

When you and at least one other person need to collaborate on a common set of files, you can set up a central location to store the files. Optionally, this central location can track whether a file has been checked out for use.

NOTE Almost always, a file server helps reduce the time, cost, and effort needed for routine exchanges. For one-off exchanges, you might be better served by sending or receiving files via techniques not covered in this book, such as email, iChat file transfer, writable DVD, or USB memory drive.

Create a Central Archive

Many groups have a common set of files that grows over time, but these files are rarely changed once they are added. In this case, many people may need to add to the archive without needing permission to delete or re-organize files, while many of the same or an entirely different set of people may need access to read the archive.

Avoid Relying on Email

Even if you're just trying to exchange one file with one other person, a file server can help you step around the problems of Internet email in the modern age. For instance, because of viruses and worms, many companies and some ISPs ban all or certain kinds of attachments,

WHAT YOU NEED TO SERVE FILES

Once you have a clear idea of what you want to achieve with file sharing, it's time to think about the hardware or hosting components necessary for file sharing. Any Mac running Jaguar through Leopard (or even older operating systems) can act as a file server; along with the server, you'll need a network connection, and the faster the better. But you may be better off putting your files on a file-sharing network drive or on an Internet-based host.

In this section, I first make recommendations for the best ways to set up a Macintosh or network drive as a file server. Then, I help you consider the best ways to network those devices to help any remote users access files via the Internet at a comfortable speed. After that, I look at Internet-based hosts that offer file-sharing services, since that option may be the best one for you.

Macintosh on Your Network

File sharing imposes little computational load on a computer: dozens of people could be transferring files actively on a Power Mac G4 from 2002 or later that you're simultaneously using as your primary work machine and you would hardly notice the effect on your work, assuming you had enough RAM.

Here are some suggestions for maximizing a Mac's performance as a file server:

- **Add more RAM:** In the olden days—as recently as 2 years ago—Macs appropriate for file serving came with inadequate amounts of RAM. Now, all desktop Macs come with 1 gigabyte (GB) of RAM. For best performance from an older machine, I recommend at least a gigabyte of RAM, or the Mac's greatest possible amount of RAM if it can't take a gigabyte.
- **Upgrade network switches and adapters:** If you're using a Macintosh sold in the last few years, it's likely that the computer includes gigabit Ethernet (1,000 Mbps) support. You have at least 100 Mbps Ethernet in any Mac sold in the last decade. Gigabit Ethernet switches, which create effectively a separate connection between any two connected computers, cost as little as \$30. Upgrading an old 10/100 Mbps Ethernet hub to a 10/100/1,000 Mbps Ethernet switch will dramatically increase speeds.

DECIDE ON A FILE-SHARING METHOD

In this section I help you learn more about the file-sharing methods and determine the one that is most appropriate for your needs. You can divide networked file sharing into roughly four categories:

- File services built into major operating system platforms, such as Mac OS and Windows. You can find more details about file services in [AFP](#), [SMB or Samba](#), and [NFS](#).
- [FTP](#) (File Transfer Protocol), a universally supported method of exchanging files that dates back to the Internet's earliest days.
- [Web](#) downloads (and uploads!).
- Proprietary methods that require a subscription or special client and server software not included with any operating system. Methods noted in this book are [iDisk](#), [Timbuktu Pro](#), and [Pando](#).

Table 1 presents a quick overview of these file-sharing methods.

Table 1: Pros and Cons of File-Sharing Methods for Leopard Users

Method	Pros	Cons
AFP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Found on all Macs. • Free. • Works over Internet. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No longer any support for Windows access.
SMB or Samba	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Found on all Windows systems. • Supported under Mac OS X. • Best common method. • Free. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some file name limitations • For security reasons, not well suited for Internet-based file sharing.
FTP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universally supported. • Plain, simple options. • Free. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tracking files accurately by date modified and performing certain folder organizations is tricky or impossible. • Insecure in default setup of built-in server; strange firewall problems can occur.

(continues)

AVOID FILE-SHARING RISKS

Before you dig into the details of how to share your files, you should consider the risks of file sharing and possibly take action to avoid them. And, no, I'm not talking about storm troopers of the Recording Industry Association of America bursting into your bedroom—that's only a concern if you're using peer-to-peer file-sharing networks to share works that aren't licensed for that kind of sharing.

Rather, you risk having unintended others accessing your files or abusing your storage space. This can happen even if you share files only over your local network; unless you set up a firewall or other protection, you may unintentionally leave your files available to outsiders. It can also happen if you don't carefully protect your passwords while you work on insecure networks: your file servers could be hijacked using your own accounts.

TIP The RIAA would like you to believe that sharing any music is illegal. Not so. Some music is licensed under broad terms that encourage sharing, such as forms of the Creative Commons license, a standard set of copyright terms designed to make it easy to retain rights while allowing reuse and distribution of any creative work. Some bands also explicitly allow trading of music recorded at live shows, or certain tracks they release online. See <http://creativecommons.org/audio/> for more details.

Problems with Open Servers

Our Windows brethren have long been aware of the problem of accidentally running an open file server, because before Windows XP, Microsoft's default configuration made it easy to turn on file sharing without any protection. On the first cable-modem networks, which work essentially like large Ethernet networks, people could troll through their neighbors' unprotected files with abandon. Whoops.

The Internet is so large and so fast, and full of so many jokers, that it has become something like a large local network. If you purposely or accidentally expose more than you intended, it's likely that some automated evil—a scanning program that looks for open fileserver connections—will suck down your data. Less maliciously, however, because search engines like Google follow all links from public Web

SHARE FILES

Turning on file sharing in Leopard requires only a few clicks in the Sharing preference pane. Although this section explains how to use the Sharing pane, you may wish to review the details about the service you are about to turn on first, either by flipping back to more general information in [AFP](#), [SMB or Samba](#), [FTP](#), or [Web](#), or by skipping ahead to more specific configuration details in [Share with AFP](#), [Share with Samba](#), [Share with FTP and SFTP](#), and [Share Files over the Web](#).

Set Up File Sharing

Leopard has streamlined file sharing by consolidating most of the services, and by improving its explanations. Three items in the Sharing pane's Service list control the major file services:

- File Sharing incorporates all three major forms of network file serving: AFP, FTP, and SMB.
- Web Sharing turns on the local Web server.
- Remote Login enables Secure FTP (SFTP) access, as well as its main function of remote Terminal sessions.

Other sharing options: *Other options in the Service list aren't related to file sharing, but rather refer to sharing computing power (Xgrid), remote management and operation, and handing out Internet access.*

An option not listed above, NFS (Network File System), requires additional configuration, but I find the method too dangerous to recommend to anyone who is not already an experienced system administrator.

Turn on services

Leopard makes it a snap to set up file sharing. It's far easier in Leopard than in any version of Mac OS since, quite honestly, Mac OS 9! Leopard has more options and is more sophisticated, but the simplicity of sharing took 7 years to cycle back around.

SHARE DIGITAL MEDIA FILES

Most of this book discusses sharing any type of files using file-sharing services. However, no book about sharing files on a Mac would be complete without explaining how to share iPhoto and iTunes libraries.

Decide How to Share an iTunes Library

The first step in sharing an iTunes Library is to decide whether to use the built-in iTunes Sharing feature or to use file sharing. I explain each option, next.

Built-in iTunes Sharing feature

iTunes has a built-in Sharing feature, which is easy to set up. You can use iTunes Sharing to share one iTunes Library among users on the same Mac or with users on a network. Unfortunately, the feature is limited in a number of ways:

- Because Apple is playing nice with the recording industry, if another user connects to your shared library, all that user can do with shared media is play it from within iTunes. He can't add a song or video or album to his own playlists, set ratings, or edit the tags that identify each MP3 file. That's appropriate in some situations, but in cases where you're sharing your own iTunes Library among your own Macs, such as on a home network, it's needlessly limiting and technologically overrules U.S. law and court decisions on fair use.
- Apple allows just five other users to connect to your iTunes Library within a 24-hour period. Boo, Apple, boo. This restriction prevents you from infringing on a song's copyright, but in so doing eliminates rights that you would have with physical media, like a CD, DVD, or VHS tape. If you have a large family or a number of computers at work and home that you use to listen to an iTunes library, you aren't violating anyone's copyright and yet you could run into problems with this restriction. Listening to music isn't the same as stealing music.

ACCESS SHARED FILES

Now that you've had the chance to read about every conceivable way to share files, you can learn about the complementary action: accessing those shared files. Let's walk through mounting volumes or browsing for files on each of the major operating system versions, starting with Mac OS X.

Access Shared Volumes with a Mac

To mount a server from the Finder in Leopard, you can simply select it from the sidebar's Shared list. New in Leopard, the Shared section of the sidebar shows all *discoverable* servers on the local network—file servers that use Bonjour (all services shared by Macs) and NetBIOS (Samba on any platform) to announce their existence. After you select one of these servers, you can connect to it by clicking Connect As. Once mounted, connected servers are also shown in that list. See [Mount by browsing](#) for more details.

TIP You can prevent shared and discoverable servers from appearing in the list: in the Finder choose Finder > Preferences, click the Sidebar button, and uncheck Connected Servers or Bonjour Computers.

Tiger & Panther: The following instructions for Leopard are nearly identical for Tiger (any version) and Panther (10.3.3 and later) except for the improvements in the network browser and the Sidebar listing.

Alternately, to mount a server's volumes, you can choose Go > Connect to Server (Command-K) to bring up the Connect to Server dialog. From that dialog, to access a server, you can:

- **Choose a recently mounted server:** Click the top right button to pop up a menu to choose from.
- **Select a favorite server:** Select a server from the list.
- **Browse for an AFP or Samba volume:** Click the Browse button, and see [Mount by browsing](#), a few pages later for more info.

DISMOUNT A SERVER

Now that I've discussed mounting servers, it's time to discuss dismounting them. At some point, you will want to remove the server or servers sitting on your Desktop. Servers can slow your system if the network is slow or becomes unavailable. You may notice this on a Mac when a server window's list of files tries to refresh and produces a spinning rainbow pointer.

If you dismount servers before putting your computer to sleep, you can reduce delays at wake-up time when Mac OS X might try to search for those servers. However, when you shut down your computer, Mac OS X automatically dismounts servers before powering off. You can also dismount a server from Leopard or Tiger by carrying out one of the following actions:

- Drag the volume icon in the Desktop, and notice that the Trash icon on the Dock temporarily changes to an Eject button while you drag. Then, drop the icon on the Eject button.
- Control-click the volume on the Desktop and choose Eject "*Volume Name*" from the contextual menu.
- Select the volume and press Command-E.
- Select the volume and choose File > Eject "*Volume Name*".
- In the sidebar, click the Eject button next to the server's name to unmount all volumes associated with a server (Leopard only; the behavior of the Eject button and the sidebar is slightly different in Tiger).
- Select the volume in any Finder window, and from the pop-up Action menu (it has a gear icon) at the top of the Finder window, choose Eject "*Volume Name*".

TIP If you don't change your Finder preferences to display connected servers on the Desktop, you cannot dismount them using any method that requires selecting the volume on the Desktop.

APPENDIX A: SLEEP AND SHARING FILES

In order to be reachable, any computer acting as a file server must be turned on and not in sleep mode. Although this seems obvious when stated this plainly, it can cause consternation if you use ordinary machines on your network as servers, as most of us do. Several readers of previous editions of this book wrote in with mysterious problems about servers disappearing, and reappearing later, which we tracked down to sleep options on the Energy Saver preference pane.

In sleep mode on a Mac, the processor cycles down and the monitor switches to a low-power mode. When it's asleep, the computer will respond to a key press or mouse click, but network access doesn't automatically wake the machine.

NOTE Macs can be woken out of sleep if they receive a "magic packet" over the network—like a sleeping prince receiving the kiss from the brave princess that wakes him. But this magic kiss has two parts:

- First, you must open the Energy Saver preference pane, click the Options button, and check Wake for Ethernet Network Administrator Access.
- Second, you need a way to send the magic packet from another Mac. Unfortunately, Apple doesn't offer a way to have one Mac automatically wake another by trying to connect over the network to a shared volume. But you can do it manually—use the free Wake550 to wake up a sleeping remote server from another Mac (<http://www.tc.umn.edu/~olve0003/wake550.html>).

Follow these steps to turn off automatic sleep in Jaguar through Leopard:

1. Open the Energy Saver preference pane, which displays the Sleep view.
2. If you are using a laptop, choose Power Adapter from the Settings For pop-up menu. (In Mac OS X versions prior to Leopard, you may need to click Show Details first.)

ABOUT THIS BOOK

Thank you for purchasing this Take Control book. We hope you find it both useful and enjoyable to read. We welcome your comments at tc-comments@tidbits.com. Keep reading in this section to learn more about the author, the Take Control series, and the publisher.

About the Author

Glenn Fleishman has written for hire since 1994, starting with *Aldus Magazine*. He contributes regularly to *Macworld*, the *Economist*, *Popular Science*, the *New York Times*, and the *Seattle Times*. He's the Macintosh columnist for the *Seattle Times*, and a contributing editor at *TidBITS*.

Glenn spends much of his time writing about wireless networking. He edits the daily Web log Wi-Fi Networking News (<http://www.wifinetnews.com/>) and five related wireless blogs.



Glenn lives in Seattle, Washington, with his wife and two sons. His older boy's first work was "book," not "Mac."

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About the Publisher

Publishers Adam and Tonya Engst have been publishing Mac-related content since they first created their online newsletter, *TidBITS*, about Macintosh- and Internet-related topics in 1990. *TidBITS* has been in continuous, weekly production since then. At the TidBITS Web site you can read the latest Macintosh news, check out software reviews, find out what's fun and interesting in the world of the Mac, and much more (<http://www.tidbits.com/>).

Adam and Tonya are known in the Macintosh world as writers, editors, and speakers. They are also parents to Tristan, who thinks ebooks about clipper ships and castles would be cool.

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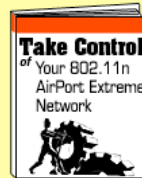


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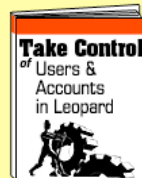


Create a rock-solid backup strategy so you can restore quickly and completely, no matter what the catastrophe.

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by Kirk McElhearn



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