

OS X
MOUNTAIN LION

the beginner's guide

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a **Make Tech Easier** production



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Introduction



So you just got a brand new Mac with Mac OS X Mountain Lion installed, or maybe you've just upgraded from OS X Lion. Now what? You have this brand new operating system that looks intimidating, overwhelming and confusing! You think to yourself, or maybe even post on Twitter or Facebook, "How the heck do I use this thing?"

Have no fear! I'm here to help, and honestly, Mountain Lion is not as bad as you may think. Sure it will take some getting used to, but after a couple of weeks you'll be a Mountain Lion pro – using gestures, keyboard shortcuts, cool Mac terminology and awesome Mac apps.

OS X Mountain Lion is the ninth major release of OS X (formerly Mac OS X). It's an operating system for Mac computers that was released on July 25, 2012. The latest release on September 19, 2012 added a few extra features, making OS X Mountain Lion even better.

So how is Mountain Lion different? OS X Mountain Lion marks the beginning of the merge between iOS (Apple's mobile operating system) and OS X, hence the reason why many of the new features and apps in this operating system come straight from iOS.

Here are some of the major changes:

1. iChat was replaced with Messages and includes support for iMessage, which is a big part of iOS
2. Essential Apps were added from iOS: Notes, Reminders, Game Center
3. The Notification Center, as well as Twitter and Facebook integration, were all introduced to the desktop – yet, all notable features of iOS
4. MobileMe was dropped and replaced by iCloud
5. RSS support in Mail and Safari was removed; check out the Recommended Apps section for an awesome solution to this
6. The Software Update service now works from the Mac App Store instead of working independently

System Requirements: 2 GB of Ram, 8 GB of available hard disk or solid state storage, OS X 10.6.8 or later; and one of the following models:

iMac from mid-2007 or later
a MacBook from late 2008 or later
a MacBook Pro from mid-2007 or later
a MacBook Air from late 2008 or later
a Mac Mini from early 2009 or later
a Mac Pro from early 2008 or later
Xserve from early 2009 or later.

What will this guide cover and who is it for?

This eBook is geared toward beginners - those new to OS X Mountain Lion. First, we'll go over how to set up your Mac and then we'll go over the basic features, keyboard shortcuts, and gestures.

Next, we'll go over the essential apps that come preinstalled on OS X Mountain Lion and their functionalities. You'll also learn how to set up and use many important features like social integration, iCloud, accessibility, dictation, power nap, and more.

Finally, we'll go over some tips and applications that will help you to get the most out of Mountain Lion. Even though it's an awesome operating system, there are still a few things missing or that can be improved on. The apps that I'll share will help to fill that void.

Without further ado, let's begin our journey.

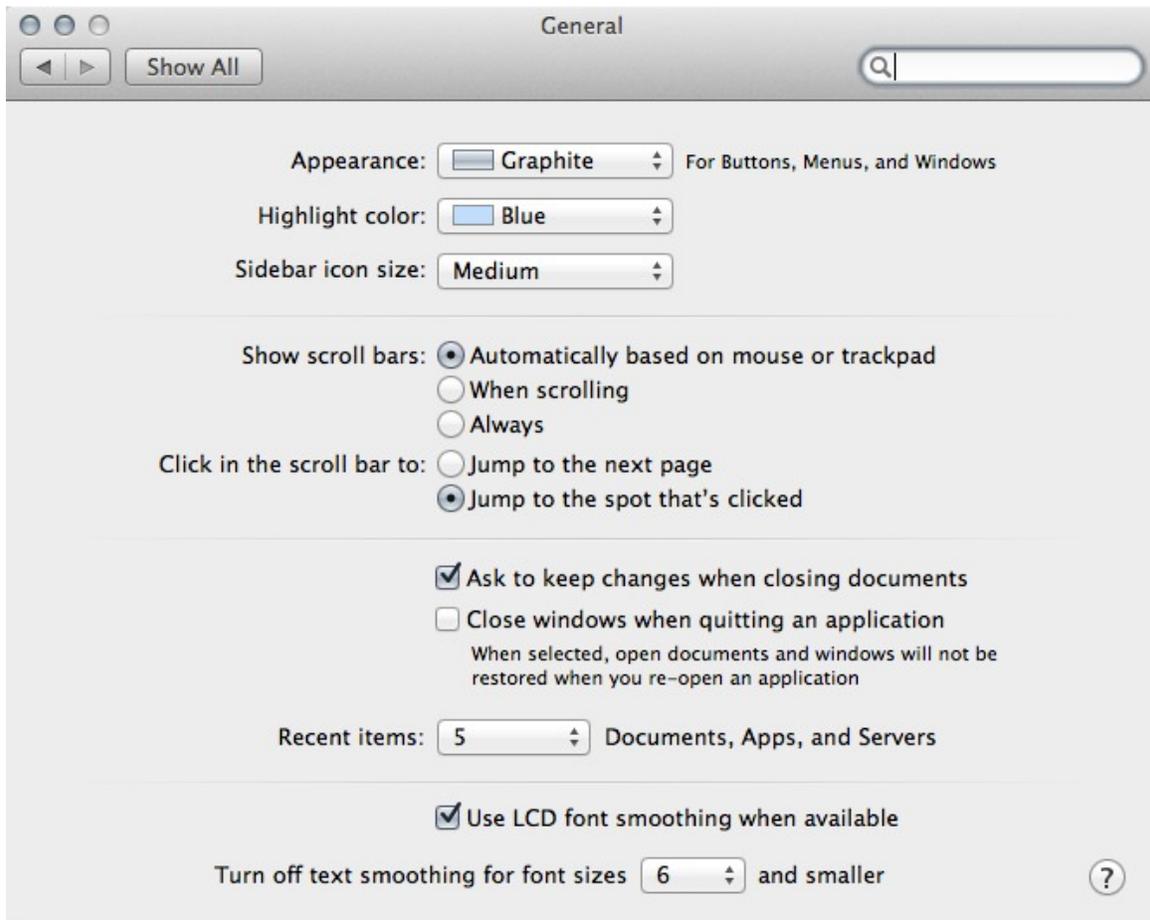
Getting Started



Setting up your Mac

The best way to set up your Mac is to **go through the System Preferences application**, since this is where you'll find most of the customization options. To access System Preferences, click the Apple in the top left corner of the screen and scroll down to System Preferences.

Each of the icons that you'll see on the System Preferences window represents a Preference Pane. You should go through each pane and customize the features for each one as desired. Here are a few important panes and features you won't want to miss.



1. **General Pane** - customize the appearance of your buttons, menus, and windows; set the functionality for your scroll bars; choose how many recent items to show in the recent items menu (Apple -> Recent Items); enable font smoothing
2. **Desktop & Screen Saver Pane** - add a desktop wallpaper or choose a preinstalled wallpaper; make your menu bar translucent; choose and customize your screen saver
3. **Dock** - change the size of your dock; enable magnification; change the position of the dock (left, bottom, right), choose a window effect; customize the functionality of your application windows
4. **Mission Control** - set the dashboard as a space; choose how to arrange your spaces; enable window grouping by application; set the keyboard and mouse shortcuts associated with Mission Control, application windows, desktop, and dashboard
5. **Spotlight** - choose the categories to display when using Spotlight search; customize the keyboard shortcuts associated with the Spotlight menu and Spotlight window
6. **Displays** - change the resolution, brightness, and color settings for your screen or monitor

7. **Energy Saver** - choose when to put your display and computer to sleep; schedule your computer to automatically start up, wake up, and/or sleep on a specific day/time
8. **Keyboard** - customize the speed of your keys; adjust the brightness of your keyboard; customize the keyboard shortcuts for important features and apps like Launchpad, Dock, Mission Control, Screen Shots, Spotlight, and more
9. **Trackpad** - customize the gestures used to open apps and use features like Notification Center, App Expose, Launchpad, zooming in and out, rotating, clicking and secondary clicking, looking up words in the dictionary, and more
10. **Sound** - set your alert volume and output volume; set your output and input devices and customize their balance and volume levels
11. **Users & Groups** - set your name; change your Apple ID; enable parental controls; enable/disable login items; add or remove user accounts
12. **Date & Time** - set the current date and time; change your time zone; customize the format of the date and time in your menu bar; enable time announcement - your Mac state the time on the hour, half hour or quarter hour

Although your Mac will automatically check for system updates, when first getting started you'll want to check manually to be sure everything is up-to-date before you begin exploring your new OS. From the Apple menu, select Software Update. The Mac App Store will open and scan your system to see if there are any updates needed. If there are updates, just click on the Update button to download and install.

Getting Around Your Mac

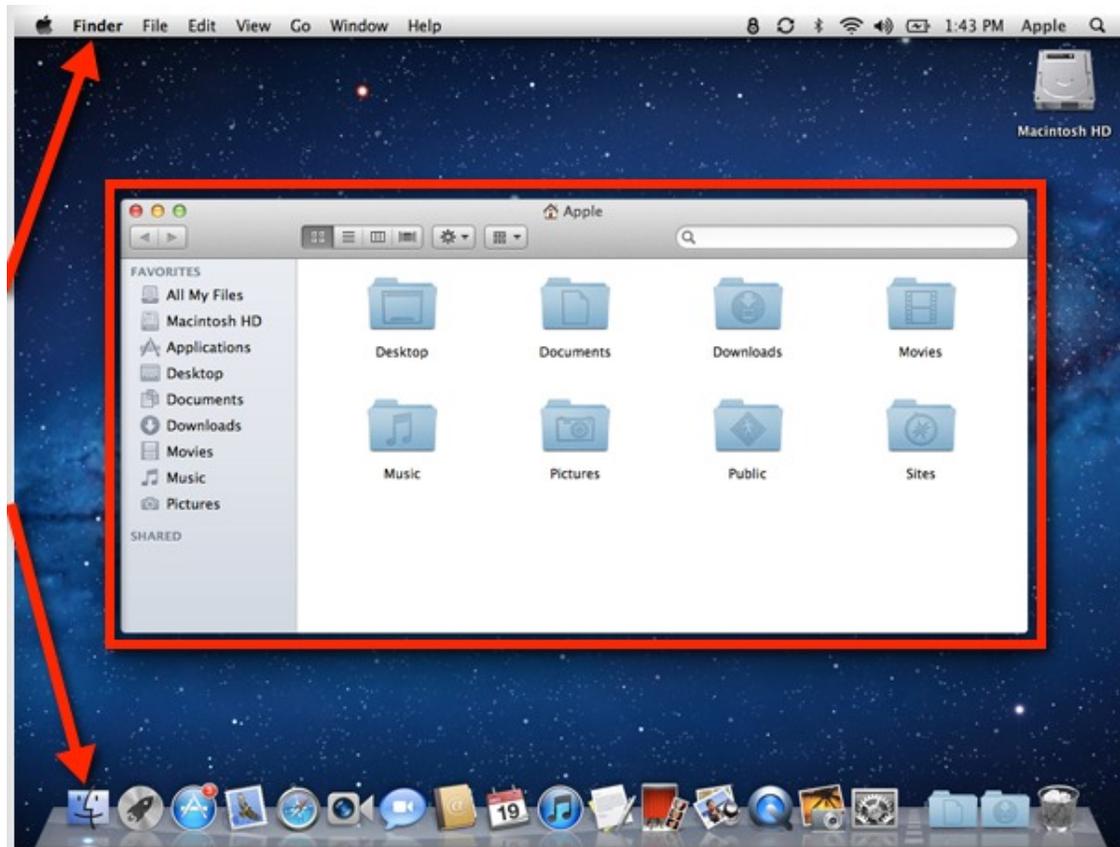


The Mac Interface

For those that are completely new to the Mac, I want to go over a few of the basics such as the interface and pertinent features.

Finder

The Finder is the *only* app on your Mac that remains **open at all times**. It can't be closed out; it can only be restarted. Finder serves as a file and folder manager, much like Windows Explorer on a Windows PC. Just about anything that you'll need to access on your Mac can be done through the Finder such as AirDrop (for sharing files between Macs), the desktop, applications, documents, downloads, your hard drives and more.



Finder can be used to organize your files and folders, search through your computer, access flash drives and DVDs, and so on. To open the Finder app, click on the first icon on the Dock or just click on the desktop (away from any app you're using) and you'll automatically be in the Finder.

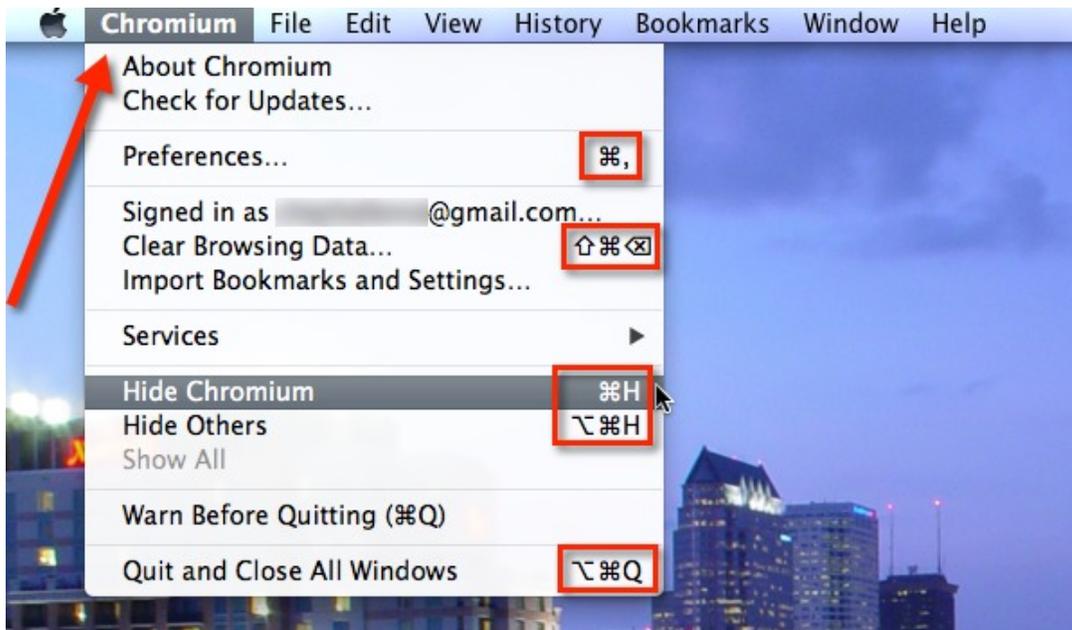
Menu Bar

The menu bar is a very important part of your desktop; it's that skinny little bar that you see running along the top of your screen. The Apple menu (where you see the Apple logo) is always the first item that will appear on it. From the menu bar, you can:

1. Access information about your Mac, like OS X version, processor and memory info, and more
2. Check for software updates
3. Go to System Preferences
4. View recent items that you've opened and recent apps you've used

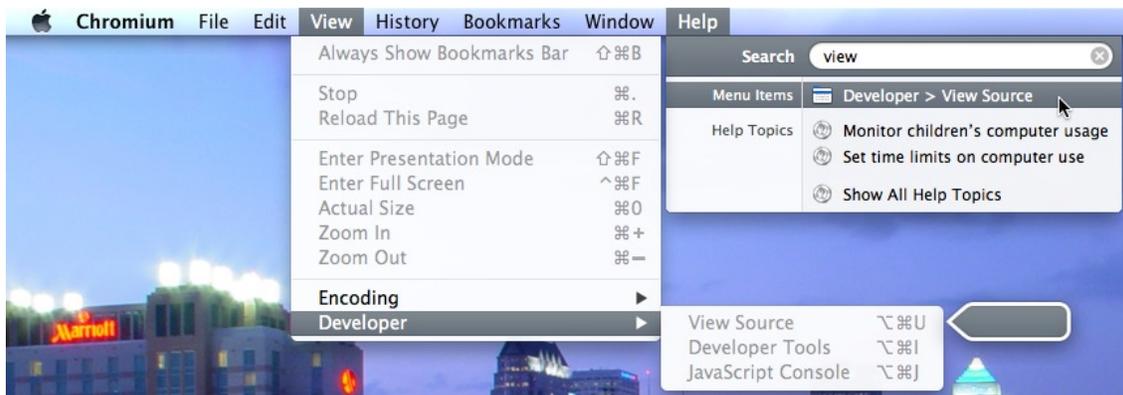
5. Force quit apps that have stopped responding
6. Put your computer to sleep, restart, shut down or log out

Next comes the Application menu section of the menu bar. Every application has its own set of menus, so this area will change for each app that you use. The name of the application you're using will always appear first, even if it's Finder, followed by other menus like File, Edit, View, Window, and Help. The application's name also serves as a menu and you'll usually find the Options or Preferences menu for an app within it.



When you start using a new app, it's a good idea to look through each menu just to get a feel for where everything is. Many menu items have keyboard shortcuts which you'll see displayed to the far right of the menu item. **Make note of the menu options that you use the most and try to learn the keyboard shortcuts for them** - it will save you a lot of time and boost productivity.

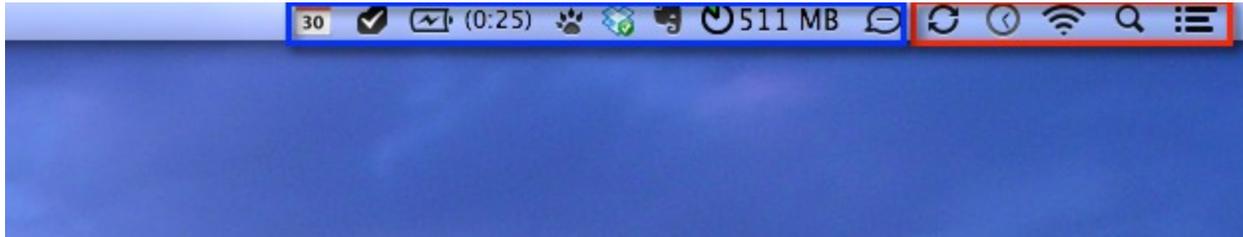
I also want to point out the importance of the Help menu, which is included with almost all apps. There's a search bar within the Help menu that you can use to type a word or phrase. As you type, you'll see results displayed below it. Many times if you don't know where a menu option is, you can search for it in the Search bar.



When you scroll down to a search result within the "Menu Items" section, you'll often see an automatic visual cue showing you the menu in which the item is located. Do you see that menu pictured above with the gray

arrow to the right of the "View Source" menu item? That menu and arrow automatically popped up once I scrolled down to the "Developer > View Source" menu item in the search bar.

Lastly, on the right side of the menu bar, you'll see the menu bar extras, status menu, Spotlight icon and Notification Center icon. The status menu (outlined in red below) shows you important things like: the date and time, Wi-Fi signal, Bluetooth availability, and volume controls. You can customize what icons to show here in System Preferences. You can also quickly remove an icon by **clicking on it, holding down the Command key and then dragging it off of the bar**. Just like that, it will be removed from the menu bar.



As you install and use other apps, you'll get a lot of extra menu bar icons (outlined in blue above). Many apps will add their own menu bar icon; sometimes an app may even give you the option to hide the menu bar icon.

The Spotlight icon (magnifying glass) is the second to last icon and will bring up a search bar, which allows you to search through your entire computer - much like the search bar in Finder, but with more options and abilities.

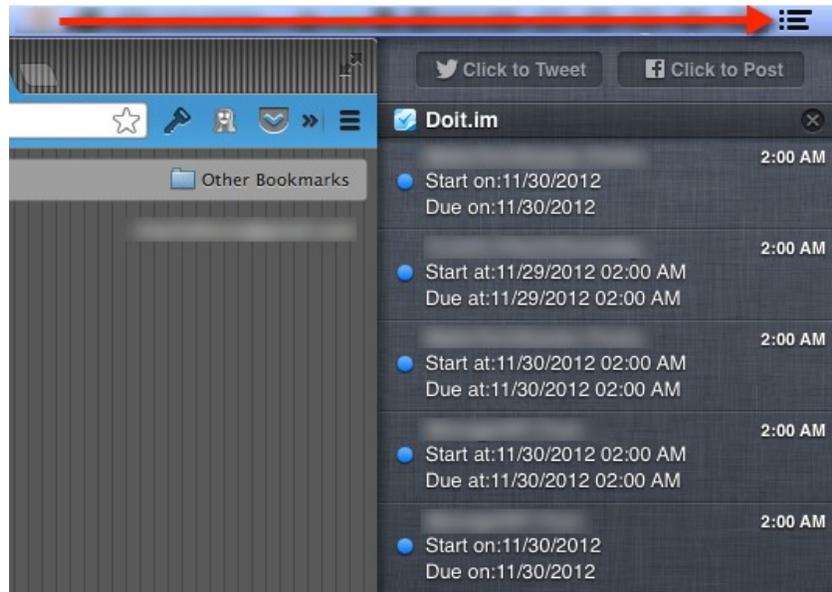
The Notification Center icon, which is last on the menu bar, will be discussed next.

Notification Center

You'll see the Notification Center mentioned many times throughout this eBook; let's learn more about it. If you're familiar with iOS, you probably know that the Notification Center was first introduced to Apple's mobile devices with iOS 5.

The Notification Center is the easiest way to keep up with everything happening on your Mac. All of your notifications from apps like Calendar, Mail, Messages, Mac App Store, Game Center, and more are all kept in the Notification Center.

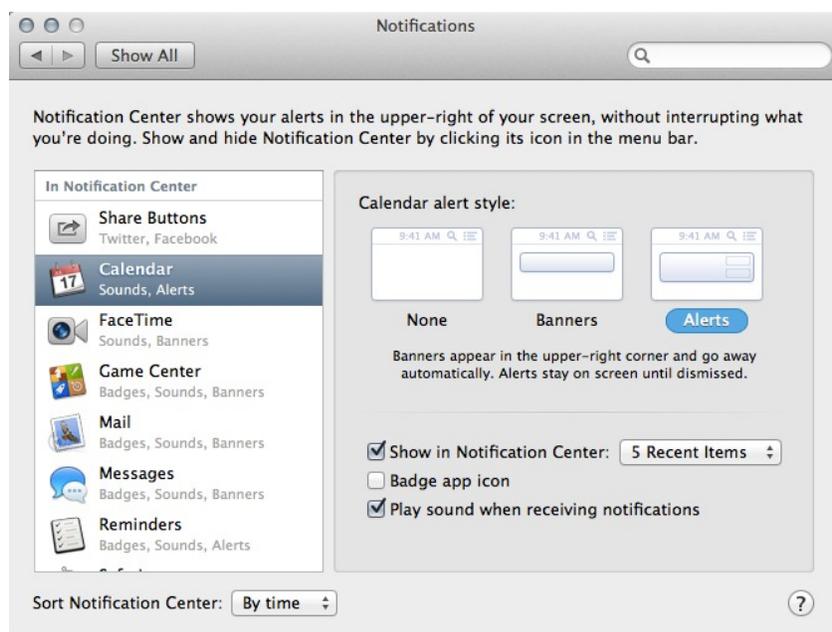
Before Mountain Lion, you had to use an app called Growl to receive desktop notifications and alerts on your Mac. It was the easiest way to keep up with your apps until the Notification Center was introduced. Unlike Growl, the Notification Center keeps your notifications visible until you remove them. This way you never miss a thing. If you step away from your computer, you can just open up the Notification Center to see what you've missed.



To access the Notification Center, you can use the icon in the upper right corner of the screen, use a keyboard shortcut, or use a gesture on your trackpad (**two finger swipe inward from the right edge**). To hide it, just swipe outwards, click on the icon, or click anywhere else on the screen (outside of the Notification Center).

There are two types of alert styles that you can receive for each app: banners and alerts. Alerts appear in the upper-right corner of your screen and stay there until you close them out - by clicking on "close" or **hovering your mouse over the notification and two finger swiping to the right**. On the other hand, banners appear in the upper-right corner and disappear after 5 seconds. You can click on the banner to go directly to the app and close them sooner by **hovering on them and two finger swiping to the right**.

You can customize each app's alert style via the Notifications settings, which is accessible from System Preferences. Alternately, you can click on the one and only icon all the way in the bottom right corner of the Notification Center.



You can add apps to the Dock by simply dragging and dropping their icon right onto the Dock. You can also rearrange the icons on your Dock via drag-and-drop. To remove an icon from the Dock, just drag it off and in a quick “poof” (animation included) it will be gone. All of your applications live on the left side of the Dock (or top, depending on the orientation of the dock), while Stacks and minimized windows live on the right side; they’re separated by an almost invisible vertical line (see screenshot above).

Stacks are Dock items that give you fast access to a folder of items, e.g. documents, applications, and downloads. There are different types of stacks that you can use, and each one will display that particular folder’s content in a unique way. Below is a screenshot showcasing the Grid Stack.



If you have an application open and you want it to remain on your Dock, you can right-click on its icon, go to Options and then select “Keep in Dock.” You’ll also find that right-clicking on an icon in the Dock will often bring up other options, depending on the application. For instance, from the Messages app you can set your online status, start a new message, and see who your last two messages were from.

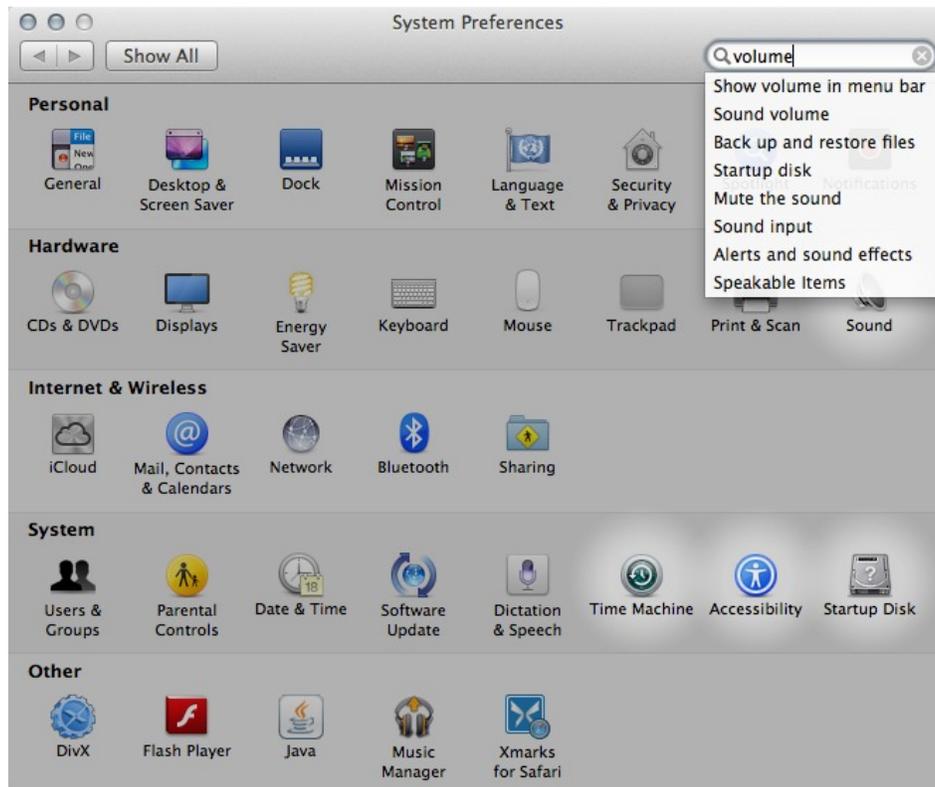
Some applications' icons may have a number displayed at the top right corner; this number lets you know how many new items you have for that particular application. For instance, the Mail app will display how many unread messages you have, while the Messages app lets you know how many unread IM messages you have.

You'll also find that many productivity apps (like iCal, Reminders and other task management apps) show you the number of events or tasks that you have for the current day.

System Preferences

The System Preferences application is extremely important; you'll find that it's used a lot - especially when customizing features and applications on your Mac. System Preferences is like a control room for your Mac and is much like the Control Panel on a Windows PC. You'll really want to familiarize yourself with all of the different preference panes that it contains.

The search bar will also come in handy because as you type, the window will automatically highlight the related pane (see screenshot below).



To access System Preferences, you can search for it using Spotlight or go to the Apple Menu and select System Preferences. Mountain Lion ships with the System Preferences application already installed in your Dock. If you haven't removed it, you can also access System Preferences by clicking the app icon in the Dock.

Mission Control

The Mission Control icon should be the third icon on your dock (unless you've moved it); it has three windows pictured on it. If you have a trackpad, you can also **swipe up with three fingers** to open Mission Control. If you have a Magic Mouse, you can double tap with two fingers. On your keyboard, you can even use the shortcut **F3** or **fn+F9**.

Mission Control is great because it gives you a bird's-eye view of everything that's happening on your Mac like: open windows and apps, the desktops you have open, and the dashboard.

Many Mac apps now support full screen viewing; you can view any app in full screen view by clicking on the double-headed arrow in the top right corner of the app. The window will then enlarge, fill up the entire screen, and slide over to the right. You'll no longer be able to see the menu bar or dock, but you can move the mouse cursor to the top or bottom of the screen to make them reappear.

Full screen apps automatically create their own space (also known as a desktop); you can access and switch between spaces using Mission Control. If you have a trackpad, you can use a **three finger swipe to the left and right** to switch between desktops as well.

You can also open up new spaces in Mission Control by moving your mouse towards the upper right corner. A small little tab will pop out from the right side and you can click on that to open a new space.



Spaces are very cool because it's like having a bunch of different desktop monitors connected to your Mac. Plus, you can use any apps that you'd like on each space. For instance, you may want to create a work space, school space, planning space (for a party, wedding or other special event), or even a social media monitoring space. You can also move apps from one space to another within Mission Control via drag-and-drop.

Launchpad

The Launchpad is a slick application launcher for your Mac much like the Dock (as we mentioned above), but with its own interface. The Launchpad icon should be the second icon on your dock between the Finder and Mission Control icons (unless you moved it) - it looks like a space shuttle. You can also use a gesture on your trackpad (**thumb and three finger pinch inward**) or the keyboard shortcut **F4** to open it up.



The Launchpad is like having an iPad on your Mac because the interface is almost identical. You'll see icons for all of the apps that you've purchased and installed from the Mac App Store. You can move them around and organize them into folders via drag-and-drop - just like in iOS.

To move your apps around, click and hold on any icon until they all begin to wiggle and then you will be able to drag-and-drop them to different areas or pages. By dragging one icon onto another, you can create folders and name those folders as you'd like - a great way to keep them organized.



While the app icons are still wiggling, you'll notice that some have a little "x" on the top left corner of them; clicking on the "x" will remove the app. Don't worry, the removal is not permanent; as long as the app was purchased through the Mac App Store, it can be reinstalled in the same manner.

If an app doesn't have an "x," that means that it was installed outside of the Mac App Store, so you won't be able to remove it using the Launchpad; you'll have to uninstall it manually. We'll discuss installing and uninstalling apps in more detail below.

I also want to point out that with Mountain Lion, Launchpad received a new feature: search.



It's pretty simple, once you open the Launchpad, just begin typing the name of the app you're looking for and Launchpad will do the rest. With this there will be no more looking back and forth between pages for an app – searching is so much quicker.

Mastering the Keyboard and Trackpad



Keyboard Shortcuts

Remember that **each app has its own set of keyboard shortcuts**. For example, "command+R" may start recording in GarageBand, start a new note in the Notes app, and close out a window in your browser. It will take some time learning the keyboard shortcuts for each app that you use.

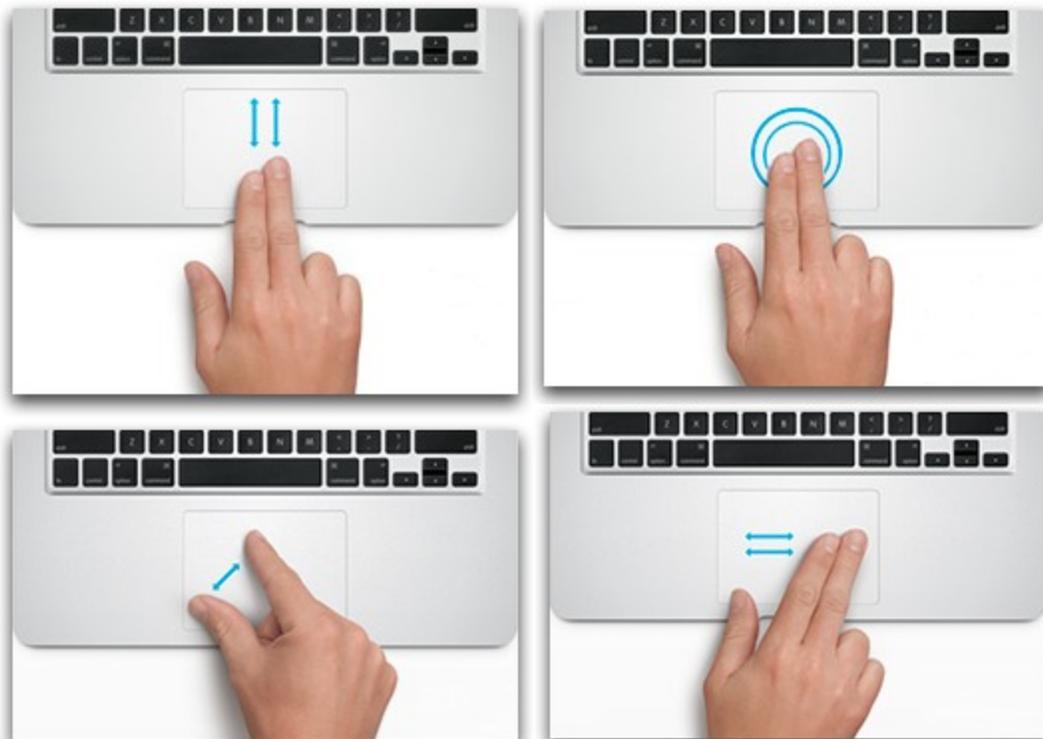
Many apps also give you the option to customize your own keyboard shortcuts. Here's a little **cheat sheet of the modifier keys**. Most of the time at least one of these modifiers will be included in a keyboard shortcut, so you'll need to know what they are.

- ⌘ (Command key) - On some Apple keyboards, this key also has an Apple (🍏) logo
- ⌃ (Control key)
- ⌥ (Option key) - "Alt" may also appear on this key
- ⇧ (Shift key)
- ⌕ (Caps Lock) - Toggles Caps Lock on or off
- Fn (Function key)

Gestures/Multitouch

Do you have a trackpad on your Macbook Pro or Macbook Air? Do you have a Magic Trackpad or Magic Mouse connected to your Mac desktop? If so, you're in luck because you get the pleasure of using multi-touch gestures.

OS X Mountain Lion supports numerous multi-touch gestures, which allow you to use important features and interact with your apps quickly. To control what's on your screen and to navigate through applications, you can tap, scroll, pinch and swipe. The gestures you use are up to you as they can be customized extensively in System Preferences.



Some of the top gestures that you may use include:

1. **Scrolling** - use two fingers to swipe in the direction that you want the page content to move (up or down); use one finger to scroll on the Magic Mouse
2. **Zooming** - you can set your trackpad to zoom via a double-tap with two fingers or to use pinch-to-zoom (pinch with your thumb and index finger); use one finger to double-tap and zoom on the Magic Mouse
3. **Navigating** - use two fingers to swipe in the direction that you want the pages to move (next or previous) - swipe left to right or right to left; use one finger to navigate pages on the Magic Mouse
4. **Switching Between Spaces** - use three fingers and swipe to the right or left to move between spaces and full screen apps; use two fingers on the Magic Mouse

Apps

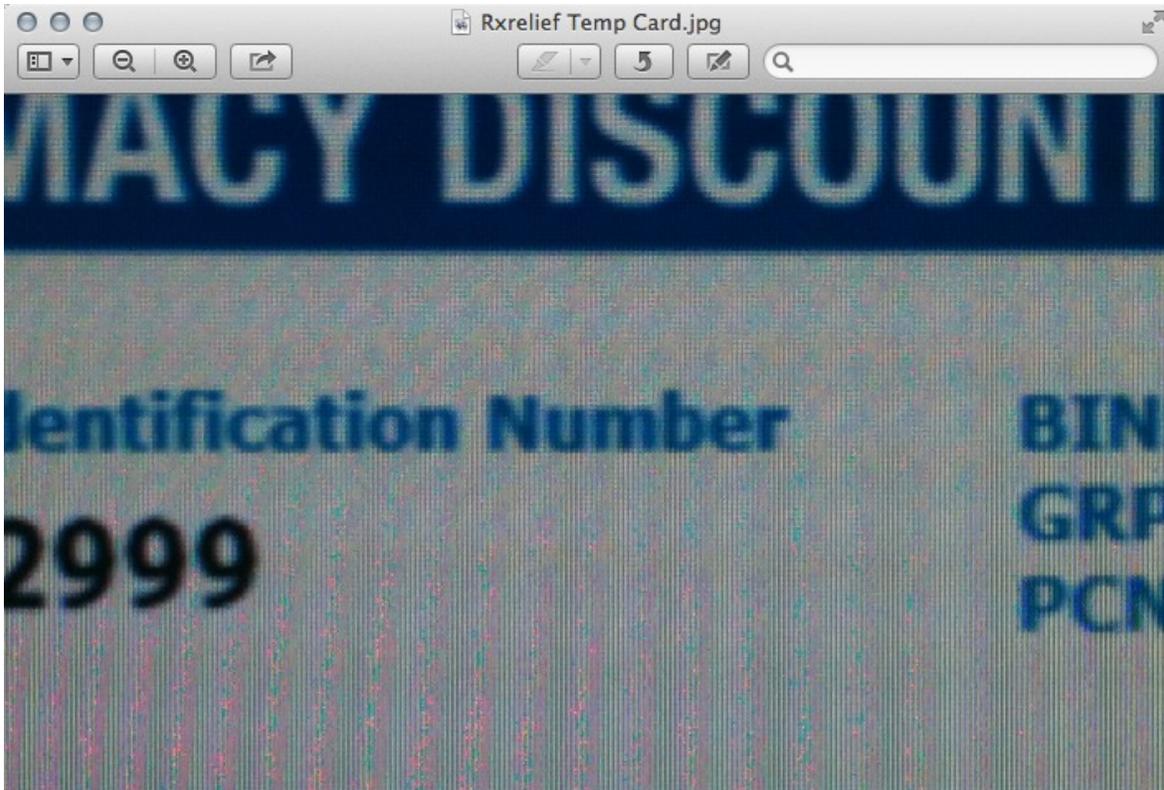


Useful Preinstalled Apps

We're going to briefly go through some of the most useful preinstalled apps in Mountain Lion.

Preview

Preview is the default application that your Mac will use to open image files like JPEGs, PNGs, and TIFFs. Preview has some basic editing capabilities like resizing, rotating, cropping, adjusting the colors, and annotating; most of these features are accessible from the Tools menu in Preview. You can also zoom in and out, magnify specific areas of an image, view images in a slideshow, and convert your images to another file format.



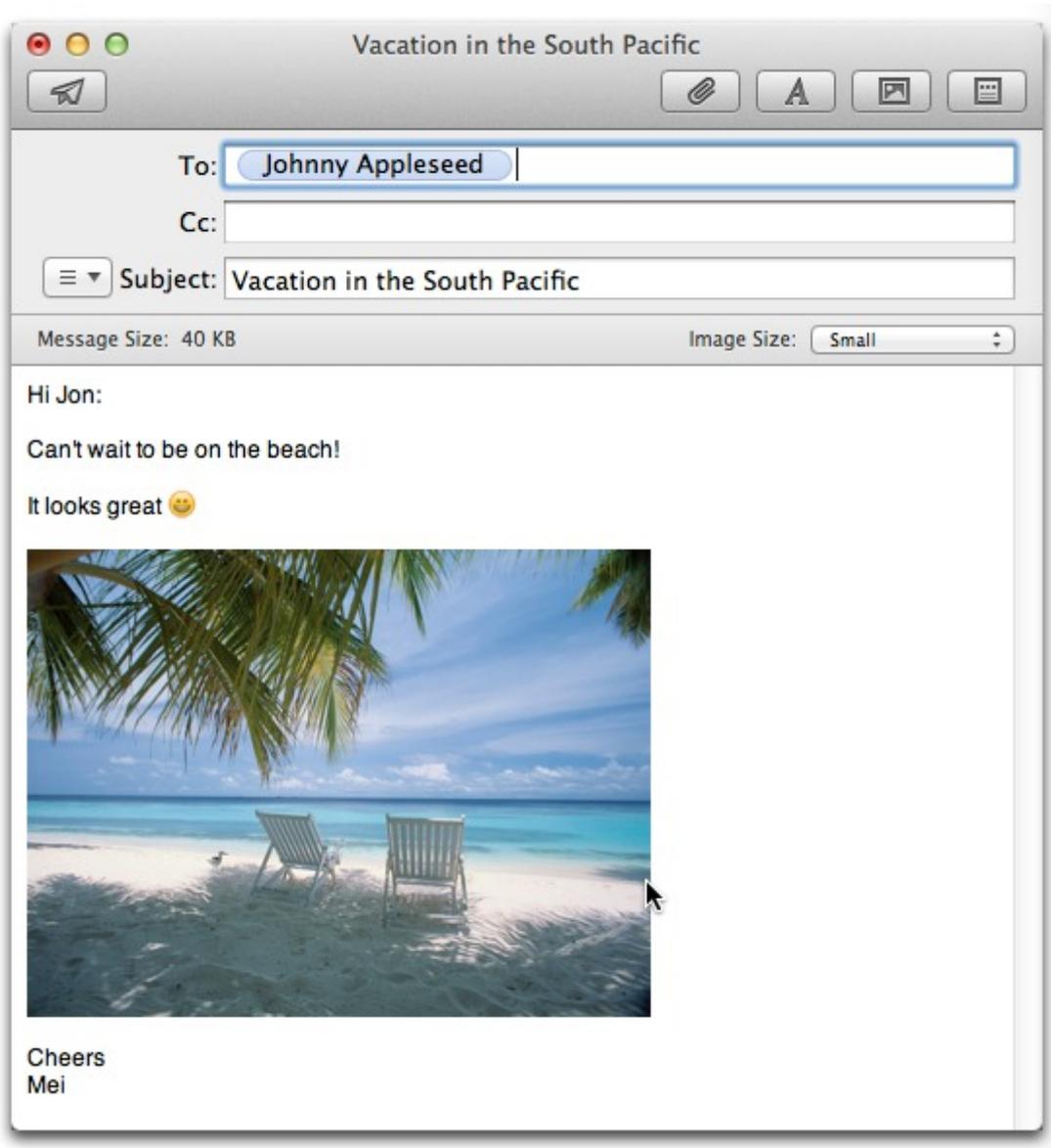
It can also be used to open PDF files. Some basic features are supported like bookmarking, adding notes, highlighting, copying text, adding signatures, and filling out forms. Preview supports full screen view, which will give you a distraction-free environment for viewing images or reading PDF files.

You can open Preview by searching via Spotlight or accessing it from the Applications menu. If you've added Preview to the Dock, you can simply drag-and-drop a file onto its icon (this functionality works for many applications on the Mac) to automatically open up the file.

Mail

You've probably heard of desktop email programs like Microsoft Outlook and Mozilla Thunderbird. Apple's desktop email program is simply called Mail. The interface is a lot simpler and cleaner than the above-mentioned programs, but it works pretty much in the same manner.

You can add as many email accounts as you'd like from services like Gmail, Yahoo, and Hotmail. You'll need to know your email service provider's server settings to set it up. You can set up these accounts by going to the File Menu within the mail app and clicking on "Add Account ..."

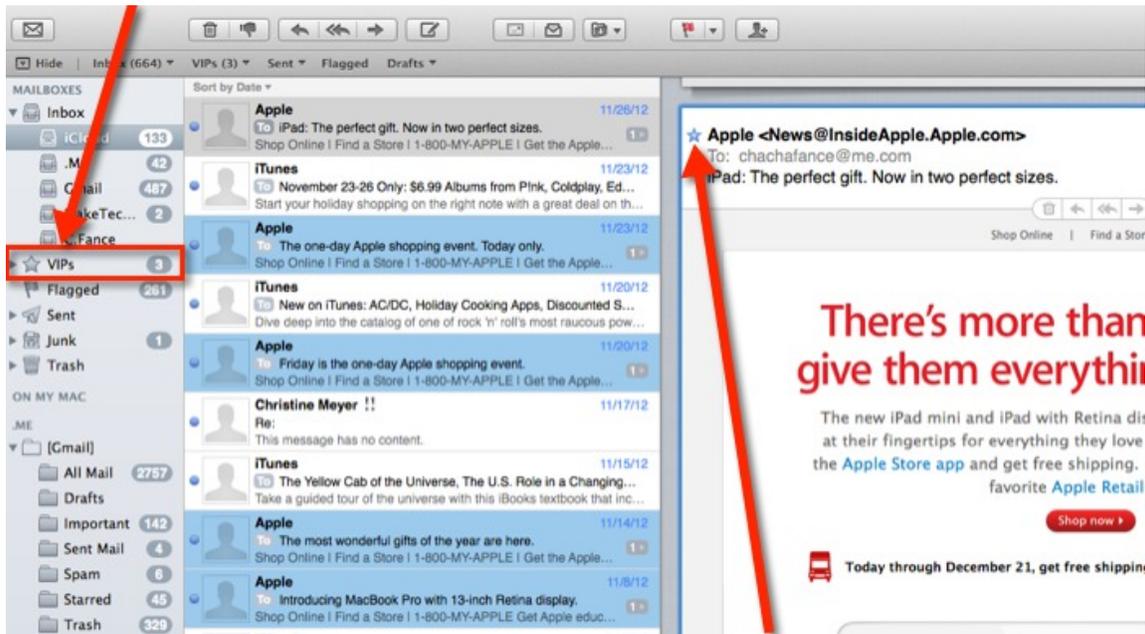


Composing a message is pretty straightforward: just click on the compose button, add a recipient and subject, enter your text, attach images or other files if needed, and send. Mail also supports stationery, and you can even create your own.

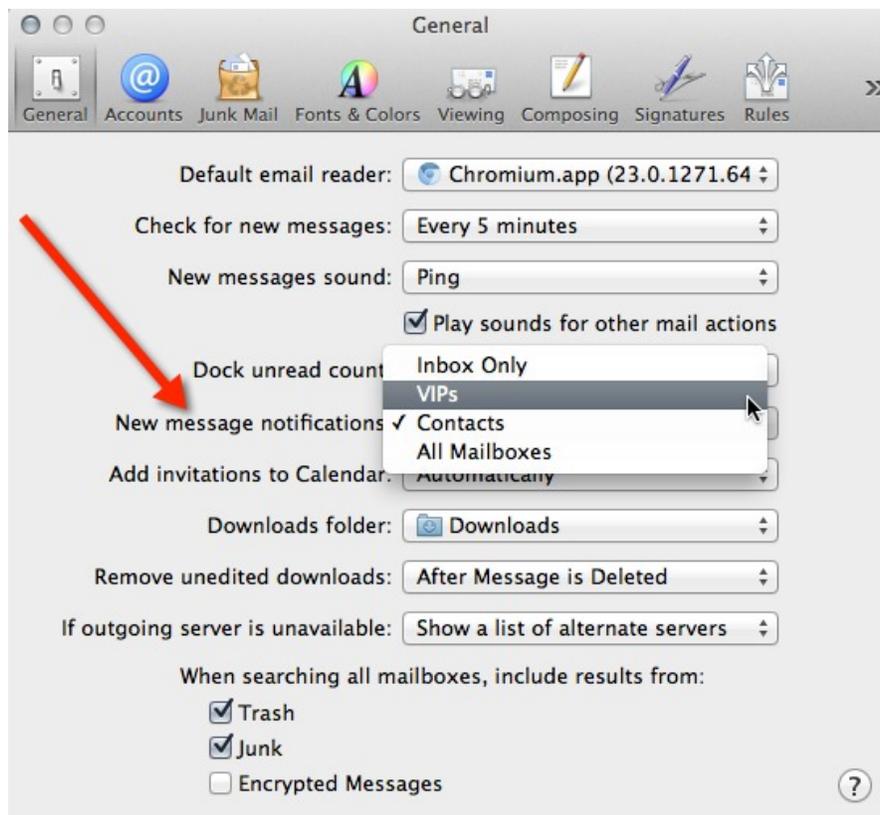
You'll want to learn the keyboard shortcuts for your most-used commands, as it will really help to boost your productivity when checking your email. For instance, Command+S will automatically save any message (that you're composing) to your drafts.

If you are a fan of email filters, you'll be happy to know that Mail does support them; they're called Rules. You can create Mail Rules to automatically move or copy a message matching that rule to a specific Mailbox or folder within a Mailbox. Another feature called Smart Mailboxes allows you to dynamically organize your messages based on a set of Rules that you create.

A new feature that was added to Mail in Mountain Lion is VIPs. If you use Mail app as your default email client, this is a must-use feature. This allows you to have your very own list of **Very Important People** right under your Inbox. It's actually a Smart Mailbox that will allow you to access email messages from all of your VIPs in one place. You'll **never miss an important message again!**



To add someone as a VIP, open a message from them and click on the star to the left of their name. This will automatically add them as a VIP.



If you want to receive notifications in Notification Center for new emails from VIPs only, you can enable this by going to the Mail menu and then to Preferences. Under general, you'll see a section with the title "new message notifications." Choose VIPs from the drop-down menu.

Dashboard Widgets

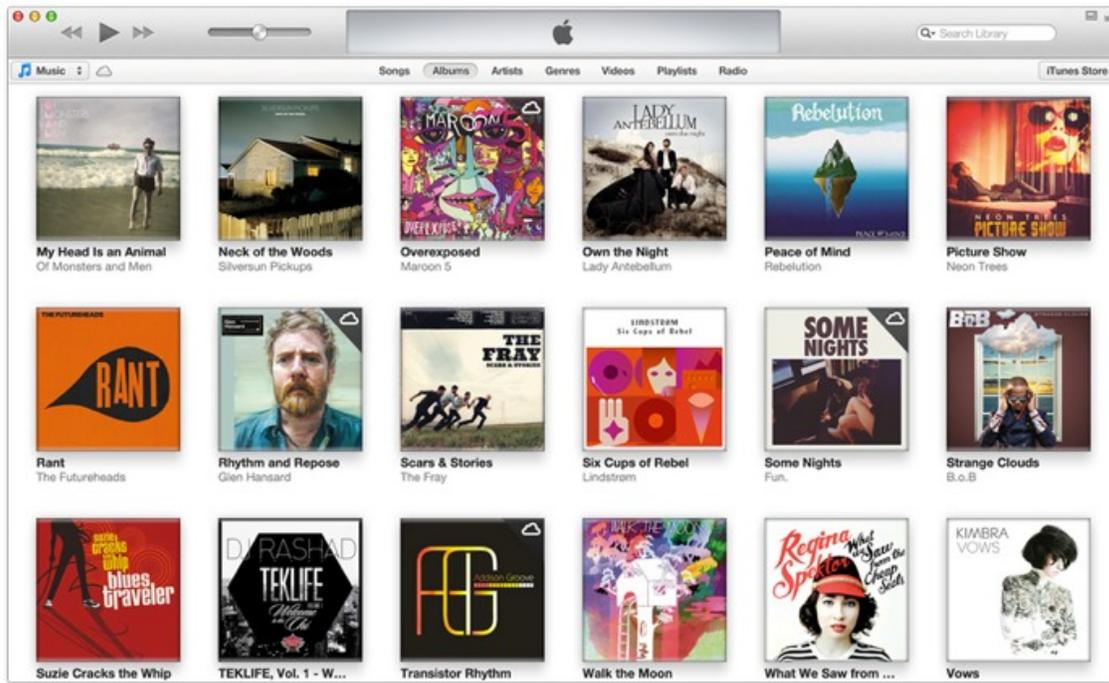
The dashboard is a special area of your Mac that houses dashboard widgets; there are hundreds to choose from and they are extremely easy to install - just download and install like you would a regular application.



Many people do not use the dashboard, but it can really come in handy. Just check out a few of my favorite dashboard widgets. Since these widgets do not use much memory on your computer, it's really smart to use them to keep up with important data or to use quick features like sharing files on Dropbox or setting up timers on your Mac.

iTunes

I'm sure you've heard of iTunes, the Mac's one-stop-shop for all types of digital media. Most people use it just to listen to and purchase music, but you can also purchase and rent movies and TV shows, listen to and even publish your own podcasts, read and publish your own books, and purchase apps for your iPhone, iPod Touch, or iPad.



iTunes has its own store for which you'll need an Apple ID. Your Apple ID is your personal identity for your digital content purchased through iTunes. It allows you to sync your content between Macs - just sign into your Apple ID on any Mac to access your content.

You don't have to purchase all of your content from iTunes in order to view it in iTunes. You can actually import any music or videos from your computer into iTunes so that you can have everything together and organized in a single application.

Lastly, when you sync content between your Apple mobile device and your Mac, you'll use iTunes and iCloud. We'll discuss this more below in the dedicated iCloud section.

Safari

Safari is the default and only Web browser that comes with any Mac. Safari is actually one of the most advanced browsers that you'll ever use! It features its own Tab View feature, which is an extremely intuitive way of browsing through your open tabs.



Safari also has built-in social sharing, fast performance, a Do Not Track feature for better privacy, an offline reading list, a smart search field that integrates with the address bar, and much more.

One of the best new things about Safari and OS X Mountain Lion is the new iCloud Tabs feature. However, it's *only* useful if you have two Mac computers or a Mac and an iOS mobile device using iOS 6. With iCloud Tabs in Safari (both the desktop and mobile versions), you can pick up right where you left off in either browser.

For instance, if you leave two tabs open in Safari on your Macbook Pro, you can go to Safari on your iMac, iPhone or iPad and view those open tabs. Just click on the tab icon (or tap on your mobile device) and you'll see all open tabs from your other devices.



In the screenshot above, you can see the two tabs that I have open in Safari on my iPad.

Notes

Notes is an application brought over to the Mac from iOS. If you currently use TextEdit or the Stickies app to jot down simple notes, you may want to switch to Notes immediately! Why? Mainly because you can sync Notes

across your iOS devices and other Mac computers with Mountain Lion via iCloud. This means that you can start a note on your iPhone and pick it back up once you're back home on your iMac - and vice versa.

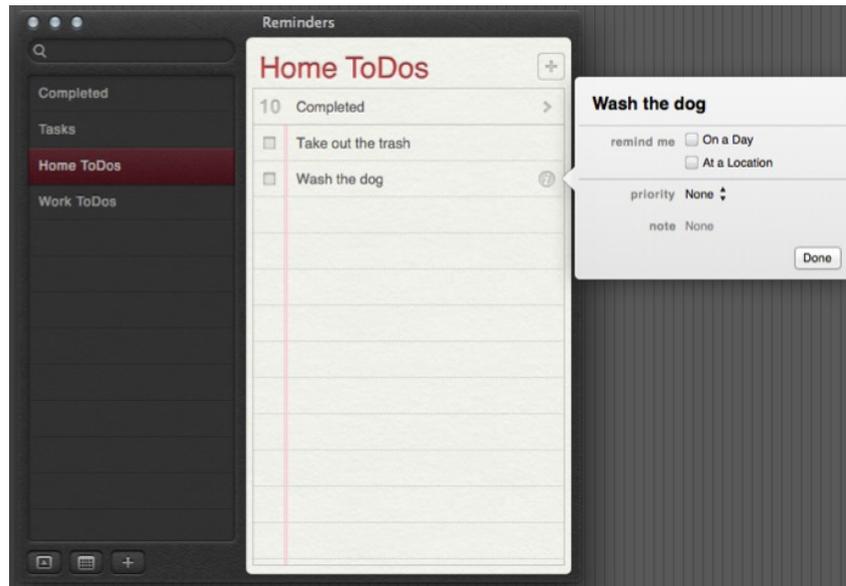


For a simple note-taking app, there sure are tons of features. Here's what you can do in the Notes app:

1. Arrange your notes into folders
2. Search for notes using the search bar
3. Sort your notes by date edited, date created or title
4. Add links and format your text using the rich text editor
5. Use the Notes app in full screen mode
6. Attach photos and other items
7. Use the built-in sharing button to send notes to a friend or coworker
8. Pin notes to your desktop by double clicking on it to bring it out of the app window - when you close the Notes app, that note will remain on your desktop.

Reminders

You've probably already guessed it: Reminders, a simple to-do list app, is another iOS app coming over to the Mac side. Like Notes, it's easy-to-use, lightweight and has many useful features. I myself even switched over to Reminders once it was available on Mountain Lion, mainly because you can sync between devices using iCloud.



What can you do in the Reminders app

1. Create todo lists, add due dates, and add reminders to specific tasks
2. Pin lists to the desktop (like Notes), by double clicking on it in within the app; the list will open up in its own window and remain on your desktop even when you close out the app.
3. Set priorities – low, medium, high
4. Search through your lists using the search bar
5. Add a location to your reminders and receive notifications when you depart from or arrive at that location
6. You'll receive reminders on all devices using the Reminders app
7. Share reminders with friends, family, coworkers
8. Swipe left or right on your trackpad to move back and forth between lists
9. Sort tasks by date due to increase productivity

iPhoto

iPhoto is the ultimate tool for viewing, editing, adjusting, and organizing the photos on your Mac. Not only can you create slideshows, photo books and cards, but you can also share your photos on Flickr and Facebook and view your Facebook photo comments from within iPhoto.

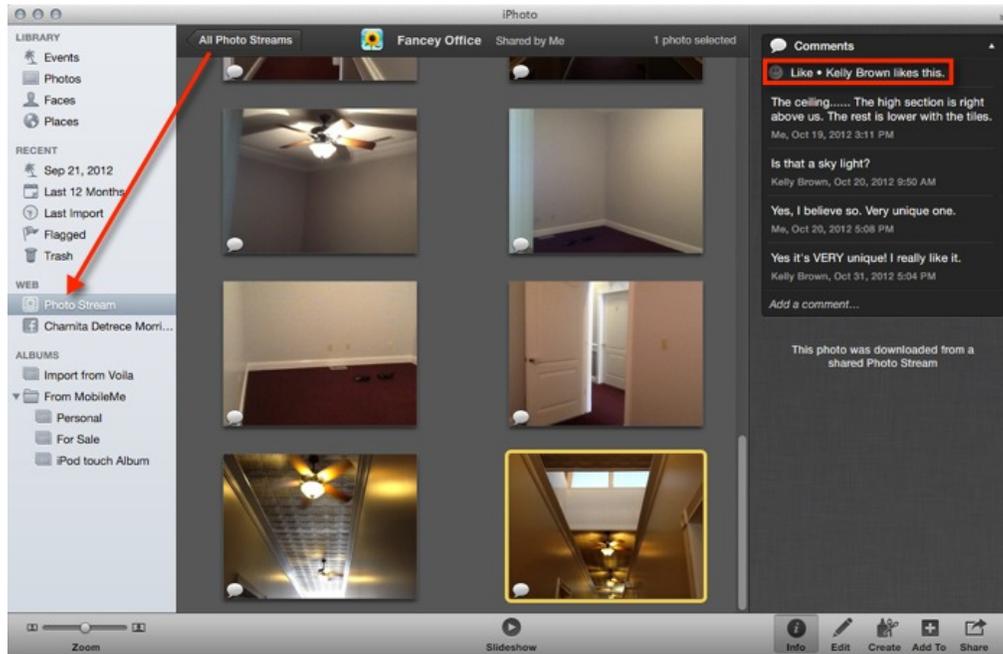


iPhoto is great for remembering special events since it automatically organizes your photos according to the day they were taken. You can also add locations and maps to your images so that you don't forget where they were taken. Additionally, iPhoto uses face detection to help you identify people in your photos; this feature is extremely smart and accurate.

One of the best new features to come to OS X Mountain Lion and iPhoto is shared Photo Streams. Basically, you can create a photo album in iPhoto and then make it public or only share it with the people that you choose. Your invitees will be automatically subscribed to that Photo Stream, and any time you add a new image or remove an image, they'll be notified. You and those that are subscribed can also add comments and "like" any image.

Thanks to iCloud, your Photo Streams will sync across devices - mobile devices running iOS 6, Macs running Mountain Lion and even Windows PCs. However, **only users on iOS or Mountain Lion will get notifications** of new images that you add. Your images will be viewable in the Photo app in iOS, iPhoto on Mac, or on the Web via the iCloud website; **comments can only be added on Apple devices - not on the Web.**

Shared Photo Streams are a great way to keep in touch with friends and family that live far away. You can add photos of special events, precious moments, or just to say hello. Best of all, Photo Streams **do not count against your iCloud storage**, so go ahead and share as many photos as you'd like!

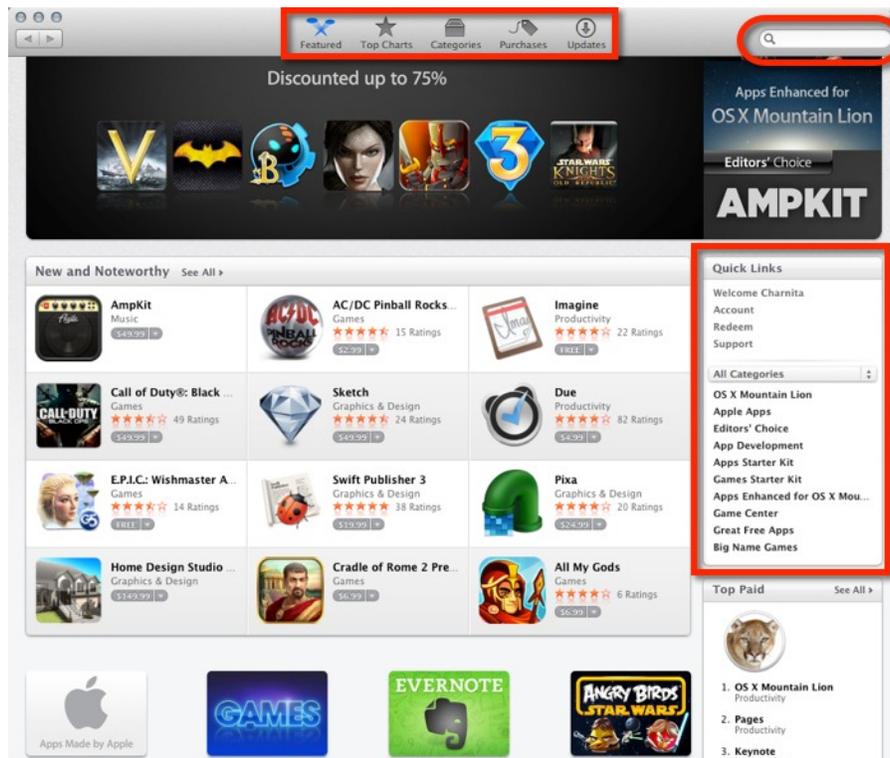


To share a Photo Stream in iPhoto on Mountain Lion, follow these steps:

1. Open iPhoto and select the photos you want to share.
2. Click on the share button at the bottom right corner and select “Photo Stream” from the menu. Next choose “New Photo Stream.”
3. Type in the email address of the people that you want to share with. This is the tricky part because if you want people to access your shared Photo Stream from an iOS device, you’ll need to use the email address associated with their iCloud account - so you may need to get this information first.
4. Name your Photo Stream.
5. You *can* share with someone that doesn’t have an Apple device, but you’ll have to make your Photo Stream public to do so.

Introduction of App Store

The Mac App Store was also introduced in Mac OS X Lion, but in Mountain Lion it became new and improved. The Mac App Store is pretty much like the App Store for iOS, except with Mac apps of course. It’s used to search for and install Mac apps and games.



There's five sections in the store: Featured, Top Charts, Categories, Purchases and Updates. The search bar is the most useful if you're looking for a specific type of app. Quick links on the home page (aka Featured section) let you access starter kits, Apple apps, Editors' Choice, apps enhanced for OS X Mountain Lion, Game Center supported games and more.

The Purchases section shows you all of the apps you've purchased through the Mac App Store. If you happen to remove a Mac app from your computer via Launchpad, you can always reinstall it from here. If an app is already installed, it will show as "installed."

This is a great way to keep up with your purchases, especially since your purchases from any Mac (as long as you're logged into your account) will show up here as well - thanks to iCloud. If you happen to get a new or additional Mac, you can easily add the apps from prior purchases to your new computer.

The Mac App Store also notifies you (via the Notification Center) when new updates have been downloaded for OS X or any of your installed apps. That's right - all you have to do is go in and install the updates; this way you can effortlessly keep everything up-to-date. Of course there's also a share button in the App Store so that you can share and recommend Mac apps to friends.



In the Mac App Store you also get full screen viewing abilities and navigation gestures (**swipe with two fingers left or right on your trackpad or mouse**) - like in Safari.

How to Install Apps from the App Store

Installing and uninstalling applications purchased through the Mac App Store is straightforward; they're installed automatically from the store and uninstalled just as easily from the Launchpad.

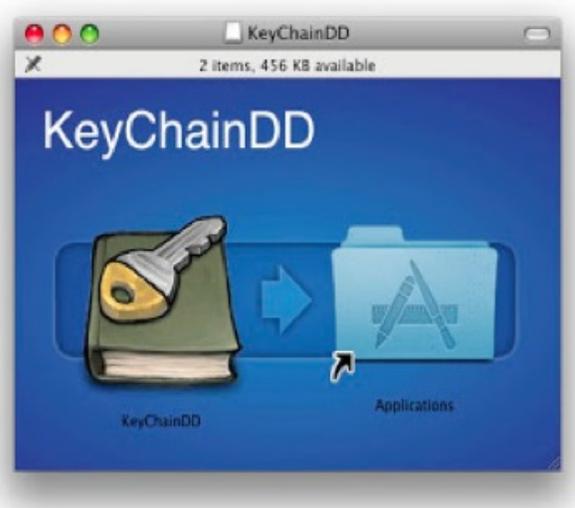


To do this, browse the apps and find one that you'd like to install and then click on the button underneath the icon that displays the price or "free." This will begin the installation process and that button will say "installing." Once the app has been installed, that same button will change to say "installed."

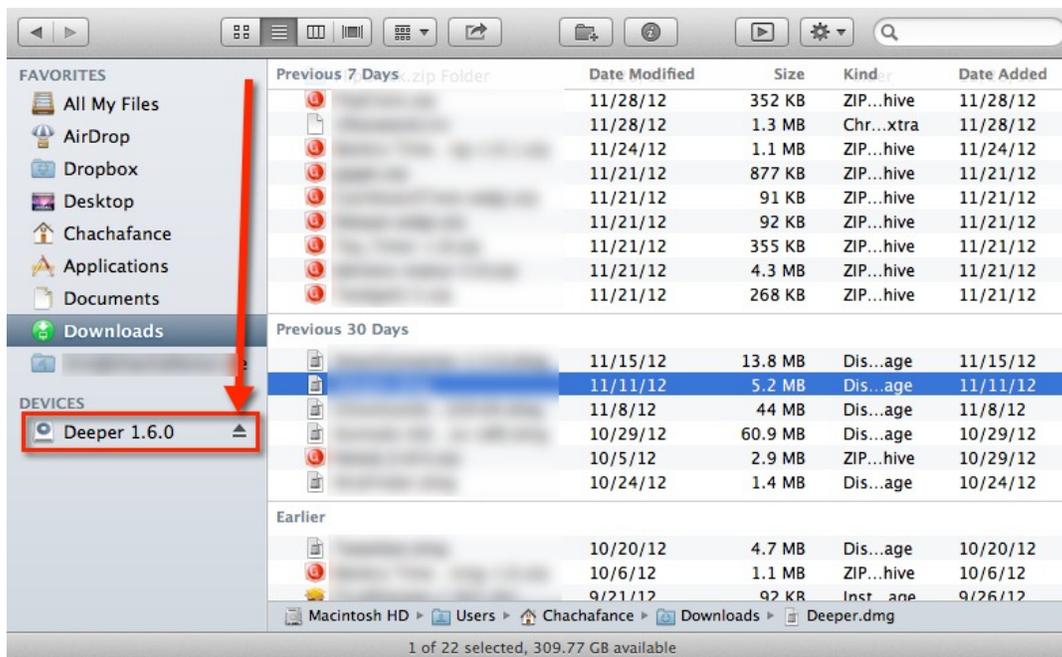
You will then be able to access and open the app using Spotlight or via Launchpad.

Installing Apps from DMG/PKG Files

Installing apps that are not in the Mac App Store will require you to download an installation or application file from a website. Once the file has been downloaded, double click on it to start the process. Most Mac apps will come in DMG format, but occasionally you'll also come across a PKG format.



DMG stands for Disk Image; it will mount itself as a device on your Mac. The DMG will contain the application file and sometimes even a ReadMe.txt or other important file. All you need to do is drag the application file to the Applications folder and it will be installed. Many apps will pop up a small window with the Application file and an alias of the Applications folder (as pictured above) and you'll just need to drag the application file to the alias of the Applications folder.



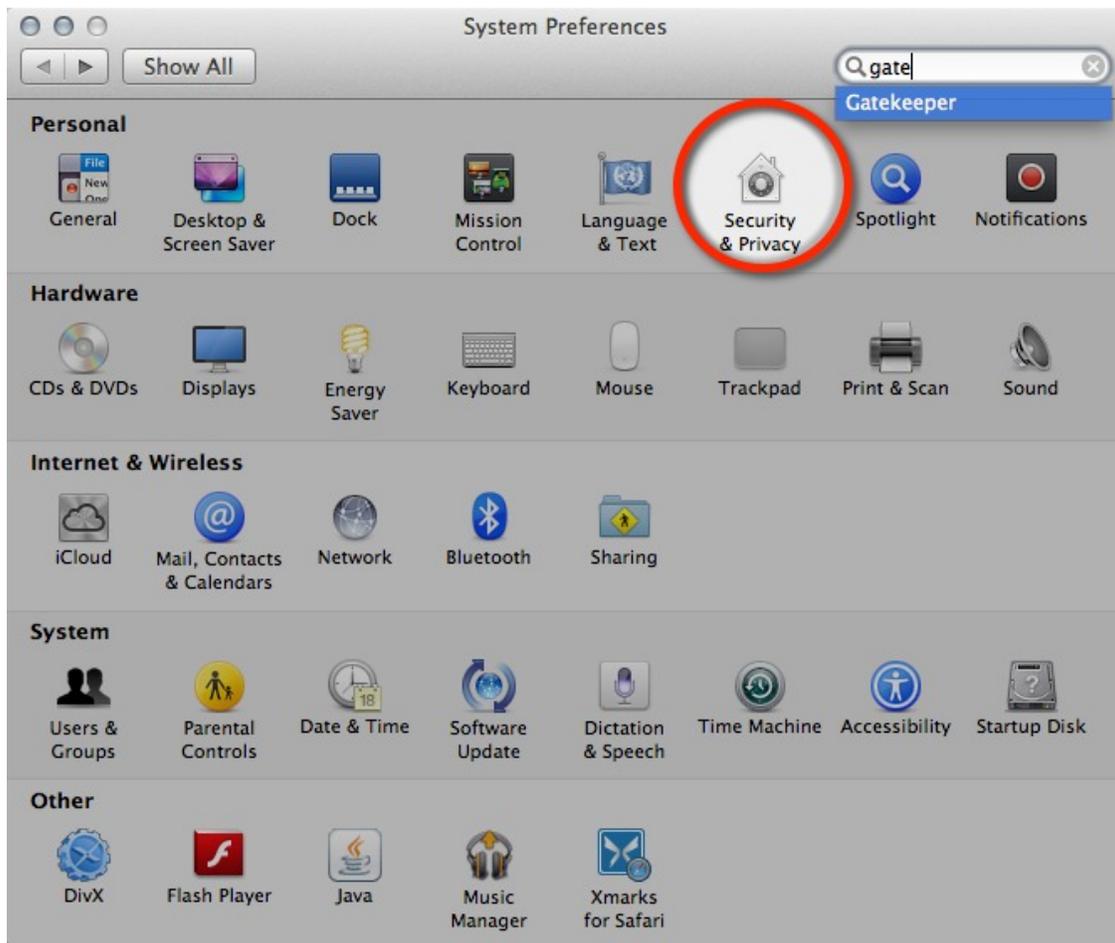
A PKG file is an actual installer and will take you through some steps, much like Windows software installation.

When you're done installing a file, you'll often need to eject it - just click on the eject button to the right of the item in the Finder sidebar (see above screenshot).

You'll find that sometimes either file type will be in a zipped folder. Since the Mac has its own opener for zip files, you can just double click on a zipped file to unzip it.

Gatekeeper

Gatekeeper is a **security system for your Mac** that can help protect you from installing malicious apps, viruses and spyware on your computer. You can access the Gatekeeper settings in System Preferences.



When it comes to downloading and installing apps on your computer, Gatekeeper gives you three options to choose from:

1. Download and install apps from the Mac App Store online
2. Download and install apps from the Mac App Store and identified developers (those with a Developer ID) only
3. Download and install apps from anywhere

Obviously, option #1 is the most secure and option #3 is a high risk. If you try to install an application from a developer that does not have a Developer ID, you'll be alerted. This alert will have to need to be overridden manually.

To override the alert, **hold the Control button while clicking** on the installer or application icon and a menu will appear. Choose "Open" and follow the prompts to install the application.

How to Uninstall Apps

To uninstall an app that was installed via the Mac App Store, you must use the Launchpad method (mentioned above). Click and hold on an app until it begins to wiggle and use the "x" at the top left corner of the icon to

remove it. The application will be removed from your Mac until you're ready to install it again, which can be done via the Mac App Store.

Uninstalling an application that was not installed from the Mac App Store is just as easy as uninstalling those from the Mac App Store. Open your Applications folder, find the app that you want to remove and trash it. You can do this by dragging and dropping the application file to the Trash bin, or by right clicking (control+click) it and selecting "Move to Trash." The next time you empty your trash, the app will be gone for good.

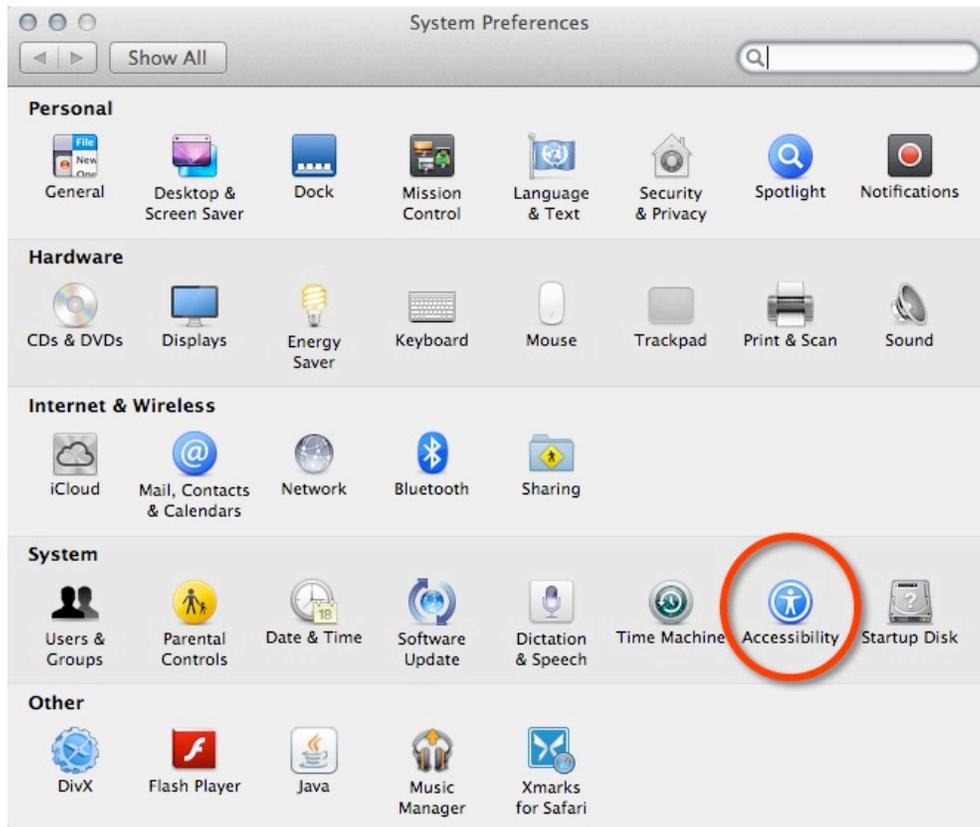
Some people prefer to use an app like AppCleaner to uninstall applications to make sure that everything is removed. Apps like these can help to get rid of those pesky additional files and folders that often get left behind when you remove an application.

Notable Features in Mountain Lion

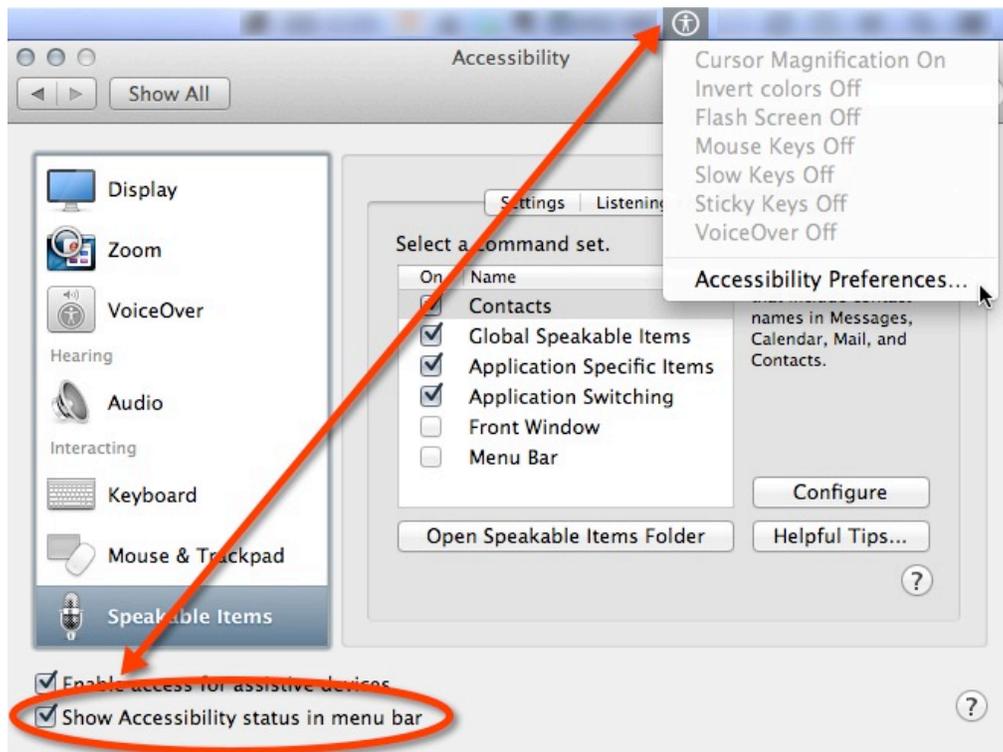


Accessibility

The Accessibility pane is found in System Preferences and is a good place to start customizing the look and functionality of your Mac. You can also use the keyboard shortcut **Command + Option + F5** from anywhere on your Mac to access a condensed version of the Accessibility options.



If you plan on using this pane often, you can also add it to the menu bar by selecting “show accessibility status in menu bar” at the bottom of the Accessibility pane.



This pane is **extremely important for those with vision disabilities and hearing difficulties, as well as physical and motor skill issues**. Plus, the Accessibility pane has been redesigned in Mountain Lion, for even easier customization.

Display

If you're having problems seeing items on your screen or want to make items easier to read, you'll find some useful options in the Display pane.

You can **invert the colors** on your screen, which will change everything from black text on a white background to white text on a black background. This is also a great option to use in dark and low light settings because it's easier on the eyes. Maybe you don't want to see any colors at all on your screen. If so, you can choose to enable the grayscale option here as well.

If you're unhappy with the contrast of your display, you can also change that here. By default your contrast will be set to normal. Just move the slider to the right until you're happy with the way the color looks on your screen. Likewise, there's a slider to control the size of your mouse cursor. Maybe normal is just too small for you. Don't worry, you can make it really large if you need to.

Zoom

Are you a fan of keyboard shortcuts? In the Zoom panel you can enable keyboard shortcuts for zooming in and out on your screen. If you want to leave the keyboard shortcuts for zoom disabled, you'll still be able to zoom by **pinching in and out on your mouse or trackpad**.

Would you like the ability to zoom in and out while holding down a specific key on your keyboard and scrolling with your trackpad or mouse's scroll wheel? If so, you'll want to keep the "use scroll gesture with modifier keys to zoom" option enabled and choose which key to use; you can choose the Control, Option, or Command key.

You'll probably want to keep the "smooth images" option enabled since it makes zoomed images look exceptionally smooth, instead of grainy.

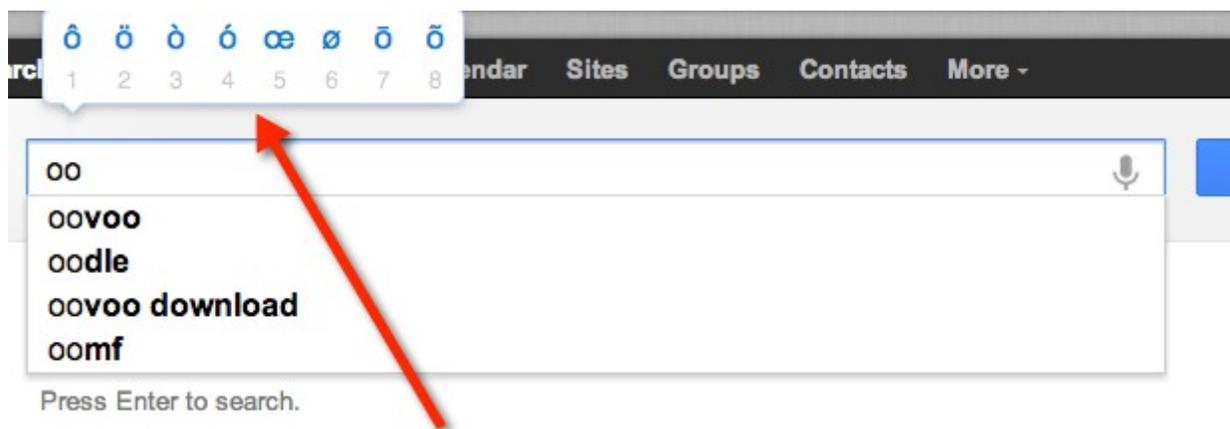
The "zoom follows the keyboard focus" is a very clever feature and another option you'll want to keep enabled. Why? Because as you zoom in and out, only the area with the keyboard or mouse focus will get magnified. So if you have the mouse at the top right of the screen, when you zoom in your screen will zoom in on that area. If you happen to move your mouse to the bottom left of the screen, then your screen will change focus and start to zoom in on that area.

You can also choose full screen or picture-in-picture zoom style. The latter works much like a magnifying glass; the magnified image will display in a small window on the screen. You'll want to enable this only as needed because the small window appears as soon as you enable the feature.

VoiceOver

Should you choose to enable the VoiceOver feature, you'll be provided with spoken and brailled descriptions of items on your screen. The braille feature only works if you have a braille display attached to your computer. You'll also be able to control your computer with your keyboard.

Out of all the Accessibility options, Mountain Lion has improved and added to the VoiceOver features the most. You can drag and drop using modifier keys, reorder tables by column headers, drag items to hotspots (the four corners of your screen) and use press and hold keys.



Speaking of press and hold keys, if you're unfamiliar with them I'll explain briefly. There are many keys on a Mac's keyboard that you can press and hold to make additional accented characters appear in a small bubble above or below the letter (see screenshot above). This especially comes in handy if you speak and type in a language that uses letter accents.

If you intend on using VoiceOver, be sure to go through the training provided and use the utility window to customize the VoiceOver settings even further.

Audio

If you have hearing difficulties, you can enable the "flash the screen when an alert occurs" feature here. The screen flash is very noticeable, so you won't have to worry about missing any important alerts. You can even test the screen flash by clicking on the "test screen flash button" in the audio pane, so that you know what to expect.

If you're hard of hearing in one ear and wear headphones while using your computer, it would be wise to enable the "play stereo audio as mono" feature. This way you'll be able to hear everything much better.

Keyboard

If you would like to enable sticky keys or slow keys, you can do that here. Sticky keys are useful if you want to use a set of modifier keys as a sequence, without having to hold the key down.

Slow keys give you the ability to adjust the amount of delay between the time you press a key and when it's activated. By default all keys have an average delay time, but you can make that shorter or longer.

Mouse & Trackpad

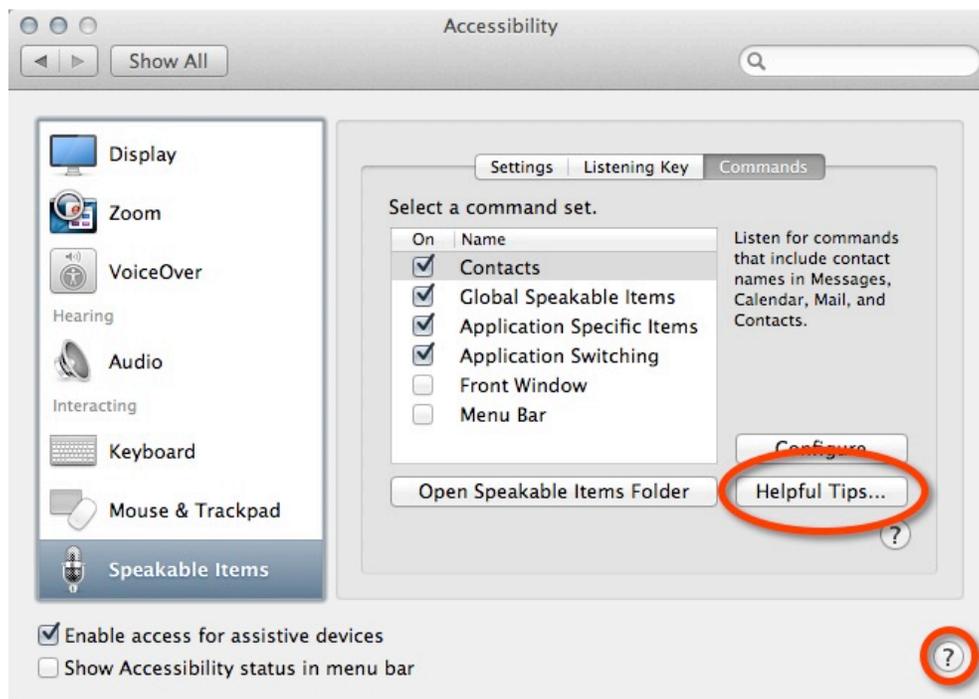
Maybe you want to **control the mouse pointer with the number pad** on your keyboard instead of your fingers. If this is easier for you, you can "enable mouse keys" and customize the delay and speed.

How about the double click speed? You know when you need to double click on an item to select it or to open an application? If you're not happy with the speed of double clicking, you can make it slower or faster.

If you're using a trackpad, but want to disable it once you connect a mouse or wireless trackpad, you can do that here. Enabling the "ignore built-in trackpad [...]" feature will ensure that the trackpad is ignored once a mouse or wireless trackpad is connected.

Speakable Items

How would you like to **control your computer and applications by using your voice**? This is called speech recognition and you can enable this feature in the Speakable Items pane. You'll get to choose which microphone to use, the listening key (the key you'll have to press while giving commands), and what types of commands the computer should listen for.



If you choose to use this feature, make sure to use the helpful tips and help center when needed. Just click on any of the question marks and the help center window will open with relevant information.

Airplay Mirroring

Mountain Lion is fully compatible with AirPlay Mirroring, a feature that lets you **wirelessly send what's on your Mac's screen to your HDTV**. This really comes in handy during meetings, conferences, classes and even at home.



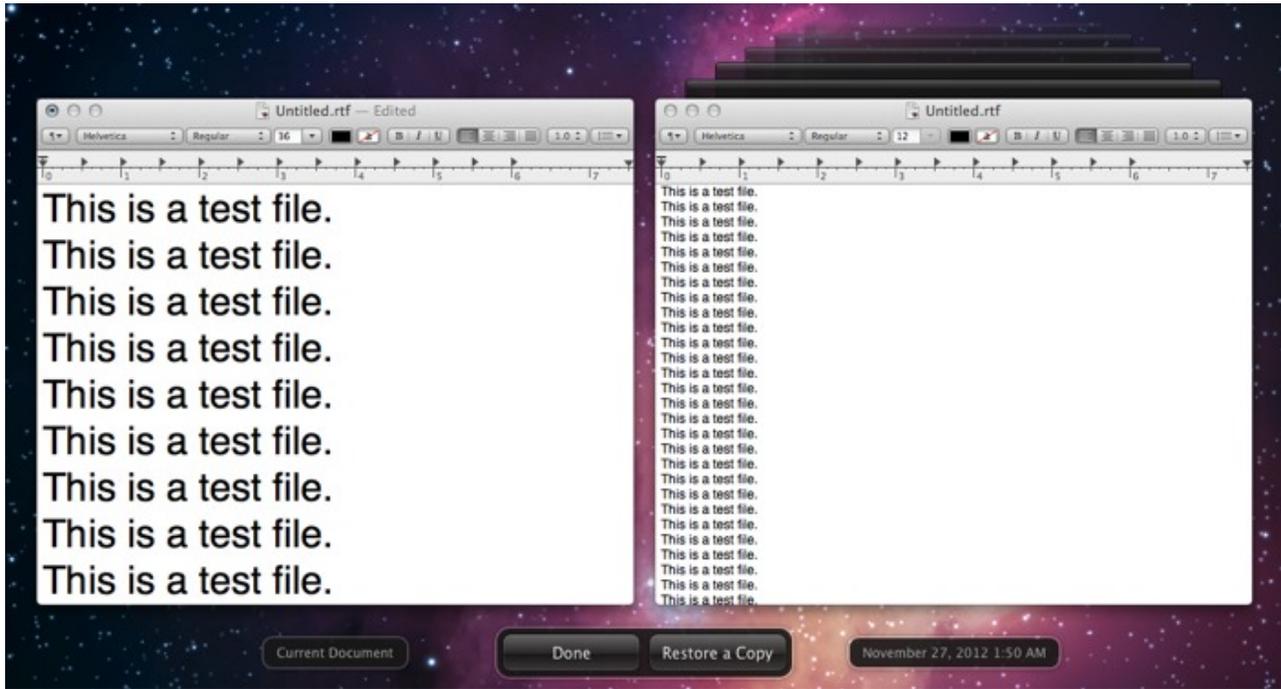
Maybe you have a video, music album or slideshow on your computer that you want to share with a small or large group. As long as you have an Apple TV or AirPort Express and iTunes version 10.2 or later, you don't all have to crowd around a small laptop screen or desktop monitor. Instead, you can stream right to an HTDV of any size.

I won't go into much detail here, but if you want to learn more about using AirPlay, Apple has a very useful support page about it.

Note: AirPlay Mirroring is only available for Macs made after 2011.

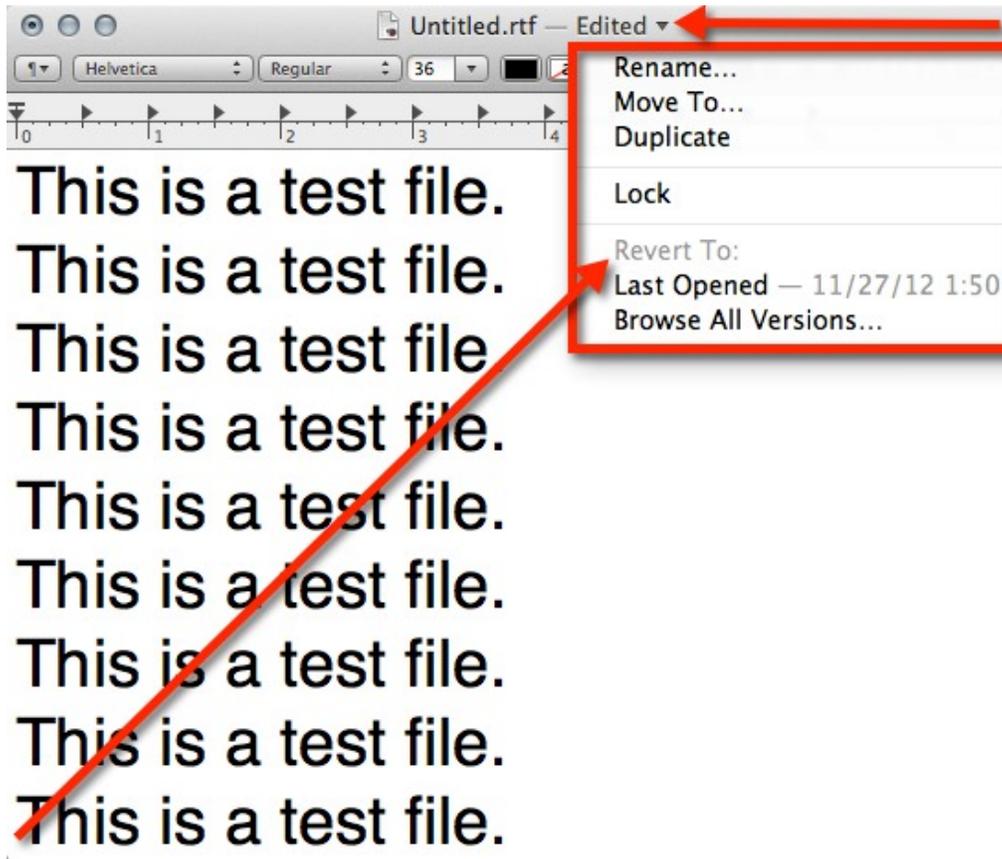
Auto Save

How many files have you lost because the application froze up or crashed before you got a chance to save it. How many times have you closed a file and forgot to save it? In Mountain Lion you don't have to worry about either of these issues because the amazing auto save functionality is quite a life saver.



As you work within a document, auto save will automatically save your changes whenever a pause in your work is detected. This creates different versions of your document, which you can revert back to at any time. By clicking on the title bar of your current document, you can revert back to any version of that document.

Along with this feature, the title bar menu also lets you quickly and easily rename your document, move the document to the cloud, duplicate the document, and lock it so that it can't be edited.



Dictation

If you're not much of a typer or not a very good speller, you'll love the dictation feature. Imagine being able to **talk anywhere that you can type**. It allows you to do many things using just your voice. Whether you're doing an Internet search, typing an email, writing a Facebook status, creating a blog post or anything else that requires text, you'll be able to use dictation; it works with just about any text field.

To enable the feature and customize the keyboard shortcut, you can find Dictation & Speech in System Preferences. You may also want to customize the Text to Speech settings for your Mac.

To start using dictation, you only need to remember one simple keyboard shortcut: **fn+fn (press the Function key twice)**. This is the default keyboard shortcut for dictation. Then you must press the Function key twice again once you have finished dictating.

So if you wanted to dictate an email you would: start a new message, press the Function (fn) key twice, speak clearly into the microphone, and press the Function (fn) key twice again to finish (you can also click on the "done" button on the microphone popup).

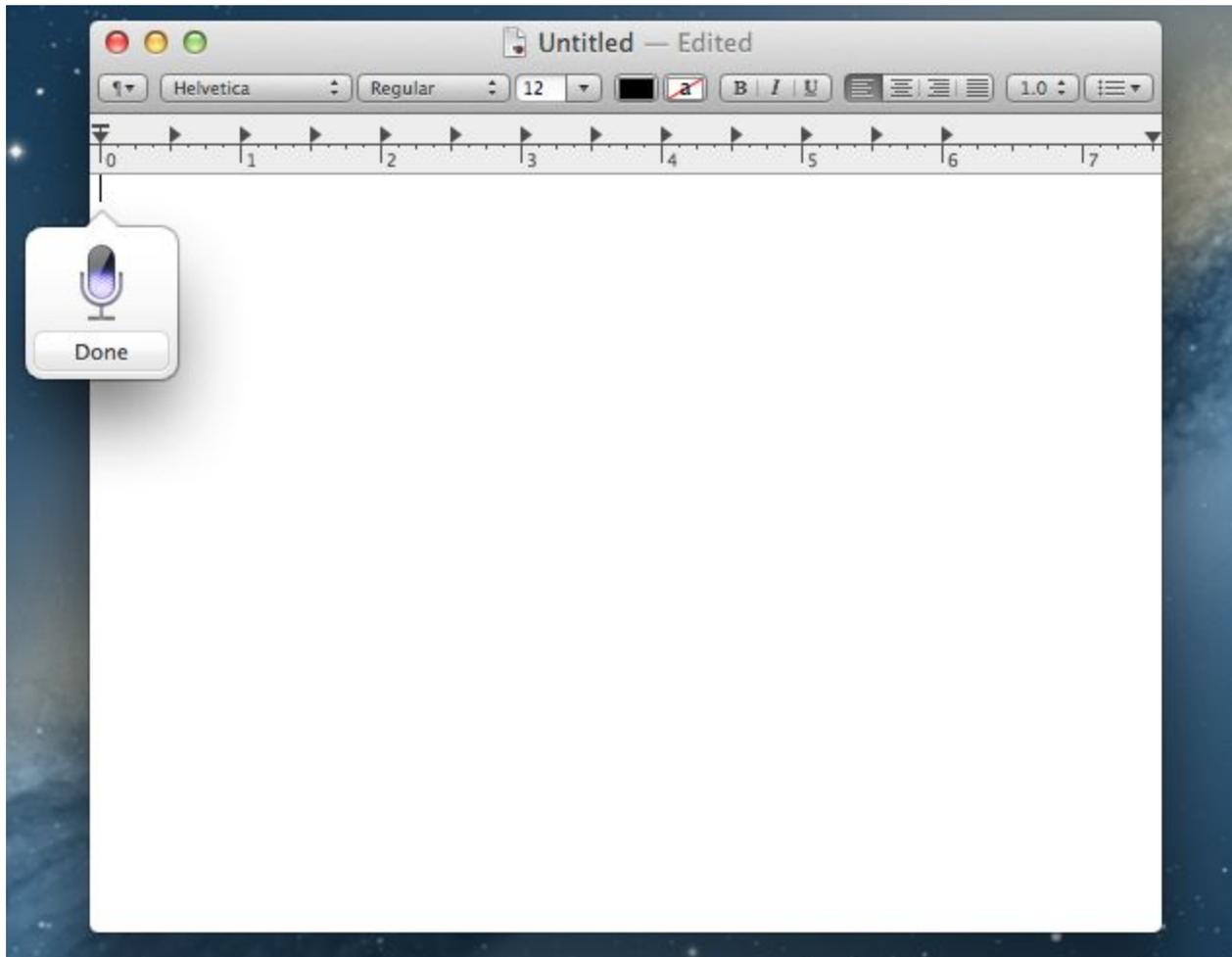


Image Credit: [Apple'N'Apps](#)

You will see a microphone popup when you first activate dictation. The purple frequency effect inside the microphone will move up and down as you speak - this lets you know that it can hear you. When you're done, the popup will disappear, and your text will automatically appear in the text box.

While the speech-to-text translation isn't perfect, it's pretty close – especially when speaking clearly and in a quiet area. Try it out for a day and you may never go back to typing!

Power Nap

Don't you hate how all your apps shut down when you put your Mac to sleep? If Mountain Lion is the only Mac OS you've ever used, then you've never dealt with this issue. However, those who have used older versions of Mac OS understand.

Thanks to Power Nap in Mountain Lion, your apps won't shut down while your Mac is sleeping. They stay awake and up-to-date! Everything will remain in sync, so when you wake up your Mac you won't have to wait for your apps to catch up.

If you use Time Machine to backup your Mac to Time Capsule, this can also continue while your Mac is in a Power Nap. Even OS X software updates can be downloaded while your Mac is power napping.

Power Nap works whether your Mac is plugged in or using battery power, so ***you won't have to worry about missing a thing.***!!!

Get Social

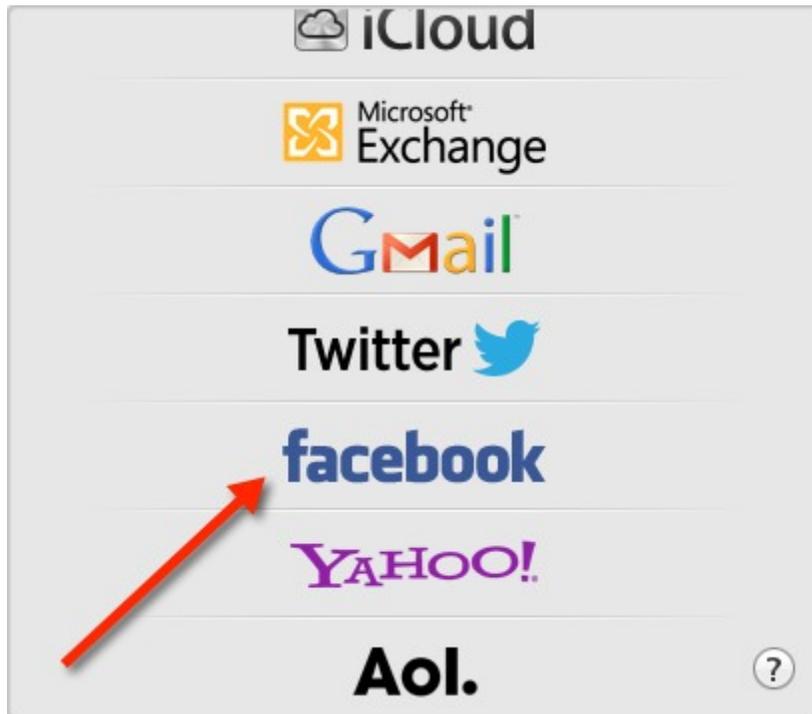


Since everyone is on Facebook and Twitter these days, Apple made a great choice when they decided to integrate both into Mountain Lion.

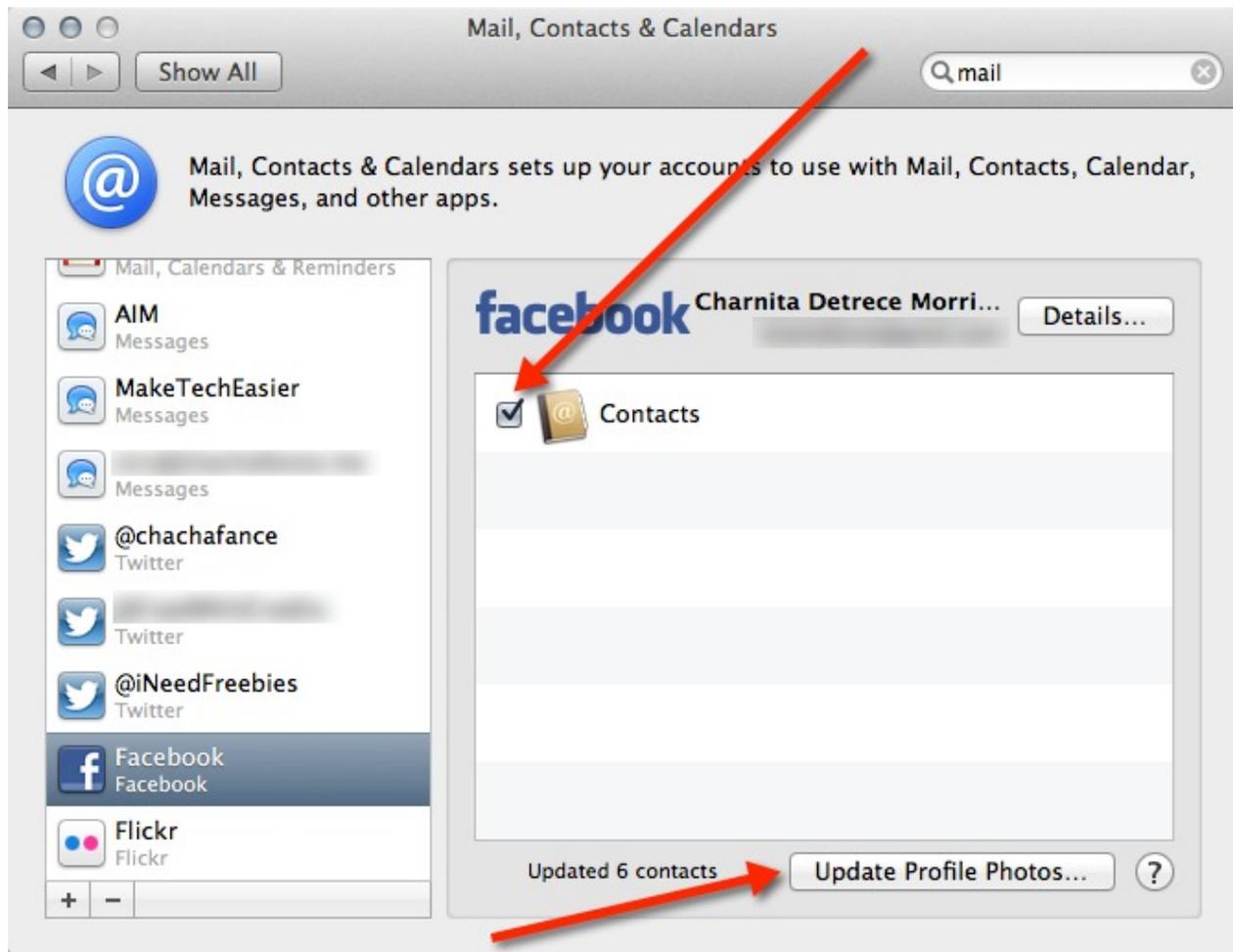
To add your Facebook and Twitter accounts to Mountain Lion, go to System Preferences. Then in System Preferences, go to “Mail, Contacts & Calendars.”



Click on Facebook or Twitter in the right column and enter your login credentials.



Your accounts will show up in the left column, along with the other accounts that you've added to Mountain Lion - like Gmail and Flickr. If you click on your Facebook account here, you will be able to enable/disable contact syncing. You can also click on the "Update Profile Photos" button any time to update your contacts.



Clicking on a Twitter account in the left column will just allow you to change the details (password, description), as well as update your contacts.

If you ever want to **remove your Facebook or Twitter account from Mountain Lion**, come back to this window, select your account in the left column, and click on the minus button at the bottom of the accounts list.

Facebook

Once you add your Facebook account to Mountain Lion, you'll be able to:

1. Share documents, photos, videos and links quickly and easily by using the built-in sharing feature
2. Receive Facebook notifications in the Notification Center
3. See your Facebook friends in the Mountain Lion Contacts app along with profile pictures and their contact information, with all information updated automatically as your friends update their accounts
4. Post a status to Facebook directly from the Notification Center

Twitter

Once you add your Twitter account to Mountain Lion, you'll be able to:

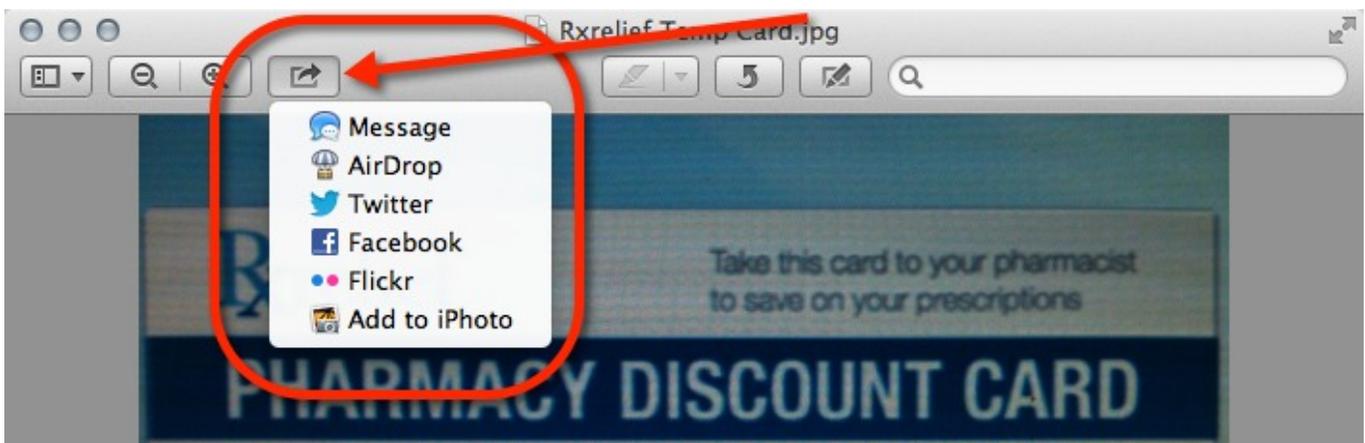
1. Share photos and links quickly and easily by using the built-in sharing feature
2. Receive Twitter notifications in the Notification Center – mentions and direct messages

1. See your Twitter friends in the Mountain Lion Contacts app along with profile pictures and Twitter user names, which also gives you quick access to their Twitter page
2. Post a tweet directly from the Notification Center
3. Add and tweet from multiple accounts - choose which one you want to send from

Built-in Sharing

As I'm sure you're aware, social sharing is all the rage now. Hundreds of images, videos and Web pages are shared daily on the top social networks like Facebook, Twitter and Google+. It's only natural that Mountain Lion has a sharing menu integrated into many of its native apps.

No longer do you have to open another app, drag a file or paste in a link to share something. You can simply use the built-in sharing menu. Most apps will have a Share button somewhere on the navigation bar, it's just a matter of finding it. In most cases, the share button will look like the icon circled in the screenshot below.



The share button will bring up a menu with services that are relevant to the app that you're using and the type of file you're sharing. Most menus will at least include: Twitter, Facebook, Message and AirDrop.

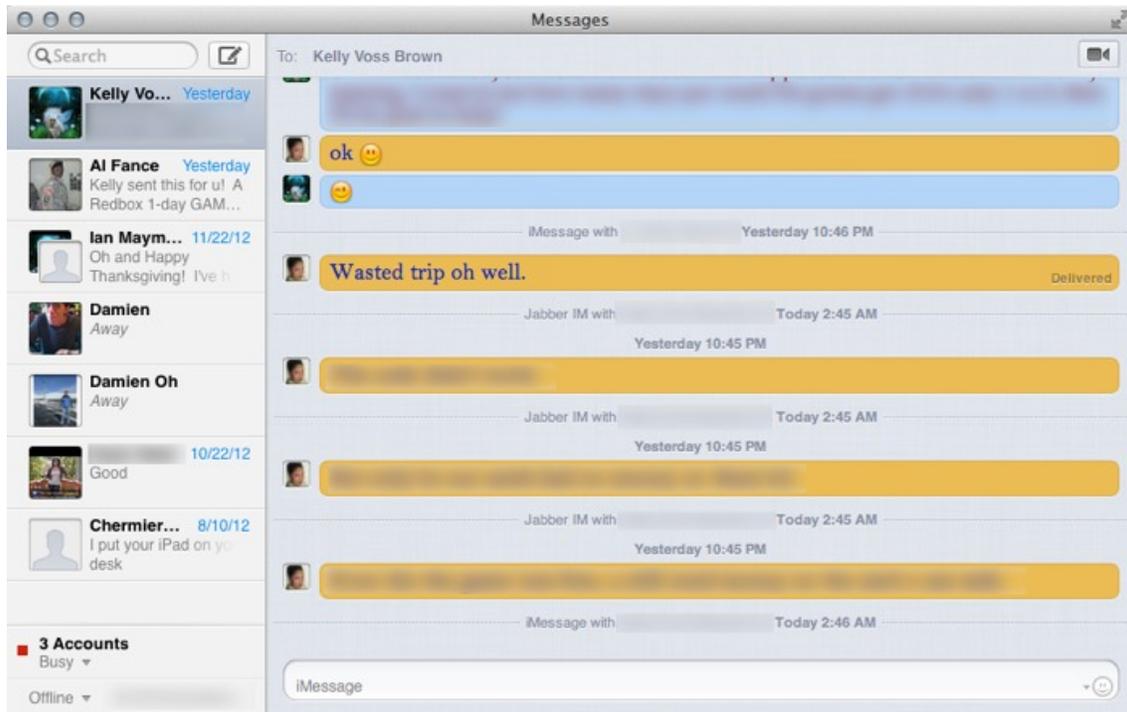
Messages

iMessage users rejoice, it's is now available on Mountain Lion via the new Messages app (formerly iChat). Of course, if you're not an iOS device user then you've probably never even heard of iMessage. In short, iMessage is **an instant messenger exclusively for users of iOS 5 (and up), and now OS X Mountain Lion as well.**

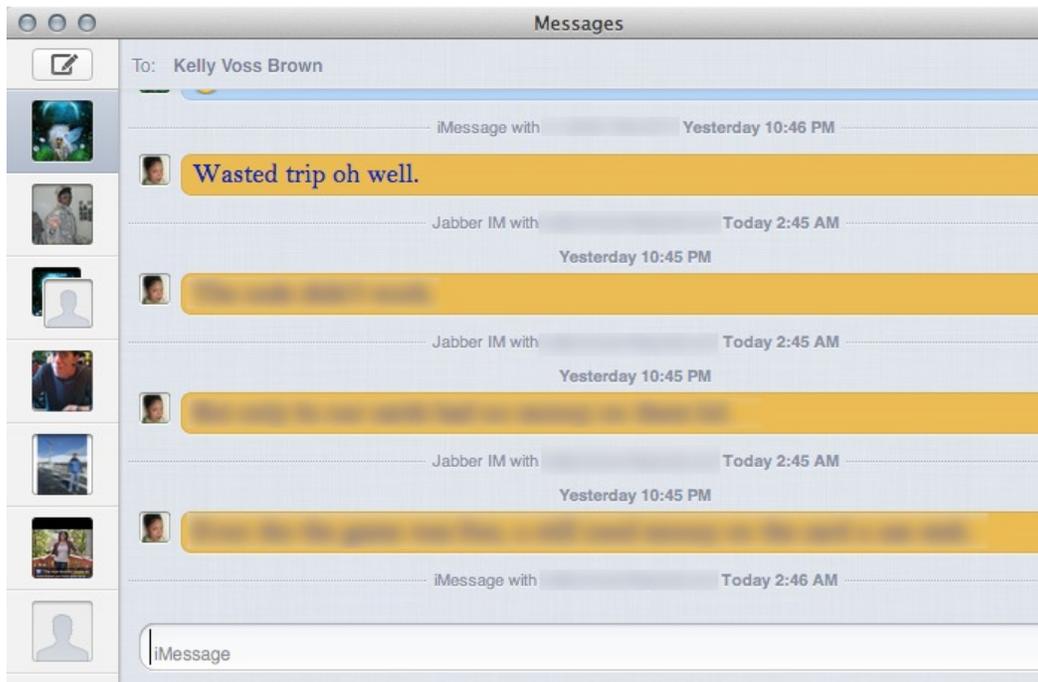
It used to be that only iOS users could message each other on their mobile devices, but now you can also message Mountain Lion users and vice versa. Additionally, Messages on OS X Mountain Lion also supports AIM, Yahoo Messenger, Google Talk and Jabber. This makes it the ultimate instant messaging tool on your Mac.

Plus, your messages will sync on all of your devices. So you can start a chat on your iPhone, switch over to your iPad, and then move to your Mac without missing a beat!

The Messages app has a simple, yet sophisticated design that's easy to navigate. Conversations are listed on the right and the contacts are pictured on the left. You can move the separator between both columns as needed.



By default, you can see a preview of the last message sent in each conversation next to the contact's picture.

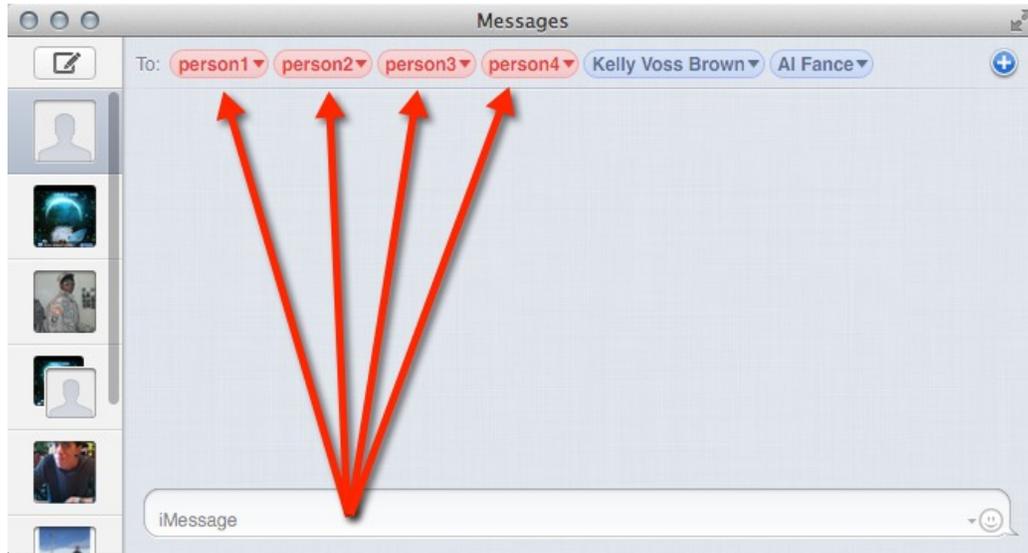


However, if you move the separator all the way to the left, you'll only be able to see avatar pictures and no previews.

When using iMessage with Messages, you can send messages to any email address associated with an Apple ID or phone number. You can add files in a message such as images, videos, and documents, by dragging and dropping items into the text area. You can attach an item up to 100MB in size.

You can also start a FaceTime conversation with a contact, by clicking on the video icon in the top right corner of the app window. The FaceTime app will then open up.

iMessage lets you know when your contact is typing, by displaying ellipsis points in your conversation. This way you know that a response is on the way. You can also easily start group messages; just type in each user's address or phone number in the "To" field when starting a new message. However, you can't add users to an pre-existing conversation.



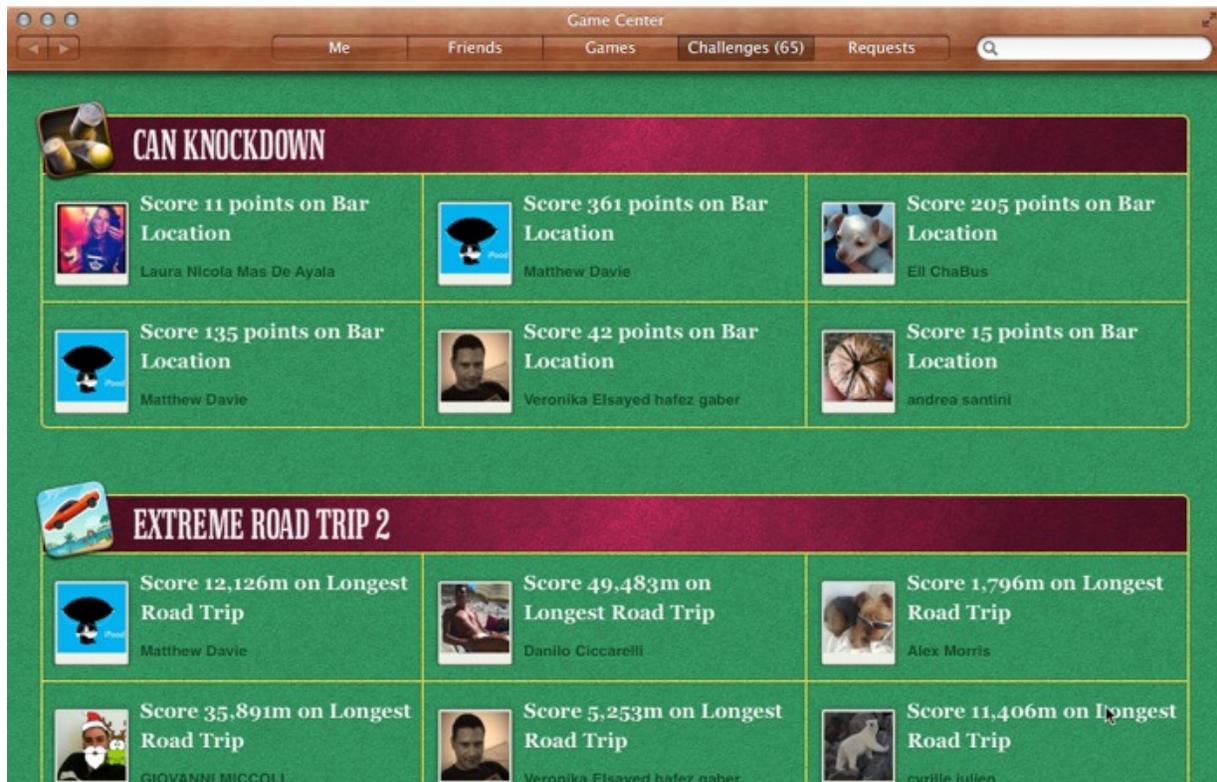
If the email address that you enter is not associated with an Apple ID, the name of the person will turn red in the "To" field (see screenshot above). This lets you know that you have the wrong information.

When you get a response or new message, you'll see it in the Notification Center. With iMessage you will also get delivery receipts so that you know when your messages have been delivered. With some contacts you'll even see read receipts, but that person will need to have this option enabled - if disabled on their end, you won't see read receipts for that contact.

It's definitely a lot to learn, but once you start using Messages, especially iMessage, you'll wonder how you've ever lived without it!

Game Center

The Game Center app is a nice surprise. If you have an iOS device (iPhone, iPod Touch, iPad), then you're already familiar with how it works. In short, the Game Center is a mini social network for iOS (and now Mac OS X Mountain Lion) gamers. You can **connect with other gamers**, send challenges, play multiplayer games, receive notifications for turn-based games, keep up with leaderboards, and see how you rank among your friends and users worldwide.



There's no need to create a new login since Game Center uses your Apple ID. This also means that if you have an iOS device, your Game Center data will sync between the two and will be available on both devices. You'll also get notifications in Notification Center on both devices.

If you don't know anyone on Game Center, you can search for them. Plus, Game Center will even recommend new friends and your friends from Facebook, to help you expand your gaming network. For anyone using Game Center, you can see what games they're playing, which achievements they've unlocked, their high scores and more.

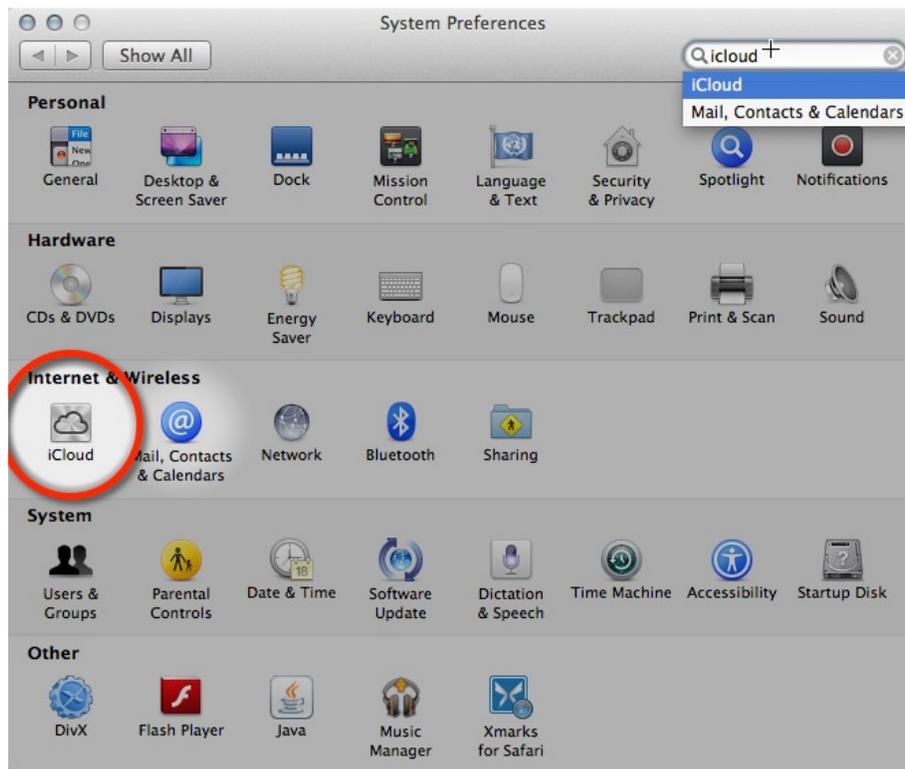
Although some games have their own internal system for sending challenges, you can also send game challenges right from Game Center. There's even a cool feature that lets you **play with anyone nearby** - even if they're not your friend.

If a game is available in both OS X Mountain Lion and iOS, then you'll be able to play against those on either types of devices.

iCloud



Now that you've learned all of the notable features in Mountain Lion, it's time to learn about iCloud: your **cloud storage** for iOS 5 (and up) and Mac OS X Mountain Lion. iCloud can be accessed in System Preferences.



iCloud is integrated into *many* apps on your Mac like the Mac App Store, iTunes, iPhoto, Safari, Notes, Reminders, TextEdit, Preview, Calendar, Mail and more.

iCloud was created with one thing in mind: **syncing across devices**. It was created so that you can access all of your music, photos, reminders, events, contacts, documents and more from any Apple device and keep everything up-to-date.

Since many Apple users have more than one Apple device (myself included), it's only right that we have a tool like iCloud to bring them all together. Luckily, once you set up iCloud, just about everything else is automatic. It syncs on its own, usually after changes have been made; this means less work for you. You'll also be happy to know that iCloud uses your Apple ID and password so that you won't have to create or remember yet another login.

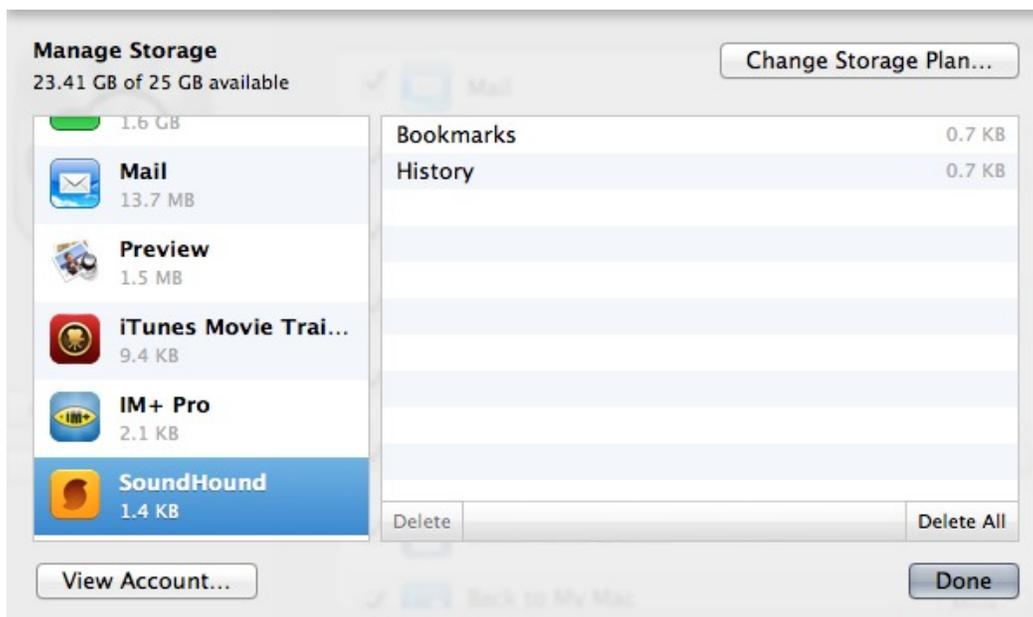
iCloud could really use its own eBook; there's so much that you can do with it and many important features. However, I'll try to be as brief as I can. Luckily, I've touched on many of its features above within the different apps in Mountain Lion.

Setting Up iCloud

iCloud is really easy to set up. Once you open it in System Settings, just sign in using your Apple ID and password. Then you can choose which items to sync: Mail, Contacts, Calendars & Reminders, Notes, Safari, Photo Stream (Public and/or Shared), Documents and Data, Back to My Mac.



You can also manage your storage by clicking on the “Manage” button in the bottom right corner.



If you need to free up some space, this is the best place to go because you can see each individual file that's in your iCloud storage - even files synced from your iOS device. You can delete any item that you want. It's basically a mini file manager just for iCloud.

iCloud Features

1. **iTunes in the Cloud** - iTunes can automatically download any new music that you purchase to all of your devices. So if you buy an album on your Mac, it can automatically download to your iPhone or

iPad. The same goes with TV shows, podcasts and anything else available in iTunes.

2. **iTunes Match** - Do you have a lot of music on your computer that was not purchased through iTunes, but want to store it in iCloud for syncing across devices? If so, iTunes Match is a great solution. Unfortunately, it's not a free service, but worth it if you have a large music collection that's constantly growing.
3. **Photo Stream** - Whether you're sharing a Photo Stream (which we've covered above) or keeping them private, you can sync your photos across devices with iCloud. You can even import pictures from your digital camera and have them sent over Wi-Fi to your iOS device. You can also use AirPlay Mirroring to view your photos on the big screen.
4. **Documents in the Cloud** - Do you work with iWorks, GarageBand, Notes, TextEdit or Preview? All documents from these apps can be synced across devices with iCloud. So you can start working on a presentation on your Mac and then work on it from your iPad when you're in a waiting room, grocery line or even on a break at work or school.
5. **Safari** - We've already discussed iCloud Tabs, which syncs your open tabs from Safari desktop and Safari mobile, but you can also sync your bookmarks and Reading List as well. Don't have time to read that interesting article that you found on your Mac right before work? Just add it to your Reading List and save for later. Don't worry, you can read it from your iPhone or iPad on your lunch break.
6. **Calendar, Contacts, Mail** - Sync your calendars, contacts and email across devices and never miss a thing. No matter what device you're on, you'll receive notifications for events and reminders. If you delete an email message in the Mail app on your Mac, it will also be deleted on the iOS Mail app.
7. **Find My Mac** - I would hate for anyone to lose their precious Mac, but if you do let's hope that the Find My Mac feature can come to the rescue! Let's just say, thanks to the [default Guest User account in Mountain Lion](#), you have a good chance of finding your Mac if it's ever lost or stolen.
8. **Storage** - iCloud comes with 5GB of free storage. If you need more, you can always upgrade to 10GB, 20GB or 50GB for an additional fee. Honestly, you'll probably never go over the 5GB limit; it really does go a long way.
1. **iCloud.com** - Are you away from your Mac or also have a PC that you want to access your iCloud content on? No problem, just use the iCloud website. You'll then be able to access Mail, Contacts, Calendar, Notes, Reminders and iWork Documents.



With its stylish UI and Web apps that bear a striking resemblance to their desktop and iOS counterparts, you'll forget that you're even using the Web!

Getting the Most Out of Mountain Lion



Recommended Apps

There are hundreds of useful Mac apps and tons that I can truly recommend, but for now here are a few must-haves to get you started.

1. [AirParrot](#) - So as you know, unless you have a Mac that is from 2011 or later, you can't use AirPlay Mirroring - or so you may think! AirParrot is an app that lets you mirror your Mac (from any year) to your AppleTV wirelessly. It's not free, but definitely worth the small price of \$10 - especially if you have a second or third generation AppleTV.
2. [Alfred](#) - This is the [ultimate productivity boosting app](#) for all Mac users. Alfred can replace Spotlight or be used in conjunction, but trust me, once you use Alfred you'll never go back to Spotlight. Alfred can be used as an application launcher, Web search tool, mini iTunes player, calculator, dictionary, system command center and much more.
3. [AppCleaner](#) - As mentioned above under installing/uninstalling apps, some people prefer to use an app. AppCleaner is my tool of choice because it just works effortlessly. When you move an application to your Trash, AppCleaner will find other files associated with the application.



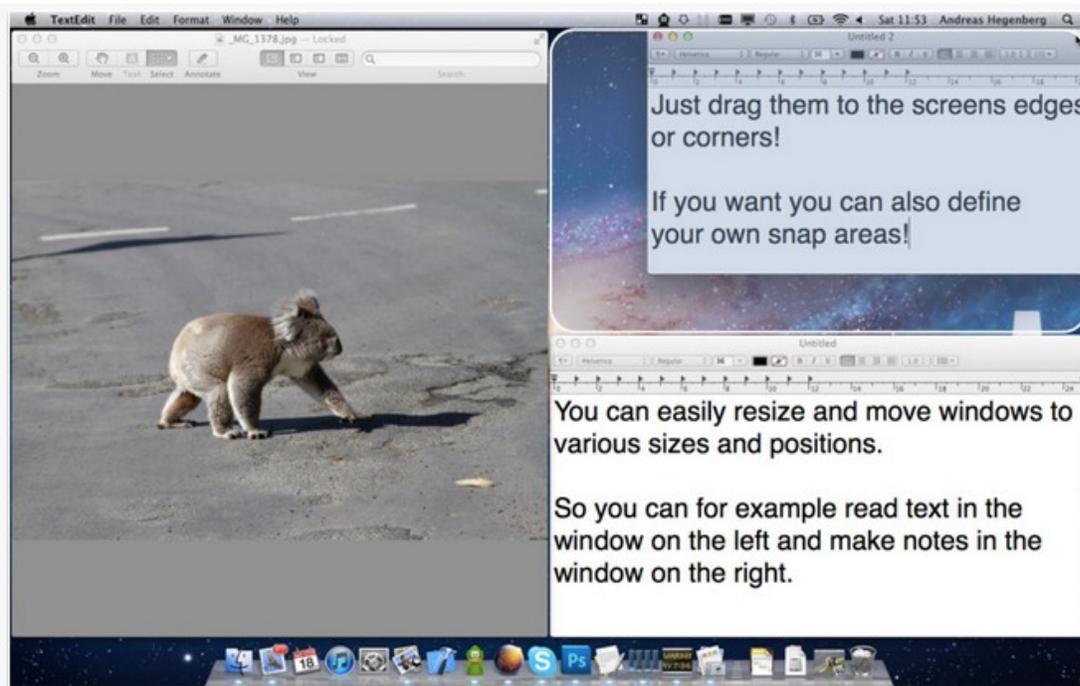
Along with uninstalling the app, it will then remove those extra files that would otherwise remain on your computer. You can also just open the app and drop an application onto its window to uninstall it.

4. [Bartender](#) - With the Mac App Store filled with thousands of apps, it's easy to get carried away. You may start by installing just a few apps, but before you know it you have 10+ apps each with their own menu bar. Boy, doesn't it get crowded up there quickly?



Yes it does, but Bartender is just the tool to help you tidy up your menu bar apps; you can hide the apps that you choose within the Bartender bar. Then all you have to do is open the Bartender bar right from the menu bar, to display them again. It's like having a second menu bar.

5. [BetterSnapTool](#) - When using my Mac, one of the few things I miss from Windows is the ability to automatically snap my windows to the right or left of the screen. It's a shame that Apple has yet to add that feature to their operating system. Luckily, there's an app for that - plenty of them actually.



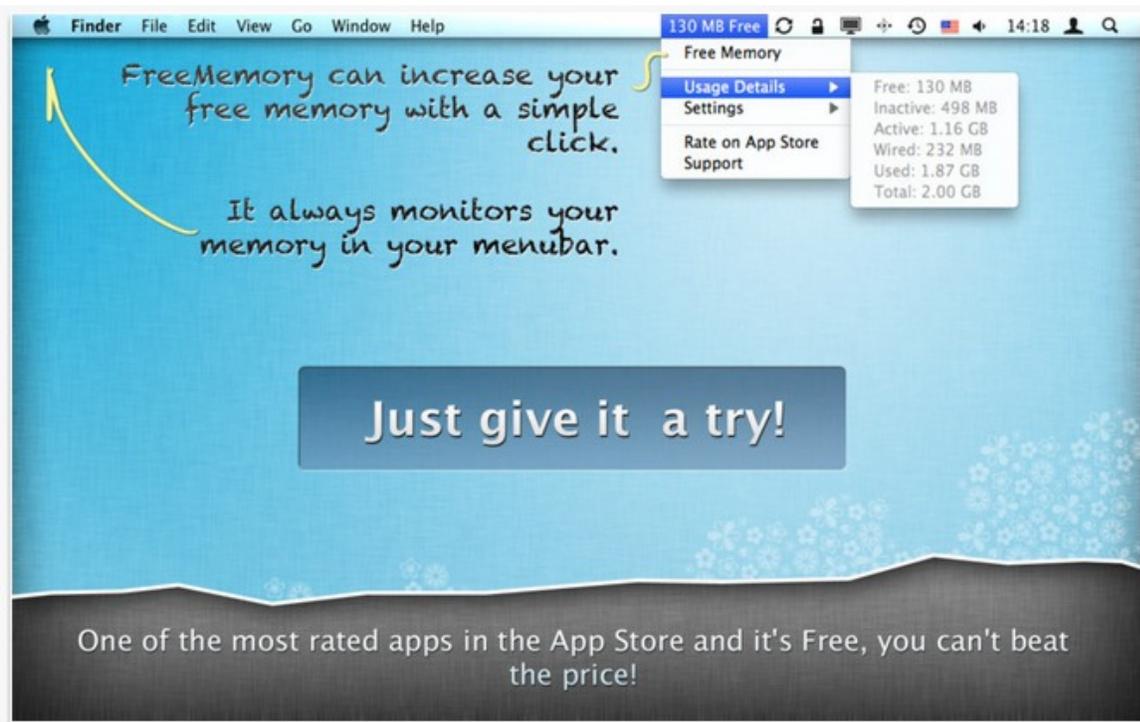
Personally I use [Moom](#) for managing my windows and snapping them into place, but BetterSnapTool is cheaper, more simple and just as useful. Just drag your window to a corner and it will automatically resize and snap into place. This is great for multitasking, making comparisons, and boosting productivity.

6. [Deeper](#) or [Mountain Tweaks](#) - Are there things about OS X Mountain Lion that really bug you? These two tools are both great for personalizing your Mac and enabling hidden functions.



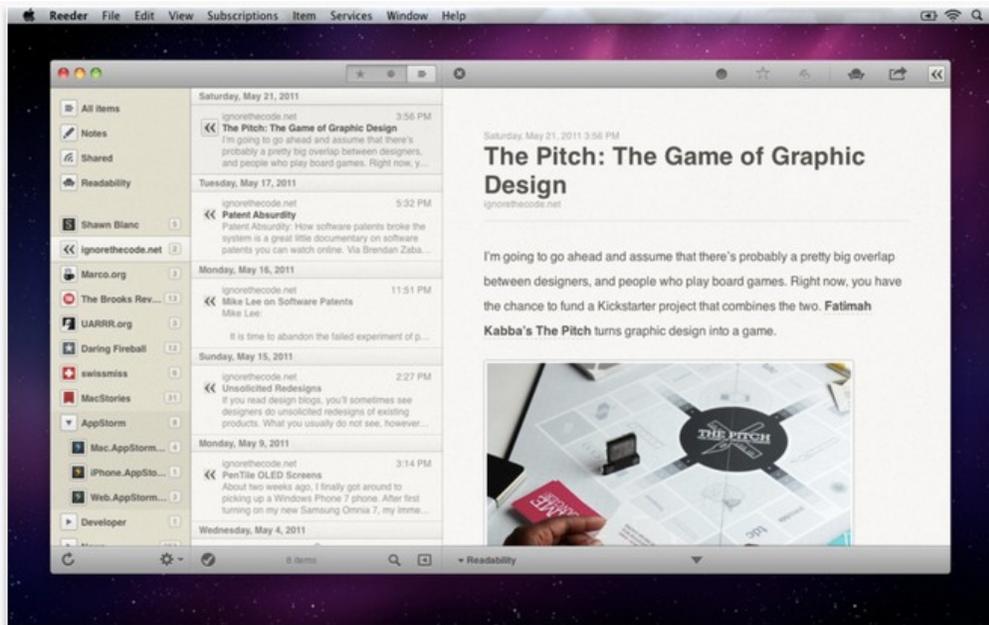
I use Deeper on my Mac and even wrote an [in-depth guide](#) on using it. You can use it to customize Finder, the dock, QuickTime, Safari, Mail, iTunes, the Login screen, Spotlight and other miscellaneous things.

7. [FreeMemory](#) - When many different apps are running on your Mac at the same time, it can use up quite a bit of RAM. Once your available RAM gets low, then your computer starts to run slow, apps and windows will freeze up and you'll see the spinning pinwheel quite often.



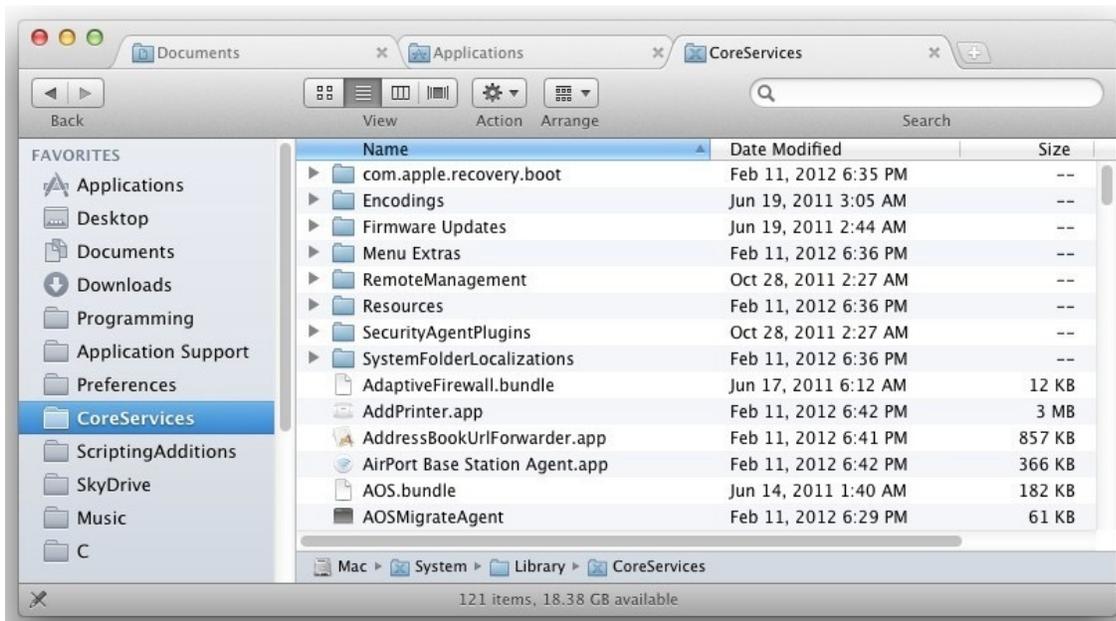
This is why FreeMemory is so handy. It's a memory monitor that's free. You can use it to manually [free up memory](#) (with a single click) on your Mac so that things will continue to run smoothly.

8. [Reeder](#) - Since Apple removed RSS support in Mail and Safari, you're going to need an RSS reading app. Reeder is definitely the best choice in the Mac App Store. It syncs with Google Reader and has a beautiful, customizable interface.



Reeder supports gestures, keyboard shortcuts and has deep social integration for sharing and bookmarking RSS items. Plus you can open items in a nice readable format with no ads or scripts to slow you down.

9. [XtraFinder](#) - The Finder is already a great tool on the Mac, but XtraFinder makes it even better! It's a free plugin for Finder that adds many great features like tabs, dual panel and dual windows, cut and paste, keyboard shortcuts, inverted colors (light text on dark background), colorful icons in the sidebar and much more.



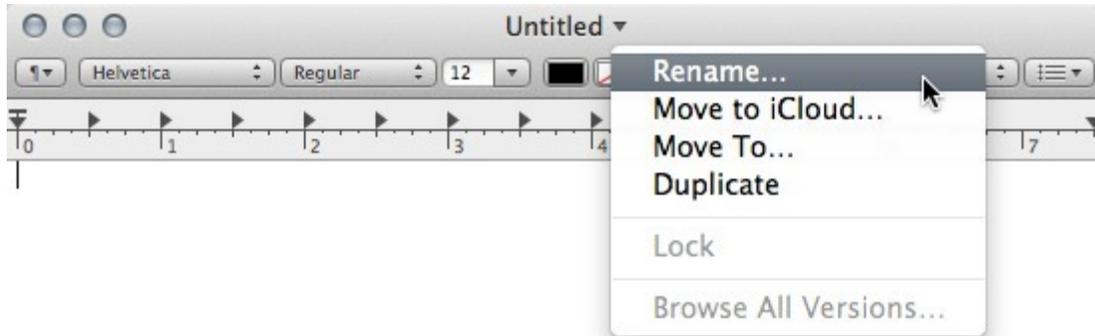
You can pick and choose which options you want to enable. It's [really easy to use](#) and once you start using it, I'm sure that you'll fall in love with it. XtraFinder is a must-have for power users and a great productivity tool to use.

Tips and Tricks

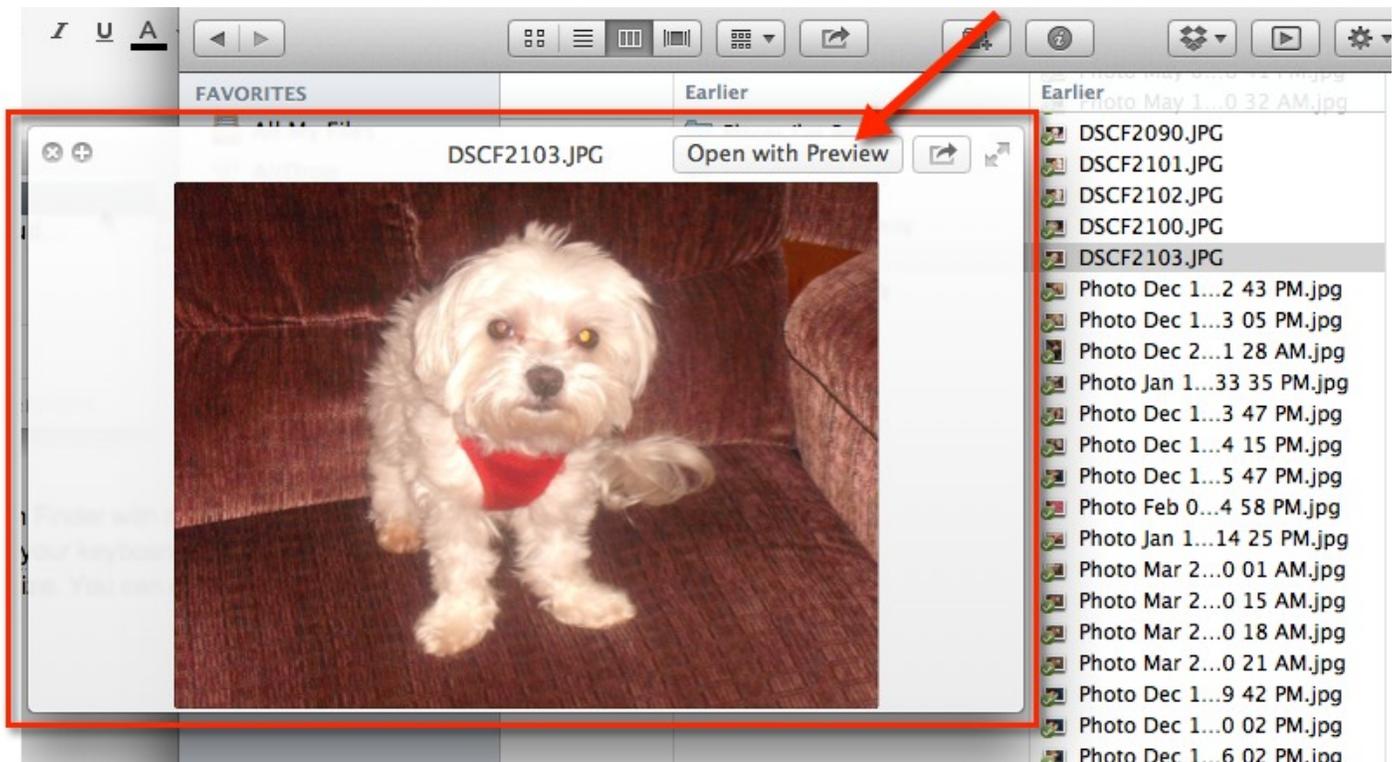


There will always be new tips and tricks popping up regularly; that's just how the Internet works. Since I can't possibly list every single tip or trick for Mac OS X, I've decided to share the top ten most notable tips and tricks that you should be aware of.

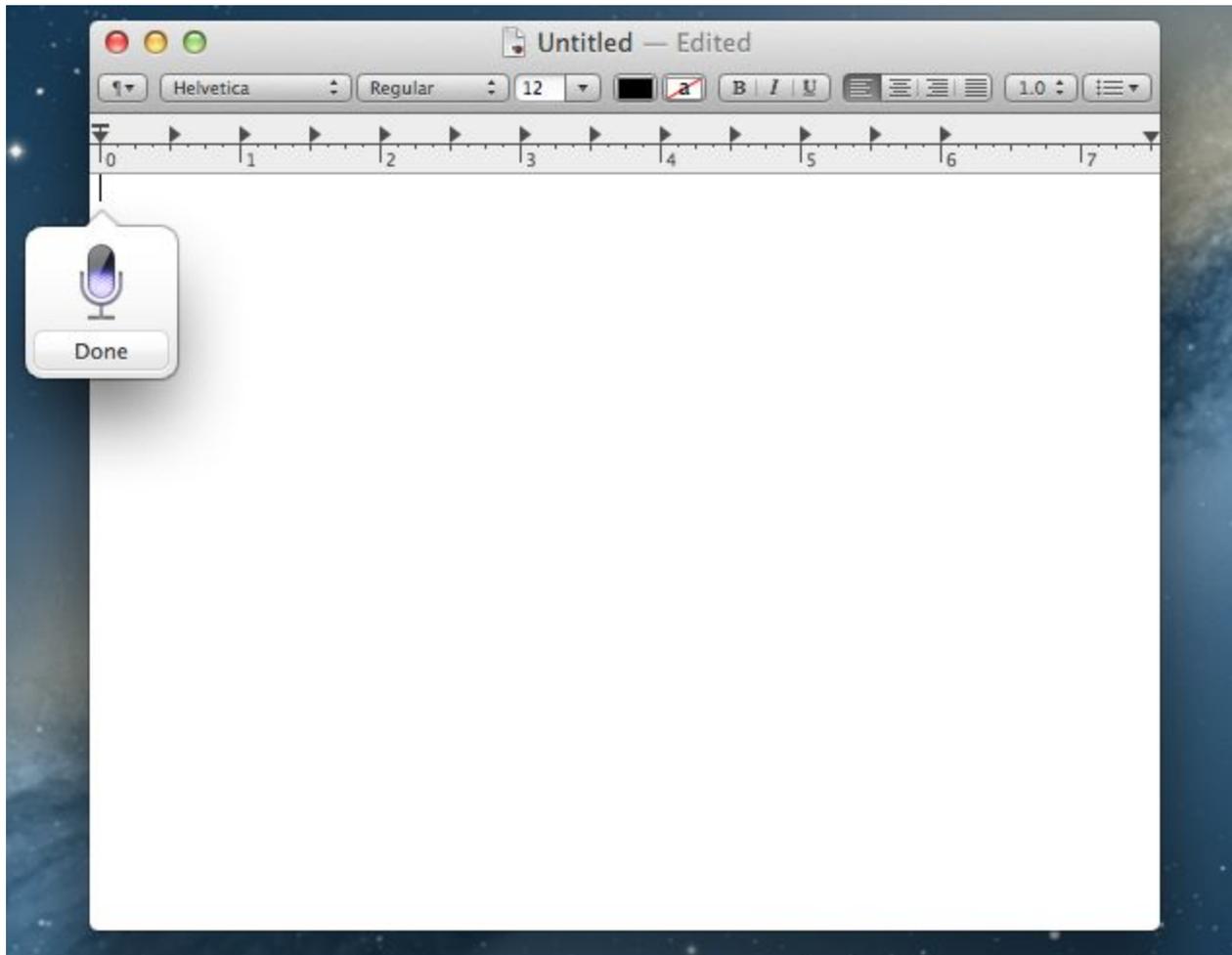
1. You can **rename any document by clicking on the title bar** and choosing "Rename" from the menu that appears. From there, you'll be able to type in a new name right on the title bar.



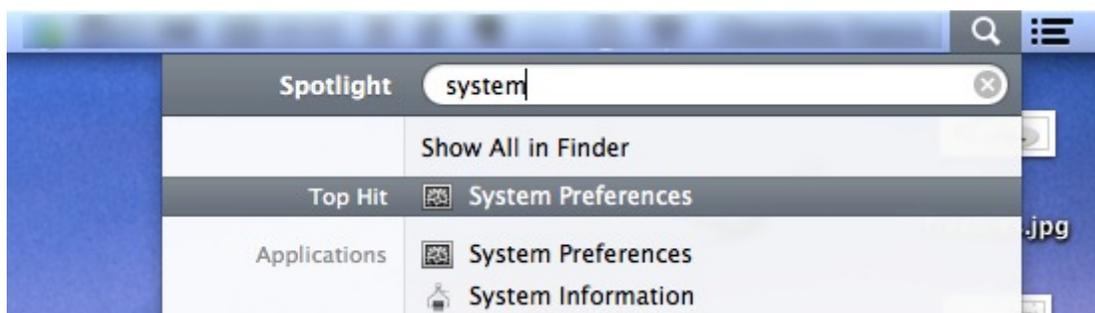
2. You can quickly preview any document, image, or video within Finder with the Quick Look feature. Just click on the item that you want to preview and press the spacebar on your keyboard. The Quick Look feature lets you look at the contents of a file in the Finder, at full or near-full size. You can even view the item in full screen view, zoom in/out, open the item in Preview, and share it (via Mountain's Lion built-in sharing) – all right from within Quick Look.



3. I mentioned this tip above, but it's so useful that I want to mention it again. You can **press the Fn key twice to activate the dictation feature** for just about any text box/field - in any app. Press Fn twice again when you're done.



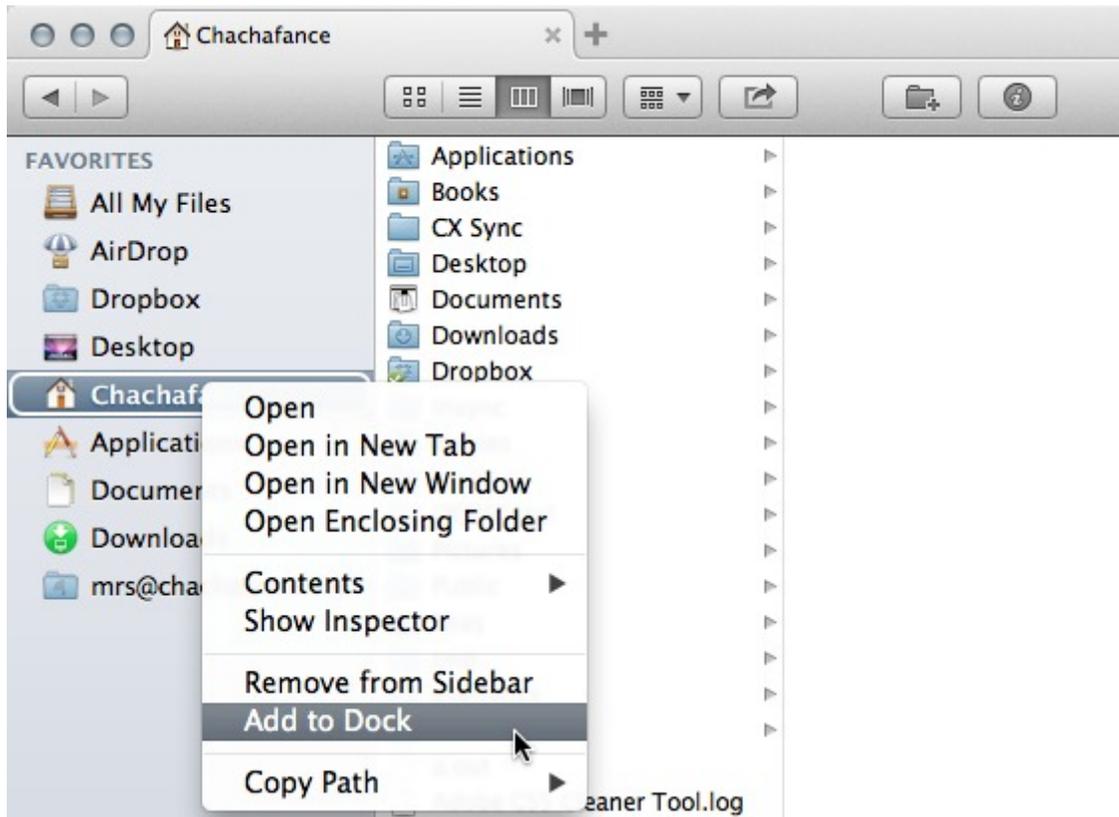
4. You can **press the command key and spacebar to bring up the spotlight search bar**. This is so much easier than having to click on the Spotlight icon, especially since your hand will probably already be on the keyboard. Just press the command key and spacebar, and start typing to bring up results. Press the esc key to exit when you're done.



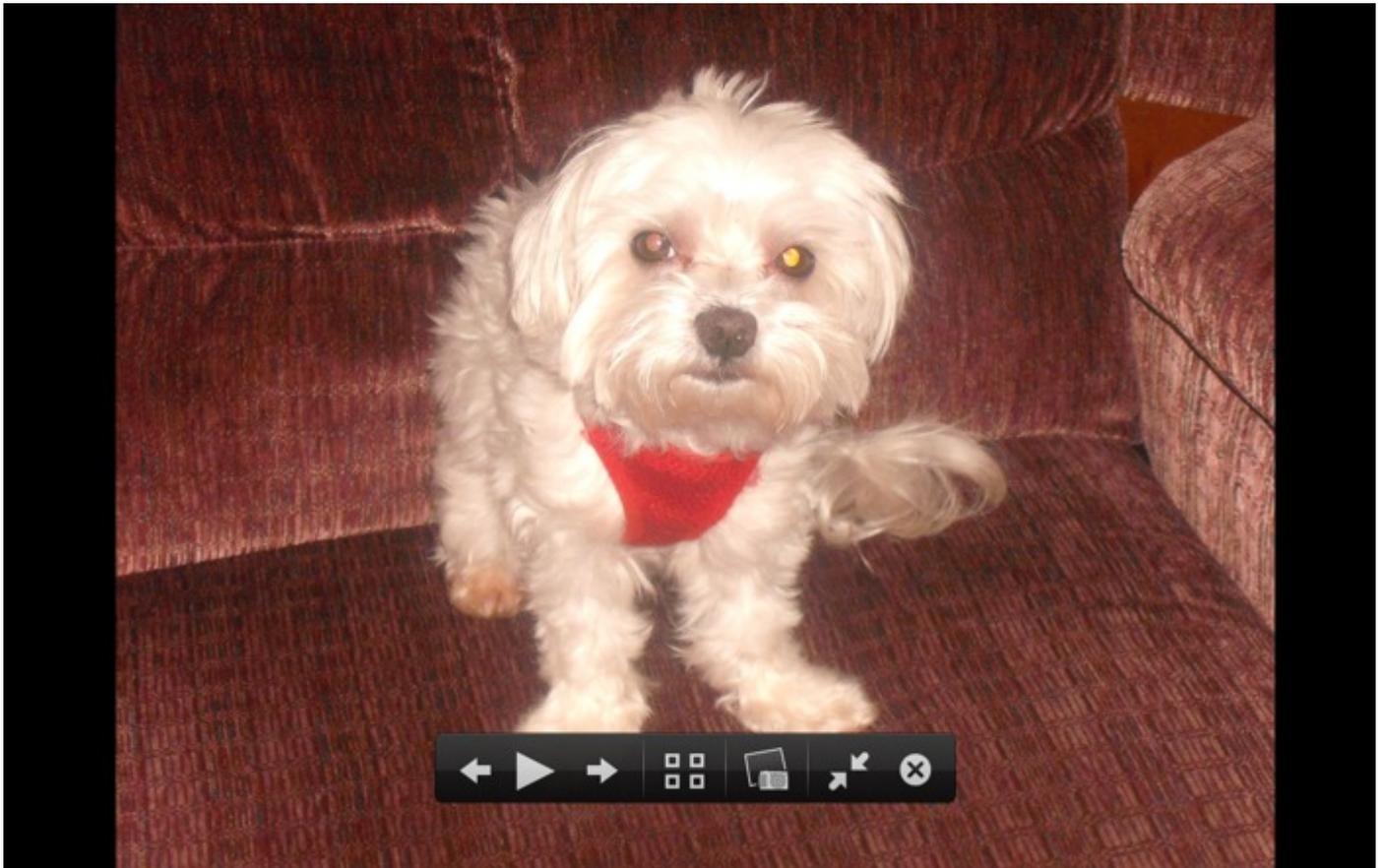
5. You can **organize your widgets into folders**, just like with Launchpad. Once you're in the dashboard, click on the plus sign at the bottom to display all of your installed widgets. From there you can click and hold any widget and when they all start to wiggle, drag-and-drop one widget onto another to create a folder.



6. You can **add items in the Finder sidebar to your Dock**. Just right-click on the item and select the “Add to Dock” option.

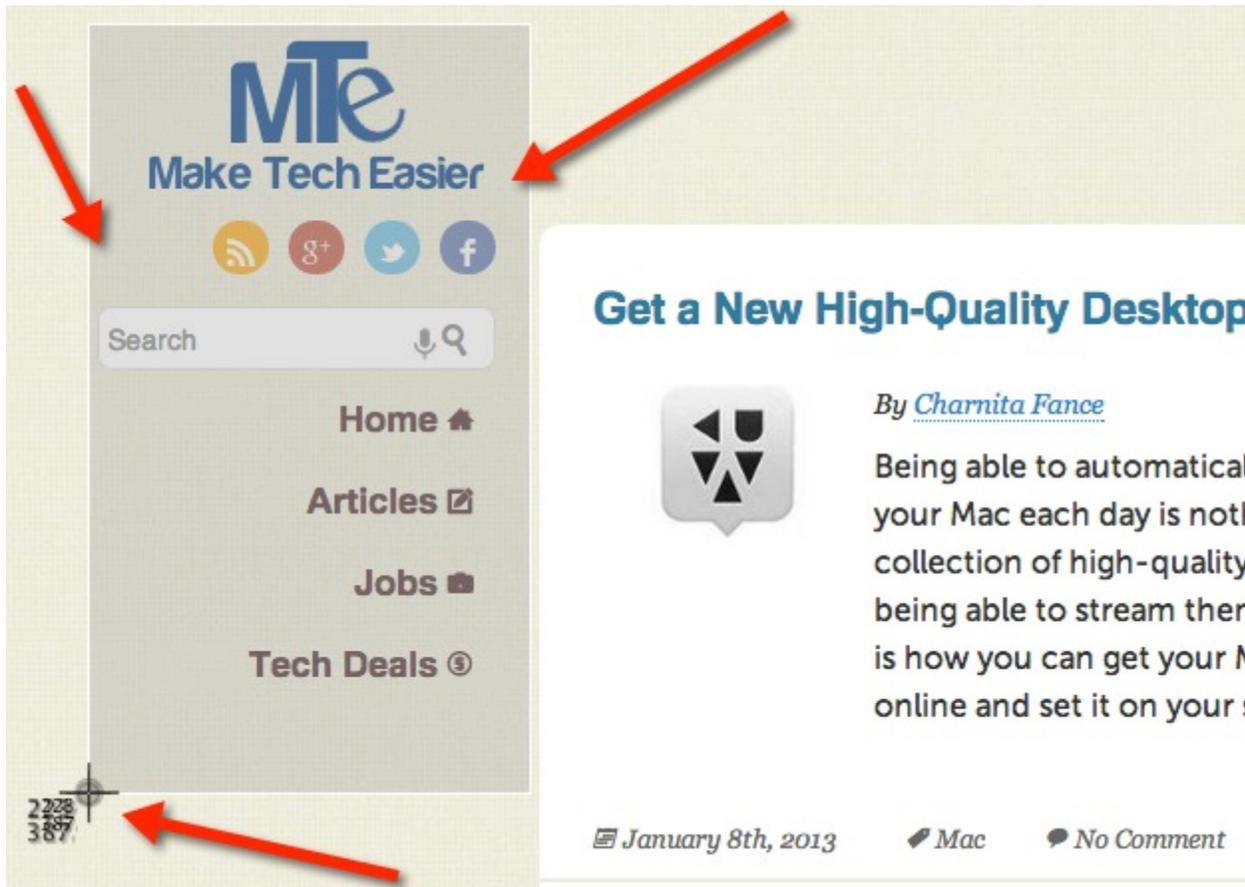


7. Do you have a large amount of images that you want to look through, or maybe you want to show them off to a friend? Well, in Mountain Lion you can **instantly turn your images into a slideshow**. Just select all of your images and press Command+Options+Y on your keyboard. Viola, you have a full-screen slideshow!



8. You can **take screenshots of anything on your desktop with two simple keyboard shortcuts** - no additional app needed.

To take a **screenshot of your entire screen**, press **Command+Shift+3**; the screenshot will be saved right to your desktop. To take a **screenshot of just a specific area of your screen**, press **Command+Shift+4** and drag your mouse to select the area that you want to capture; the screenshot will be saved to your desktop.



9. You can cycle through all of your open applications by clicking on Command+Tab. This will open up the application switcher window. Keep pressing the tab key to move through the applications, and let go of all keys once you're on the application window that you want to bring to the front.



Image Credit: [Mac and I](#)

10. If you have many different windows open for a single application (e.g. your Web browser), you can use the command+` shortcut (the key in front of the #1 on your keyboard) to **cycle through all of the open windows for that one application**. You can then let go of the keys once you have the desired window in focus.

Of course, you can use Mission Control for this too, but many power users feel that this keyboard shortcut is more convenient.



Image Credit: [OSX Daily](#)

Wrapping It All Up



Mountain Lion has definitely set the bar high for operating systems. You just won't find many of its unique, amazing features on any other system. Plus with a focus on iOS and data syncing via iCloud, it definitely makes you want to go out and buy an iPhone and/or iPad if you don't already have one.

Even though we've gone through so much in this eBook, there's still lots more where that came from. Remember that Google is your friend and the Internet is full of other great tips for Mountain Lion. Just don't take too long to learn because you know how Apple is – by the time you master OS X Mountain Lion, it will be time for the next Mac operating system to hit the scene!

Good luck, and I hope that this guide has come in handy for you.

If you have any other questions, need some help, or just want to say hello, I'm just a tweet or Facebook message away; you can also connect with me on Google+.

Thanks for reading!