



UNIVERSITY OF UTAH
SPENCER S. ECCLES
HEALTH SCIENCES LIBRARY

Mac Tips & Tricks Workshop



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Introduction

This course is designed for beginning and intermediate Mac users. The format is informal, with lots of opportunity for questions and discussion. We will cover a number of the key features of the Mac OS (10.5, also known as Leopard), including how to customize them. At the end there will be a Q & A time.

This handout has space on the right side of each page for you to take notes as we work through these materials. At the end of the class you will be asked to complete a course evaluation. Please do so, as this provides valuable feedback for the instructor on how the class went, and how to improve it.

Background: few basic terms

Dock

The Dock is a collection of icons used for launching applications and opening folders you use frequently with a single click. Features:

- It can be moved from the (default) bottom location to either side, or set to hide until your cursor is moved to the bottom of the screen.
- Open applications have a small, blue-white dot under its icon.
- You can move, add or remove items to the dock by clicking and dragging it on/off.
- Stacks: items to the right of the dotted lines that have a spring-loaded display.
- Settings: Control + click on the dotted lines

Desktop

The desktop is the area between the menu bar at the top, and the Dock at the bottom. You can create an alias to any item and place it on the desktop, or in any folder:

Cmd + Option + click-n-drag item to where you want it.

Finder

From Spotlight:

"The Finder is a program that's responsible for managing your files, applications, disks, network connections, and devices such as printers."



The Finder provides the menu bar along the top of the screen, and a Dock at the bottom edge. It shows up in the Dock as the two-color blue smiley face, and will always have a lighted dot under it.

Menu Bar and Backgrounds

From Spotlight: *“At the top of your screen is the menu bar. The leftmost menu is the Apple menu, designated by an Apple icon. When you are in the Finder, you’ll see the Finder menu next to the Apple menu. When you use other applications, their menus may appear here instead.”*

You can click the desktop at any time to get back to the Finder and see the Finder menu.

NOTE: Make sure you quit an application (Cmd + Q), not just close the window.

Windows

Views



- Icon
- List
- Columns
- Cover flow

Practice: find a folder that has multiple document types and view it in cover-flow.

Change folder label colors:

- Control + click (or right click)
- Select label color.

Sidebar

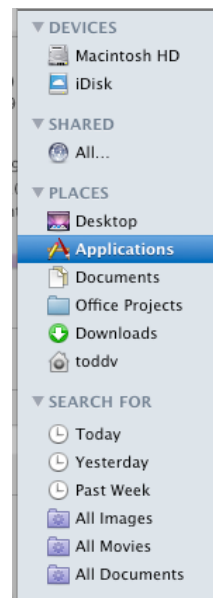
From Spotlight:

“All Finder windows have a sidebar that displays icons for things you frequently use, including disks, servers, and folders.

The sidebar is divided into these four sections:

Devices: *This section has icons representing your computer, your internal disk and any other disks attached to your computer, any CD or DVD discs in an optical drive available to your computer, and your iDisk if you have one. You can rearrange the icons in this section, or remove them altogether if you like.*

Shared: *This section has icons for shared computers and servers on your local network, including AirPort disks. To see all available shared computers and servers, click “More.” You may need a user name and password to access*



a shared device.

Places: This section has icons for folders you use most frequently. Your home folder, with a house icon, appears here. Several of the folders that are inside your home folder are also listed here, including Documents, Music, and Pictures. The Downloads folder is the default location for any software or files you download from the Internet.

You can add folders to the Places section. Keeping your favorite folders here is a convenient way to quickly access them.”

Demo

1. Adding folders such as Downloads or Applications
2. Hiding Sidebar
3. Quick Look button
4. Action button

Spotlight

Spotlight is the powerful search utility that comes with every Mac.

“Spotlight searches filenames, content, and metadata (data that describes other data) to find virtually anything on your computer, such as documents, images, movies, music, PDF files, email messages, to-do items, contacts, and events. For example, if you search for a person’s name, such as Tom, Spotlight returns: Tom’s contact information, all documents that contain Tom, all email messages to or from Tom, all calendar appointments with Tom, and all iChat transcripts you’ve saved that involve Tom.

You can search your computer at any time by clicking the Spotlight icon in the menu bar to display the Spotlight search field. Because Spotlight searching is used in multiple applications, the Spotlight search field also appears in the Finder, Mail, and System Preferences (among others), as well as in Open and Save dialogs. Spotlight is also used in Smart Folders, Smart Mailboxes, and Smart Groups, which help you organize and access information on your computer.” (from Spotlight).

To activate:

Hold down the Command key and press the Space bar.

Exposé

“Your computer has a feature called Exposé that makes it easy to find windows, even when your desktop is cluttered. Unless you have changed your Exposé settings, you can press the F9 key to activate Exposé and see all your open windows. (On a laptop computer press F3.) Even if you have many overlapping windows, Exposé lets you view thumbnail versions of all of them so you can find the one you need.”

Practice: open 4-6 documents and then use Exposé to switch between them.

Trackpad

The Trackpad on the iBook and MacBook serves as the computer mouse but is more powerful. Very short video demos are available in **System Preferences -> Keyboard and Mouse**.

User Accounts

Mac OS X makes it easy for multiple users to share a single computer. “You should create individual user accounts for each person who regularly uses your computer. Each new user has a separate home folder and can adjust his or her own preferences without affecting other users” (from Spotlight).

Software

Preview

From Spotlight:

“Preview is the PDF viewer built into Mac OS X. With Preview, you can view, rotate, resize, crop, and convert a wide range of image files; read and search PDF files; view incoming faxes as PDF files; and take screen shots. Preview is also used in other applications to preview documents before printing.”

Features of note:

- Adjust color for images (like Photoshop)
- Annotate and markup (beware: permanent!)



iPhoto

“iPhoto is the essential tool for organizing, saving, and sharing your digital photographs. Use iPhoto to crop a photo, enhance its color, create albums and slideshows, and archive your photo libraries to CD or DVD. With a click of a button, order professional-quality prints or custom coffee-table books filled with your photos. iPhoto is part of the iLife suite of creativity applications and works seamlessly with the other iLife applications” (from Spotlight).

Demo:

- Importing pictures and recognizing faces.
- Creating a slideshow
- Integration with Flickr (a “Web 2.0” online service)

Web Browsers

- **Safari:** “When you’re connected to the Internet, you can use a web browser application to explore the World Wide Web. Although you can use many web browsers, Mac OS X comes with a built-in browser, Safari” (from Spotlight).
- **Firefox:** it is the highly popular web browser used by over 350 million people worldwide, and it is available in Mac, Windows and Linux versions. It is generally faster than Safari and Internet Explorer, and is more customizable than other web browsers. The same people who invented the old Netscape browser created Firefox.
- **Opera:** it is light, fast and a great way to surf the web anonymously.
 - Demo: deleting private data
- **Google Chrome:** also light and fast, and claims to allow “incognito” browsing.

UU Essential Software for Mac

VPN

VPN stands for “virtual private network,” and it is a small piece of software that you load onto your Mac to give you nearly the same access to University of Utah resources that the Eccles Library computers do.

Demo:

- Find and download the University of Utah’s VPN software
- Download the uofu.pcf file
- Configure the VPN and import the uofu.pcf settings file.
- Always run the VPN before opening your web browser or email.

UU Browser tip

Use Firefox instead of Safari. As of last semester there were some problems accessing UU resources (even via VPN) in Safari that UIT had not yet resolved.

Protecting your Mac

Software Updates

- Automatic updates: your Mac will automatically check for updates to the system software. To change the frequency or turn this off (not recommended):

System Preferences -> Software Update

Time Machine

If you have an external USB or Firewire hard drive attached to your computer, you can use Time Machine to automatically back up your files. Then you can recover them at any time, even if you’ve deleted them.



Demo video from Lynda.com (6:24)

Troubleshooting your Mac

Disk Utility

This system software helps you check the status of, and do basic repairs on any drives or discs in or attached to your computer. It also allows you to burn CDs and DVDs, both re-writeable (RW) and single-write format.

Demo:

1. Basic window elements: S.M.A.R.T. Status
2. Repairing disk permissions
3. Verify & Repair Disk
4. Disk images and burning

Startup problems

Usually a hardware rather than a software issue.

- Check the power:
 - Plugged-in?
 - Getting power?
 - Monitor on?

Mac starts but something bad happens

- Mac freezes or shows a gray screen (a “kernel panic”) -> usually a hardware issue
 - Unplug anything plugged into your Mac except the mouse, keyboard and monitor
 - Plug in one thing at a time and restart. If problem occurs, then that device is the problem. Usually downloading a new driver will help.
 - If you’ve added new RAM or other internal cards, shut down the Mac and make sure they are properly seated.
 - Zap the P-RAM: hold down Command + Option + P + R at startup and wait for the Mac to restart twice.
- Hold down the Shift key when you start up until you see “Safe Boot.” Release the Shift key and observe how your Mac behaves. If it’s okay, a startup item is causing the problem. Delete Login Items from your account.
- Next, move items out of the /Library/StartupItems folder.

Running Problems

- Your account acts strangely
 - If an application unexpectedly quits, click the Relaunch button. If it does it again, choose “Reset and Relaunch”.
 - Log out and back in. If that fails, restart your Mac.



- Check you Mac with Disk Utility's First Aid.
- Restart using your system disc as the startup disc and run First Aid from the Utilities menu.

Helpful information sources

- Apple Discussion Forums: <http://discussions.apple.com>
- MacFixIt: www.macfixit.com
- Macworld Forums: <http://forums.macworld.com>
- Google

Q & A

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