Take Control of macOS Media Apps

Apple Music & Beyond
Manage your audio and video content in the Music, Podcasts, TV, and Books apps for macOS

by Kirk McElhearn
$14.99

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Welcome to *Take Control of macOS Media Apps*, version 1.2, published in October 2020 by alt concepts inc. This book was written by Kirk McElhearn and edited by Joe Kissell.

This book shows you how to manage audio, video, podcasts, and audiobooks on a Mac and in Apple’s cloud; stream tunes from Apple Music; and sync content to your iPhone, iPad, or iPod.

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What’s New in Version 1.2

This is the second version of *Take Control of macOS Media Apps*, which, last year, underwent major changes after Apple split iTunes into multiple apps on the Mac.

This year, it’s time for a big change in the overall interface of macOS. This is the biggest overhaul of the Mac’s interface in many years, but the media apps—Music, TV, Podcasts, and Books—have very few changes. There are some changes in terminology, the return of a key missing feature in the Music app, and a few minor tweaks, but those who have already adapted to these news apps will not have any difficulty in continuing as they have since the release of macOS Catalina.

Version 1.2 of this book covers changes made in macOS 11 Big Sur:

- **New interface:** With macOS Big Sur, Apple has made the most comprehensive overhaul of the operating system’s interface in many years. Windows, toolbars, and other elements have a new look, and all of Apple’s media apps inherit this new styling. While all the screenshots in this book have been redone for this version, there aren’t that many feature changes in the various apps.

- **Listen Now:** When Apple Music was launched, For You was the place to go in iTunes, and later the Music app, to find personalized music recommendations. Now, in macOS Big Sur, Apple has named the personalized section of the Music app Listen Now. The content has changed slightly, but the Listen Now section is essentially the same as For You. See Discover Music on Apple Music.

- **Album artwork in Songs view:** When macOS Catalina was released, the Music app was missing two essential features that I have long used to navigate and find music. The first, the Column Browser, was restored in an update a couple of months after the initial release. However, the second, the display of album artwork when viewing music in Songs view, was not restored. This feature is back in macOS Big Sur. Thank you, Apple. See Songs View.
• **Playing Next:** The Music app, and its predecessor iTunes, had an Up Next queue that showed what you would be listening to after the current track, if you started playing an album, playlist, or other selection of music. The Music app in macOS Big Sur has changed the name of this list to Playing Next, but the functionality remains the same. See Use Playing Next to View and Manage a Music Queue.

• **Time-synced lyrics for some songs on Apple Music:** Apple has added “time-synced lyrics” for some songs on Apple Music. This means that you can see the lyrics for a song with each line highlighted as it is sung. See View Lyrics for Your Songs for more on this feature.

• **New Apple Music content:** Apple Music changes its Listen Now section regularly, irrespective of updates to its operating systems. I’ve updated the Discover Apple Music section to cover the latest elements available in Listen Now.

• **New Apple Music radio stations:** Apple rebranded its flagship Beats 1 radio station as Apple Music 1, and added two new live Apple Music radio stations. See Listen to Apple Music Radio.

• **Full Screen Player:** While you may listen to music while you work, sometimes you want your Mac to be a standalone music player. The Music app offers a Full Screen Player, which displays album artwork, with a background derived from colors in the artwork, and you can also display lyrics while your music plays. See Use the Full Screen Player.

• **A new icon for the Music app:** The music app loses its multi-colored hues, and is now a simple two-toned icon. It retains the two beamed eight notes, which are now white on a red background.

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**A Note on Terminology**

As Apple has forked its mobile operating system into two versions, iOS and iPadOS, this presents some problems in the way I describe the portable devices you use to store and play music and other media files.
In previous editions of this book, I used the blanket term “iOS devices” for all of these devices, even if they were non-iOS iPods. I did, however, make special mention of features that differed between the iOS and non-iOS devices when necessary.

While there is no difference in the way you manage or play media content on iOS and iPadOS, it is important to be precise when referring to these devices. For want of a better term, and in the interest of economy, I now generally refer to these them as mobile devices. In some cases, this also includes iPods, though when old-fashioned iPods—such as the iPod classic, nano, mini, or shuffle—are discussed for any features they do or don’t have, they are specified as such. The iPod touch, while still bearing the historic name of iPod, runs iOS, so it is included when I talk about mobile devices.

The distinction is less that of the actual operating system the devices run, but is more the fact that the iPhone, iPad, and iPod touch can run apps and, especially, given the way you store and manage audio and video content, access the cloud, something that older iPods cannot do. This has a big effect on how you access media content on your mobile devices. In the past, you were limited to the storage space on your mobile devices; now your only limit is your internet access and bandwidth. Nevertheless, all of mobile these devices, whether iPhones, iPads, or iPods, can play all the audio content I cover, and on some non-iOS iPods you can even watch videos and view photos.

I do, however, use the term iOS/iPadOS device occasionally, when I refer to devices that can run specific apps, such as the Music app on the iPhone, iPad, or iPod touch, or the iTunes Remote app.

There are a few cases where I use the more global term device, and this is meant to include any Apple device that can access content. For example, if you sync your music library to the cloud, it is available on any Mac in the Music app, in iTunes on a Windows PC, on an iPhone, iPad, iPod touch, but also on the Apple TV and the Apple Watch, and even on the Apple Music app on Android devices.
We are now living in a post-iTunes age.

iTunes was introduced in 2001, based on SoundJam, an early Mac MP3 player app that Apple acquired. In the beginning, it was a fairly simple app. It allowed users to organize, browse, and play their music collections. It could rip, play, and burn CDs; and it could play MP3 files and sync those music files to a handful of MP3 players. But the only digital media files we used regularly when iTunes was released were music files: we didn’t have podcasts or ebooks, and we didn’t have libraries of video files. Digital audiobooks were available at the time, and Apple added audiobook support to iTunes in 2002.

A lot changed over the years. As new digital media types became common, iTunes became a media center that organized, played, and synced not only music files (in several formats), but also videos, audiobooks, ebooks, podcasts, apps, ringtones, and voice memos. And along the way, Apple introduced Apple Music, the company’s streaming service that offers access to more than 60 million tracks.

With the release of macOS Catalina, Apple made the biggest change ever to The App Formerly Known as iTunes. There are now four apps, named for the types of content they manage: Music, Podcasts, TV, and Books. (And the iTunes features for syncing mobile devices have been moved to the Finder.) As a result of this, the way you manage your media library has changed dramatically. Not just because you need to use up to four apps whereas in the past you only needed one, but also because these apps store their media files in four different locations. If you have a large media library, this can complicate the storage, management, and backup of those files.

I’ve long been a serious music fan, and I’ve amassed a music collection that contains more than 100,000 tracks, made up of thousands of CDs I’ve ripped and thousands of tracks I’ve purchased from the iTunes Store and other sources. I’m a big listener of classical music (more than half of my library), and one of my special loves is German art
songs, or *lieder*. But I’m also a Deadhead (a fan of the Grateful Dead) and have hundreds of recordings of their live concerts. I like jazz, progressive rock, ambient music, vintage punk rock, and much more. I’m learning to play the shakuhachi (a Japanese end-blown flute) and have many recordings made with that instrument. I also regularly listen to audiobooks and podcasts, and I enjoy listening to audio recordings of Shakespeare’s plays. And I have a substantial video library, containing movies, TV shows, and music videos.

I currently own two Macs, an iPhone, two iPads, several iPods (remember them?), an Apple Watch, and an Apple TV. Over time, I have confronted the many hurdles that make using digital content on these devices a challenge.

In this book, I share much of what I’ve learned about managing media on a Mac. The wide range of music that I listen to, and the variety of content in my music library, has led me to discover the most practical and efficient solutions to the problems of ripping, tagging, organizing, managing, playing, and syncing a large media library.

There are several aspects of these media management apps that I don’t deal with. I mention only briefly apps used to play digital content on mobile devices, such as Apple’s Music app. I discuss syncing in order to show you how to put media—music, video, and audiobooks—on Apple’s mobile devices, but I don’t cover syncing other types of data, such as contacts, calendars, and photos.

If you’ve ever been frustrated while trying to efficiently manage media files on your Mac, read on.

**Compatibility:** This book focuses on using Apple’s media management apps on macOS 11 Big Sur (which are similar to their counterparts in 10.15 Catalina). If you are using a Mac running a macOS Mojave or earlier, and want to learn how to use iTunes 12, you can learn how to download a copy of my earlier book *Take Control of iTunes 12: The FAQ* in this blog post.
Quick Start

This Quick Start describes what you can learn in each chapter. You can go to the beginning of any chapter to view a list of that chapter’s specific topics. Click (or tap!) any chapter title to jump to the content.

**Play music:**
- Learn how to find and play and music in the new Music app in Play Music.
- Explore the features in Apple Music, including on-demand streaming, music discovery, curated playlists, and recommendations, plus a live radio station. See Stream Apple Music.
- There are a number of ways you can view your music library: by album, artist, genre, songs, and more. See View Your Music and Other Content.

**Learn how to use the cloud and the iTunes Store:**
- You can store music you own and music you’ve added to your library from Apple Music in the cloud, and then access it on multiple devices. See Store Your Music Library in the Cloud.
- You can use the iTunes Store to add music, videos, and more to your media library, and you can add content you own to the Music, TV, and Books apps. See Use the iTunes Store.

**Tag media and organize your files:**
- Tagging media files, or adding metadata to them, is the most important thing you can do to take control of your Music and TV libraries. I’ll show you which tags you can change, how to change them for single and multiple items, and more. Read Tag Your Music Files.
- Playlists let you organize your music so you can do more than play songs by album, or at random. See Organize Your Music and Create Playlists.

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• The various media apps store files in different locations, and you may need to change the locations for some of these files if you have a large library. You can also share your Music and TV content over your home network. See Manage and Share Media Files.

• Learn the best ways to import music and audiobook CDs, how to burn CDs, and how to print from the Music app. See Rip, Burn, and Print.

Enjoy audiobooks, movies, TV shows, and podcasts:
• You now store and play audiobooks in the Books app. See Listen to Audiobooks.

• Movies and TV shows are now handled by the TV app. Read about managing a video library and viewing videos on your Mac. See Watch Movies and TV Shows in the TV App.

• Podcasts also have their own app now, and, as with audiobooks, you may need special strategies to manage a large library if you want to save podcast episodes. See Listen to and Watch Podcasts.

Sync media to an iPhone, iPad, or iPod:
• You can, of course, still sync media to your mobile devices, but you now manage this process in the Finder. See Sync Media to Your iPhone, iPad, or iPod.

Extend Music and TV with AppleScripts:
• You can do a lot with the Music and TV apps, but you may want to go even further. Take advantage of AppleScripts to extend these apps’ functionality. See Extend the Music and TV Apps with AppleScripts.
In 2019, Apple made the biggest change to The App Formerly Known as iTunes since its inception in 2001. If you’re just now updating to macOS 11 Big Sur from Mojave or earlier, you’ll be discovering these new apps and their new approach to managing media files. If you’re updating from macOS Catalina, you’ll see that the interfaces of all these apps have changed slightly, in line with the rest of the operating system.

Instead of grafting new features onto iTunes and perpetuating what many users saw as “bloat,” the company split the app into four media-specific apps:

- **Music:** This app, which retains the core features of iTunes, manages both a local music library and a library in the cloud. And it lets users stream more than 60 million tracks from Apple Music. The Music app can also store and play music videos.

- **TV:** Inheriting the video management features from iTunes, the TV app lets users manage a local movie and TV show library, as well as providing storage for home videos (these can be videos of your family, as well as rips of DVDs you own). In addition, it is the gateway to Apple’s large offering of movies that you can buy or rent from the iTunes Store and Apple TV+, Apple’s video streaming service.

- **Podcasts:** Just as iTunes managed podcasts, allowing you to find, subscribe to, download, and listen to episodes of your favorite podcasts, the Podcasts app does this, and nothing more.

- **Books:** The Books app, which has existed since 2018 to manage ebooks, has expanded its scope, and now manages audiobooks, which had previously been the purview of iTunes.
In addition to these four new apps, the iTunes features for backing up and syncing mobile devices are now available in the Finder.

There are two distinct styles of interface in the macOS media apps. The Music app is fairly minimalist, with all navigation done from the sidebar, whereas iTunes 12 required a combination of the sidebar, the Media Picker (a pop-up menu above the sidebar), and a series of tabs at the top-center of the window, to navigate different types of content. The Podcasts and Books apps present similar stripped-down, sidebar-focused navigation, but the TV app has tabs at the tops of its window to allow you to navigate between local content and that available from the iTunes Store and Apple TV+, Apple’s video streaming service.

While the iTunes name is gone on the Mac desktop, the iTunes Store still exists, and is broken up into content-specific stores in each app (with the exception of the Podcasts app, which features a podcast directory, but doesn’t call it part of the iTunes Store). And the iTunes Store is not going anywhere soon, for two reasons. First, because Apple has a lot of content to sell you; and, second, because Windows users are not seeing this split into four apps. For them, iTunes continues to function as before, and Apple has not said whether they are bringing these new apps to that platform.

Much of this book discusses the Music app, and explains how you can view and manage your content. The various ways you view your music have been simplified compared to iTunes. While Apple made some excellent choices to simplify the Music app, some users may not find all these changes to their liking; but the restoration of some missing features in macOS 11 Big Sur is welcome.

As a result of these changes, managing media on your Mac has become either a bit simpler or a bit more complex since iTunes, depending on how many media kinds you have in your library. If you only stored music in iTunes, then the new Music app is a “light” version of its predecessor. If, however, you used all of these media kinds in the past, you may find that you have to faff around a bit more, rather than finding all your media in one app.
Play Music

Playing music is simple, but there are some useful features that let you mix your music up, run it on repeat, and make it sound better. In this chapter, I look at the Music app, and explain the various ways you can play music: songs, albums, playlists, and even CDs.

Note that to use some of the features I describe in this and subsequent chapters, you will need to be signed into an iTunes Store account. I discuss this in About Your iTunes Store Account.

Play Your Music

The Music app’s sidebar has three distinct sections where you can start playing music: Apple Music, Library, and Playlists. You may use one or all of these depending on how you find and launch the music you want to hear. You play music in any of these sections by clicking a Play button, which may be on an album (hover your pointer over an album’s artwork to display it; Figure 1), or by clicking a Play button above a playlist. You can also click the Play icon in the app header at the top of the Music window. Whenever you start playing music, the Play button in the app header becomes a Pause icon that you can click to stop playing.
Figure 1: When you hover your pointer over an album, a red and white Play button appears, as you can see above on the album *Another Green World*. Click it to play the album.

**Hide Apple Music**

If you don’t have an Apple Music account, and don’t want to use the service, you don’t have to, but the Music app will continue to show Apple Music in the sidebar, in the hopes of tempting you to the siren call of streaming. You can, however, hide this. Go to Music > Preferences, click Restrictions, then, in the Disable section, check Apple Music. You’ll see there that you can also hide the iTunes Store if you like. But note that if you hide the iTunes Store first, then Apple Music is also disabled.

To skip ahead one track, click the Next icon; to skip back, click the Previous icon. To *scrub* (skip) ahead or back within a track, press and hold one of these icons or drag the playhead in the app header. And to change the volume, drag the volume slider in the app header.
Stream Apple Music

The world of music has changed in recent years. People are slowly shifting from owning their music—buying CDs or downloads—to renting it. With Apple Music and other streaming services, you can now access tens of millions of tracks for $10 a month. While not every artist or label’s music can be streamed, you can access most of what you want to hear. But is this the best way to spend your music budget? Some people—myself included—still buy CDs and still want to own music and listen on our own terms.

While much of what I explained about playing music in the previous chapter also applies to Apple Music, in this chapter, I look at Apple Music and explain how it works, plus how you can find great music and help Apple Music recommend new music for you to discover.

Note: Although you can use Apple’s older iTunes Match service to stream your own music, I discuss it later in the Store Your Music Library in the Cloud chapter.

Discover Apple Music

Apple Music is Apple’s streaming music service, which combines several features:

- **Music streaming:** You can stream more than 60 million tracks from the Apple Music Library. Much of the music that’s for sale in the iTunes Store is available to stream, but not all. You can stream tracks on demand, such as a song or album, or you can stream playlists curated by Apple Music editors and contributors. See Stream Apple Music.

- **Cloud storage:** You can store up to 100,000 tracks in the cloud. If you enable cloud sync of your music library, the Music app checks each track in your library to see whether it can “match” a track
that’s already in the Apple Music Library. If a track doesn’t match, it’s uploaded. These tracks show in your library along with tracks you’ve purchased from the iTunes Store and those you’ve downloaded from Apple Music. See Sync Your Music Library to the Cloud.

- **Listen Now music recommendations:** With 60 million tracks to choose from, you can have that kid-in-a-candy-store feeling, where you want to stream everything but don’t know where to start. Apple Music’s Listen Now feature can help you choose what to listen to. See Personalize Apple Music.

- **Radio:** Apple Music 1 is the marquee streaming radio station on Apple Music, and in 2020, the company added two other live stations, Apple Music Hits and Apple Music Country. There are a few dozen other radio stations you can listen to on Apple Music, and you can create an Apple Music Radio station from any song, artist, or genre. See Listen to Apple Music Radio.

An individual subscription costs $9.99 per month, and a family plan, available to groups using Apple’s Family Sharing, costs $14.99 per month for up to six people. If you subscribe or renew an individual plan for one year, it’s only $99, saving you the cost of two months, but there is no discounted annual membership for those with family plans. A half-price student subscription is also available, after you have submitted proof that you are a student. (Prices are different outside the United States.)

Apple will be launching the new [Apple One](https://www.apple.com/apple-one) bundles in late 2020, which will include Apple Music, Apple TV+, Apple Arcade, and additional iCloud storage. There are prices for individuals ($14.95 per month, with 50 GB of storage) and families ($19.95 per month, with 200 GB), as well as a Premier bundle that adds News+ and Fitness+, and includes 2 TB of storage ($24.95 per month). So if you want Apple Music, you may find that for a few dollars more per month, Apple One will also offer other services that you may want.

If you don’t subscribe, you can access a subset of Apple Music features.
Now that you have a substantial music library, you need to choose the right way to view your music so you can find what you want to listen to. In this chapter, I’ll show you various ways to view your music.

Use the Sidebar

The Music sidebar, which displays at the left of the app’s window (Figure 32), helps you navigate your music library. It lets you view your music in different ways.

Figure 32: Use the sidebar to access your music in different ways.
The sidebar has four or five sections, by default, depending on how you interact with Apple’s commercial offerings:

- **Search:** The search field is at the top of the sidebar, and cannot be hidden. I discuss searching your music library, Apple Music, and the iTunes Store in Search for Music.

- **Apple Music:** If you have an Apple Music subscription, you can use the three elements of the Apple Music section of the sidebar to access Listen Now recommendations, Browse Apple Music content, and listen to Apple Music Radio. If you don’t have an Apple Music subscription, this is still visible; Apple wants to tempt you to sign up. To hide this, choose Music > Preferences, click Restrictions, and disable Apple Music. I discuss Apple Music in Stream Apple Music.

- **Library:** This is your music library, which contains local tracks and those in your cloud library, if you are using that feature. If you have shared libraries on your network, you can click the Library header to choose those libraries. See Share Your Music and TV Libraries over a Network for more on using Home Sharing.

- **iTunes Store:** If you are signed into an Apple Music account, this is hidden by default; if not, you will see it. You can show or hide it by choosing Music > Preferences, and selecting or deselecting iTunes Store in the Show section. I look at the iTunes Store in Use the iTunes Store.

- **Playlists:** You may have playlists for your local music, or you may have created your own playlists or added Apple Music playlists to your library. If so, a Playlists section displays in the sidebar. I explain how to create playlists in On Playlists.

**Customize the Sidebar**

As mentioned above, you can show and hide two elements of the sidebar in Music’s preferences: Apple Music and the iTunes Store. But you can also choose what to display in the Library section, and you can hide the Playlists section if you don’t want to see it.
Store Your Music Library in the Cloud

Your music library can be on your Mac, or it can be in the cloud, if you enable Sync Library, or it can be in both locations. The Music app blurs the distinction between the two, because it can upload your own music to the cloud, and you can also add music from Apple Music to your library. While you aren’t required to use the cloud for your music library, it’s a powerful tool that allows you to have a huge music library accessible on all your devices. (Provided you have the bandwidth and data allowance to access it.)

This chapter looks at the two ways you can store your music library in the cloud, via Apple Music and iTunes Match. Both these options allow you to enable Sync Library, which lets you store up to 100,000 tracks that you can access from any Mac running the Music app, any Windows PC running iTunes, an Apple TV, any iOS/iPadOS device, or an Android device running the Apple Music app. And the iTunes Store keeps your purchased content in the cloud, so you can stream or re-download it at any time.

Note: In the previous chapter, Stream Apple Music, I looked at Apple’s streaming music service. Although some of those sections touched on cloud-based aspects of Apple Music, this chapter has detailed information about storing your music library in the cloud when you enable Sync Library.

Manage Music and the Cloud

In recent years, Apple has expanded its cloud-based media offerings, and, while you can certainly use the Music app without ever accessing the cloud, many of its features depend on Apple’s data centers.
Here’s a quick look at the current options for digital media:

- **Sync Library:** If you subscribe to Apple Music or iTunes Match, you can enable Sync Library, which commingles tracks from the following sources, making them available on all computers and mobile devices that are signed in to the same iTunes Store account:
  
  - Tracks in your Music library that didn’t come from Apple, such as tracks from CDs you’ve ripped or downloads you’ve purchased from sources other than Apple, which are uploaded to the cloud or matched with existing tracks on Apple’s servers
  
  - Music you’ve added from Apple Music, as long as you maintain your Apple Music subscription
  
  - Music you’ve purchased from the iTunes Store

Before you start iTunes Match or turn on Sync Library, read *Before You Enable Sync Library.*

- **Apple Music:** This is the streaming arm of Apple’s cloud music offering. Without a subscription, you can listen to Apple Music 1 and other live radio stations. Subscribers can listen to Apple Music Radio, gain access to the 60 million tracks in the Apple Music Library, get Listen Now recommendations, and can turn on Sync Library. See *Discover Apple Music* to learn how to use this service.

- **iTunes Match:** With iTunes Match, you enable Sync Library to store your music library in the cloud. The tunes that you store and access are only those from your library; you can’t access the Apple Music Library. Because iTunes Match’s cloud features are included in Apple Music, if you’ve subscribed to Apple Music, you won’t see an iTunes Match option. See *Use iTunes Match* for more.

- **Automatic downloads from the iTunes Store:** This feature has been around for a few years, so even though it’s cloud-based, you may not think of it that way. It lets you download a new iTunes Store purchase to more than one computer or device automatically. See *Automatically Download Purchases to the Music App.*
Use the iTunes Store

The iTunes Store sells music in the Music app, movies and TV shows in the TV app, and ebooks and audiobooks in the Books app. It also offers movie rentals, and podcasts are technically supplied by the iTunes Store, even though Mac and users don’t see an actual storefront when using the Podcasts app. (Windows users still access podcasts in iTunes.) In other countries, the content available varies, but music is sold in all countries where the iTunes Store is present.

In this chapter, I look at using the U.S. iTunes Store. I also explain how to move digital content you’ve purchased elsewhere into Music, in Add Your Own Files Own to the Music App.

About Your iTunes Store Account

Everyone who has an Apple ID has an associated iTunes Store account. You use this Apple ID to purchase or rent items from Apple’s various stores, which are still considered part of the iTunes Store, but also for the Mac App Store, iOS/iPadOS App Store, the Books Store, and other Apple services.

You will need to be signed into your iTunes Store account to use some of the features I describe in this book. In most cases, the Music, TV, Podcasts, or Books app will prompt you to sign into your iTunes Store account when you first try to access such features, but, if not, you can do so by choosing Account > Sign In Music, TV, or Podcasts, and Store > Sign In in Books. You can also access your Apple ID settings in the Apple ID pane of System Preferences.

For more on what your Apple ID is used for, see the Apple support document, Manage and use your Apple ID.
Shop in the iTunes Store

When Apple split up iTunes into multiple apps, they changed the way users see the iTunes Store. If you have an Apple Music account, you will not see the iTunes Store in the app’s sidebar by default. If you don’t subscribe to Apple Music, you will see the iTunes Store, but you’ll also see the Apple Music section in the sidebar.

You can change both of these. If you are an Apple Music user and do want to see the iTunes Store—many people both rent and buy music—go to Music > Preferences, click General, and select iTunes Store in the Show section. Note that while you can browse the iTunes Store at any time, you must be signed into your iTunes Store account to purchase or rent any content, or download any free content. See About Your iTunes Store Account above for more on signing into your iTunes Store account.

If you don’t have an Apple Music account and want to hide the Apple Music entries in the sidebar, go to Music > Preferences > Restrictions and then, in the Disable section, select Apple Music. While you’re there, you can also disable the iTunes Store, if you don’t want to use either of these. Disabling the iTunes Store also disables Apple Music.

Click iTunes Store in the sidebar to enter the store. You’ll see what Apple is currently touting, with new music, discounted offers, pre-orders, and more. You can navigate the store by genre (there are lots of navigation links in the right-hand sidebar), look at the top songs and albums (also in the right-hand sidebar), and browse in other ways. To learn more about an item, or to buy it, click it to open its page.

When viewing an album’s page (Figure 48), you can preview a track by hovering over its track number and clicking, or you can preview the entire album by clicking “Preview All” beneath the track list. And if you have an Apple Music subscription, and the album is available to stream, a banner at the top of the page allows you to click a button to listen to the album on Apple Music.
Tag Your Music Files

Tagging media files is the most important thing you can do to take control of your Music library. You could add all your music to your library and play it at random, but without correct tags, you’d never find what you want, and you wouldn’t be able to make smart playlists. To correctly organize your music, tagging is essential.

In this chapter, I’ll show you which tags you can change, how to change them for single and multiple items, and how to streamline tagging so you can easily organize your library. Note that the information in this chapter also applies to video files in the TV app, but you can no longer change tags for podcasts in the new Podcasts app, or for audiobooks in the Books app.

Understanding Tags

In order for the Music app to keep track of your media files, and for you to know which ones to play, every item in your Music library has tags. Tags are metadata—information about the files and their content—that helps Music sort tracks and keep albums together, and more.

Note: Tags are part of the ID3 specification for storing metadata in music files, and are also used in other types of files, such as videos and ebooks. ID3.org has information about the history of tags, and which tags are available for music files. Note that the Music app only uses some of the available ID3 tags.

At a minimum, for a song, you need tags specifying a song name, artist, and album name. But you can add other tags: composer, year, genre, track number, disc number, and more. You can also add comments, lyrics, and album artwork.
To see tags for any item, select it and press ⌘-I. Here’s a list of the main tags for music, audiobooks, and videos, and what they commonly contain:

- **Name:** This could be a song name, the name of a movement in a symphony, a section of a movie soundtrack, and so on.

- **Artist:** This is the person or group who recorded the music.

- **Album:** The name of the album on which the track appears.

- **Album Artist:** Say you have a record by U2 with a song featuring Luciano Pavarotti. The artist tag would mention both of these artists, but the Album Artist tag would contain only U2, because the song is on a U2 album. This tag helps you sort music correctly by album, yet list additional artists on specific tracks.

- **Composer:** This is the composer of the music, whether a classical composer or a songwriter.

- **Grouping:** Some music from the iTunes Store—usually classical music—has this tag. For example, an album that has three piano concertos by Mozart will have a single name for the album, but the individual works’ names may be entered in the Grouping tag. You can sort files by grouping in Songs view, and you can use this tag with smart playlists.

- **Genre:** You can pick from a number of preset genres, or you can add your own by typing one in this field. I’ve found that the Genre tag is a great way to organize my music. Since it’s easier to look at genres that contain less music, I’ve created plenty of nonstandard genres. For example, I have genres for Dylan (Bob Dylan, and his recordings with The Band), Dead (The Grateful Dead, and its members’ solo recordings), Lieder (German art songs), and Chamber Music (string quartets, violin sonatas, etc.).

Another way to set up fine-grained genres is to use multiple words, like Classical: Opera, or Blues: Electric. You’ll have all your genres grouped by the first word, with the sub-genre visible after it.

- **Year:** The year the music was recorded, performed, or released.
Organize Your Music and Create Playlists

You’ve got your favorite music in your library, but you’d like to organize it better. In this chapter, I’ll show you how to make playlists, the key to setting up your listening sessions. I’ll look at using tags to create smart playlists automatically with your favorite tunes. And I’ll cover some special topics that will help you with tasks like finding your media files on your disk, managing a large music library, and finding duplicates.

On Playlists

You can listen to your music by album, or by selecting song after song. You can play all the music by a specific artist, or you can shuffle your entire library. But the Music app reveals its biggest strength when you make playlists.

A playlist is a list of songs that you play together, one after the other, with a first song and a last song. Pretty basic; kind of like a CD.

But playlists are more than that. A playlist is a self-contained unit, one with a bunch of tracks you can always play in order or in shuffle mode; a group of songs that you can listen to while dining or when chilling outside; or your favorite lively songs to listen to when you work out.

A playlist can be the equivalent of an album, a double-album set, a live concert, or an opera. It can be a compilation of favorite songs by different groups, or a selection of music for a special occasion. It can even contain all your songs, if you want. With smart playlists, you can create an endless stream of music that flows as long as you listen. And a playlist can also include videos from Apple Music.

Click here to buy the full 237-page “Take Control of macOS Media Apps” for only $14.99!
Let’s distinguish between two types of playlists:

- **Standard:** Standard playlists are groups of songs that you organize manually. The key word here is *manually*: as you’ll see ahead, smart playlists are *automatically* created from rules you select, but standard playlists require that you choose every track they contain, and their play order. Standard playlists are also static; they don’t change as you play them, unless you intervene or activate shuffle mode.

- **Smart:** Smart playlists are dynamic. You choose rules, and Music scans your library for files that match these rules, based on the tags your files contain. (Hence the importance of tagging your media correctly.) In essence, the rules in a smart playlist tell Music to search your library for items that match them.

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### Create a Standard Playlist

You create a standard playlist by choosing File > New > Playlist, or pressing ⌘-N. Music adds the playlist to the sidebar, and highlights its name. By default, Music names the new playlist *Playlist* (or, if that name exists, *Playlist 2*, and so on). Type a name for the playlist, and then press Return to save the name.

It is possible to create multiple playlists with the same name, but try to give your playlists unique names so you can tell them apart. To later change the name of a playlist, find it in the Playlists sidebar, click it, wait a moment, click it again, and type a new name.

Select the new playlist in the sidebar to work with it (**Figure 58**).
Manage and Share Media Files

One of the advantages of apps such as Music, TV, Podcasts, and Books is that you don’t need to think about files. When you add files to these apps’ libraries, they are stored on your Mac in specific locations, but you rarely need to manipulate them in the Finder. However, if you have a large media library, you may need to consider offloading your files from your Mac to an external drive.

In this chapter, I discuss how you can manage large media libraries, and also how to share your music over a network to other devices.

How the Media Apps Organize Files

A useful aspect of the Music and TV apps is that they free you from having to worry about organizing the actual files they manage. When you add a file to Music or TV, the app stores a pointer to its location, so all you need to think about is whether you want to play the file, and how you sync it to your mobile device (if you still sync music and don’t use the cloud).

Music App File Organization

By default, Music stores your files in a Media folder. When you download files from the iTunes Store, they go there automatically; when you rip CDs the same thing occurs. When you add files to your music library from your drive, assuming you’ve left the “Copy files...” checkbox enabled (it’s described just ahead), Music copies them from their original location, and you can delete the originals.
Where Are All Those Files?

With the new media apps, there are new locations for the storage of media files, compared to the way iTunes stored them. However, if you upgrade from an existing installation, created before macOS Catalina, rather than do a clean install of macOS Big Sur, your music and video files will not be moved. You’ll find them, and other support files, in ~/Music/Music/iTunes Media. Your library files will, however, be in ~/Music/Music/ and ~/Movies/TV. This can be a bit confusing. If you do a clean install, music and TV files will be located as follows:

- Music stores its files in the Music subfolder of your home folder. The default location of your Media folder is ~/Music/Music/Media/, where ~ is a shortcut for your home folder.
- The TV app stores file in ~/Movies/TV/Media.

Each of the above folders contains several subfolders organizing your content.

For the other two media kinds—podcasts and audiobooks—the paths are a bit more complex. These folders are “hidden,” in the sense that you are not expected to access them, regardless of how you install or upgrade to macOS Catalina or later.

Podcasts are stored in a cache folder in ~/Library/Group Containers/243LU875E5.groups.com.apple.podcasts. (I don’t know what 243LU875E5 means, but that prefix seems to be used on all Macs.)

Since Apple spun off the Books app, ebooks have been stored in a folder in your Library folder: ~/Library/Containers/com.apple.BKAgentService. Audiobooks are also stored there now.

One problem with audiobooks is the space they take up. If you have a large audiobook library, you may not have room on your startup drive, especially if it’s an SSD. So you might want to remove as many audiobooks as possible and store them somewhere else, if you’re not planning to listen to them soon.

If you have a large media library and already store your media files on an external drive, when you upgrade to macOS Catalina or later, both the Music and Apple TV apps will remember the location of your existing media, if you are using a different folder than the default. The Music and TV apps each have an Advanced preference allowing you to choose a location for its media folder. This means that you can store
When Apple introduced the Books app in Mac OS X 10.9 Mavericks, it took over the management of ebooks from iTunes. A standalone Books app on iOS mirrored its features, and in macOS Catalina, Apple also added audiobooks to the Books app on both platforms. Now, in Big Sur, there are few changes to the Books app, with the exception of a sidebar replacing tabs at the top of the apps window for navigation.

The Books app lets you listen to audiobooks, whether you’ve purchased them from the Books Store or from Audible, or ripped your own audiobook CDs. (See How to Rip an Audiobook CD for special information about ripping audiobook CDs.)

Play Audiobooks

Listening to an audiobook is similar to listening to music, with two small differences. The first is that when you listen to an audiobook, you want to pick it up again later where you last paused. The Books app manages this, so if you listen to a chapter on your Mac, you can come back the next day and immediately begin with the next chapter. It stores your precise location, so you can stop and restart your audiobook at any time.

Not only does Books remember where you stopped listening to an audiobook, but it also syncs this location to your mobile device. And when you listen on a mobile device, Music finds the last location there and syncs it back as well. So you can listen to an audiobook on an iPhone, then sync and pick up at your last location on your computer. Sync again before you go out, and you can continue on your iPhone.

Another specific feature of audiobooks is that many of them are chaptered, and when you play a chaptered audiobook, a Chapters menu appears at the far right of the Books app header. If you click the Table of Contents icon (see Figure 67), you can view your location in...
the book, and click a chapter to start playing at that location. The header bar shows the title and author of the book you’re listening to, and its chapter, and, if you hover your pointer over that area, the amount of time elapsed and remaining in the current chapter.

**Figure 67:** The Chapters menu in the Books app lets you choose a location in an audiobook.

Since Books stores your location when you stop listening to audiobooks, you may not use the Chapters menu often. It would be practical for, say, a book of essays or short stories, but in my experience, very few audiobooks have named chapters that help you navigate efficiently.

**Note:** The first time you play an audiobook from Audible, the Books app asks you to authorize it by entering your Audible username and password. If it doesn’t, you can authorize the app by choosing Store > Authorizations > Authorize Audible Account. And you may need to sign into your iTunes Store account in the Books app. You can manage your iTunes Store authorization from the Store > Authorizations submenu.

**Playback Options**

The Books app header has play controls, similar to the Music app, where you can play and pause your audio. But rather than have icons
Watch Movies and TV Shows in the TV App

The TV app manages movies, TV shows, and home movies, and corresponds to the Movies and TV apps on iOS/iPadOS and on the Apple TV. You can use it to buy and rent movies and TV shows, and view video content from your own library.

For many people, the TV app will be nothing more than a conduit to access videos streamed from different services: Apple’s iTunes Store offerings, of course, Apple TV+, but also a number of channels accessible via the TV app, such as HBO, Showtime, and Starz. The comparable TV app on the Apple TV offers more content, through apps that can be downloaded to that device.

Browse Content in the TV App

The TV app has five tabs at the top of the window: Watch Now, Movies, TV Shows, Kids, and Library. (Figure 69)

Figure 69: The Watch Now tab of the TV app.
Here is what these tabs present:

- **Watch Now:** This tab shows a poster frame of the last movie or TV show episode you’ve watched, or a movie that you’ve just bought or rented, along with an Up Next list below it, showing content that you have recently added to your library, that you have started watching and not finished, or that Apple is promoting.

- **Movies:** Here you can find movies available to purchase or rent from Apple’s offering, or watch on Apple TV+, as well as on channels that you can subscribe to.

- **TV Shows:** This tab presents TV shows available to purchase or rent, or to watch on Apple TV+.

- **Kids:** This tab shows content appropriate for children, though not sorted by age.

- **Library:** Here you can access movies and TV shows you have purchased from Apple, or movies that you have added to your library manually. The Library view contains a sidebar which lets you access your library by type of content, genre, and in playlists (Figure 70).

![Figure 70: Movies in my library.](image)
Listen to and Watch Podcasts

Like music, books, and TV, podcasts have their own eponymous app. The Podcasts app is similar to that on iOS/iPadOS and on Apple TV, and you can use it to listen to individual podcast episodes and subscribe to your favorite podcasts. However, you no longer have direct access to podcast files, so if you kept an archive of your favorites, you’ll need to rethink your strategy.

Find Podcasts

To find podcasts to listen to, click Browse in the sidebar. You’ll see an interface similar to that of the iTunes Store, with some featured podcasts at the top of the window, and other popular podcasts below. Scroll down to the Categories section, and click a category to see what’s available. Or use the search field to find podcasts that match specific keywords.

If aren’t sure what to try, check out The Next Track, shown in Figure 72, a podcast about music and technology. My co-host Doug Adams and I discuss various types of music, audio equipment, Apple’s media apps, and more.

To view more information about the podcast, click its title or thumbnail.
Figure 72: Find podcasts to listen to in the Podcasts app.

To stream an episode and listen to it immediately, hover your pointer over an episode and click the Play ▶ icon that displays to the left of its name. If you click the Info  icon on the right side of the app header, you’ll see show notes for the podcast; and if you click the Playing Next  icon next to that, you’ll see what’s coming up in your podcast queue (if anything).

If want to listen to a podcast regularly, you can simplify the download process by subscribing to it. Click the Subscribe   button, and the Podcasts app will download the latest episode. To add other episodes to your library, click the Add  icon; this changes into a Download  icon. You can click that to download the episode.

If you scroll down and click See All Episodes, you’ll see all available episodes of the podcast. Unfortunately, there’s no way to add all episodes of a podcast to your library; you’ll need to click the Add  icon for each one.

In the future, the Podcasts app adds new episodes of your subscribed podcasts to your library when they are published. You can have Podcasts download these episodes automatically if you like. Go to Podcasts > Preferences > General. From the Automatically Download Episodes pop-up menu, choose Only New or All Unplayed. If you choose the former option, new episodes will download as they are
Sync Media to Your iPhone, iPad, or iPod

Since iTunes was split into four apps, if you want to sync media files, or other information, to an iPhone, iPad, or iPod, you use the Finder to do this. It makes more sense to have syncing centralized than to have any or all of Apple’s media apps control the process.

Syncing offers many options. I want to point out some of the basics, and explain how you can put your favorite media files on your mobile device. As with the rest of this book, my focus here is music, because music syncing is so granular, though I mention other media kinds. Once you grasp the concepts, it’s simple to sync your media to your mobile device exactly the way you want to.

What to Sync to Your Mobile Device

Before thinking about what you want to sync, take a minute to consider what you can’t sync through the Finder:

- If you’ve turned on Sync Library, you no longer copy music from your Mac.
- It’s the same with iCloud Photos—if you’ve turned it on, you no longer sync photos through your Mac.
- If you’ve set up Podcasts to sync subscriptions to the cloud, then you also don’t sync them to your device.
- If you’ve turned on iCloud sync for calendars or contacts, you can’t sync that data through the Finder.

Even for items that you can sync, you may wish to transfer them in some other way. For example, on an iPhone, you may prefer to download iTunes Store purchases from the cloud and podcasts can all come over the air. However, you’ll be able to add new content to the device
only when it has an internet connection. In the case of a cellular connection, if your data plan is limited or the connection is slow, you may find that you can’t get the items you want when you need them. And, of course, cellular works only for cellular devices, such as an iPhone or an iPad with cellular access.

Another consideration about what to sync has to do with your device’s capacity for holding media:

• **Your mobile device has the capacity to hold all your media:** In this case, sync it all; it’ll be much easier for you to not worry about choosing specific items. This may be the case if you have a 160 GB iPod classic, for example (may it rest in peace), or if you have a 256 GB iPhone with enough space for all your music, but also have some video content.

  Unless you really don’t want your videos on the device, then don’t worry, sync everything and be happy.

• **Your mobile device doesn’t have space for all your media:** In this common situation, you need to choose what to sync. Your choice isn’t permanent; you can change what you sync every week, or even every day. You can have certain types of items sync dynamically: for example, you can sync only unwatched TV shows or unplayed podcasts, or only a certain number of them. In this way, your device’s content will change over time, constantly refreshing. You can also use smart playlists to change the music that you sync: for example, you can sync only music you haven’t listened to recently, or only music you’ve bought or added to your Apple Music library in the last few months.

  Many people fall into the second camp, but generally because of the videos in their libraries, not audio. In that situation, you may want to sync all your music, and pay more attention to choosing which, if any, videos you sync to your device.

  This said, if you have the bandwidth, and an appropriate cellular plan for when you’re on the go, I recommend using the cloud in lieu of syncing as much as possible. You can get any videos you’ve purchased
Rip, Burn, and Print

If you want to add music from your CDs to the Music app, you can rip, or import, CDs and add the music to your library. You can then listen to it on your computer or sync it to your mobile device. But you can add more than just ripped music: you can rip audiobooks from CDs or add videos from DVDs that you own. I also discuss burning CDs—which is so 2000—and printing from the Music app, which you may actually want to do at some point.

How to Rip CDs

Many music lovers still buy CDs. These plastic discs offer several advantages over digital music: they contain uncompressed music; they have liner notes; and, in some cases, they are cheaper than digital downloads. You can pick up used CDs for a few bucks each, and you can get many excellent box sets of classical music for just a couple of dollars per disc.

Ripping CDs is simple, but you should make some decisions regarding compression format, bit rate, and tagging before you start. If you have a large music library, you’ve probably already made these decisions, but if you’re still building your library, it’s not too late. You can re-rip CDs you’ve ripped in the past, if you decide that you’d rather use a different bit rate. But also consider how much your music library is going to grow. If you have lots of CDs that you haven’t yet ripped, or if you buy a lot of music, plan ahead. Keep reading to find advice on each of these topics.

Note: The following topics on compression formats, bit rates, etc., may seem complex, but the quality of your ripped music depends on them. You’ll need to read these topics only once; after you’ve chosen your settings, you’ll probably never want to change them.
Is Ripping Legal?

If you’re used to ripping CDs, you’d probably never think that it might not be legal to rip them. In the United States, and in many other countries, ripping music is legal as part of the “fair use” doctrine of copyright law, as long as you rip CDs that you own, and the digital files are for your personal use only. You can’t rip a CD, then make mixes and give them to your friends.

Later in this chapter, I’ll talk about ripping DVDs, which, according to current U.S. law, violates the DMCA (Digital Millennium Copyright Act). This is because DVDs are, in most cases, protected by encryption called CSS (Content Scrambling System). Bypassing any such copyright protection system is illegal. (In 2010, exemptions were made to the DMCA for noncommercial copying of short excerpts for the purpose of criticism or comment.)

However, there is a gray area around copying DVDs that you own in order to view their content on a mobile device, laptop, or Apple TV; it’s essentially the same as ripping music to listen to on your iPod. I am not espousing the violation of any law, merely presenting methods that are used to create digital versions of videos on DVDs. It’s up to you to decide how to deal with the legality of the procedure.

Compression Formats for Ripping CDs

Before getting our hands dirty with actual CD rips, I want to discuss compression formats. When you rip a CD with the Music app, you can either use the default format or choose a different one that suits you. To make this choice, you need to understand a bit about compression. (Skip ahead to How to Rip a Music CD if you don’t care and want to use the default, or if you already know this stuff.)

Compression reduces the size of digital files. You’ve probably used compressed .zip archives, which allow you to store data in smaller files or to transfer data over a network more effectively. Compression software looks for redundancies in bits of data, especially repeated characters or series of characters, and replaces them with shorter bits of data. You can compress text files to about half or one-third of their
Extend the Music and TV Apps with AppleScripts

You can take advantage of AppleScripts to extend the functionality of the Music and TV apps. While looking at AppleScripts in depth would take another book of this length, in this bonus chapter I want to give you a taste of what AppleScripts can do for you, and tell you about some of my favorite AppleScripts.

Introducing AppleScripts

AppleScripts are short, simple programs that are much easier to write than full-fledged applications and that let you act on files and metadata in many Apple apps (the Finder, Music, TV, Photos, Safari, Mail, etc.), as well as a number of third-party applications (Microsoft Office, Adobe Creative Suite, etc.) that provide some AppleScript support.

AppleScript support can be limited—supporting a mere handful of commands—to highly complex. Music and TV offer in-depth scriptability, notably by providing access via AppleScript to the tags in your media files.

When you add AppleScripts to your user folders at ~/Library/Music/Scripts and ~/Library/Apple TV/Scripts, they display in Scripts menus respectively in the Music and TV apps, and you can run them by choosing them from those menus. You must create these folders if you want to use AppleScripts. Also note that you may want to use the same scripts with both apps; you must add copies of the script to both folders, in this case.

Tip: The ~/Library folder mentioned in the previous paragraph is normally invisible. To see it, hold down the Option key and choose Go > Library in the Finder.
Where to Find AppleScripts

There are two ways to get AppleScripts. The first is to roll your own, but, to be fair, this requires a good knowledge of programming. While Apple claimed—and still claims—that AppleScript is close to natural language, this isn’t exactly the case.

There’s an easier way to get AppleScripts for the Music and TV apps: go to the Doug’s AppleScripts website. Run by Doug Adams, AppleScript guru extraordinaire, this site is a compendium of scripts that he has written. There are scripts for managing tracks and track info, working with artwork, dealing with playlists, controlling the Music and TV apps, importing and exporting information about your Music and TV libraries and playlists, managing files, working with libraries, and much more. The site houses hundreds of scripts and a handful of applications that Doug has written.

What You Can Do with AppleScripts

When you see exactly what AppleScripts can do with the Music and TV apps, you may be surprised. I use them most often for tagging files; copying, correcting, truncating or appending track names; searching for and replacing text; and finding “missing” tracks in my library.

The best way to understand what AppleScripts can do is to look at some concrete examples. Here are my top ten AppleScripts, with links to them on the Doug’s AppleScripts website:

1. Remove n Characters from Front or Back: This script lets you remove extraneous characters from the beginning or end of a tag. You can do this for tags including Name, Album, Artist, and Composer. I use it often for classical music; many Name tags include the name of the composer before the name of the track, in this form: Schubert: Gute Nacht. For an album tagged like that, I remove the first 10 characters, and keep just the name of the track.
Learn More

Here’s a list of some of the most useful websites for learning more about Apple’s media management apps and mobile devices:

- **Kirkville**: This is my personal website. I regularly publish articles about using Apple’s media apps, Macs, and mobile devices, as well as articles about my favorite music and more.

- **The Next Track**: I co-host this podcast about how people listen to music today with Doug Adams. We have been called “the Renaissance men of music,” and on The Next Track we discuss many kinds of music, audio equipment, and the apps we use to listen to music. (You can find links to my other podcasts in this Shameless Plug.)

- **Apple’s iTunes and iPod support hubs**: These portals to information about iTunes and the various iPod models provide access to technical notes, user’s manuals, and more. (Yes, they still call the page “iTunes Support.”)

- **Apple’s iTunes forums**: Apple’s forums offer a way for users to get troubleshooting help from their peers. You can often find answers to the most obscure questions here.

- **iTunes version history**: This Wikipedia page has a list of iTunes versions and the features added with each one.

- **Audiophile Style**: Although audiophiles can be a bit obsessive, the Audiophile Style website offers useful information about setting up centralized media servers, playing high-resolution audio files, and using high-end audio equipment connected to a computer. There’s also a very active forum where you can discuss using a computer as part of your audio system.
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About the Author

Kirk McElhearn writes about Apple hardware and software, books, music, and more. He contributes to TidBITS and other publications, and co-hosts several podcasts. Kirk has written and co-written more than two dozen books about using the Mac, including *Take Control of Audio Hijack*, *Take Control of Scrivener 2*, and *Take Control of LaunchBar*.

Kirk’s website, Kirkville, features articles on Macs, iOS/iPadOS devices, books, music, and much more. A lapsed New Yorker, Kirk has lived in Europe for more than 35 years; he currently lives in a farmhouse near Stratford-upon-Avon, in the United Kingdom. You can email Kirk at kirk@mcelhearn.com or follow him on Twitter: @mcelhearn.

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We’re now one year on from the biggest change in Apple’s media apps and their capabilities; this change required a rethink of how to efficiently work with these new apps. Doug Adams was a big help in understanding these changes, and his AppleScripts make the Music and TV apps much easier to use.

Over the years, through the various editions of this book, I’ve worked with a number of fine editors, and it was again Joe Kissell’s turn to shepherd it to publication. With the many changes to the apps that this book covers, a new strategy was needed, and I thank Joe for helping shape this new edition.

A number of people have been of great help over the years, and through the various versions of this book. My son Perceval shared some of his iTunes (now Music) techniques, and continues to provide me with many music recommendations so I keep up with the times. Andy Doe helped me understand some of the minute technical details of digital audio and the financial aspects of music streaming. Chris Connaker enlightened me about the nuances of high-resolution audio and audiophile hardware. Nick Flower of Hyperion Records gave me

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insight into issues around delivering digital music to customers from a record label’s point of view. Jeff Robbin provided answers to some of my more obscure questions. Stéphane Sudre helped me figure out how to get graphics out of the Music and TV apps to use as inline buttons in this book. And Gregorio Zanon has provided useful information about the way iOS/iPadOS devices function under the hood.

Finally, I’d like to thank the readers of the previous versions of this book, and of my web site, Kirkville. Through email messages and questions, they have helped me understand what they need to know, and have pointed out the occasional typo that slipped past our ace proofleading team.

The latest edition of this book was written in Nisus Writer Pro on a 4K iMac, with the help of a 13-inch MacBook Pro, an iPad Pro, iPad mini, iPhone 11, Apple Watch, iPod classic, iPod touch, iPod nano, iPod shuffle, a pair of HomePods, two Sonos Ones, a Synology DS218+ NAS, an Apple TV, and AirPods. It was produced under the influence of a wonderful selection of Chinese green teas and wulongs, and first flush Darjeelings. And Titus the Cat and Rosalind the Cat provided company as I worked; in exchange for food and treats.

The stereo in my home office, where I do much of my music listening, and where I played the music that accompanied me while writing this book, consists of a Sonos Amp, a Cambridge Audio 651 BD CD player, Q Acoustics 3020i speakers on IsoAcoustic speaker stands on my desk, KEF Q150 speakers in the comfy listening area of my office, and a Wharfedale Diamond SW150 subwoofer. The cables and interconnects cost a few quid each.

The soundtrack for this book included music by Bob Dylan, Brian Eno, Franz Schubert, Chiku Za, Robert Johnson, The Normal, the Grateful Dead, Miles Davis, The Clash, Brian Eno, Brad Mehldau, The Durutti Column, Okuda Atsuya, Bill Frisell, John Foxx, The Rolling Stones, Bill Evans, Fontaines D.C., Harold Budd, The Cure, Miles Davis, Toru Takemitsu, and many others. It’s a delight to be able to write about software that manages music while listening to so much great music.

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About the Publisher

alt concepts inc., publisher of Take Control Books, is operated by Joe Kissell and Morgen Jahnke, who acquired the ebook series from TidBITS Publishing Inc.’s owners, Adam and Tonya Engst, in May 2017. Joe brings his decades of experience as author of more than 60 books on tech topics (including many popular Take Control titles) to his role as Publisher. Morgen’s professional background is in development work for nonprofit organizations, and she employs those skills as Director of Marketing and Publicity. Joe and Morgen live in San Diego with their two children and their cat.

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