



# Hints & Tips

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Welcome!

These tips have been culled from user group newsletters, Macintosh-related books, magazines, and other sources. Thanks to all who have contributed and provided this valuable information to the Macintosh community.

Several hundred new tips are added to the Hints & Tips Database each month, with only 29 of them featured in this month's newsletter.

If you haven't used the searchable Database of tips available on this website, I urge you to give it a try. For \$4.95, you can access the entire library of tips for a month. For \$48, you can have access for a full year. It is a lot easier and faster than going through a pile of newsletters and magazines looking for that tip you read about a few months ago.

If you like this newsletter, the best way to support it is to subscribe to the Database.

— Paul Taylor  
paul@mac-hints-tips.com



## General

### The Mac Mini as an Entertainment Server

I have long been fascinated with the idea of an all-inclusive digital entertainment server. Ideally this would be a simple, low power device that would connect to both my receiver and television. It would host my 75 GB music library, digital movies, some games, even my digital photos and artwork. It would banish the clutter of DVDs and CDs to deep storage. It would connect to the Internet for streaming audio, Podcasts, and weather and news reports. And it would do this in the living room, where friends and family tend to congregate.

I already had a 40 GB iPod connected to my stereo via the iPod dock. The sound was great, the interface simple, and it required little electricity to run. However, the 40 GB iPod could only hold half of my music library, and it was occasionally awkward to browse so much music on the small device. When the Airport Express came out, I tried streaming music from iTunes on my desktop computer to the stereo, which was neat, but there was no great way to browse my music selection from the couch — I had to go to the computer room to do this.

The Mac mini seemed to be the device I was waiting for. So, in the name of science, I purchased a 1.42 GHz Mac mini with 1 GB of RAM, 80 GB hard drive, Combo drive, and Bluetooth and Airport Extreme cards. I also purchased the Apple DVI to

Video adapter, to connect the Mac mini to the S-video port on my television, and the Monster iCable to connect the audio port on the Mac Mini to my stereo receiver. I would use a Macally Bluetooth mouse to control the Mac mini.

Fifteen minutes after I brought everything home, the Mac mini was connected to the television, playing a CD from iTunes, and running Software Update via Airport Extreme. Now, with only an 80 GB internal hard drive, and 75 GB of music, plus dozens of gigabytes of photos and movies, it was clear that I would need an external hard drive. I loaded up an older 160 drive with all of my music and videos, and loaded my entire iPhoto library onto the 80 GB drive in the Mac mini. After downloading a few essential applications, and upgrading to QuickTime Pro, the Mac mini was ready to serve as my home entertainment hub.

After a couple of months, I can say it does what I wanted it to do. It keeps my digital entertainment files organized in one central location. Every song or movie file is immediately at hand, especially with Mac OS X 10.4's Spotlight feature. The Mac mini does a great job of playing CDs, DVDs, and digital files such as MP3s and movies. Apple's familiar bundled programs, such as iTunes, DVD Player, QuickTime, Safari, and the colorful Tiger Widgets handle these files with ease. The video quality coming out of the Mac Mini is great — iPhoto pictures, QuickTime

slideshows, DVDs, even the iTunes visualizer look excellent on TV. Simple games also look great, but I do not play these often. Overall system performance is excellent.

There are a few things to consider for the future. First, I currently have a CRT-style television, and because of the scan-lines, text is difficult to read. I have adjusted the system settings to improve this, but it won't truly be resolved until I upgrade to an LCD television in the fall. This is only a problem with text; images look great.

The Mac mini has no native video-in port or TV tuner, making video recording impossible without using a third party device, such as a Miglia Evolution or EyeTV. The audio quality is very good, but not absolutely spectacular.

I may buy an audio output device, such as the Griffin Firewave, to improve the audio output. I will probably purchase a Micronet Minimate or LaCie mini, to replace the hard drive I currently have connected to the mini. Finally, I now have more cables and more electrical demand than before the Mac mini. In its current incarnation, the system is a little more complicated than planned, though works as intended.

Apple may someday come out with their long-rumored entertainment server. In the meantime, I am happy with the Mac mini. It has been fun for the family, and my friends think it's pretty cool, too.

Order Ed's Mac mini set up: Mac mini, iCable and DVI to Video connector for \$479. To order: <http://www.smalldog.com/wag16025/attt>

~ Edward Shepard

*Small Dog Electronics*

### **HDTV on Your Mac**

Even though the Mac is a little late to the HDTV party, you can roll your own setup for not too much time or money. Erica Sadun shows you how.

<http://www.macdevcenter.com/pub/a/mac/2005/03/29/hdtv.html>

*The MUG Center  
via TMUG Insider, Pleasanton, CA*

### **Silence the Volume Keys**

**Q:** When I adjust the volume of my Mac using the volume keys on my keyboard, my Mac makes a beep every time I press a key. How do I shut it up?

**A:** Hold down the shift key while pressing the volume keys on your keyboard to silence the beeps. Alternatively, you can squelch volume-key feedback for good: Open System Preferences, click the "Sound Effects" tab, and uncheck the box labeled "Play Feedback When Volume Keys Are Pressed."

*MacAddict Magazine*

### **Redirecting Files**

I have a text file written in a "classic" text editor on an older Macintosh. I copy the file to the iBook with OS X 10.3.3, and want to work on it there using, say, BBEditLite. I click the file icon, press Command/I for "Get Info," click "Open with," then select BBEditLite. Double clicking the file then opens it with that program. A further extension of this is the following. I continually receive Microsoft Word documents, and am required to read them on my iBook, which does not have a copy of Word. Recently, if I double-click the Word file, it has opened in Nisus Writer Express, of which I have only a 30-day demo. Apparently this is the most recent program I

have installed that can open Word documents. I click on the file icon, press Command/I for "Get Info," click "Open with" to access a list of other programs that might read the file; I choose icWord. The file will then open in icWord. However, I can also then click the "Change All" button in "Get Info"; the effect is that double-clicking subsequent Word files will automatically open in icWord. ~ Bruce Craven

*AUSOM News, Melbourne, Australia*

### **Customizing the Finder Toolbar**

As I was playing around with "Get Info," I decided to check out the tools to customize my Finder windows. There are basically two locations that allow you to set up the Finder to best suit how you work.

### **Finder Preferences**

If you are in the Finder you can go under the Finder menu item and choose Preferences. The Finder Preference has four tabs. The General tab allows you to specify which items are shown on the Desktop. You can select (or deselect) hard disks, CDs, DVDS, iPods, and connected servers. You can also select which window you would like to open when you open a new Finder window. The choices are the Home directory, a specific drive, or any folder on your Mac.

Other General preferences include whether you want to open a new window every time you open a folder and whether you want to open all new windows in column view ( I have that one checked because I find the column view the most useful). You can also set the delay rate for spring-loaded folders and windows.

The Labels tab allows you to set colors and names for labels.

The Sidebar tab lets you set the items to be shown in the Sidebar. In the column view, the sidebar contains the icons for drives, servers, Desktop, Home directory, and Applications folder. Documents, Music, Movies, and Pictures are in the sidebar by default. You can also manage your sidebar by dragging items into or out of it, much like the dock.

The Advanced Tab allows you to select whether you want a warning before emptying the trash or whether you want to show all file extensions. I opt for the Trash warning and skip the file extensions (that's a Windoze thing!).

What about the Toolbar? Where is the Finder toolbar and how do you modify it? The toolbar is the set of icons that appears on the top of every Finder window. The default set includes:

- Back and advance arrows
- View choices
- An action "gear" that allows you to Open, Get Info, Copy, Show View Options or Label any file with drop-down menu choice
- A search window

You can add others or eliminate some of the default selections by going to the View menu item and choosing "Customize Toolbar." There you can drag other choices to the toolbar and arrange them the way you like. Don't want something in the toolbar? Drag it out and it disappears in a puff of virtual smoke.

You can add the following tools:

- Path (this tool allows you to see the path to get to a particular file)
- Eject Button
- Burn Button (to burn CDs or DVDs)
- Customize (this would allow

instant access to the customize toolbar menu -- I can't quite see the need for this one)

- Space and Flexible Space (for organization and looks on the toolbar)
- New Folder
- Delete (careful with this one!)
- Connect (to servers)
- Get Info
- iDisk

My current set has: Back and Advance Arrows, View Choices, Action Path, Eject, Get Info, New Folder, and Burn.

You can choose to display icons, text, or both. You can also shrink it all down by choosing "Use Small Size. ~ Don Mayer

*Small Dog Electronics*

### Upgrade or Wade Up?

**Q:** I have a Power Mac G4 (PCI Graphics) with 320MB of RAM and a 10GB hard drive running Mac OS 8.6. I use Microsoft Office 98, Outlook Express, and a few games, and I have a dial-up connection to the Internet. I'd like to add a second hard drive, install OS X, and use Virtual PC 7.0 with a current version of Windows. Will using OS X cause a noticeable drop in performance? If so, is a processor upgrade worth it, or should I look for a new Mac? ~ Keith Thomas

**A:** Yes, you will notice a difference in performance when you move from the old Mac operating system to OS X. When I use my Mac that's still capable of booting into OS 9, I'm astounded by how much more responsive it is in the old OS. Of course, I'm quickly brought back to earth when I recall that I can't perform simultaneous tasks in the old OS.

Setting performance aside for the moment, let's look at the cost of

what you're proposing. At press time, a 1GHz processor upgrade from Sonnet Technologies costs \$400, a 120GB ATA hard drive costs about \$85, OS X 10.4 (Tiger) will run you \$129, and Microsoft's Virtual PC 7 will set you back another \$129. My Calculator widget tells me you'll be putting \$743 into this old Mac.

Compare that with the \$499 price tag of a new 1.25GHz Mac mini, which comes with OS X installed. You already have a keyboard, a monitor, and a mouse that will work with the mini. I'd configure the mini with 512MB of RAM and upgrade to an 80GB hard drive — you'll want the extra RAM because 256MB just isn't enough to get the best performance from OS X, and a 40GB hard drive will be cramped if you play games and run Virtual PC. Apple charges \$75 and \$50 for these upgrades, respectively. Virtual PC will still cost you \$129. So a mini, a hard drive, and Virtual PC add up to \$753.

I'd feel a bit better if you also put a copy of Microsoft Office 2004 on this machine, but you can get along by running your version of Office in the Classic environment (you should switch your email client to Apple's Mail, however, as no version of Outlook Express exists for OS X).

If it appeared that you required a more open Mac — one in which you could add PCI cards or additional internal hard drives — the decision wouldn't be so easy to make. But your needs appear to be modest enough that I'm comfortable saying, "Out with the old and in with the new!"

*Chris Breen's Mac 911  
via The Finder, Mid-Columbia MUG,  
Kennewick, WA*

## A Remark on Text Editors

While many text files open automatically under OS X in Apple's Text Edit, this useful program is not always the text editor most suitable for one's purpose. If one's concern is computer programming, or TeX or LaTeX source code for typesetting, then one needs a text editor that only does things like word wrapping, or formatting like RTF, or insertion of tabs, when one specifically asks for them. Also, one may want line numbers easily accessible. For OS X, I have found BBEditLite and Tex-Edit Plus (current version 4.8.3) to be valuable for the purposes I mentioned. (And I am currently writing this Blurb in BBEditLite for Mac OS X.)

Also, while formatting features (when used) are usually not transferred by "drag and drop" between different editor programs, there is some extent of interchangeability between the programs mentioned here. Of course, I am not rubbishing all other text editor programs, but just citing some programs that I find useful for my purposes. The motto here is "horses for courses!" ~ Bruce Craven  
*AUSOM News, Melbourne, Australia*

## Portable Updates

**Q:** I have a PowerBook and an iMac. Unfortunately I do not have high-speed Internet access at home, so some of the large downloads can take a few hours. I can take the PowerBook to a remote site and retrieve the updates through a high-speed wireless connection, which helps considerably. Here's the big question: Once I get the update on the PowerBook, is it possible to transfer it to the iMac?  
~ Ken St. Marie

**A:** Software Update cleans up after itself. Once you've downloaded and applied an update, the update package is automatically deleted to keep your hard disk free of unnecessary files. You can choose to keep the update packages, though, which you can then transfer to your iMac. Choose "System Preferences" from the Apple Menu and click "Software Update." Click "Check Now" and wait for a list of available updates to appear. Command/click each update you want to download and install, and then choose Update > Install and "Keep Package." Software Update will now go about its business, downloading and installing the update. Once it's finished, you'll find the installer packages at Macintosh HD > Library > Packages. You can then transfer these packages to the iMac and install them at your leisure.

Of course, there are bound to be updates you need that do not show up in Software Update. You may have already applied a number of updates to your PowerBook, or there could be an update specific to your iMac. In these cases, you'll want to go to [www.apple.com/support/downloads](http://www.apple.com/support/downloads) and grab any updates you might have missed. Updates downloaded through apple.com will appear in your downloads folder. Once you get home, you can transfer the packages to your iMac.  
*macHOME Journal*

## Time to Preach About Backups Again

My G5 iMac developed overheating problems recently and Apple decided that it needed a new motherboard. Took it in for repairs alter doing a complete backup and decided to have a bigger hard drive installed while they had it

apart. When they tried to clone the drive back to the new drive, it kept hanging and they finally decided that the original drive was also defective. Fortunately, I had that mirror backup on an external drive and was able to restore from it. The additional benefit was that I was able to run my iBook from that drive while the iMac was in the shop. I had access to all of the apps, fonts and other files that I use normally on the iMac but are not installed on the iBook. I've ordered a case for the replacement 80 gig drive and will use it for backing up my iBook.

**Backup Benefit #2:** I launched iCal and something went wonkie, gave me an obscure error message, and my calendars disappeared. Did the usual "plist" trashing, but it didn't help.

It seems that Apple, in its infinite wisdom, made some major changes in Tiger. No longer are your calendars stored in recognizable form. They now have numbers and multiple files. Bad Apple! They used to be in the home Library folder, in the (surprise!) Calendars folder with the same names you gave them to start with. Now, you have to burrow through home > Library > Application Support > iCal only to be met by a bunch of folders with impossibly long alphanumeric names that are meaningless.

The files were all there, but iCal either couldn't find them or couldn't read them.

Fortunately, I still had the last backup I did of Panther before installing Tiger and was able to import them and recreate the missing events. Not fun, but better than starting from scratch.

Under the File menu in iCal you will find a "Backup Database"

command. Do yourself a favor and use it when you make major changes. If you ever experience a loss like this, it will be easy to just restore from that backup.

This was my month for troubleshooting problems. Right after iCal went bonkers, MasterJuggler, my font manager, did the same thing. Launch, Wink, error message, and all of my font sets were gone. You don't want to know how many fonts and sets I have on my system. Tried trashing the "plist," dumping the MJ database file and replacing it with one from a backup and nothing was working.

I finally, and I still don't know what prompted me to do it, booted from one of my backup drives, replaced the database with a copy of the one in the active drive that I knew was working, and finally rebooted from my internal drive. That time it took.

For some reason, even with MasterJuggler not running and the background helper app disabled, every time I replaced the database with a clean file, it would revert to the corrupt state. Like I said, it has been a strange month.

Backup those files! Two backups are even better. I actually have three for my iMac. One is an older drive that has the last update of Panther. Drive number two has a full mirror copy of my current drive setup. I updated it generally on a weekly basis and definitely before making any system updates.

If I run into an update that breaks things (yes, it does happen) I have a working clone to revert to. The third drive runs all of the time. I have my software set to automatically backup my user and Documents folders every

morning. If I am working on a critical InDesign project, I'll trigger a backup of my Documents folder more often.

*MacNews, Detroit, MI*

## X Mac OS X

### Switching Applications

Have a number of applications open and need to switch to one of them? Hold down the Command key and press the Tab key.

*Apple Pickers MUG, Indianapolis, IN*

### Labels

There are lots of great things about Panther (10.3) and later, but file labeling is not one of them! Someone decided that instead of coloring the icons themselves (as in Mac OS 9), they'd color the file names.

This makes some kind of sense when you consider that some of OS X's ornate icons may not take well to being colored, but it wreaks havoc on filenames presented in List or Column view, or in Open/Save dialogs, since the colored bars are both obtrusive and excessively bright.

To the rescue comes Unsanity, publisher of a number of OS X "haxies" including the esteemed Windowshade and now Labels X, which restores the OS 9-style labeling system icons in which the icons themselves are tinted with colors you can choose and edit if you like. Ahh; that is better!

I am not a great fan of reverting to OS 9 conventions just for the hell of it, but this is one worth trying out if you are a heavy Labels user. Not free, but a reasonable (\$10). More info at <[www.unsanity.com](http://www.unsanity.com)>.

~ Steve Cooper

*AUSOM News, Melbourne, Australia*

### Screen Saver News

You can get the news from an RSS feed on your screen as a Screen Saver. Command/click on your screen to Change Desktop Background. Shift to the Screen Saver tab. Select "RSS Visualizer." Press "Options" and select the feed you wish to see. Now when your Screen Saver appears, you get the latest news on screen.

*Mouse Droppings, Corvallis, OR*

### Creating Your Own Keyboard Shortcuts

One thing in OS X that doesn't get enough press, but kicks butt in the productivity department, is that you can now create your own custom keyboard shortcuts. Here's how:

Go under the Apple menu to System Preferences, then click on the Keyboard & Mouse icon. In the pane that appears, click on the "Keyboard Shortcuts" button. Then click the + (plus) sign button at the bottom of the list of existing shortcuts to add your own. The pop-up menu at the top of the dialog that opens lets you choose whether this shortcut works across all applications, or in just an individual app (or just the Finder if you like). In the "Menu Title" field, enter the EXACT name of the menu item you want a shortcut for, then type in the shortcut you want to use and click "Add." It is that easy.

**Note:** Make sure that the application you are creating your own shortcut for is not open.

*TMUG Insider, Pleasanton, CA*



### Jive (AppleTalk) Talkin'

Macintosh reader Mauro Notarianni ran into some AppleTalk

troubles with Tiger. He wrote “I just upgraded to Tiger. All was well until I tried to connect to my other Macs over the network and Tiger told me it was unable to connect. I got the following message: ‘This file server uses an incompatible version of the AFP protocol. You cannot connect to it.’ Great!”

The ubiquitous Tracy Valleau responded with the following fix:

“I too struggled with AFP issues until I figured it out. Your symptoms will go away if you do the following:

1. Fix permissions;
2. Shut down and wait 20 seconds;
3. Start up into Open Firmware by pressing and holding the Command/Option/O and F keys during startup;
4. At the Open Firmware prompt, type: ‘resetnvram’ (without the quotes) and press the Return key;
5. At the next Open Firmware prompt, type: ‘setdefaults’ and press Return (you’ll get an ‘OK’ response);
6. At the next Open Firmware prompt, type: ‘resetall’ and press Return. The computer will then restart and all will be well.”

Alan Oppenheimer, of Open Door Networks, Inc., sheds more light on the subject:

AppleTalk support has not been eliminated in Tiger. AppleTalk can still be used, for instance, for printing and service location. What has been eliminated is AppleShare or Apple Filing Protocol (AFP) support over AppleTalk. What this means is that Tiger machines can only connect to AppleShare-compatible servers (in particular

Personal File Sharing) that use AFP over TCP/IP.

Mac OS 9 has always supported AFP over TCP/IP through a version of our ShareWay IP product that Apple licensed and included in the system. You just have to check the box in the File Sharing Control Panel.

We sell an upgrade to the OS 9 version that includes a number of added security features. We also sell a version of Share Way IP that runs all the way back to System 7.5.5, so it’s still quite possible for anyone with very old systems (even 68K ones!) to make their machines accessible to Tiger through Personal File Sharing.

We hope to be putting out a press release with more details shortly, but to highlight the suddenly-increased usefulness of ShareWay IP, we’ve halved the price of the product to \$39 effective immediately. Details are available at <http://www.opendoor.com/shareway/>.

*MacValley Voice, Northridge, CA*

### Reindex Spotlight

**Q:** How can I make Spotlight start over with its indexing, or at least force it to re-index a particular volume, without reinstalling Tiger.  
~ Steve Osborn

**A:** If you can’t find what you’re looking for when you search with Spotlight, you may want to create a new index of your hard disk. But try a couple of things first: Use Disk Utility (/Applications/Utilities) to repair your file permissions, in case mucked-up permissions are the problem. (Launch the program, select the disk from the list, and click on “Repair Disk Permissions.”) Also, if you’ve recently indexed the drive, wait another day or so. Spotlight might not have finished

indexing the drive even though you’ve been able to use it.

If your searches still don’t work, then try this:

Open the Spotlight preference pane, click on the “Privacy” tab, click on the plus sign (+), and add the volume you want to re-index. Wait about five minutes, select the volume in the Privacy list, and click on the minus sign (-) to remove it. Spotlight will index the volume again from the ground up.

*Mouse Tales, NorthCoast MUG,  
Berea, OH*

### You Can’t Find Widgets without a Map

Tiger brings desk accessories back to the Mac, only now they’re called “widgets.” One of them the Phone Book can show you maps by simply clicking on a search result, but [www.MacOSXHints.com](http://www.MacOSXHints.com) went one better with this tip: how to replace the phone book widget’s mapping service! They believe MapQuest is aging badly, and Google maps fit in better with the coolness of Tiger. To find out how to make the switch, click on <http://www.macosxhints.com/article.php?story=20050424065456133>; you’ll find a couple of blocks of text there that you can easily copy and paste using a text editor to get the job done.

*MacValley Voice, Northridge, CA*



### Apple Mail

#### Moving from Entourage to Mail

After being teased for being the only person at Small Dog to be using a mail application other than Mail, I decided to give Mail another try. This meant that I had to move from Entourage back to Mail (which I haven’t used since

Office 2004 came out).

You might think that this would be a simple and transparent move, but to be honest, at first it was torture. This torture was due to two things: the sheer number of emails that I have saved since 1998 and the fact that I had lots of learned behavior that needed retraining. It has now been just over a week and I've learned to like Mail, but I've had to find plug-ins and other solutions to do everything that Entourage did without the add-ons. There are still things that aren't exactly the way that I would like them to be, but there are also a few things that I do like about the switch.

I started by importing all my mailboxes. This is where the torture for the change started. It took hours — MANY hours. This was largely due to the fact that I have saved mail since 1998. After about four hours, I realized that not all the mail was properly brought over from Entourage. Something just wasn't right. So I tried again, which took about the same amount of time and again there were problems with the import. By now I was frustrated and wishing that I hadn't started the project. I went home mad at myself for even trying to make the change.

During the evening, I had the idea that I didn't need to save the huge amount of email that I was sitting on and came up with the great idea that since we use an IMAP server, I could store my messages on our mail server and be able to access mail from any mail application that I might decide to use in the future. So I came back to work invigorated to dump old mail and move everything to the new mail server. I made an archive

of my mail database (to do this in Entourage, hold down the option key while launching Entourage) and then proceeded to delete mail older than 2003. Then I moved my mail to our mail server which was much faster than the import even though I had to do it manually.

So with less email and the ability to move between the two applications, I was able to spend time comparing one to the other and to get the feel of Mail since it has been sometime since I used it. The biggest difference between the two is how I used Entourage, which was to really put the Project Center to work. Everything that I would take on, I'd create a new project for, which would then tie in my email, contacts, files, tasks, calendar events, and notes. Everything was neat, organized, and connected.

Mail works differently. The standalone applications (Mail, Address Book, iCal, TextEdit, and Stickies) do everything that Entourage does, but this fragmentation means that there is no easy or built-in way to connect everything. Here's where a third-party add-on comes in: CRM4Mac by ibizzi (<http://www.crm4mac.com/>). I tried several titles that claim that they do what CRM4Mac does, but CRM4Mac blew the others away with its speed and ease of use. You can download a full working demo to use for 30 days, and the cost is about \$50 if you decide that you like it. It's one of the better Mac CRM titles that I've used.

Since I don't necessarily want to pay for software that I already own (after all, I have Entourage), I still need to find some way to make my existing software more like Entourage while spending as little

as possible. I came across two great plug-ins from a company called Indev. The first is MailTags and the second is Mail Act-On.

MailTags allow you to add metadata to any email message — things like keywords, projects, set priorities, due dates, and add notes. Once you tag a message, you can then create a Smart Mailbox based on the MailTag info, as MailTag is integrated with Spotlight. You can combine these metadata searches for a great deal of power. For example, you can create a Smart Mailbox that searches for all the messages for Project XYZZY that need a response in the next three days.

Mail Act-On adds power (as well as keyboard control) to Apple's Rules. It allows you to map specific mail rules or actions to "Act-On" keys. When viewing mail, you can apply the "Act-On" action for a message by making simple keystrokes. I'm a big fan of David Allen's book "Getting Things Done," and use Mail Act-On to quickly move folders from my inbox to my action folders. Now when I receive a message, all I have to do is use my Act-On key. And since you can make rules with MailTags, you can use the two together.

Both titles are DonationWare (which supports future development) and can be found at the Indev web site (<http://www.indev.ca>).

Now that I have Mail acting more like I want, I have to deal with scheduling, tasks, and notes.

I could easily use TextEdit or Stickies to create notes (as well as a number of other note-taking or word processing software titles) but I decided to try something new. I came across WikiNotes and VoodooPad, both of which

are applications that allow linking between documents much like the way a Web Wiki works, except that it is on your desktop. Basically, you are creating your own “web world” of documents. WikiNotes is freeware, VoodooPad is shareware but there is a free version, VoodooPad Lite. Both are built on the idea of a Wiki. (For a description of Wiki within a Wiki: <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wiki>>.)

Just like a web site, my Wiki consist of a “home” page or index and then links from there to other documents, which can be linked to more docs, back to the original page, etc. As you might imagine, the full version of VoodooPad has more features than the others, but they both work great.

For VoodooPad: <http://flyingmeat.com/>

For WikiNotes: <http://members.liwest.at/solar/>

Last comes scheduling and tasks, for which I use iCal. The single biggest drawback for me is that I can't schedule recurring tasks in iCal. The standard response is, “Make it an event and then you can make it repeat.” Well, that just doesn't work for me. I have tasks that don't relate to any specific day or time, and once I'm done, I need them to happen a week or month later. (For example, updating our radio ads.) I don't have any specific day in which to get them updated, but once they are updated, I want to update them again about a month later.

The workaround that I found is web based and free, but requires setting up an account. The web site has the catchy name of “RememberTheMilk” (<http://www.rememberthemilk.com>). It does a nice job of keeping tasks organized

and you can share To Dos and access them from anywhere. You can set reminders to send an email, instant message, or text to your cell phone as a reminder. You can view the data from iCal by subscribing to the calendar that is created (it will add these tasks to your To Do list) or you can view the info by subscribing to its RSS feed. Lastly, you can email tasks using a provided email address, and they will be updated.

You may be wondering why I went through all this trouble, since I have Entourage and it was working well for me. Well, the reason is junk mail. Entourage's Junk mail filter just didn't work. The filter for Entourage is a little different from Mail in that it doesn't learn. It is a set filter that is updated periodically by Microsoft. At first it worked great, but then I had some corruption which required rebuilding my database and it never worked again, even after I reinstalled the software and spent lots of time searching through forums and the Internet looking for solutions. I was hoping the next update would solve the problem, but it never improved. The other big reason was to appease the newsletter gods. Entourage adds all kinds of weird things to a mail message that require extra work to clean up. Often that wasn't enough, and receivers would complain of oddities on their end.

### ***Entourage vs. Mail***

***Entourage:*** Better sorting (or more sorting options, especially in the In Box) and interconnectivity through the Project Center are its best features for me. Junk mail and slow search speed are its weaknesses. Another thing I liked was being able to set the query for new mail

messages differently for different mail accounts.

***Mail:*** Its best attribute is its sheer speed, especially when looking for messages and Smart Mailboxes. This, along with better junk mail filtering, makes me glad that I moved back to Mail. I wish that it had many more features, but I was able to work around things. It is an important application for Apple, so I hope they keep adding features.

In the process of writing this article, I came across this web site, which has plug-ins and add-ons for Mail, iCal, Address Book, and a few others: <http://www.timgaden.com/hawkwings/>.

- Dawn@Smalldog.com

*Small Dog Electronics*



## **Internet**

### **Hands-Free Shooting**

Web site tells you how to set up a hands-free shooting rig for your digital photography! <http://www.macdevcenter.com/pub/a/mac/2005/08/05/photography.html/>

- Victoria Maciulski

*Fat Bits, Conejo Valley MUG*



### **Selective Searching**

**Q:** I have a list of several Web sites I want to search for information or images. Do you know any way that I can limit a search to a list of Web sites?

- David Warkentin

**A:** Google lets you limit searches to a single Web site or a group of Web sites. The trick is to phrase your query correctly. You need to use a combination of “site:the site you want” and the OR variable.

Travel to [www.google.com](http://www.google.com) (or type directly in Safari's Google search field) and enter something like this in the Search field: "grunion site:stanford.edu" (without the quote marks). This limits your search for the noble fish to Stanford University's domain. Or you can enter: "grunion site:stanford.edu OR site:ucsd.edu OR site:pepperdine.edu" (again without the quote marks). Now you and the grunion are really off and running. This query searches the sites of all three universities for information on your piscine pal.

*Chris Breen's Mac 911  
via Mouse Droppings, Corvallis, OR*

### David Pogue's Google Tips

Phrase your question in the form of an answer, "After all, you're not looking for Web pages that ask your question," explains director of technology Craig Silverstein. "You're looking for pages that answer it." So instead of typing, "What is the average rainfall in the Amazon basin?", you might get better results by typing "The average rainfall in the Amazon basin is."

This is an old one, but very important: Put quotes around phrases that must be searched together. If you put quotes around "electric curtains," Google won't waste your time finding one set of Web pages containing the word "electric" and another set containing the word "curtains."

Similarly, put a hyphen right before any word you want screened out. If you're looking up dolphins, for example, you'll have to wade through a million Miami Dolphins pages unless you search for "dolphins -Miami."

**Google is a global White Pages and Yellow Pages.** Search for

"phonebook:home depot norwalk, ct," Google instantly produces the address and phone number of the Norwalk Home Depot. This works with names ("phonebook: robert jones las vegas, NV") as well as businesses. Don't put any space after "phonebook." And in all of the following examples, don't type the quotes I'm showing you here.

#### **Google is a package tracker.**

Type a FedEx or UPS package number (just the digits); when you click "Search," Google offers a link to its tracking information.

**Google is a calculator.** Type in an equation ("32+2345\*3234="), Click "Search" to see the answer.

**Google is a units-of-measurement converter.** Type "teaspoons in a gallon," for example, or "centimeters in a foot." Click "Search" to see the answer.

**Google is a stock ticker.** Type in AAPL or MSFT, for example, to see a link to the current Apple or Microsoft stock price, graphs, financial news, and so on.

**Google is an atlas.** Type in an area code, like 212, to see a MapQuest map of the area.

**Google is Wal-Mart's computer.** Type in a UPC bar code number, such as "036000250015," to see the description of the product you've just "scanned in." (Thanks to the Google Blog, <http://google.blogspot.com>, for this tip.)

**Google is an aviation buff.** Type in a flight number like "United 22" for a link to a map of that flight's progress in the air. Or type in the tail number you see on an airplane for the full registration form for that plane.

**Google is the Department of Motor Vehicles.** Type in a VIN (vehicle identification number, which is etched onto a plate, usually

on the door frame, of every car), like "JH4NA1 157MT001832," to find out the car's year, make, and model.

For hours of rainy-day entertainment, visit <http://labs.google.com>. Here, you'll find links to new, half-finished Google experiments-like Google Voice, in which you call (650) 623-6706, speak the words you want to search for, and then open your browser to view the results. Disclaimer: It wasn't working when I tried it. (Ditto a lot of these experiments.)

Poke around the "Services & Tools" link on the Google.com home page, and you'll find some of the better-known lesser-known Google features, if that makes any sense.

*New York Times.com  
via Connecticut Macintosh Chronicle*



### Indispensable Tips for Word Users

No matter how long you've been using Microsoft Word, you can always learn new techniques to help you work faster and smarter.

Here are some favorite tips and tricks:

**Learn to use Undo:** Make a mistake? Press Command/Z or choose "Undo" from the Edit menu right away. Keep pressing Command/Z to backtrack through and undo the most recent editing changes you've made.

**Save often:** Press Command/S or click the "Save" button on the Standard toolbar. Save your work frequently. You can also instruct Word to automatically save your work periodically. Open the Tools menu, select "Options," click the "Save" tab, and activate the "Save AutoRecovery Info Every" option.

You can specify an interval from 1 to 120 minutes.

**Quickly move around in a document:** To move to the top of a document, press Command/Home. To move to the bottom of a document, press Command/End. To go to the top of the next page, press Command/Page Down. For the top of the preceding page, press Command/Page Up.

**Select a word:** Double-click on it. If a space immediately follows the word you select, the space gets selected, too. Punctuation is ignored.

**Select a sentence:** Hold down the Command key and click anywhere in the sentence.

**Select a paragraph:** Triple-click within the paragraph or move the mouse just past the left margin of the paragraph. When the pointer changes to a right-pointing arrow, double-click to select the entire paragraph.

**Select all the text between the insertion point and ...:** To select all the text between the insertion point and the end of the current line, press Shift/End. To select the text from the insertion point through the end of the current paragraph, press Command/Shift and the down arrow. To select the text from the insertion point to the end of the document, press Command/Shift/End.

**Rename an existing document:** Use “Save As.” When you need to use an existing document as the basis for a new one, don’t overwrite the old document. As soon as you open it, open the File menu and choose “Save As.” Then immediately type a new name or change some part of the old one.

**Grow font, shrink font:** Here are three quick ways to change the size of selected text: Choose

“Font” from the Format menu and specify the desired point size: Click the “Font Size” button on the Formatting toolbar and select an entry from the drop-down list. Or use the “Grow Font” and “Shrink Font” shortcuts, which are the Command key plus the close- and open-square bracket characters ([ ]), respectively.

**Print envelopes:** Want to address your envelopes in the printer? Type an address in a blank document or in a letter. Open the Tools menu and select “Envelopes.” In the Envelopes tab, enter the return address if you want one, and click “Print.”

**Expand your vocabulary:** Word has a built-in thesaurus. Press Shift/F7 or open the Tools menu, select “Language,” and then choose “Thesaurus.” Word will display a list of synonyms for the word you’ve selected or the word closest to the insertion point marker.

**Make friends with the right mouse button:** Don’t be afraid to right-click on a block of text or a table cell. The shortcut menu offers immediate access to some handy formatting options.

**Paste plain text:** When you copy and paste text from a Web page or another document, the text brings its formatting into your document. To get around that behavior, copy the text and place the insertion point marker where you want to insert the copy. Then, open the Edit menu, choose “Paste Special,” and select the “Unformatted Text” option.

**Effortless AutoText:** Save time by inserting AutoText automatically. Type an entry name and press “F3.” Or take advantage of Word’s AutoComplete feature. Just open the Tools menu, select

“AutoCorrect,” click the “AutoText” tab, and turn on the “Show AutoComplete Tip for AutoText and Dates” option. With this feature active, Word will show a ScreenTip after you begin typing an AutoText item. Just press “Enter” and Word will insert the item for you. (This feature works the same way with dates and days of the week.)

**Instant AutoCorrect:** Right-click on a word that’s flagged as misspelled to display the Edit shortcut menu. If Word has a suggested alternative, AutoCorrect will appear on the menu. Choose “AutoCorrect” and then select the correct version of the word from the submenu to create an AutoCorrect entry.

**Marker display:** Work with paragraph markers and tab marks displayed. Simply click the Show/Hide Invisibles (¶) button on the Standard toolbar. Displaying those normally hidden characters helps you avoid inadvertently deleting objects or changing formatting; it also helps you figure out funky alignment and extra white space problems.

**Clear a table:** If you need to delete the contents of all the cells in a table, just select the table and press “Delete” (not “Backspace”).

**Jump quickly between documents:** If you work with a lot of open, overlapping documents, here’s a quick way to cycle between them: Press “Control/F6” to jump from one to the next; Control/Shift/F6 will jump you backward.

*TMUG Insider, Pleasanton, CA*



**Norton Anti-Virus**

**Norton AV, Rest in Peace**

Norton Antivirus for the Mac

lives! Kind of. I still think it's on life support, but the company reversed itself and released a new version 10 that may be compatible with Tiger; the jury is still out.

As to a compelling reason to pay money for this upgrade, [http://www.symantec.com/nav/nav\\_mac/](http://www.symantec.com/nav/nav_mac/) says "Don't jeopardize your valuable data or risk passing infections to colleagues with PCs."

There we have it in a nutshell. There still isn't any credible virus threat on the Mac, but as "good citizens" we should pay Symantec so we don't inadvertently infect PC users? Puhleeze! As far as I'm concerned, if a PC user isn't using anti-virus software and keeping it up-to-date, he or she gets what he or she deserves. Installing, maintaining, and fiddling with anti-virus software is the price you pay for using Windows. Why take away their fun?

Another thing to consider is if a real virus or virus-like threat appears on the Mac platform someday, it will almost certainly be UNIX-based which is something a product like Norton AV will be powerless to defend against. Add to that version 10's almost glacial speed when scanning drives and penchant for interfering with the proper functioning of Adobe software and you've got one more reason to close your wallet and go home.

*MacValley Voice, Northridge, CA*



## Photoshop

### Tip for Magnetic Tools

When using the Magnetic Lasso or Magnetic Pen tool in Photoshop, press the Caps Lock key to see the exact area where the tool is looking for an edge. To change the size of

the area it's using for its calculations, type right or left brackets ( ] or [ ).

~ Ben Willmore

*Design Tools Monthly*

### Photoshop CS2's Red Eye Tool

Photoshop CS2 has a Red Eye removal tool hidden under the Healing Brush tool. To access it, click and hold on the Healing Brush tool. One of the brush alternates that appears is the Red Eye tool.

To use it, click on the red portion of the eye in your photo and adjust the pupil size and darkness in the Options Bar at the top of the Photoshop workspace.

*Design Tools Monthly*

### Targeting vs. Selecting Layers

Targeting and selecting layers in Photoshop CS2 is a very important distinction now that you can Command/click or Shift/click to target multiple layers.

Because of this, you need to pay attention to where you click on the layer. Command/clicking on the layer thumbnail will create a selection around all nontransparent areas on the layer. Command/click on the layer's name to actually target the layer itself.

*Layers Magazine*

### Working with Guides in Photoshop

Hold Option to change the direction of the guide (horizontal/vertical), hold Shift to snap it to the tick marks of your ruler, and hold Command to move guide when using tool other than the Move tool. Hold the Control key after you start to drag something (guide, selection, layer, etc.) to prevent it from snapping to other objects.

*LIMac Forum, Long Island, NY*

### Save JPEGs as PSDs to Preserve Quality

If you start with a JPEG image, perhaps from a digital camera, and alter it, don't save it again as a JPEG; you'll lose image quality every time you re-save an image in JPEG format. Instead, save the altered image as a PSD file and make a JPEG copy if you need to post the image to the Web, for example. In the meantime, you'll have a good copy of your altered image in PSD format for use in other applications, such as for printing photos or using them in a printed brochure.

*Element K Journals  
via LIMac Forum, Long Island, NY*

### Adding New Text Close to Existing Type

Did you ever try to add some new text a little too close to some existing text, only to have the Type tool assume you want to edit the existing text? To avoid this, hold down the Shift key as you click with the Type tool — this will ignore the existing text and create a new Type layer, no matter how close you click to the original text.

*Layers Magazine*

### Reset Misbehaving Photoshop Tools

Sometimes in Photoshop, a tool behaves strangely and you can't figure out why. The easy way out is to reset its options to their defaults by Control/clicking the tool's icon in the far left of the Options Bar. A contextual menu will appear, from which you choose "Reset Tool."

~ Peter Baiter

*Mac Design Magazine  
via Design Tools Monthly*



## Credits & Special Thanks

These Hints and Tips are compiled from a variety of sources including:

### User Group Newsletters:

- *Mouse Droppings*, newsletter of the Corvallis Macintosh User Group in Corvallis, Oregon, one of the oldest and most active user groups in the country. *Mouse Droppings* is the home of Phil Russell, a respected Macintosh writer and the main source of hints and tips published by me over the years, as well as other MUG newsletters throughout the world.
- *ApplePickers*, newsletter of the ApplePickers MUG in Indianapolis, Indiana.
- *AUSOM News*, newsletter of Australia's largest Macintosh User Group, Apple Mac Users' Society of Melbourne, Australia.
- *Connecticut Macintosh Connection*, newsletter of the Connecticut Macintosh Connection in West Hartford, Connecticut.
- *FatBits*, newsletter of CVMUG, the nation's first user group. Camarillo, California
- *The Finder*, newsletter of Mid-Columbia Macintosh User Group in Kennewick, Washington.
- *LIMAC Forum*, newsletter of the Long Island Mac Users Group in Seaford, New York.
- *MacNews*, newsletter of MacGroup-Detroit in Detroit, Michigan.
- *MacValley Voice*, newsletter of the MacValley User Group in the Northridge, California.
- *Mouse Tales*, newsletter of the North Coast Mac Users Group in Cleveland, Ohio.
- *TMUG Insider*, newsletter of the Tri-Valley Macintosh Users Group in Pleasanton, California.

### Websites:

- Small Dog Electronics, an Apple Specialist and resellers of Apple Macintosh computers, peripherals, and software. [www.smalldog.com](http://www.smalldog.com).
- [www.MugCenter.com](http://www.MugCenter.com) — The Mac User Group Resource Site.

### Publications:

- *The Design Authority*, "your best source for ideas, techniques and inspiration." Design tips and shortcuts for print and Web. Published by Element K Journals. Check out their website for subscriptions to many concise, easy-to-read monthly journals for a variety of topics. [www.elementkjournals.com](http://www.elementkjournals.com)
- Jay J. Nelson's *Design Tools Monthly* — An executive summary of graphic design news which includes Mac news and rumors, new software and hardware announcements, upcoming seminars and shows, interesting websites, and other valuable information. You may request a free sample copy of this monthly newsletter by going to [www.design-tools.com](http://www.design-tools.com) or calling 303.543.8400.
- *Layers Magazine* (formerly known as *Mac Design Magazine*) is the top graphic design magazine published today. *Layers Magazine* is edited by Scott Kelby, the President of the National Association of Photoshop Professionals, and also editor of *Photoshop User*, the NAPP's excellent newsletter.
- *MacAddict Magazine*. "A better machine. A better magazine." Every issue of *MacAddict* is packed with in-depth how-to articles, fact-filled features, and expert reviews, plus a monthly CD of hot product demos, tutorials, freeware, and video how-to stories and interviews. [www.macaddict.com](http://www.macaddict.com)
- The *macHome Journal*, the ultimate magazine for the Macintosh consumer, offering practical advice for everyone. *macHome Journal* offers excellent how-to articles and advice on purchases, and Hot Tips on line. [www.machome.com](http://www.machome.com).
- *Macworld Magazine*. The ultimate resource for Mac users. Each issue is packed with practical how-tos, in-depth features, the latest troubleshooting tips and tricks, industry news, future trends, and is home of Chris Breen's Mac 911 columns. [www.macworld.com](http://www.macworld.com).
- *The New York Times*, New York City, New York.

If you are not a member of a Macintosh User Group, I highly recommend that you find one in your area and join. User groups are the greatest source of information and help available to all Mac users — from novices to experts. Find one in your area at [apple.com/usergroups/find](http://apple.com/usergroups/find).