

SONOMA VALLEY
COMPUTER GROUP

The Newsletter for Sonoma County's Mac and Windows Users Aug/Sept 2009 Vol.1 No 8-9

**SEPTEMBER GUEST SPEAKER
AND NEW COLUMNIST
SEE PG. 5**



Date: Saturday, 9/12/2009
Time: 9 am to 10:30a.m.

Place: Sonoma Public Library
755 West Napa Street, Sonoma, CA

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Mac Q&A at 9 a.m.
FACEBOOK/TWITTER
MYSFACE, ETC.
SEE YOU Sept. 12th

Invite a friend.

Sonoma Valley Computer Group

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BOARD MEETINGS

Open to all members. Call 935-6690 for further information.

MEMBERSHIPS

S.V.C.G. Annual Membership: \$20.
S.V.C.G. Family membership: \$30 (residing at same address). Membership renewals are due and payable at the beginning of each year.

GENERAL MEETINGS

S.V.C.G. meets second Saturday of each month at Sonoma Public Library, 755 West Napa Street; HOURS: Mac: 9AM-10:30AM, Windows: 10:30AM-noon unless otherwise notified. Meetings free; guests welcome.

ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

Sonoma Valley Computer Group Newsletter is published monthly by Sonoma Valley Computer Group. Desktop publishing services donated by: **Kathy Aanestad**. Call: (707) 935-6690, email aanestad@vom.com. © 2009, SVCG. All rights reserved. Sponsored by our local ISP, DataProfessionals, on

19480-8th St. East.

Donating Used Computer Equipment

The URL listed is for the Computer Recycling Center. All of the info needed (and then some) is listed on the site.
<http://www.crc.org/>

SVCG User Group Benefits & Discounts

O'REILLY

Members receive a 20% discount on O'Reilly books and conferences. Contact Kathy for the code.

NEW RIDERS BOOKS

<http://www.newriders.com>

BECOME A NEW RIDERS CLUB MEMBER. You can save up to 20% on all books every day at newriders.com simply by becoming a New Riders Club Member. Membership is **free** and easy. All you have to do is answer a few, short questions in our ongoing, online survey, which you can access on any book page. Don't worry.

All of your information stays with us--we won't sell it or give it away to anyone. After you've filled out the profile, you'll save 20% automatically whenever you log on to <http://www.newriders.com> as a member. It's that easy!

Note that you may use your User Group Coupon Code **ON TOP** of your Club Member savings. Just remember to log in first when making a purchase and then enter the code at checkout as well! Contact Kathy for code.



O'REILLY

PEACHPIT



Peachpit



Take Control
E-Books



JOIN THE PEACHPIT CLUB

You can save 30% on all books every day at peachpit.com simply by becoming a Peachpit Club Member. Membership is free and easy. All you have to do is answer a few, short questions in our ongoing, online survey, which you can access on any book page. Don't worry, all of your information is confidential and stays with us--we won't sell it or give it away to anyone. After you've filled out the survey, you'll save 30% automatically whenever you log on to <http://www.peachpit.com> as a member. It's that easy!

USER GROUP COUPON CODE

User group members should note that once you've become a Peachpit Club member, you may use your user group coupon code ON TOP of the permanent savings you earn as a member of the club. Just make sure you've logged onto the site before you make a purchase to ensure this permanent discount will be in effect, then enter coupon code (case-sensitive) at checkout! This coupon code is an exclusive offer that may not be used in conjunction with any other coupon codes. Contact Kathy for code information.

NO AUGUST MEETING

SEPTEMBER MEETING



GUEST SPEAKER




Want to learn about FACEBOOK, MySPACE, or TWITTER? Then September's meeting is for you. Invite a friend.



Guest speaker, Bruck Kolman, will take us through the steps and show us how, for example, set up a Facebook account.



SVCG

) Plugged into Technology 

This is your August - September newsletter.

Note: There will be NO August SVCG meeting. We're taking a break!

SVCG will resume September 12th. We are very excited to present our guest speaker, Bruce Kolman, who will talk about Social Networking - FACEBOOK, TWITTER, MYSPACE, and more.

**Bring your questions.
See you September 12th.
Mark your calendars and remember —
invite a friend.**



YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Sonoma Valley Computer Group Membership Application/Renewal Form

New Applicant Renewal

Name: _____

Address: _____

Home Phone: _____

Work Phone: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Send \$20 (individual) \$30 (family) check to:

Sonoma Valley Computer Group
POB 649
El Verano, CA 95433

Platform:

Mac PC

WinXP Win98

WinVista OS Leopard OS Tiger OS X

Linux

Computer Make/Model: _____

How did you hear about SVCG?

class club member newspaper newsletter

User Level: Novice Intermediate

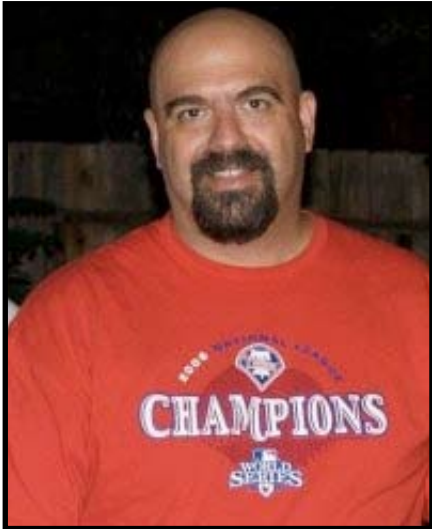
Advanced Expert

*I give permission to use this info in the club
roster which is for members only*

GUEST COLUMNIST

MAC RADIO, ON YOUR IPOD/IPHONE

by Bruce Kolman



I have a 50 minute commute from Windsor to Sonoma every day. Since I had long since given up on the radio, my iPod has become my ever constant traveling companion. When Apple added podcasts to iTunes, I was saved. Since I have a variety of interests I have been able to find podcasts to fill every day of the week, both ways.

I am first and foremost an Apple enthusiast and have been since my Apple IIc. While some fathers and sons talked sports, my father and I talked Macs (and sports). There is a plethora of Mac related podcasts, some produced right here in Sonoma County. If you like hearing your Mac information as well as reading about it in Macworld or Mac Life, I have some podcasts for you. Most of these shows cover both the Macintosh world as well as iPod/iPhone topics including both hardware and software. You can listen on your computer, iPod or iPhone. The advantage is that unless you scour the blogs yourself, you can't get your information any faster. Magazines come out monthly, while these shows are produced weekly. Both **Macworld** and **Mac Life** offer fine podcasts with news and reviews of all things Apple, however there are a variety of podcasts that can cover your need for Mac information.

The quick and dirty news roundup can be found on **Mac OS Ken**. Ken Ray reads the news from around the blogosphere in an entertaining and concise fashion. This podcast is actually released five times a week. He also has a weekly paid program, **Mac OS Ken Day 6**, which is a longer form program with interviews and more in-depth reviews. You can find Ken on iTunes or at www.macosken.com.

The Typical Mac User focuses on how-to's for beginners as well as novice users, while **The Power Mac User** podcast offers how to's for more advanced users. There are several podcasts that have one or two hosts covering "all things Apple". Some of the best of these include the **Mac Core** and **The Mac Cast**. **The Mac Roundtable** is a rotating collection of podcasters that meet online via Skype which offers a wide range of opinions on current goings on in the Mac world. Most of these are not professional broadcasters, but fellow enthusiasts who have harnessed the power of their Macs and produce these shows every week. They are all informative and entertaining.

I must say that my favorite of all these podcasts is **MacBreak Weekly**. It is produced by Leo Laporte (aka The Tech Guy on am radio), right here in Petaluma. It features Leo, Andy Ihnatko, Scott Bourne, and Alex Lindsay talking about the weeks Mac news, as well as offering software and hardware picks of the week. This show is very well produced and most reminds me of those Mac conversations with my father, and now my mother who has become quite the geek in her own right. Leo also produces several other podcasts on a variety of tech topics on the TWIT (This Week in Technology). You can find out more about these shows at www.twit.tv. Scott and Andy also host a podcast called **MYDL**, or Managing Your Digital Life (www.mydl.me). This podcast focuses mostly on what to do with all of your digital media files. Topics include storage, back-up, and the many types of media and devices you can use to man-

age your digital life.

All of these shows can be subscribed to via iTunes, and best of all they are free. I am grateful to all of these fine podcasters for keeping me awake and informed during my sojourn to and from work. I hope you find them useful and that they help you get more out of your Macs.



MAC TIP OF THE WEEK #232

Excerpted from The iPhone Pocket Guide, Third Edition by Christopher Breen

Sync Your iPhoto Pictures with Your iPhone

If you're a Mac user and you store your pictures in iPhoto, you're probably aware that iPhoto automatically groups pictures taken during the same general period—a single day, for example. In the Photos tab within iTunes, you can ask that iPhoto's 1, 3, 5, 10, or 20 most recent events be synched to your iPhone.

\$1.23 BILLION PROFIT HIGHLIGHTS APPLE'S Q3 2009

by Jeff Carlson <jeffc@tidbits.com>

article link: <<http://db.tidbits.com/article/10422>>

Apple reported “record non-holiday quarter revenue and earnings” for the third quarter of its fiscal 2009, boasting a profit of \$1.23 billion on revenue of \$8.34 billion, or \$1.35 per diluted share. (Those numbers compare to a profit of \$1.07 billion on revenue of \$7.64 billion in the year-ago quarter.) The results were bolstered by strong sales of laptops, iPhones, and the iPod touch, even as sales of traditional iPod models declined. (For accounting purposes, Apple's year ends 27-Sep-09.)

<<http://www.apple.com/pr/library/2009/07/21results.html>>

Apple sold 2.6 million Macs, up from 2.2 million in the second quarter of 2009. The company doesn't report sales by model type, but in its quarterly earnings conference call, Chief Financial Officer Peter Oppenheimer said that portables are now two-thirds of all Mac sales. The entire MacBook lineup was refreshed in June, which accelerated sales according to Oppenheimer (see “Apple Refreshes MacBook Line at WWDC,” 2009-06-08).

<<http://db.tidbits.com/article/10332>>

The iPhone, not surprisingly, was a strong performer. Apple sold 5.2 million iPhones during the quarter, though Apple didn't reveal how that number breaks down into iPhone 3G and iPhone 3GS sales. However, Oppenheimer said that the company can't yet make iPhone 3GS units fast enough to fulfill demand. Chief Operating Officer Tim Cook also noted that almost 20 percent of Fortune 100 companies have purchased 10,000 or more iPhones, while some large corporations and government organizations have bought more than 25,000 units each. Because Apple accounts for iPhone (and Apple TV) revenue over the course of the devices' estimated lives, the revenue figures don't include all money from actual sales. The non-GAAP (Generally Accepted Accounting Principles) results - money actually coming in - shows a \$1.94 billion profit on revenue of \$9.74 billion. It's also worth noting that Apple didn't recognize iPhone revenue between 17-Mar-09 (when the iPhone OS 3.0 was announced) and 17-Jun-09 (when the software was released).

The iPod touch was particularly popular during the quarter, growing 134 percent over last year. However, the gains were offset by declining sales of other iPod models, leading to overall sales of 10.2 million iPods, a 7 percent decline from the previous year's quarter. The company expects iPod touch sales to increase in the fourth quarter, an indication that the device will be updated (iPods have traditionally seen updates in that time period).

read/post comments: <<http://db.tidbits.com/article/10422#comments>>

tweet this article: <<http://db.tidbits.com/t/10422>>

EYE TV

<http://www.elgato.com/elgato/na/mainmenu/products/hybrid09/product1.en.html>

EyeTV is sold by El Gato <http://www.elgato.com/> and is basically a stable of devices that allow you to view and record TV on your computer. Some of their devices

can also digitize vhs video tapes. The software can wake your computer from record and then sleep, either as a one-time event or on a schedule. The recordings can then be exported to a multitude of devices (it's fully compatible with anything Mac) and burned to dvds. I'm just a bit rusty on the burning end and wanted 16:9 format with best viewing.



The nice and fun thing about EyeTV is that the viewing window can be full screen or infinitely resized and positioned like any Mac window so you have no excuses not to do your work because A Few Good Men is on again (I've seen it 25+ times and can recite the lines) or the finish of the Tour de France. You can even drag a running TV window into the doc and it will play as a tiny little icon there with sound.

In the past you could use EyeTV with an analog antenna but now that we're all digital TV you would have to hook it to your digital converter box or, like I do, to your cable to get a signal.

What their website says:

Watch HDTV, analog TV, and FM radio on your Mac



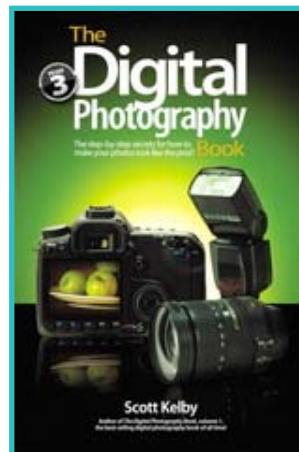
EyeTV Hybrid turns your Mac into the world's most affordable flat-screen HDTV. And because it receives both unencrypted analog and

digital TV, EyeTV Hybrid is an ideal solution for the digital transition. Continue to watch analog cable TV on your Mac, and use your antenna to receive crystal clear HDTV broadcasts as soon as they become available in your area. What's more, EyeTV Hybrid receives FM radio.

Record television for your iPod, iPhone & Apple TV

But EyeTV Hybrid does more than just TV. Thanks to the included EyeTV 3 software, EyeTV Hybrid is also a digital video recorder (DVR) with a comprehensive Program Guide and editing capabilities. It's a DVR that can put your television recordings on a Mac, iPod, iPhone, or Apple TV with one easy click of a button, and can export them for use in other Mac video applications. All this, in one small TV tuner stick.

Peachpit



Digital Photography Book, Volume 3, The

By Scott Kelby
Published Jul 21, 2009
by Peachpit Press.
Your Price: \$24.99
Copyright 2010
Dimensions 6 X 9
Pages: 264
Edition: 1st.
ISBN-10: 0-321-61765-

7

Scott Kelby, author of The Digital Photography Book, volume 1 (the world's best-selling digital photography book of all time), is back with a follow-up to his volume 2 smash best seller, with an entirely new book that picks up right where he left off. It's even more of that "Ah ha—so that's how they do it," straight-to-the-point, skip-the-techno-jargon stuff you can really use today to make your shots even better.

This book truly has a brilliant premise, and here's how Scott describes it: "If you and I were out on a shoot and you asked me, 'Hey Scott, I want the

light for this portrait to look really soft and flattering. How far back should I put this softbox?" I wouldn't give you a lecture about lighting ratios, or flash modifiers. In real life, I'd just turn to you and say, 'Move it in as close to your subject as you possibly can, without it actually showing up in the shot.' Well, that's what this book is all about: you and I out shooting where I answer questions, give you advice, and share the secrets I've learned, just like I would with a friend—without all the technical explanations and techie photo speak."

Each page covers a single concept on how to make your photography better. Every time you turn the page, you'll learn another pro setting, tool, or trick to transform your work from snapshots into gallery prints. If you're tired of taking shots that look "okay," and if you're tired of looking in photography magazines and thinking, "Why don't my shots look like that?" then this is the book for you.

This isn't a book of theory—full of confusing jargon and detailed concepts. This is a book on which button to push, which setting to use, and when to use it. With nearly 200 more of the most closely guarded photographic "tricks of the trade," this book gets you shooting dramatically better-looking, sharper, more colorful, more professional-looking photos every time.

MAC TIP OF THE WEEK #230

Excerpted from Apple Training Series: iLife '09 by Michael E. Cohen et al.

Search iPhoto by Keyword

If your photos in iPhoto have keywords assigned, you can search for the files associated with particular keywords. 1) Choose Keyword from the search field's pop-up menu. The Keywords pane appears. 2) In the Keywords pane, click the desired keyword. The photos with that keyword assigned appear in the viewing area.



MAC TIP OF THE WEEK #227

Excerpted from The Macintosh iLife '09 by Jim Heid

Naming a Face in iPhoto



When iPhoto scans your photos for faces, it's simply identifying photos that it thinks contains eyes, noses and mouths. It's up to you to tell iPhoto who those folks are—a process

called Naming a Face.

Step 1. Select a photo containing a face you want to name.

Step 2. Click the Name button. The photo appears with a box enclosing each face.

Step 3. Click the unnamed face text, type the person's name, and then press the Return key. If the photo contains additional unnamed faces, repeat this step to name each face. To move to different photos and name the faces they contain, click the arrow buttons. Are you done naming? Click Done.



STILL AFRAID OF SOCIAL NETWORKING?

Still Afraid of Social Networks? Top 4 Objections and How to Disappear Them

by Julia D. Stege, MFA
@magicalmarketer

I have been giving a lot of talks and classes lately on Social Networking and I've been getting some feedback from folks that they're still afraid of the likes of Twitter and Facebook. There are so many reasons people have for avoiding these free online marketing tools. The ones I hear the most are:

1. I will lose my privacy.
2. I don't have the time to do one more thing.
3. People say meaningless things like what they're eating. Why do I care?
4. I don't understand how to use Social Networks to attract perfect customers.

I promise you, I feel your pain. I really do. There was once a time when I said all of these things about sites I now use daily to grow my list, create buzz about my offerings, and expand my reputation online. But instead of giving up, I investigated, spent time, learned, and used the social networks to great advantage. And even though everyone is talking about Twitter and Facebook now, most Internet marketers weren't even on these sites a few months ago. So relax! Everyone is new at this. And I'll give you some tips to disappear those objections you may still have to Facebooking and Tweeting your way to Internet marketing success.

Objection 1: I'll lose my privacy.

Frankly, my gut reaction to this objection is, "privacy is dead." Anyone who markets online is exposing themselves to the world in bigger ways than ever was possible before. There are great advantages to being this exposed, including improved reputation, expanded influence, and wider selection of potential



customers. My second reaction is, "what do you have to hide?" I always promote an authentic approach to marketing because your most perfect customers are attracted to your true self. Social Networks offer your contacts an opportunity to get to know the real you, and if they don't like you, they're not your perfect customers! That said, it's a good idea to keep your personal information private, such as your personal email, home phone, and other info, if you don't want folks contacting you night and day. Create business contact avenues that you can turn off when the business day ends.

Objection 2: I don't have the time to do one more thing

Let me offer a scenario. Everyone in business needs to network to spread the word about their offerings and meet new contacts. How much time does it take to go to one networking meeting? Consider you have to get dressed up which takes about an hour, and then you must get to the event, say another half hour. The event is 2-3 hours, and then you have to drive home. That's a total of 4 - 5 hours! If you were to spend that time networking online you have the potential to reach a much larger audience,

and your web properties will stay up for months or even years attracting your customers 24/7.

Objection 3: People say meaningless things like what they're eating. Why do I care?

This is a common complaint. You go to your network and feel inundated by nonsense. Here's a tip: If you don't like what people are writing about on your networks, you're not connecting to the right people. To attract the right people, do a keyword search using words that reflect your purpose and interests and connect with them! Search for groups of like minded people and friend them. After a while you'll find your networks filled with helpful tidbits and inspirations that uplift and educate you. Spend some time responding to those folks who have said something interesting and encourage them. Make sure you offer helpful and interesting information too, so it's not just a one way relationship!

Objection 4: I don't understand how to use Social Networks to attract my perfect customers.

You're not alone! Most people know how to have fun, connect, and chat with folks online once they get the hang of it, but attracting customers? That's a different story. Consider this: Dale Carnegie who wrote *How to Win Friends and Influence People* taught us that people will buy from us when they know us, like us and trust us. Making friends online is a crucial step in this process. The second step is in creatively letting them know about what you're offering for sale, and be authentic.

I realize it's not that simple for some folks who need a helping hand. That's why I teach a 10 week program for conscious entrepreneurs who need guidance through the process of getting on the right social networks, using the right words to attract folks, and using the best tools to create new business relationships. I also offer free tele-classes once per month to give you some valuable tips on how to get started on the Social Networks. Visit <http://www.graphicgirlz.com/apco.html> to learn more and register for my upcoming classes. It's my pleasure to empower you to attract your perfect customers online.

Magical Marketer Julia D. Stege, MFA helps people attract their perfect customers with a unique combination of Law of Attraction, Wildly Attractive Websites™,

Branding from the Heart™, and smart Social Networking strategies. If you're ready to start attracting your perfect customers now, get Julia's free Magical Marketing Toolkit at <http://www.magicalmarketingtoolkit.com>

WHAT IS SOCIAL NETWORKING?



<http://www.whatissocialnetworking.com/>

Social Networking - perhaps you've heard of it before, but are not quite sure what it means.

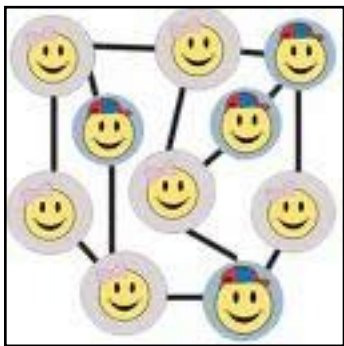
Social networking is the grouping of individuals into specific groups, like small rural communities or a neighborhood subdivision, if you will. Although social networking is possible in person, especially in universities, high schools or in the workplace, it is most popular online. This is because unlike most high schools, colleges, or workplaces, the internet is filled with millions of individuals who are looking to meet other internet users, to gather first hand information or experiences about a medical condition, develop friendships, find vacation spots or to start a professional relationship. Connecting Online

When it comes to online social networking, websites are commonly used. These websites are known as social sites. Social networking websites function like an online community of internet users. Depending on the website in question, many of these online community members share a common interest such as hobbies, religion, or politics. Once you are granted access to a social networking website you can begin to socialize. This socialization may include reading the profile pages of other members and possibly even contacting them.

The friends that you can make are just one of the many benefits to social networking online. Another one of those benefits includes diversity because the internet gives individuals from all around the world access to

social networking sites. This means that although you are in the United States, you could develop an online friendship with someone in Denmark. Not only will you make new friends, but you just might learn a thing or two about new cultures or new languages and learning is always a good thing.

Networking with Friends As mentioned, social networking often involves grouping specific individuals or organizations together. While there are a number of social networking websites that focus on particular interests, there are others that do not. The websites without a main focus are often referred to as “traditional” social networking websites and usually have open memberships. This means that anyone can become a member, no matter what their hobbies, beliefs, or views are. However, once you are inside this community, you can begin to create your own network of friends and members that do not share common interests or goals.



As I’m sure you’re aware, there are dangers associated with social networking: data theft and viruses are on the rise. The most prevalent danger though often involves online predators or individuals who claim to be someone that they are not. Although danger does exist with networking online, it also exists with networking out in the real world, too. Just like you’re advised when meeting strangers at clubs and bars, school, or work - you are also advised to proceed with caution online. By being aware of your surroundings and who you are talking to, you should be able to safely enjoy social networking online. Just use common sense and listen to your inner voice; it will tell you when something doesn’t feel right.

Once you’ve convinced yourself that you are sufficiently informed, you can begin to search for networking communities to join. This can easily be done by performing a standard internet search. Your search will likely return a number of results, including MySpace,

FriendWise, FriendFinder, Yahoo! 360, Facebook, Orkut, and Classmates.

Social Networking and Website Promotion

The Internet has evolved into a into a social environment in addition to an information clearinghouse. Harness the viewership of the Internet with Social Networking and make it work for you.

Utilize social networking:

- As an online marketer;
- To meet other like-minded people sharing the same interests; and
- To find special friendships or perhaps something more.

Do you have a website that you would like to promote? Consider social networking as a platform to announce yourself and your internet business. If you incorporate social networking and internet participation into your online marketing efforts, you’ll begin to see your profits grow in response. Just how much depends upon the amount of time, effort and hard work you’re willing to put into it.

If you are a member of an online forum and sign-off with your name or send e-mails (as most of us do), perhaps you are aware that you can create a signature line. Often, you can choose a little smiley or some other icon or even upload your own photograph and attach it to a signature that you’ve created - much like the one we create in Outlook. Then, add your website name directly underneath your signature.

Have more than one website? Then go slow. List only one website at each forum that you belong to. Some of the social networking sites like MySpace, don’t like blatant self-advertising, but you can discreetly put in a small blurb with your signature.

Then join in the “talk” at forums or blogs and post your name at the end. Easier said than done though because the hardest part of social networking is finding the time to participate; especially if you have a

full-time job. If you just lurk around, reading the posts without participating, you won't get the attention you need. So, only join the groups and forums that you really need an association with. Then, each time you post, you will create an association in the reader's mind between your signature line, your website and any product(s) or services that you offer.

You might also want to consider starting your own personal social site. They don't necessarily originate with large companies or a few Fortune 500 folks. Social sites are quickly turning into niche social sites so it may be a good time for you to make the decision to move ahead in life. Test the waters - who knows, starting your own social networking site might just be the big break (\$\$) you've been waiting for. There are specific articles on the rest of this site relative to meeting people online. Just be careful, and watch your teenagers, too. These are trying times for everyone. It's not like the 60's and 70's. . . or was that the 50's?

Social Networking Sites: Should You Join?

Are you interested in meeting new people online?

Social networking websites allow internet users to communicate with each other and make connections - whether romantic, personal or professional. Despite the fact that social networking website have rapidly increased in popularity and their popularity is expected to rise, there are many internet users who are unsure if actually joining is for them or, for that matter, whether they should allow their teens to join. Most teenagers want to fit in and find other friends to talk to so they'll join MySpace or Facebook and Twitter.

Think about why social sites are so popular. Doing so will enable you to determine why other internet users make the decision to join an online social network. After a close examination, you may even find that those are the same reasons why you want to join -to easily meet other internet uses.

Before the advent of social networking websites, it

was difficult to meet other internet users. Meet other internet users. If you tried, you would have to rely on chat rooms, instant messaging services and often communicate via email. As nice as these popular internet features are, they are not always considered safe. With chat rooms and the like, we're often given little reassurance that a person is who they claim to be. We just took it on faith that people were being honest and forthright about themselves. Before the introduction of social networking sites' "profiles" of its membership, there was no way that you could learn more about a particular internet user, even if you wanted to. But, social networking websites have changed that.

Not only have social networking websites made it safer to meet people online, it also allows us to meet people that share the same similar interests. Most social network-websites allow you to create your own profile; in fact, many even give you your own webpage. These profiles or pages will allow you to share information about yourself, including your likes and dislikes, hobbies, education, etc. Since all other network members complete their own pages and profiles, it should be fairly easy for you to meet with other internet users, especially those who enjoy or believe in the same things that you do.



Another one of the many reasons why you should join a social networking website is because you literally have a wide variety of different choices. As social networking websites have increased in popularity, so did the number of websites that could be found online. Although Facebook is often deemed the most popular online social networking website, there are others that are just as easy or as much fun to use. Twitter has become a very popular site not only for keeping up with your friends, but for advertising as well. You should easily be able to find those websites by performing a standard internet search for "social networking websites."

Sharing common interests In your search, for social

networking websites, you will come across a number of different networks. Many of those sites will have a particular focus. Unlike MySpace, which accepts just about any internet user, there are online social networks that aim to accept internet users that have a particular hobby, view, or belief. Online, it is not uncommon to find social networking websites that focus on politics, religion, pets, sports, medicine, pharmaceuticals, weight loss, depression, well, there are more than enough sites out there for you to find one you might be interested in joining.

If you are unsure about joining an online networking community, specialty networking sites may be your best bet. They are a great way to test the waters because they automatically pair you with internet users who have interests, beliefs as you even sites cat lovers: com - as munities and art lov-com.



the same views, or be-do. There are for dog and dogchannel. well as com-for artists ers: gazzag.

Perhaps, the greatest reasons why should join a social networking website is because most are free to use. In addition to free social networks, there are online networks in which you are required to pay to join. Although you may not want to pay for something that you can obtain for free elsewhere, you will find that most paid networks offer you more membership benefits when compared to free social Meeting people online.networking sites.

Due to the fact that most social networking websites are free to use or at least, free to try, you are encouraged to give them a try. If you are unsatisfied with your experience, you can easily cancel your membership; often without any hassels. Then keep looking until you find a good fit.

The USO® is a community that's been around for over 65 years. The USO offers many ways for U.S. citizens to get involved in a social networking kind-of-way.

Social Networking Websites: How to Find Them

Each day, in the United States, millions of Americans communicate with each other online.

In addition to communicating with other Americans, many are communicating with those on the other side of the world.

When it comes to finding social networking websites, you have a number of different options. You may want to search with the words "social networking" or "social networking websites." The focus of your search should be your main interest or topic. If you are a veteran, look for military social networking; a christian, search for religious social networking sites; love animals, search for pet lovers social networking. Place the main word in front of the search phrase or at the end. Either will return many results.

Try words/phrases like:

- social networking sites for [a subject of interest]
- online community for [your hobbies]
- social networking communities for. . .

Should You Create Your Own Social Networking Site?

Social networking is not just another fad. Social networks are here to stay. Facebook has 200,000,000 registered users; Classmates has 50,000,000; and MySpace has 253,000,000 [Source:Wikipedia.com 5-13-09]. While it's true that some social sites will crash and burn on the information highway, others will spring up and blossom into smaller more specific communities.

These smaller social networking websites offer a more personalized experience by tightly focusing on the interests of its members rather than trying to build a brand. They are known as specialty networking sites or "niche" social networking sites, and people are willing to move from network to network

until they find that one special site where they feel a genuine sense of connection and community.

More and more large companies, universities and small businesses are getting their own social websites up and running so they can connect with their employees or students; fans or customers; and people from all walks of life and socioeconomic backgrounds. The types of social networking websites differ of course, due to the diverse nature of people, organizations and businesses. Naturally, then, there is a clear distinction between social networks that help you do something, like marketing your business or accomplish certain goals and those networks that offer a “social” connection.

Are you thinking about developing your own social site?

stand-alone social site
community network-
corporate the answer
you most need profes-
The con-
one must
in creat-
network site



Creating a community or adding social networking to a website? If is yes, then likely will social help. siderations think about ing a social

are endless and most of us aren't even sure where to begin. Even though social site designs may look like normal websites, a lot more is happening in the background than most people are aware of.

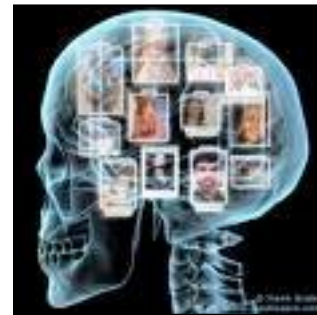
What do you want from your social network? Will you develop and host your own application, or hire someone? Are you aware of ownership and intellectual property rights? What about the development process and functionality of the site? These questions and many, many more will need to be reviewed and answered by everyone involved in the project.

There's layout and design, registration systems, creating custom signup for users, customizing fields for users to describe themselves, photos, videos, email messages, calendars, setting up user groups and so

forth. Additionally, there are important security measures that need to be addressed to prevent malicious attacks, unsolicited comments and profanity filters. Least we not forget, the site needs an administrator; someone with the technical knowledge and the time to monitor the site; to suspend or remove users who abuse their membership.

Online social networking is a phenomenon that has drastically changed the landscape of how people connect and socialize with each other. That socialization is possible through the internet and the social networking websites that are built by programmers and designers, individually or through a company. People interact and connect with each other from and “on” those websites. They provide a foundation in which society reacts to new ideas through the viewpoints and opinions of others; sharing ideas and stories; find-

tion and in-
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websites
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are happier
them.

So, if you're seriously thinking about starting a social networking site, talk with the professionals first; someone who has experience in web development and programming. Whether it's an individual or company, tell them what you have in mind, what service you want to provide, a niche product that you want to promote, or if you simply want your own personal networking website. It could be fun and profitable, too!

Happy Social Networking!



PROTECT YOUR MAC

By Matt Klein
Smalldog.com



We see a ton of damaged computers in the service department. It seems more common in our South Burlington tech room, as it's right down the street from the

University of Vermont and, well, it's a college town. There are two primary types of physical damage: liquid spills and impact damage.

Liquid spills often mean the end of a machine's useful life. If you spill anything in your computer, immediately turn it off by unplugging the MagSafe and removing the battery. Open it up and turn the machine upside down. Leave it alone. **FOR A WEEK.** If you bring your spill-damaged machine in for service, we will not begin testing for a week; this ensures that all the water has evaporated.

If you drop your computer, it's safe to try turning it on in most cases. Depending on the impact, the machine will probably have obvious denting and perhaps even a shattered screen. I've seen quite a few dropped MacBooks come in with a dim screen, very little denting, and functioning external video.

Dim screens can be caused by a failure of the LCD itself, the inverter board, various cables, main logic board, or a loose connection anywhere along the line. In the MacBook that inspired this article, a very severe drop caused the connection from main logic board to inverter cable to come loose, resulting in a dim screen.

Of course, the best way to prevent impact damage is to keep your laptop in a well padded case.

TIP OF THE WEEK: GOOGLE LIKE A PRO

By Matt Klein
Smalldog.com



While there are plenty of viable search engines out there like Yahoo, Dogpile, and even Microsoft's new Bing, we all know, love, and constantly use Google. There's more to Google than simple search of the whole Internet. Here are a few ways to Google like a pro.

Exact phrase search is possible by wrapping your search terms in quotations marks. For example, "small dog electronics" vs. small dog electronics will bring up slightly different results, particularly if you use the Google News or Images service.

You can exclude words from a search by using a hyphen (-). Form your search for Lance Armstrong articles that don't talk about doping by typing "Lance Armstrong" -doping.

You can get the definition of a word by typing define: obscure.

To show search results within a certain numerical range, you want to type your search terms followed by the range. For example, Michael Jackson 1970...1980.

For web sites with less-than-stellar search engines, why bother when you can use Google to search any page. For example, "small dog electronics" site:timesargus.com will give news in the Barre/Montpelier Times Argus newspaper.

If you read something fascinating and wonder who else links to the page you're on, type link:twitter.com/hellosmalldog

Finally, you can do unit conversion right in Google. For example, 23 miles to km, 56 USD to Yen, 1 yard to meters.

I'm sure there is a ton of other stuff Google can do, but I'll leave you with these Googling tips to find them for yourselves!

BETA NO MORE

By Kali Hilke
Smalldog.com



Gmail, Google Calendar, Google Docs and GTalk had their beta labels removed.

Gmail, in particular, has been operating in beta mode for a considerable amount of time—it launched in 2004—so it seems Google finally feels ready to release it officially into the wild...?

The beta label clearly doesn't mean as much as it used to, since there was no big announcement to speak of when the apps switched over from their former mode. They all look and behave the same way they did yesterday, as far as I can tell.

However, there are changes, and they're aimed specifically at businesses. Google wants their offerings to be viewed as legitimate competitors to Microsoft et al. It's understandable that no matter how reliable a service may seem, the beta label would still keep many companies from utilizing it on a professional level. Again, Gmail is a good example.

Gmail now has offline access to mail and calendars, among other new features. There's better contact management for Google Apps and better compatibility with Microsoft Outlook.



FIVE COOL AND USEFUL TECHNIQUES FOR IMOVIE '09 AND IDVD

Jeff Carlson
Sample Chapter is provided courtesy of Peachpit Press

It would be easy to overlook some video-editing and DVD-creation features in iMovie '09 and iDVD, as they aren't immediately apparent to a new (or even longtime) user. But these tips from Jeff Carlson, author of iMovie '09 and iDVD for Mac OS X: Visual QuickStart Guide, are immediately useful - and loads of fun.

iMovie '09 is a huge update to Apple's consumer video-editing software—one of those releases where the flagship new features, such as image stabilization or the Precision Editor, really represent just the top crust of what's been baked in. In the process of updating my book iMovie '09 and iDVD for Mac OS X: Visual QuickStart Guide, I found myself slicing-and-dicing the new edition to make room for all of the new material.

The situation with iDVD is oddly the reverse; Apple pretty much left the DVD-creation program alone this time around (with one important exception, as I point out in this article). You can now export a movie directly from iMovie to iDVD, a feature that went absent in iMovie '08, but everything else is the same.

For that reason, and to keep the physical size (and price) of my book reasonable, I decided to pull out the iDVD section and offer it as a free download to

anyone who wants it. Click the Downloads tab on Peachpit's book page, or just click here, to open the PDF of the iDVD section of the book. Then save your own free copy—more than 70 pages!

For this article, I've chosen five tips that are easy to overlook, but that can greatly improve your video-editing and DVD-creation experience.

Tip 1: Add Any Location to a Travel Map

One of the flashy new features in iMovie '09 is the capability to create travel maps. Specify two locations, such as cities, and iMovie creates an animated map that draws a red line between the two. iMovie includes a database of 4,000 locations (cities, airports, and many landmarks), which sounds like a lot but doesn't cover the globe.

However, if you know the latitude and longitude of a location, iMovie can place it on one of its maps. Since you probably don't have that information easily at hand (heck, I still get lost in my hometown), do this:

1. Go to Get Lat Lon (<http://www.getlatlon.com/>), a website that looks up coordinates for you.
2. Enter a place name, such as Elko NV, and click the Zoom to Place button. The specified place appears on the map, with the latitude and longitude coordinates listed below it (in this case, 40.83538, -115.767178). Select those coordinates on the screen, and copy them by choosing Edit > Copy.
3. In iMovie, add a map to your project (drag one from the Maps and Backgrounds browser to the Project browser). iMovie's inspector (a floating window) appears, with San Francisco as the Start Location.
4. Click a location button to flip the inspector and reveal the Choose Location window.
5. Paste the copied coordinates (Edit > Paste) into the field at the top. In the field at the bottom of the window, enter a name for the location (see Figure 1). You can change the name here for any location, even those that are in iMovie's database.
6. Click OK.



Figure 1 You can add a precise location to the maps in your movies.

7. To complete the journey, you can then specify another location. To preview the effect, press the slash (/) key to play just that clip (see Figure 2).



Figure 2 Mark more than one location to create an animated line that connects the two locations.

Tip 2: Learn the Best Keyboard Shortcuts

When you use any program for an extended length of time, you'll discover that keyboard shortcuts can dramatically improve the experience. Video editing takes time, so Apple's engineers have incorporated several keyboard aids to make the process easier or to unlock hidden features that don't warrant a button, menu item, or preference. Here are a few of my favorites, each of which you can do with one hand on the keyboard and one hand on the mouse as you edit.

* iMovie's Project browser displays your movie's filmstrip in rows that wrap in the same way a paragraph of text wraps in your word processor. When you get to the far-right edge of a row, the movie continues from the far-left edge of the next row down. When you skim (move your mouse pointer over the filmstrip), the Viewer displays the footage under the mouse pointer.

* However, as you move the pointer past the right edge of a row, the preview in the Viewer stops. This behavior makes sense, because you should be free to move the mouse wherever you want, but it's annoy-



iMovie 09 and iDVD for Mac OS X:
Visual QuickStart Guide

ing if you're trying to skim through your movie.

* To continue previewing the footage, hold down the Shift key as you skim past the right edge, and iMovie jumps the playhead down to the next row. (View this trick in action on my website.) <http://jeff-carlson.typepad.com/imovievqs/2009/02/imovie-09-tip-wraparound-cursor.html>

* Whenever the playhead crosses the filmstrip, you see a preview in the Viewer. On older machines, this behavior can slow performance. To disable the skimming preview temporarily, hold down the Control key as you mouse over the area.

* When you add a title to your movie by dragging one of the title styles from the Titles browser, iMovie highlights a portion of the clip to which you're about to apply the title. Depending on where the playhead is, you can position the title at the beginning, end, or across the entire clip. For a bit more control, hold down the Shift key when dragging the clip. iMovie highlights a four-second area of the filmstrip, giving you more precision over where the title begins. As you drag, the Viewer displays the frame where the title will begin. This method also lets you straddle a title over multiple clips, instead of placing the title and then moving it into position later.

Tip 3: Change Clip Speed

iMovie '08, the complete rewrite of iMovie, lacked a feature that we'd grown accustomed to using in earlier versions: Changing the speed of a clip. No slow-motion replay of your kid's winning goal, no sped-up footage of you assembling the entire Lego Millennium Falcon.

Fortunately, the feature to change clip speed returned in iMovie '09. Double-click a clip to bring up the Clip Adjustments inspector and adjust the Speed slider.

But here's a tip that's hidden from view: You're not limited to the amounts provided by the slider, which offers only a few preset tick marks. The slowest setting using the slider is 12.5% of normal speed; the fastest is 800%. Those are both reasonable amounts, but iMovie can do better.

In the text field to the right of the Speed slider, enter any number between 5 and 2000 percent. You can

ignore the slider entirely. For example, if 50% is too fast but 25% is too slow, plug 46 into the field, as shown in Figure 3, and see whether that timing works better.



Figure 3 You have more control over iMovie '09 clip speed than you think you do.

Tip 4: Use Smart Titles, Maps, and Photos

The iMovie designers engineered some smarts into a few areas of iMovie '09 that aren't immediately apparent. For example, the Four Corners title may seem broken at first. The two lines of text you specify fly into the lower-left corner of the screen from the left and bottom edges. The text then flies out toward the top and right edges. However, add the Four Corners title again, and the text arrives from the top and right edges, hangs out at the upper-right corner, and then exits via the left and bottom edges. Do that two more times, and you'll have taken care of all four corners.

Another example is the Date/Time title. You can't edit it, but that's okay; it displays the clip's actual date and time at the bottom of the screen, as shown in Figure 4. (It doesn't advance like a real-time ticker, though.)



Figure 4 iMovie's Date/Time title shows the clip's actual date at the bottom of the screen.

Now let's turn our attention to maps. You can set a

Start Location and an End Location for your interactive map. Assuming that you probably want to go back home at some point, iMovie automatically uses the previous map's End Location as the Start Location for the next map you make. This little convenience is great when you're putting together a journey with multiple destinations, making it easier to hop from New York to London to Madrid to Tokyo without having to reenter a lot of the same data.

Or look at the Ken Burns Effect that's automatically applied to photos you add to your project. By default, the effect slowly zooms out. But when you add another photo, the effect is reversed, and the camera zooms in on the picture. So, when you add 10 photos back to back, without doing anything else you end up with a nice series of pictures that smoothly zoom out, in, out, and so on.

Tip 5: Mark Chapters and Send to iDVD

Among its list of omissions, one longtime iMovie feature that didn't make it into iMovie '08 was support for sending a project to iDVD. Turning your movie into a DVD involved a lengthy trip through GarageBand (or iMovie HD 6) before arriving at iDVD. iMovie '09 now includes this long-awaited feature, with a simpler way to create the markers for DVD chapters. The iDVD application barely changed at all; its version number has been incremented from 7.0.2 to 7.0.4, and Apple removed the year from the title, so now it's just iDVD.

But there's a significant change that will catch longtime iDVD users by surprise. Let's take a look.

In iMovie, make sure that you have the program's advanced tools enabled (choose iMovie > Preferences and click the Show Advanced Tools option in the General section of the window). After you close the window, two small buttons appear at the upper-right corner of the Project browser, as shown in Figure 5.

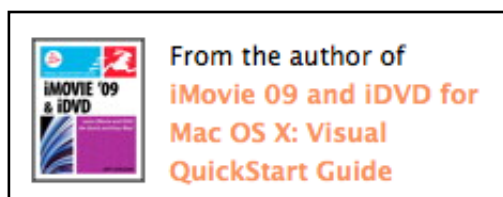


Figure 5 Turn on Show Advanced Tools in iMovie, and you'll see a couple of extra small buttons in the Project browser.

Drag the icon on the right, identified with a white arrow, to a location in your project where you want a chapter to begin. Then type a name in the marker that appears, which is the chapter name that appears in iDVD (see Figure 6). That's it. You can move the marker to a new location as needed, simply by dragging it.

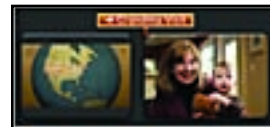


Figure 6 When you send your movie to iDVD, this marker location appears as a chapter in the DVD's menu.

To send the project to iDVD, choose Share > iDVD. iMovie generates a full version of the movie, launches iDVD, and creates a new project.

Now here's the unusual part. When you preview the project in iDVD, the movie begins playing from the beginning automatically, before you even see the main menu. To make the DVD creation process as easy as possible for inexperienced users, Apple decided to load a full version of the movie in iDVD's Auto Play well. Click the Show the DVD Map button and look at the icon in the upper-left corner; that's the Auto Play well (see Figure 7).



Figure 7 Any content in the iDVD Auto Play well begins playing as soon as the DVD is loaded.

Anything put into that icon automatically plays as soon as a disc is loaded. Normally that's a nice way to start the DVD, with a quick slideshow or introduction, but in this case it's the whole movie.

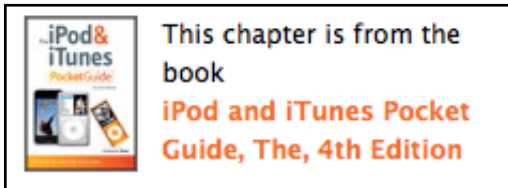
To prevent the movie playing first thing, simply drag the contents out of the Auto Play well. When you preview the project in iDVD or burn it to disc, the main menu will be the first thing to appear.

iTunes and You

By Christopher Breen

<http://www.peachpit.com/articles/article.aspx?p=1278996>

Sample Chapter is provided courtesy of Peachpit Press



To best understand what makes the iPod's world turn, you must be familiar with how it and iTunes 8 work together to move music (as well as pictures, videos, and games, in the case of some recent iPods) on and off your iPod. In the following pages, you'll see just that.

A high-performance automobile is little more than an interesting amalgam of metal and plastic if it's missing tires and fuel. Sure, given the proper slope (and, perhaps, a helpful tailwind), that car is capable of movement, but the resulting journey leaves much to be desired. So, too, the iPod is a less-capable music-making vehicle without Apple's multitrack media manager/player, iTunes. The two—like coffee and cream, dill and pickle, and Fred and Ginger—were simply meant for each other.

To best understand what makes the iPod's world turn, you must be familiar with how it and iTunes 8 work together to move music (as well as pictures, videos, and games, in the case of some recent iPods)

on and off your iPod. In the following pages, you'll see just that.

Getting the Goods

You have three ways to get tunes into iTunes:

- * Recording (or ripping, in today's terminology) an audio CD

- * Importing music that doesn't come directly from a CD (such as an audio track you downloaded or created in an audio application on your computer)

- * Purchasing music from an online emporium such as Apple's iTunes Store

The following sections tell you how to use the first two methods. The iTunes Store is a special-enough place that I devote all of Chapter 5 to it. The iTunes Wi-Fi Music Store gets its due in Chapter 6.

Rip a CD

Apple intended the process of converting audio-CD music to computer data to be painless, and it is. Here's how to go about it:

1. Launch iTunes.
2. Insert an audio CD into your computer's CD or DVD drive.

By default, iTunes tries to identify the CD you've inserted. It logs on to the Web to download the CD's track information—a very handy feature for those who find typing such minutia to be tedious.

The CD appears in iTunes' Source list under the Devices heading, and the track info appears in the Song list to the right (Figure 4.1).



Figure 4.1 A selected CD and its tracks.

Then iTunes displays a dialog box, asking whether you'd like to import the tracks from the CD into your iTunes Library.

3. Click Yes, and iTunes imports the songs; click No, and it doesn't.

NOTE

You can change this behavior in iTunes' Preferences window. In the General tab you find a When You Insert a CD pop-up menu. Make a choice from that menu to direct iTunes to show the CD, begin playing it, ask to import it (the default), import it without asking, or import and then eject it.

4. If you decided earlier not to import the audio but want to do so now, simply select the CD in the Source list and click the Import CD button in the bottom-right section of the iTunes window (Figure 4.2).

Figure 4.2 iTunes' Import CD button: Let 'er rip.



iTunes begins encoding the files via the method chosen in the Import Settings area. (You reach this area by clicking the Import Settings button in the General preferences tab.) By default, iTunes imports songs in “high-quality” AAC format at 128 Kbps. (For more on encoding methods, see the sidebar “Import Business: File Formats and Bit Rates.”)



To import only certain songs, uncheck the boxes next to the titles of songs you don't want to import; then click the Import CD button.

5. Click the Music entry in the Source list.

You'll find the songs you just imported somewhere in the list.

6. To listen to a song, click its name in the list and then click the Play icon or press the spacebar.

Import Business: File Formats and Bit Rates

MP3, MPEG-4, AAC, AIFF, WAV . . . is the computer industry incapable of speaking plain English?

It may seem so, given the plethora of acronyms floating through modern-day Technotopia. But the lingo and

the basics behind it aren't terribly difficult to understand.

MP3, AAC, AIFF, and WAV are audio file formats. The compression methods used to create MP3 and AAC files are termed lossy because their encoders remove information from the source sound file to create these smaller files. Fortunately, these encoders are designed to remove the information you're least likely to miss—audio frequencies that humans can't hear easily, for example.

AIFF and WAV files are uncompressed, which means that they contain all the data in the source audio file. When a Macintosh pulls audio from an audio CD, it does so in AIFF format, which is the native uncompressed audio format used by Apple's QuickTime technology. WAV is an AIFF variant used extensively with the Windows operating system.

iTunes supports one other compression format: Apple Lossless. This format is termed a lossless encoder because it shrinks files by removing redundant data without discarding any portion of the audio spectrum. This scheme yields sound files with all the audio quality of the source files at around half their size. iTunes and the iPod also support the H.264 and MPEG-4 video formats. These, too, are compressed formats that allow you to fit a great big movie on a tiny iPod.

Now that you're familiar with these file formats, I'll touch on resolution as it applies to audio and video files.

You probably know that the more pixels per inch a digital photograph has, the crisper the image (and the larger the file). Resolution applies to audio as well. But audio defines resolution by the number of kilobits per second (Kbps) contained in an audio file. With files encoded similarly, the higher the kilobit rate, the better-sounding the file (and the larger the file).

I emphasize with files encoded similarly because the quality of the file depends a great deal on the encoder used to compress it. Many people claim that if you

encode a file at 128 Kbps in both the MP3 and AAC formats, the AAC file sounds better.

The Import Settings menu (which you reach via the General preferences tab) lets you choose to import files in AAC, AIFF, Apple Lossless, MP3, or WAV format. The Setting pop-up menu is where you choose the resolution of the AAC and MP3 files encoded by iTunes by choosing Custom from the menu. iTunes' default setting is High Quality (128 Kbps). To change this setting, choose Higher Quality (256 Kbps) or Custom from the Setting pop-up menu. (Spoken Podcast is another option when you choose the AAC Encoder, but it produces quality that's good only for spoken-word audio.) If you choose Custom, the AAC Encoder dialog box appears. Choose a different setting—in a range from 16 Kbps to 320 Kbps—from the Stereo Bit Rate pop-up menu (Figure 4.3). Files encoded at a high bit rate sound better than those encoded at a low bit rate (such as 96 Kbps). But files encoded at higher bit rates also take up more space on your hard drive and iPod.

Figure 4.3 The Stereo Bit Rate pop-up menu.



The preset options for MP3 importing include Good Quality (128 Kbps), High Quality (160 Kbps), and Higher Quality (192 Kbps). If you don't care to use one of these settings, choose Custom from this same pop-up menu. In the MP3 Encoder dialog box that appears, you have the option to choose a bit rate ranging from 16 Kbps to 320 Kbps.

Resolution is important for video as well. Fortunately (because an explanation beyond this gross simplification is beyond the scope of this slim volume), iTunes allows you only to convert video to iPod/iPhone-compatible format by choosing Advanced > Create iPod or iPhone Version. This command provides no tools for adjusting resolution settings.

Move music into iTunes

Ripping CDs isn't the only way to put music files on your computer. Suppose that you've downloaded some audio files from the Web and want to put them in iTunes. You have three ways to do that:

* In iTunes, choose File > Add to Library.

When you choose this command, the Add To Library dialog box appears. Navigate to the file, folder, or volume you want to add to iTunes, and click Open (Figure 4.4). iTunes determines which files it thinks it can play and adds them to the library.



Figure 4.4 Navigate to tracks you want to add to iTunes via the Add To Library dialog box.

* Drag files, folders, or entire volumes to the iTunes icon in Mac OS X's Dock, the iTunes icon in Windows' Start menu (if you've pinned iTunes to this menu), or the iTunes icon in either operating system (at which point iTunes launches and adds the dragged files to its library).

* Drag files, folders, or entire volumes into iTunes' main window or the Library entry in the Source list.

In the Mac versions of iTunes, by default you'll find songs in the iTunes Music folder within the iTunes folder inside the Music folder inside your Mac OS X user folder. The path to my iTunes music files, for example, would be `chris/Music/iTunes/iTunes Music`.

Windows users will find their iTunes Music folder by following this path: `yourusername/My Music (XP) or Music (Vista)/iTunes/iTunes Music`.

You can use the same methods to add compatible videos and movies to your iTunes Library. Those videos will most likely appear in the Movies playlist

in the Source list.

I say most likely because there are a few exceptions: Videos specifically designated as music videos appear in the Music playlist, and videos designated as TV shows appear in the TV Shows playlist. See the sidebar “Tag, You’re It” at the end of this chapter for information on how to apply those video designations.

Creating and Configuring a Playlist

Before you put any media files (music or video) on your iPod, organize them in iTunes. Doing so will make it far easier to find the media you want, both on your computer and on your iPod. The best way to organize that material is through playlists.

A playlist is simply a set of tracks and/or videos that you believe should be grouped in a list. The organizing principle is completely up to you. You can organize songs by artist, by mood, by style, by song length . . . heck, if you like, you can have iTunes automatically gather all your 1950s polka tunes with the letter z in their titles. Similarly, you can organize your videos by criteria including director, actor, and TV-series title. You can mix videos and music tracks within playlists as well, combining, say, music videos and music tracks by the same artist. As far as playlists are concerned, you’re the boss.

The following sections look at ways to create playlists.

Standard playlists

Standard playlists are those that you make by hand, selecting each of the media files you want grouped. To create a standard playlist in iTunes, follow these steps:

1. Click the large plus (+) icon in the bottom-left corner of the iTunes window, or choose File > New Playlist (Command-N on the Mac, Ctrl-N in Windows).
2. In the highlighted field that appears next to that

new playlist in the Source list, type a name for your new playlist.

3. Click an appropriate entry in the Source list—Music, Movies, TV Shows, or Podcasts—and select the tracks or videos you want to place in the playlist you created.
4. Drag the selected tracks or videos to the new playlist’s icon.
5. Arrange the order of the tracks or videos in your new playlist.

To do this, click the number column in the main window, and drag tracks up and down in the list. When the iPod is synchronized with iTunes, this order is how the songs will appear in the playlist on your iPod.

If the songs in your playlist come from the same album, and you want the songs in the playlist to appear in the same order as they do on the original album, click the Album heading.

Playlist from selection

You can also create a new playlist from selected items by following these steps:

1. Command-click (Mac) or Ctrl-click (Windows) songs or videos to select the files you’d like to appear in the new playlist.
2. Choose File > New Playlist from Selection (Command-Shift-N on a Mac, Ctrl-Shift-N on a Windows PC).

A new playlist containing the selected items will appear under the Playlists heading in the iTunes Source list. If all selected tracks are from the same album, the list will bear the name of the artist and album. If the tracks are from different albums by the same artist, the playlist will be named after the artist. If you’ve mixed tracks from different artists or combined music with videos, the new playlist will display the name untitled playlist.

3. To name (or rename) the playlist, type in the highlighted field.

Smart Playlists

Smart Playlists are slightly different beasts. They include tracks that meet certain conditions you've defined—for example, Cowboy Junkies tracks encoded in AAC format that are shorter than 4 minutes. Here's how to work the magic of Smart Playlists:

1. In iTunes, choose File > New Smart Playlist (Command-Option-N on the Mac, Ctrl-Alt-N in Windows).

You can also hold down the Option key on the Mac or the Shift key on a Windows PC and then click the gear icon that replaces the plus icon at the bottom of the iTunes window.

2. Choose your criteria.

You'll spy a pop-up menu that allows you to select items by various criteria—including artist, composer, genre, podcast, bit rate, comment, date added, and last played—followed by a Contains field. To choose all songs by Elvis Presley and Elvis Costello, for example, you'd choose Artist from the pop-up menu and then enter Elvis in the Contains field (Figure 4.5).



Figure 4.5 The inner workings of a smart playlist.

You can limit the selections that appear in the playlist by minutes, hours, megabytes, gigabytes, or number of songs. You may want the playlist to contain no more than 2 GB worth of songs and videos, for example.

You'll also see a Live Updating option. When it's switched on, this option ensures that if you add any songs or videos to iTunes that meet the criteria you've set, those files will be added to the playlist. If you add a new Elvis Costello album to iTunes, for example, iTunes updates your Elvis Smart Playlist automatically.

3. Click OK.

A new playlist that contains your smart selections appears in iTunes' Source list.

You don't have to settle for a single criterion. By clicking the plus icon next to a criterion field, you can add other conditions. You could create a playlist containing, say, only songs you've never listened to by punk artists whose names contain the letter J.

Folders for playlists

You can also file playlists in folders. By invoking the File > New Playlist Folder command, you can lump a bunch of playlists into a single folder. Folders are a great way to keep your playlists separate from your spouse's or to gather groups of similar playlists (All My Jazz Playlists, for example).

At one time, folders didn't translate to the iPod; however, the 3G and 4G iPod nanos and the iPod classics do offer nested playlist hierarchies. The iPod touch doesn't. Instead, when you move a folder full of playlists into the iPod touch, all those playlists appear as separate entries in the touch's Playlists screen.

Genius playlists

If you're the kind of reader who starts at the beginning of a book and plows through to the end, you're aware, from the previous chapter, of the Genius feature on the iPod. iTunes 8 and later can also create Genius playlists—playlists of music that iTunes believes to be related to other music in your library. You get those playlists this way:

1. Switch on the Genius feature.

When you install iTunes, you're offered the choice to turn Genius on. Doing so requires an iTunes account. If you don't have one, no worries. When you start the Genius process you'll find an option for signing up for an account. If you neglected to turn on Genius, you can do so by choosing Store > Turn on Genius. If you're connected to the Internet, iTunes will ask you to sign into your iTunes account.

2. Wait while iTunes configures Genius.

iTunes gathers information about your music library—specifically, the songs it contains—and sends that information to Apple’s servers anonymously. That information is compared with similar data from other users and placed in a database. A database file that contains the relationship data is sent back to your computer.

3. Create a Genius playlist.

Select a track in your iTunes Library, and click the Genius button in the bottom-right corner of the iTunes window. iTunes will create a new playlist of 25 songs (by default) that should go well with the track you selected. You can ask Genius to create a longer version of this playlist by making a larger choice from the Limit To pop-up menu at the bottom of the window; your choices are 25, 50, 75, and 100 songs. You can also click Refresh to ask Genius to try again.

4. Save the playlist.

When you click the Save Playlist button at the top of the window, iTunes creates a playlist named after your source track—A Common Disaster, for example. You can return to any Genius playlist you’ve created and change the Limit To settings as well as refresh the playlist.

5. Expose the Genius sidebar.

Click the Sidebar icon in the bottom-right corner of the iTunes window to display the Genius sidebar, which is designed to recommend related music from the iTunes Store (Figure 4.6).



Figure 4.6 The Genius sidebar.

At the tip of the sidebar, you’ll find entries that include top albums by the currently playing artist, top

songs you’re missing, iTunes Essentials collections that include the artist, and a list of tracks by related artists. Next to the Top Songs You’re Missing and Recommendations selections you’ll see both a Preview button (denoted by an eighth note) and a Buy button. To audition 30 seconds of a track, just click the Preview button. If you like what you’ve heard and would like to own the track, click Buy. In the resulting dialog box you’ll be prompted for your Apple ID and password. Enter that info and click the Buy button, and the track downloads to your computer.

NOTE

You can sync Genius playlists to your iPod just as you can any other playlists.

Key iTunes Features

Intuitive though it may be, iTunes packs a lot of features and power—enough that I could write an entire book about just this application. We have bigger fish to fry: getting the most out of your iPod. But part of frying those fish is learning about the key iTunes features that can make using and listening to your iPod more enjoyable. In this section, I examine those features.

iTunes preferences

Choose iTunes > Preferences on a Mac or Edit > Preferences on a Windows PC, and you open iTunes’ Preferences window. Some of the tabs within this window hold settings you should know about.

General

I’ve already mentioned that within the General tab, you specify what happens when you insert a CD. Elsewhere in this tab you’ll see options for showing or hiding certain items in iTunes’ Source list, including Movies, TV Shows, Podcasts, Audiobooks, Genius, Applications, Radio, Party Shuffle, and Ringtones. If you find iTunes’ interface too cluttered, disabling the items you don’t use will clean things up.

Playback

Here, you can determine where in the iTunes interface movies, TV shows, and music videos are displayed (in a separate window, for example) and the default language and subtitle language for movies. But the most interesting settings here are Crossfade Songs, Sound Enhancer, and Sound Check.

Crossfade Songs. This setting causes the end of each song to fade out and the beginning of the next track to fade in. For some people, this feature makes for a less jarring listening experience. You can set the length of the crossfade—from 1 to 12 seconds—with a slider. These settings don't transfer to the iPod.

Sound Enhancer. This feature is a kind of audio filter that can expand and brighten the sound coming from iTunes tracks. It's worth playing with to see whether its results please you. These settings don't transfer to the iPod either.

Sound Check. In Chapter 2, I talk about the Sound Check feature on the iPod and how you have to enable it. This tab is where you do that. The feature's job is to try to make volumes across all the songs in your library similar.

Sharing

iTunes allows you to easily share your music library or just specific playlists in it with other copies of iTunes running on a local network (and allows those iTunes libraries to be shared with you). You can share your library by enabling the Share My Library on My Local Network option. To seek out other iTunes shared libraries, enable the Look for Shared Libraries option.

Parental

Not all music and video is appropriate for all ages. Using the Parental tab, you can disable podcasts, radio, the iTunes Store, and shared libraries, as well as restrict content from the iTunes Store.

Advanced

The Advanced tab is where you tell iTunes the location of your media files and how to organize them. In Chapter 9, I put this tab to good use to shift an iTunes Library from a cramped startup drive to a more expansive external drive.

Info window

I talk about tagging a fair amount in this chapter. By tagging, I don't mean playing the kids' game, but practicing the subtle art of marking files with identifying bits of information (such as title, artist, album, and genre) so that you can locate and organize them more easily. You do all this in an item's Info window.

To produce an Info window, just select any hunk of media in your iTunes Library—such as a song, video, or podcast—and choose File > Get Info. The resulting window contains several tabs. For purposes of this chapter, the important ones include the following.

Info

This tab is where all the tagging business takes place. Here, you find fields for such information as name, artist, album, composer, comments, year, and track number, as well as a Genre menu (Figure 4.7). iTunes is pretty good about filling in this information for you, but at times you may need to tag your own music—when a ripped CD isn't recognized, for example, or when you've ripped someone else's mix CD and iTunes can't identify its tracks.



Figure 4.7 The Info tab.

Video

When you import TV episodes from sources other than the iTunes Store, that video may lack the proper tags—show name, season, and episode number, for

example. The Video tab contains fields for exactly that information.

Options

Within the Options tab you can adjust a track's volume so that it's louder or softer, choose an equalizer (EQ) preset (see the nearby sidebar "EQ and the iPod"), and select an item's media type. For videos, the media type will be movie, TV show, or music video; for audio files, it will be music or audiobook.

You can also impose start and stop times on a track. This feature is useful when you can't stand the first minute of a song or podcast and want to skip over it automatically whenever you play it. Do that by enabling the Start Time option and then entering 1:00 in the text box.

Finally, cock a keen eye at the Rating field. Here, you can rate your tracks from one to five stars. (You can also rate tracks by clicking the Rating column next to a track's name, as well as selecting a track and choosing a rating from the Rating submenu of the File menu.) Rating your media now is helpful for creating Smart Playlists later, basing those playlists on songs and videos you enjoy.

Lyrics

You recall that your iPod can display lyrics, right? This tab is where you enter them.

Artwork

iTunes is more than happy to seek out album artwork for you, but it locates artwork only for albums that are available from the iTunes Store. If you import an album that can't be had from the Store, a generic icon appears in Grid and Cover Flow views. You can add your own artwork simply by dragging a graphic file into the artwork field in the Artwork tab.

TIP

You can tag multiple files simply by selecting more than one file and choosing File > Get Info. A Multiple Item Information window appears, and you can add tags therein for such things as art-

ist, album, composer, comments, genre, artwork, and rating. This feature is handy for adding one piece of album artwork to a group of tracks.

EQ and the iPod

Having EQ built into iTunes and the iPod is great, but the interaction between iTunes and the iPod in regard to EQ is a little confusing. Allow me to end that confusion.

In iTunes, you can assign an EQ setting to a song individually by clicking the song, pressing Command-I (Mac) or Ctrl-I (Windows), clicking the Options tab, and then choosing an EQ setting from the Equalizer Preset menu. When you move songs to your iPod, these EQ settings move right along with them, but you won't be able to use them unless you configure the iPod correctly.

If, for example, you have EQ switched off on the iPod, songs that have assigned EQ presets won't play with those settings. Instead, your songs will play without the benefit of EQ. If you set the iPod's EQ to Flat, the EQ setting that you preset in iTunes will play on the iPod. If you select one of the other EQ settings on the iPod (Latin or Electronic, for example), songs without EQ presets assigned in iTunes will use the iPod EQ setting. Songs with EQ settings assigned in iTunes will use the iTunes setting.

If you'd like to hear how a particular song sounds on your iPod with a different EQ setting, start playing the song on the iPod, tap the Home button, tap Settings > iPod > EQ, and then select one of the EQ settings. The song will immediately take on the EQ setting you've chosen, but this setting won't stick on subsequent playback. If you want to change the song's EQ more permanently, you must do so in iTunes.

Move Music and Video to the iPod (shuffle Excluded)

NOTE

The next few pages don't apply to the iPod shuffle, as its iTunes interface is significantly different from the one used for other iPod models. Because it is so

different, I've chosen to devote the latter portion of this chapter to the shuffle.

Now that your media is organized, it's time to put it on your 'pod. The conduit for moving music, podcasts, audiobooks, videos, and (for some iPods) applications and games to the iPod is iTunes—which, fortunately, can be fairly flexible in the way it goes about the process.

You have several ways to configure iTunes so that your iPod is updated when you want it to be. It's just as possible to configure iTunes so that only the music and videos you want are copied to your iPod. The key is the iPod Preferences window.

To start, plug your iPod into your computer, and launch iTunes. (By default, iTunes launches when you connect the iPod.) The iPod appears under the Devices heading in iTunes' Source list (Figure 4.8). To open the iPod Preferences window, select the iPod in the Source list.



Figure 4.8 iPods in iTunes' Source list.

Within the iPod Preferences window, you'll find eight panes if you have a 5G iPod, 3G or 4G iPod nano, or any iPod classic: Summary, Music, Movies, TV Shows, Podcasts, Photos, Contacts, and Games. Those with an iPod touch will find Summary, Music, Movies, TV Shows, Podcasts, Photos, Info, and Applications. If you have a color iPod that doesn't offer video (including 1G and 2G iPod nanos), the Movies, TV Shows, and Games tabs will be absent. For monochrome iPods, the Photos tab will also be missing.

Below these tabs, you'll see the Capacity bar (Figure 4.9), a thermometerlike display that details how much media is on your iPod. With any of today's display-bearing iPods plugged into your computer, you'll see entries for Audio, Video, Photos, Other (data such as files you've copied to the iPod, notes, contacts, and calendars), and Free.



Figure 4.9 The iPod touch's Capacity bar.

The iPod touch adds an Apps entry. Click the bar, and the display cycles through the amounts of storage used by each kind of media (measured in GB and MB), the numbers of items of each kind of media (7,660 songs, 109 videos, and 6,098 photos, for example), and how long it would take to play all the audio and video files (26.6 days, for example). Here's how the panes shake out.

Summary

In iTunes 7 and later, the Summary pane provides such details about your iPod as its name, capacity, software version number, serial number, and format (Macintosh or Windows). It also tells you the version of the iPod software it's running and offers you the option to update that software if newer software is available or to restore your iPod (essentially, erase its contents and give it a new operating system). I cover the ins and outs of restoring your iPod in Chapter 9.

Finally, the Summary tab offers these options.

Open iTunes When This iPod Is Connected

Most likely, you're going to want to sync or otherwise muck with your iPod when you plug it into your computer. This option saves you the trouble of launching iTunes manually.

Sync Only Checked Songs and Videos

This option provides fine control over which files you sync to the iPod. Checking the box for this option lets you prevent files from loading onto the iPod by unchecking the small check boxes next to their names in playlists and Library lists.



Care to check or uncheck all the songs in a playlist at the same time? On the Mac, hold down the Command key and click any check box in the playlist. In Windows, hold down the Control key and

do the same thing. When you uncheck a box, all boxes will be unchecked; check a box, and all boxes will be checked.

Manually Manage Music and Videos

This small option offers a lot of power. To understand its usefulness, it's helpful to know that by default, when you sync iTunes and the iPod, iTunes moves only the files you ask it for onto the iPod and erases everything else from the device. This arrangement can be a real bother if you've moved your iPod from one computer to another and the contents of the second computer don't match those of the first.

Managing files manually allows you to add music (and videos, for compatible iPods) to your iPod without erasing any other media. When you select this option, all the playlists on your iPod appear below the iPod's icon in the iTunes Source list. (For the sake of simplicity, I'll say that the Music, Movies, TV Shows, Podcasts, and Audiobooks entries count as playlists.)

NOTE

As I hint, you can use this technique to copy music to your iPod from multiple computers, but it doesn't work with the iPod touch. Although you can manually manage music and video to the touch to the point where you can drag media to it in iTunes' Source list, if you attempt to sync the touch to another computer, you'll be told that you must erase all the music and video on it when you sync it with the new computer.

To add media files to the iPod manually, just select them in one of iTunes' playlists, and drag them to the iPod's icon in the Source list or to one of the iPod's standard (not Smart) playlists (Figure 4.10). You can also drag files from your computer's desktop directly to the iPod, which copies the media to the iPod but not to your iTunes Library.



Figure 4.10 Manually dragging files to an iPod.

Optionally, you can add songs by genre, artist, or al-

bum by using iTunes' browser. To do so, follow these steps:

1. In iTunes, choose View > Show Browser (Command-B in Mac OS X, Ctrl-B in Windows).

A pane divided into Genre, Artist, and Album columns appears at the top of iTunes' main window.

2. Click an entry in one of the columns.

If you want to copy all the Kate Bush songs in your iTunes Library to the iPod, for example, click Ms. Bush's name in the Artist column. To copy all the reggae tunes to the iPod, select Reggae in the Genre column.

3. Drag the selected item to the iPod's icon in the Source list or to a playlist you've created on the iPod.

To remove songs from the iPod, select the songs you want to remove within the iPod entry in the Source list; then press your keyboard's Delete key (or Control-click on the Mac or right-click for Windows, and choose Clear from the contextual menu). Mac users can also drag the songs to the Trash.

NOTE

When you remove songs from your iPod, you don't remove them from your computer. Unless you select a song in iTunes' Library and delete it, the song is still on your hard drive.

You can even copy entire playlists to other playlists by dragging one playlist icon on top of another. This method works for both iTunes and iPod playlists, though you can't drag a playlist on the iPod to an iTunes playlist and expect the songs to copy over. Under most circumstances, tracks on the iPod don't copy to your computer (unless you know the tricks detailed in Chapter 9).

But wait—there's more. iTunes 8 includes two additional views: Grid and Cover Flow. Click the second button in the View palette at the top of the window to see Grid view; Cover Flow view appears when you click the third button. When you click the Grid button, you can view your music in Albums, Artists, Genres,

or Composers view. These views work this way.

Albums. Each album cover in the selected entry (music or a playlist) is displayed (Figure 4.11). Mouse over the cover, and a Play Album entry appears. Click the Play symbol in this icon, and the album begins playing from the first track. Double-click an album cover, and a page opens that displays the album cover and the tracks on the album. To return to the previous Grid view, click the All Albums entry in the top-left corner of the window.



Figure 4.11 Albums in Grid view.

NOTE

If iTunes can't find the album artwork for a particular album, the cover shows a generic icon of two eighth notes.

Artists. When you click Artists you'll still see album covers, but those covers will be grouped by artist. If you have tracks from more than one track by an artist, select an artist and roll your mouse horizontally over the cover; the album covers will change to reflect all the artist's album entries. A Play All Artist entry also appears. Click the Play symbol in it, and iTunes begins playing the first track from the first album title, sorted alphabetically. Click All Artists to return to Grid view.

Genres. Seeking a quick way to find all the World music in your iTunes Library? Click the Genres entry, and you'll see the selected playlist's music categorized by genre. (Those songs must have their Genre tag filled in to appear in this view, however. See the sidebar "Tag You're It" at the end of this chapter for more information on tags.) For common genres, you'll see custom icons provided by Apple—Rock, Soundtrack, and World, for example. If tracks have a less-common genre type assigned to them—Ska, Metal, or Fusion, for example—you'll see the album cover for a track tagged with that genre or iTunes' generic eighth-notes icon.

As in Artists and Albums views, select an icon and move

your mouse over it horizontally, and album covers appear. Click the Play symbol within the Play Genre entry that appears over selected icons to play all the music within that genre. Music is organized alphabetically by the artist's first name.

Composers. You know the drill by now. Tracks are organized by composers when those tracks contain a Composer tag. If not, you'll find the remaining tracks files listed under Unknown Composer. Click the Play symbol in the Play Composer entry to play. Tracks are organized first by artist and then by album title. If you choose the leader of The Who, Pete Townshend, for example, his solo albums come first in alphabetical order; then come The Who's albums in alphabetical order.

Cover Flow view is kind of a lazy-Susan affair that represents your library as a series of covers (Figure 4.12). You can move music from these views to your iPod simply by dragging the cover art from the view to the iPod's icon. The contents of that album, video, or podcast will be transferred to the iPod.



Figure 4.12 Cover Flow view.

The Perfect Dismount

When you choose to manage your songs and playlists manually, you'll be told that you have to disconnect all display-bearing iPods except the iPod touch manually—meaning that you have to take action to unmount the thing, rather than simply unplug it from your computer.

To do so, you can click the Eject icon next to the iPod's name in the Source list, or select the iPod and then click the small iPod icon that appears in the bottom-right corner of the iTunes window. Alternatively, Mac users can switch to the Finder and drag the iPod to the Trash; when its icon disappears from the Desktop, you can unplug your iPod. Windows users can invoke the Safely Remove Hardware command from the notification area.

If you unmount the iPod by doing something rash like

unplugging it, your computer's operating system will complain, and your iPod may not have all the media you wanted it to have if it was busy doing something at the time.

Enable Disk Use (all iPods except iPod touch)

The iPod is, at heart, an elegant storage device that happens to play music (and in some cases, slideshows and videos too). You can mount all iPods except the iPod touch as a hard drive on your computer by enabling this option. When the iPod is mounted, you can use it just like a hard drive; copy files to it as you desire.

Music

The Music pane (Figure 4.13) contains options for syncing music and music videos to your iPod, as well as for displaying album artwork on all color iPods save for the iPod touch. (The iPod touch always syncs album artwork, so you won't find this option in the Music pane when you connect a touch.)



Figure 4.13 The Music pane.

Enabling the Sync Music option tells iTunes that you'd like it to sync its music collection to the iPod automatically. If you've enabled the Manually Manage Music and Videos option in the Summary pane, enabling the Sync Music option overrides the Manual option (iTunes will ask you if you're sure you want to do this). When you've chosen Sync Music, you then have the choice to sync all songs and playlists or just selected playlists.

Any songs currently on the iPod that aren't in the iTunes Library or in the selected playlists are erased from the iPod.

Why choose selected playlists rather than your entire music library? For one thing, your iPod may not have the capacity to hold your entire music collection. This option is also a good one to use when several members of your family share an iPod. It allows you to chunk up a

music collection into multiple playlists and then rotate those playlists in and out of the iPod.

If you've removed songs from the iTunes Library and want them to remain on your iPod after the update, you'll want to avoid this option and manage your music manually.

You'll also see an option at the bottom of the window to sync music videos. Enable it, and any music videos in selected playlists will also be synced to your iPod. Turn the option off, and music videos will steer clear, even if they're part of a playlist.

Movies

The Movies pane is similar to the Music pane. Here, you'll find the option to Sync Movies and then choices to sync All Movies; All Unwatched Movies; 1, 3, 5, or 10 Most Recent Unwatched Movies; Selected Movies; or Selected Playlists. iTunes provides this greater level of sync control because movies take up a lot of space, and a large movie collection and even the highest-capacity iPod may not mix.

Again, if you enable the Sync Movies option, you undo the Manually Manage Movies and Videos setting if you've switched it on.

TV Shows

In the TV Shows tab, you see a list of all the videos marked as TV Shows in your iTunes Library (Figure 4.14). You can sync all or the 1, 3, 5, or 10 most recent TV shows among all TV shows, or just selected shows or playlists from the list of shows below. Or you can sync all unwatched episodes; the 1, 3, 5, or 10 most recent or least recent unwatched episodes of all TV shows; or selected TV shows or playlists.



Figure 4.14 The TV Shows pane.

TIP

What's with this "least recent unwatched episodes" stuff? If you've downloaded a season of a TV series, you'd choose this option so that the shows sync in order from the beginning of the season to the end. If, instead, you chose the most recent unwatched episodes, playback would start with the last show and then work its way backward. (If that wouldn't spoil the suspense, I don't know what would!)

Podcasts

What puts the pod in podcast is the iPod. Because people tend to listen to lots of podcasts, some of which tend to be long (their files therefore taking up significant amounts of room), iTunes lets you manage which ones are synced to your iPod.

As in each one of these tabs, you have the option to not sync this content. But if you choose to, you have plenty of options. You can choose all podcasts, all unplayed podcasts, or all new podcasts. Or you have the option to play 1, 3, 5, or 10 of the following: the most recent podcasts, the most recent unplayed podcasts, the least recent unplayed podcasts, the most recent new podcasts, or the least recent new podcasts. These settings apply to either all your podcasts or just those you've selected.

Note that video as well as audio podcasts are included here. Because video can consume a lot of storage space, be careful how you choose your video podcasts.

Photos (color iPods only)

If you use a Mac, an iPod with a color display can sync photos with Apple's iPhoto and Aperture, as well as with your Photos folder or a different folder of your choosing. On that Mac, you also have the option to sync just specific iPhoto events. On a Windows PC, you can sync with your My Pictures folder, a different folder of your choosing, or photo albums created with Adobe Photoshop Elements 3 or later or Adobe Photoshop Album 2 or later. To do this, enable the Sync Photos From option, and, from the pop-up menu that follows it, choose the source for your photos.

When you choose iPhoto or Aperture, the option below

the pop-up menu reads All Photos and Albums, and eventually tells you how many photos are involved (9,548 photos, for example). When you enable this option and sync the iPod, all the pictures in your iPhoto or Aperture library will be converted and copied to the iPod. You also have the Selected Albums option, which works much like the Selected Playlists option in the Music pane (Figure 4.15). Regardless of which option you choose, whenever you add new images to a selected album, the iPod automatically updates its photo library when it next synchronizes.



Figure 4.15 The Photos pane.

You can also select Choose Folder from the Sync Photos From pop-up menu. When you do, up pops a Change Photos Folder Location navigation window. Just traipse to the folder you want to pull pictures from, and click Open. When you do this, the folder you've chosen appears in the pop-up menu.

If you choose Pictures from this pop-up menu, the options below it change to All Photos and Albums and Selected Folders. The principles of iPhoto/Aperture import apply here as well. If you choose All Photos, iTunes rummages around in this folder and looks for compatible graphics files. If you choose Selected Folders, you can direct iTunes to look in only those folders that you select.

TIP

This method is a good way to copy every picture from your hard drive to your iPod. As far as iTunes is concerned, your hard drive is just another folder. Select it as the source folder with the All Photos option selected, and iTunes grabs all the compatible graphics files it can find, converts them, and plunks them onto your iPod.

This process is no more complicated for Windows users. The main difference is that the Windows version of iTunes offers no iPhoto option (and because no version of iPhoto is available for Windows, that's probably a good thing). Instead, you'll see the option to sync All or Selected Folders from your My Pictures folder or another folder of your choosing.

If you've installed Adobe Photoshop Elements (version 3 or later) or Adobe Photoshop Album on your PC, the Sync Photos From pop-up menu also contains entries for these programs, allowing you to import pictures from the albums that these programs create.

TIP

The tip I propose for copying all the pictures from your Mac to your iPod works in Windows as well. In this case, choose your C drive as the source. When you do, every compatible graphics file will be converted and copied.

At the bottom of the Photos window you'll see an Include Full-Resolution Photos option when you've plugged in any color iPod except the iPod touch. It says what it means. When you enable it, iTunes creates a Photos folder at the root level of the iPod, and it hurls into that folder full-resolution versions of your photos rather than the slimmed-down photos that the iPhoto displays. This option is primarily for transporting your photos; the iPod can't display them.

To access them, enable disk use on the iPod, locate the iPod on your computer's desktop, open the Photos folder, and then open the Full Resolution folder within. This folder is organized in a logical way. When you open the Full Resolution folder, you'll see a folder that bears the year the pictures were created. Within this folder are folders marked with the month of creation. Within one of these folders is a folder denoting the day of conception. So the folder hierarchy might look like this: Photos/Full Resolution/2008/2/28/yourphotos.

Contacts (all display-bearing iPods except iPod touch)

iTunes handles synchronization of contacts and calendars between your computer and iPod. The Contacts pane offers synchronization options for your computer's main contacts and calendars applications. From the Contacts pane on a Macintosh, you can choose to synchronize all your Apple Address Book contacts or just those contacts from selected groups. On a Windows PC, iTunes synchronizes Windows' Address Book (called Windows Contacts in Vista) or Microsoft Outlook contacts in the same way—either all contacts or selected groups of contacts. Only in the Macintosh version of iTunes do you also have the op-

tion to include the photo associated with your contact.

Below the Contacts section of the pane, you'll spy the Calendars section, which works similarly to Contacts. On a Mac, you can sync all your iCal calendars or just selected calendars. On a Windows PC, you have these same options for Microsoft Outlook calendars.

Games (5G iPod, 3G and 4G iPod nano, and iPod classics only)

The iTunes Store sells not only applications for the iPhone and iPod touch through the App Store, but also games made specifically for click-wheel iPods. Currently, The Store sells a small collection of games that are compatible with the 3G and 4G iPod nanos, iPod classics, and 5G iPod. Buy one of these games, and you can play it on any (or all) of these iPod models.

The Games pane is where you choose which games to sync to your iPod. Your choices are all games or selected games (chosen from a list of purchased games below).

Info (iPod touch only)

The Info tab is where you choose which data—contacts, calendars, mail accounts, and browser bookmarks—you'd like to sync to your iPod touch. This tab is also where you configure iTunes to push email, calendars, contacts, and bookmarks from Apple's MobileMe service to the iPhone. I discuss these settings at length in Chapter 8.

Applications (iPod touch only)

Just as you can with the iPhone, you can install applications you've obtained from Apple's App Store on your iPod touch. I look at the ins and outs of these applications in Chapter 6. For now, all you need to know is that in this tab, you can choose to sync all or just selected applications to your iPod touch.

Move Music to the iPod shuffle

As I mention earlier in the chapter, the iPod shuffle interacts differently with iTunes compared with a display-bearing iPod. To begin with, because the shuffle lacks

a screen, it doesn't need to offer options for synchronizing photos, videos, contacts, and calendars. The lack of a screen also means that you can do little to navigate a shuffle's music library. You are, in a very real sense, flying blind.


Also consider the shuffle's limited storage space. Because the current shuffles hold just 1 GB or 2 GB, you don't have a lot of extra room for storing large music files. iTunes does its best to keep such files from being placed on your music player automatically.

With these limitations in mind, let's take a look at just what iTunes offers for the shuffle owner.

When you attach an iPod shuffle to your Mac or PC, by default, iTunes launches. When it does, the shuffle appears in the iTunes Source list under the Devices heading, just like any other iPod (save for the fact that its icon looks like a shuffle rather than a full-size iPod). Select that shuffle, and iTunes' main window shows two tabs: Settings and Contents, with the Contents tab front and center.

Contents tab

In the top part of the window, you see a list of the tracks you've loaded on the shuffle. At the bottom of the window, you see the Autofill pane (Figure 4.16), which contains the items described in the following sections.

 Figure 4.16 The iPod shuffle's Contents tab.

In theory, putting music on your shuffle is very simple. By default, iTunes is set up so that when you click the Autofill button, iTunes grabs a collection of random tracks from your iTunes Library and copies those tracks to your shuffle. But things don't have to work that way. Although the Autofill button, in league with the Autofill From pop-up menu (which you'll hear about in just a sec), is a powerful way to move music to your shuffle, you need never touch it.

Blasphemy? Perhaps. But the only way to ensure that you get exactly the music you want on your shuffle is to lay off this button. Instead, if your shuffle has anything on it, select it, select all its contents, and press your computer's

Delete key. Then drag just the music you want from your iTunes Library onto the shuffle's icon.

To see the order in which songs will play if the shuffle is set to play from beginning to end, click the number heading in iTunes' main window. To save that playlist so that you don't lose it when you later fill your shuffle with other music, select everything in the playlist, and choose File > New Playlist from Selection. A new playlist will be created in iTunes' Source list that includes all the selected tracks.

If you choose to bang the Autofill button, of course, it will do exactly what it says: fill your shuffle with as much as it can of the playlist selected in the Autofill From pop-up menu.

Autofill From pop-up menu

One way to customize your shuffle's contents more carefully is to feed it from specific playlists. You might create sets of music that make sense for particular activities—music for your next workout or for a car trip, for example. Or use a particular Genius playlist that appeals to you. When you've created these playlists, you can choose the one you like from the Autofill From pop-up menu.

Choose Items Randomly

The shuffle was designed with random play in mind, but you can make it load specific tracks in a specific order by disabling this option. When you do, iTunes takes the playlist selected in the Autofill From pop-up menu and places as much of it as can fit, in order, on the shuffle. When you've flipped your shuffle into "play from beginning to end" mode, the playlist you load will play in that order. This technique is one way to ensure that the songs in an album you place on the shuffle play in the same order as they do on the album.

Choose Higher Rated Items More Often

I mean, honestly, what's the use of putting music that you loathe on your shuffle? If you haven't thought of a good reason for rating your audio files, now you have one. Assign a rating of four or five stars to your favorite tracks, and those tracks are more likely to be moved to your shuffle when this option is enabled.

Replace All Items When Autofilling

When this option is selected, iTunes will wipe out whatever music the shuffle currently holds and replace it with selections from the playlist selected in the Autofill From pop-up menu. Leaving this box checked is a good way to help ensure that you get a fresh crop of music the next time you listen to your shuffle. It's not such a good choice, however, if you want to keep some selections on the shuffle (podcasts, for example) and remove others.

Uncheck this option, and check Only Update Checked Songs in the Settings tab, and you've got a whole lot more control. This way, you can uncheck the tracks you want to keep on the shuffle and then click the Autofill button. The unchecked music stays put and is surrounded by new material.

Settings tab

The other tab you see when selecting an iPod shuffle in the Source list provides settings for formatting the little devil and managing its relationship with iTunes. The Settings tab includes the some of the same options you find in a display-bearing iPod's Summary pane.

At the top of the pane, you'll find information regarding the shuffle's name, capacity, software version number, and serial number.

Below is the same Version area that you see for other iPods. Here, you can update or restore your iPod with the latest iPod software.

The Options area is where the good stuff happens (Figure 4.17). Here, you'll see options for launching iTunes when the shuffle is attached, updating only checked songs, converting higher-bit-rate songs to 128 Kbps AAC, enabling Sound Check, and enabling disk use.



Figure 4.17 The Options area of the iPod shuffle's Settings tab.

You're familiar with some of these options already. Let's

look at the new ones.

Convert Higher Bit Rate Songs to 128 Kbps AAC

Although the shuffle can play uncompressed files (which I discuss earlier in the chapter), on a device with such limited storage, packing it with these large files isn't such a good idea. Enabling this option instructs iTunes to slim down stout files so that they take up less space on the shuffle.

iTunes won't automatically place Apple Lossless files on your shuffle; on the 1G shuffle, it also won't load AIFF files. If you drag such files to the shuffle to place them on the player manually, however, iTunes will automatically convert them to 128 Kbps AAC files when this option is enabled. Your files will remain in their original format on your computer, but compressed copies will be made just for the shuffle.

Enable Sound Check

Enable this option, and your shuffle will use those Sound Check settings to play back tracks at a fairly consistent volume.

Limit Maximum Volume

Enable this option and adjust the slider to set a maximum volume for the shuffle. Click the Lock icon to password-protect this option.

Enable Disk Use

If you enable this option, you can mount the shuffle on your computer and use it to store data files as well as music files.

To help ensure that you've got some room left for data files, iTunes includes a slider below this option that allows you to determine how much of the shuffle's storage space will be reserved for songs and how much will go toward data storage. If you set the slider to the halfway point on a 1 GB iPod shuffle, you can fit approximately 120 4-minute 128 Kbps AAC songs and 512 MB of data on your iPod. Double those figures for a 2 GB shuffle.

Tag, You're It

So how does iTunes know about tracks, artists, albums, and genres? Through something called ID3 tags. ID3 tags are just little bits of data included in a song file that tell programs like iTunes something about the file—not just the track's name and the album it came from, but also the composer, the album track number, the year it was recorded, and whether it is part of a compilation.

These ID3 tags are the key to creating great Smart Playlists. To view this information, select a track, and choose File > Get Info. Click the Info tab in the resulting window, and you'll see fields for all kinds of things. You may find occasions when it's helpful to change the information in these fields. If you have two versions of the same song—perhaps one is a studio recording and another is a live recording—you could change the title of the latter to include (Live).

A really useful field to edit is the Comments field. Here, you can enter anything you like and then use that entry to sort your music. If a particular track would be great to fall asleep to, for example, enter sleepy in the Comments field. Do likewise with similar tracks, and when you're ready to hit the hay, create a Smart Playlist that includes "Comment is sleepy." With this technique under your belt, you can create playlists that fit particular moods or situations, such as a playlist that gets you pumped up during a workout.

PEACHPIT AUTHORS ARE ALL A-TWITTER

You've probably already heard about Twitter. You may even be Twittering around yourself. But did you know that Peachpit and New Riders authors are Tweeting, too?

Peachpit's super-cool authors have found yet another outlet for their endlessly flowing creative juices. But this one condenses their wisdom into easy-to-digest 140-character bites.

If you'd like to see what our authors are up to, Twitter is your key to unlocking the magic. Here are some of our brilliant authors who are actively swimming in the Twitter stream (You can also follow us @peachpit and @peachpittv!):

Aarron Walter: @aarron
Adam Engst: @adamengst
Andy Beach: @andybeach
Andy Clarke: @malarkey
Ben Waldie: @applescriptguru
Christopher Breen: @BodyofBreen
Christopher Schmitt: @teleject
Dave Awl: @DaveAwl
Dave Cross: @davecross
David Berman: @davidberman
David Blatner @dblatner
David duChemin: @Pixelatedimage
Dori Smith @dori
Dwight Silverman: @dsilverman
Eric A. Meyer: @meyerweb
Frederick V. Johnson: @frederickvan
Garr Reynolds: @presentationzen
Greg Rewis: @garazi
Jason Cranford Teague: @jason_speaking
Jeff Carlson: @jeffcarlson
Jeffrey Zeldman: @zeldman
Jeremy Keith: @adactio
Joshua Porter: @bokardo
Kimberly Blessing: @obiwankimberly
Kris Hadlock: @khadlock
Maria Langer: @mlanger
Mark Christiansen: @flowseeker
Meryl K. Evans: @merylkevans
Miraz Jordan: @miraz
Molly Holzschlag: @mollydotcom
Mordy Golding: @Mordy
Peter-Paul Koch: @ppk
Robert Hoekman, Jr: @rhjr
Scott Kelby: @ScottKelby
Scott McNulty: @blankbaby
Stephanie Sullivan: @stefull
Stu Maschwitz: @5tu
Susan Weinschenk: @susanweinschenk
Tom Negrino: @negrino



MAC TIP OF THE WEEK #220

Excerpted from *The Little Mac Book, Leopard Edition*
by Robin Williams

Enlarge Screen Items for Better Visibility

If you want everything on your Mac screen to appear larger, go to the Apple menu and choose System Preferences. In the Hardware section of the System Preferences window, click the Displays icon and choose a lower-numbered resolution.

SPEED UP IPHOTO '09 OPERATIONS ON SOME MACS

by Rob Griffiths, Macworld.com



If you're trying to use iPhoto '09 on older pre-Intel hardware and/or if you have a very large photo library, you may have noticed that many face-related operations, such as tagging and drag-selecting, take an in-

ordinate amount of time. During these delays, iPhoto may appear to be locked, or you may be treated to the wonderful spinning beachball cursor show while iPhoto thinks about what you've just asked it to do.

Short of ordering a eight-core Mac Pro with 32GB of RAM, I'm afraid I don't have an iron-clad solution to this problem. I do however, thanks to Mac OS X Hints contributors Chris Devers and Brian Hagemann, have a suggested fix that may reduce the delays.

When you look at your albums and libraries in the left-hand pane in iPhoto, do you see photo counts next to

each one? While these little numbers may prove useful, they may also be somewhat responsible for the slowdowns you're experiencing. The task of updating these counts whenever you modify your images appears to cause iPhoto to slow down, at least for some users.

To disable the item counts, open iPhoto's preferences, and on the General tab, uncheck the 'Show item counts' box. (On my machine, toggling this checkbox sometimes seems to take a few seconds, so don't go click-crazy if it seems like it's not working.)

After disabling the photo counts, try tagging some faces and see if the slowdowns have disappeared—or at least been reduced to bearable levels. For both Chris and Brian, this simple change made a huge difference. On my Mac Pro with a 17,000ish photo library, the change isn't really noticeable. But if you're experiencing slowdowns in faces and use photo counts, it might be worth disabling them to see if it makes a difference.

MAC 101: USING TIME MACHINE IN MAC OS X 10.5 LEOPARD

Summary



Did you ever wish there was a really easy and safe way to let your Mac perform backups for you? Time Machine, included with Mac OS X 10.5 Leopard, is the answer. More than just a backup utility, Time Machine makes an up-to-date copy of everything on your Mac--

digital photos, music, movies, downloaded TV shows, and documents—and lets you easily go “back in time” to recover files.

Getting started

The first time you attach an external drive to your Mac OS X Leopard-based Mac, Time Machine asks if you'd like to use that drive as your backup location (you may

need to erase the drive first). Choose yes and Time Machine takes care of everything else, automatically, in the background. You won't have to worry about backing up again.

Customizing Time Machine

You can easily customize Time Machine or change backup locations. First, open Time Machine preferences:

1. Choose System Preferences from the Apple Menu.
2. Click the Time Machine icon.
3. If you've never turned Time Machine on before, you'll be asked if you want to turn it on.

Changing your backup location

1. Click Choose Backup Disk, then select the disk to save backups to.
2. Click Change Disk, and from the listing in the resulting dialog select a new disk to use for backups, and click Use for Backup to save the new location.

Adjusting what Time Machine backs up

If you want to minimize backup storage space, or just limit your backups to certain data, you can exclude certain files and folder from Time Machine backups.

1. In Time Machine preferences, Choose Backup Disk, then click Options. A list of locations that are backed up appears.
2. To add a new "do not back up" location to the listing, click the "+" button below the list, navigate to the location you want to exclude and click Exclude.
To delete a listing, select that listing and click the "-" button.
3. Click Done to return to Time Machine preferences.
4. Drag the Time Machine OFF-ON slider to turn Time Machine on or off.

Now that Time Machine is setup, you can forget about it until you need to restore files, folders, or even your entire system! Time Machine will continue making automatic backups for every hour of the last 24 hours, every day of the last month, and every week past that until your backup disk is full.

Recovering files or folders with Time Machine

If you lose or accidentally delete a file or folder, and you've been using Time Machine to back up your computer, the fastest way to recover your missing item is to use Time Machine and Spotlight together.

To easily restore a particular file, first use Spotlight to specify the file or folder location you need to recover. For example, if you need to recover a presentation on architecture, search for "architecture" using Spotlight.

Once you've located the file you want to restore, (or a file you want to restore even if Spotlight can't find it), click the Time Machine icon in the Dock. Spotlight will pass your search to Time Machine.

In the Time Machine "time travel" window, use the large arrows to the right of the search window, or the timeline on the right window edge of Time Machine, to browse through your backups. Your previous search is performed in every backup window as it is displayed.

When you've found the file you want, select it and use Quick Look to make sure.

Click Restore to restore the file. The restored item is returned to its original location. For example, if the file was in the Documents folder, it is returned to the Documents folder.

Time Machine may ask if you want to re-create one or more folders in order to return a restored item to its original location.

Besides restoring deleted files, Time Machine can restore previous versions of an existing file. For example, if you made changes to a really important presentation, then accidentally saved unwanted changes to the original file, Time Machine can restore the previous version, and preserve the current version too



HOW CAN I MAKE MY CURSOR BIGGER

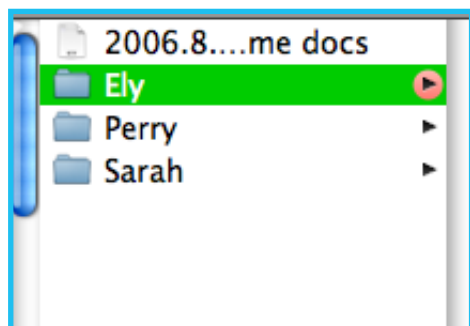
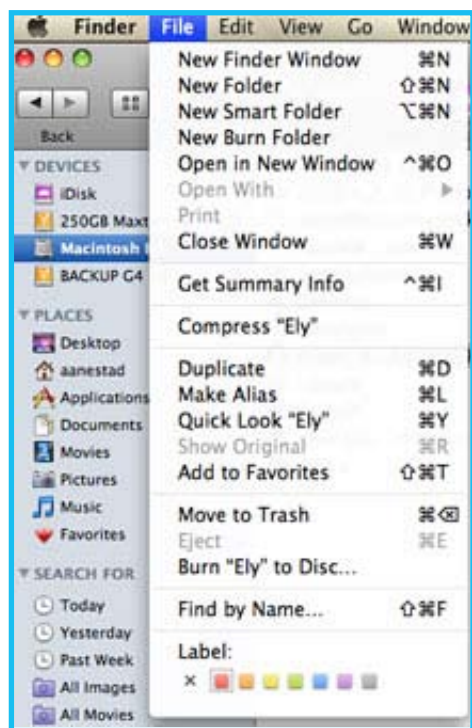
Apple Prefs> Universal Access> Mouse> Cursor Size

MAC TIP OF THE WEEK #221

Excerpted from Mac OS X 10.5 Leopard: Visual Quick-Start Guide by Maria Langer

Labels

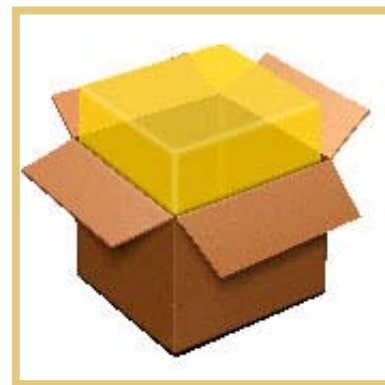
Mac OS X's Labels feature enables you to assign color-coded labels to Finder icons. You can then sort list view windows by label or search for items based on the



assigned label. To assign a label to an item, go to the Finder window and select the icon(s) you want to apply a label to. From the File menu, choose the color of the label you want to apply.

SOFTWARE UPDATES - TIPS AND TRICKS

By Matt Klein
Smalldog.com



Every now and again, Apple releases software updates to all Mac users. It's rare now to see updates for 10.3 and earlier, but they do pop up now and again. It is generally safe and recommended that you install each of the updates as they become available, and it's generally a good idea to install all of the updates instead of selecting updates only for the software you use. For example, an update to Safari can affect function of the iTunes store.

Huh?

Part of the underpinnings of Mac OS X are frameworks, or shared resources. Without writing a novel, think of frameworks as sections of the operating system that any program can draw on. I mentioned that a Safari update can affect iTunes, because the HTML rendering engine, WebKit, is what renders web pages in Safari and the content you see in the iTunes Music Store.

There are a few reasons that software updates fail. Among them is a slow or otherwise finicky internet connection. If your computer is trying to download a large update, but stalls, the Apple server sending the update to you will think you were disconnected after a short while. This is often referred to as a "timeout error," and is sometimes accompanied by an error message that says "Make sure you can connect to the Internet, then try again."

I sometimes hear from customers who see this error message. The fix, 99% of the time, is to just reset both your AirPort Base Station (or similar by another manufacturer like Netgear or Linksys) and your cable, DSL, or satellite modem. Whenever resetting these devices, it's best to leave them unplugged for about ten minutes to dissipate any residual electricity stored in capacitors.

After ten minutes, plug the devices back in. A few minutes later, your computer(s) will recognize your network and should be re-connected to the web. Your software updates should download just fine now.

If, for some reason, they do not download successfully, it may be due to extraordinary network traffic on Apple's servers, like that occurring after the release of a major update like 10.5.7, released just the other day at over seven hundred megabytes for some users!

MAC TREAT #85:

Password-Protect Your iWork Docs

By Kali Hilke
Smalldog.com

In iWork '09, I use Pages most often, then Keynote, and finally, Numbers.

I was recently reminded of the benefits of password protection when Ed and I presented our departmental review in Keynote to other department managers today at Small Dog, and I wanted to keep the presentation Top Secret.

To create a password-protected document in iWork '09, click on the Inspector (the blue "I" universally featured across iWork and other Apple applications) and go to the Documents section (usually the first category in the Inspector) and check Require Password to Open. It will then prompt you to set up a password, verify and set a hint (optional).



Next week, I'll elaborate on the features of Keynote in "How to Use Keynote Like Steve Jobs" (Or Phil Schiller, as the case may be at the upcoming WWDC event)!

ADDRESSBOOK AND ICAL

Reader Peter Frank questions Apple's devotion to senior citizens. He writes: "I use Address Book and iCal, which sync to my iPhone very nicely except for birthdays of people over about 76 years of age. Anyone born before 1/1/1933 (for this year) does not get their birthday synced over to the iPhone. Why is this and is there any way to fix it? Each year my family and friends get older and some are over this arbitrary cut off."

Allow me to outline what's happening here. In Address Book you've caused the Birthday field to appear by opening Address Book's preferences, clicking the Template tab, and, from the Add Field pop-up menu, selecting Birthday. In Address Book, you then entered birth dates for your nearest and dearest.

You then launched iCal, opened its preferences, and enabled the Show Birthdays Calendar option in the General tab. You then browsed through iCal and, sure enough, there were the birthdays you'd added in Address Book.

Good so far. Now, when you synced your iPhone to this birthdays calendar you discovered that those of advanced years did not appear on your iPhone. The reason is that the iPhone and iPod touch are limited to repeating a single event just 75 times. Regrettably, your iPhone doesn't see Aunt Toni's 76th birthday through sentimental eyes. To it, she's just an event that's repeated one time too many.

The solution is to create a separate repeating event in a different iCal calendar for your well-seasoned friends and family members that begins this year. Unless they live to be more than 150 years old, you should be set.
- Christopher Breen

AIRRADAR SURVEYS YOUR WIRELESS SIGNALS

by Nathan Alderman, Macworld.com



[Editor's note: The following review is part of Macworld's GemFest 2009 series. Every day until the end of June 2009, the Macworld staff will use the Mac Gems blog to briefly cover a favorite free or low-

cost program. Visit the Mac Gems homepage for a list of past Mac Gems.]

Increasingly, the airwaves around us are a jungle of competing wireless signals. Koingo Software's AirRadar not only helps cut through the clutter, but also provides useful information about your wireless signal of choice.

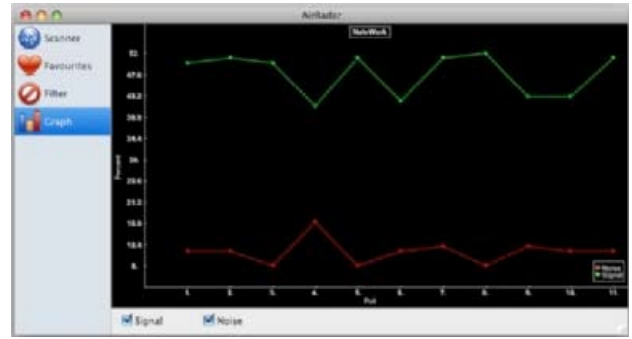


AirRadar quickly scans for surrounding wireless networks, pulling in a wealth of customizable information about them.

AirRadar seems designed for users serious about their wireless safaris. It scans for available networks, displaying highly detailed information about their MAC addresses, broadcast channels, signal strengths, and numerous other categories only a network administrator could love. Users can easily add networks to a list of favorites, or filter them out of the main scan list. You can also pull up a graph of a given network's signal-to-noise ratio, which the program tracks and compiles over time. You can even tell AirRadar to automatically find and join the nearest open network above a specified signal strength.

If you're an ordinary Joe Wi-Fi type like me, you can see how your network signal is holding up, and whether it's on the same channel as competing networks that might be interfering with its reliability. Wardrivers roving the

streets in search of open networks will find AirRadar a handy ally. And on a less shady note, wireless network administrators can use the program to probe for weak or slow routers in their buildings or campuses.



A signal-to-noise graph lets you track a given network's performance over time.

For a \$10 app, AirRadar is admirably polished and professional. A thorough Preferences window lets you customize pretty much everything, from the goofy sounds the program plays whenever its scan registers a new network to the colors of the graphs. The program's Help menu is simple but effective, with plenty of useful information.

Admittedly, using a program that digs up so much information about the networks around you feels a little creepy and intrusive. I'd advise using it respectfully and responsibly. But aside from the spy factor, AirRadar is a terrific little program, well made and well worth the \$10 from wireless buffs.

Want to stay up-to-date with the latest Gems? Sign up for the Mac Gems newsletter for a weekly e-mail summary of Gems reviews sent directly to your inbox.

[Nathan Alderman is a writer, copy editor, and Wi-Fi addict in Alexandria, Va.]



OUR TAKE ON A JAVA VULNERABILITY ON MAC OS X

By Morgan Aldridge
Smalldog.com

Word is spreading that there's a critical security vulnerability in Java on Mac OS X. Actually, it's a couple of vulnerabilities that can be taken advantage of to run commands outside of the browser as the user that launched the browser. The truth is that it's been known about since at least August of last year and Sun, the makers of Java, fixed it long ago, but those fixes haven't made it into Mac OS X yet, not even the 10.5.7 update.

So, what's a Mac User to do? There's no known use of exploit beyond the **proof-of-concept examples**, but the triage is pretty simple:

1. Turn off 'Open "safe" files after downloading' in Safari -> Preferences -> General
2. Turn off Java in Safari -> Preferences -> Security and any other browsers you use

This will prevent malicious Java code on a web page or downloaded from running automatically. There's no reason to panic and JavaScript will still function normally, but it's better to be on the safe side if you're not regularly visiting web sites requiring Java.

“MUCH TODO ABOUT NOTHING”

[Op. Ed. - Kathy Aanestad]

Recently, I had a conversation with some techy friends about some comments relating to the Mac vulnerability to malware attacks and following are some of their opinions.

“Please show me ***evidence*** of Macs being successfully attacked in the wild. Questions you should ask when you hear such reports:

- A) How many Macs have been successfully compromised?
- B) How many of those were compromised completely without the owner's knowledge or participation? Typically exploits for Mac OS X require a **user** to enter their administrator password some-

where, for example.

C) How many required direct user participation (i.e. entering an administrator password) and how was the user thus duped?”

“It's not to say there isn't anything to worry about, but for 99.9+% of Mac users out there, there is nothing to worry about. Until I see real evidence to the contrary I'll spend more time worrying about being hit by a meteor than having my laptop infected with any malware.”

“The phrase “run roughshod all over OS X.” What does that mean?”

“The day will probably eventually come when Macs will become subject to some serious and legitimate attack. I just haven't seen it yet.”

“To those people who speak about Mac attacks, please point to the specific article and reference to be a supportable argument and not be hearsay. I did a search and did not come up with any of those phrases or any more advisories other than the two known social engineered malware hacks that are out there. One is the Java vulnerability and the other is the DNSChanger that has been out for more than 6 months and takes a download of untrusted software from untrusted sites.”



MAC TIP OF THE WEEK #222

Excerpted from Apple Training Series: iLife '09

by Michael E. Cohen et al.

Publishing Your Movie to Apple Devices



To create a movie that can be played on Apple devices or any computer using iTunes, use the Share to iTunes command. With your movie open, choose Share > iTunes. A dialog opens, asking which size you would like to publish. The dots beneath each icon in the dialog identify which sizes are suitable for which target device (iPod, iPhone, Apple TV, or computer). The numbers at right indicate the video's dimensions (width x height) in pixels. If your original media isn't large enough to render in any of these sizes, those options will be dimmed. If you select both the Tiny and Medium options, your movie will be viewable on all three of the Apple devices, as well as on full-size computers.

MAC 911 TIP OF THE WEEK

Reformatting Flash Drives

Reader Dan Coates believes in recycling (or, at least, reformatting). He writes: "I have a number of commercial flash drives with outdated information. **How can I unlock them for reuse?**"

Increasingly, companies are putting data on cheap USB flash drives and passing them along to customers and colleagues. Like you, I agree that it's a shame to toss them out when you can easily reformat them and put them to use for your own purposes. The easiest way to reformat one of these things is to launch Disk Utility (Applications/

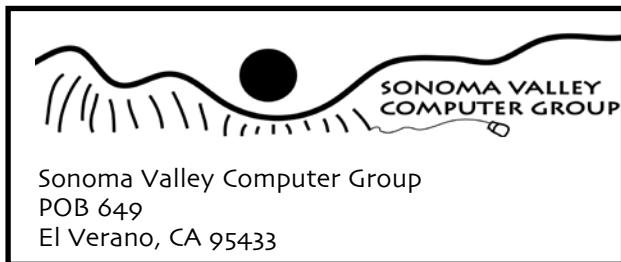
Utilities), select the flash drive from Disk Utility's list of drives, click the Erase tab, choose MS-DOS (FAT) from the Volume Format pop-up menu, and click the Erase button. The drive will be erased with the selected format and will be usable on both Macs and Windows PCs.

I've seen claims on the Internet that formatting these drives in the Mac OS Extended (Journaled) format speeds up transfers. I haven't found that to be the case. In fact, when copying a 2GB folder to a SanDisk U3 Cruzer Micro USB flash drive I found the opposite to be true. It took 7 minutes and 42 seconds to copy the folder to the drive when it was formatted using MS-DOS (FAT) and 8 minutes and 27 seconds when the drive was formatted using OS X Extended (Journaled). When copying that same folder from the flash drive to my hard drive the two were close -- 1 minute 36 seconds for the OS X Extended format and 1 minute and 40 seconds for the MS-DOS format.

Should you desire to format the drive as Mac OS X Extended (Journaled), you're welcome to. To do so, select the drive in Disk Utility, click the Partition tab, select 1 Partition from the Volume Scheme pop-up menu, click the Options button, choose GUID Partition Table or Apple Partition Map from the resulting sheet (GUID for Intel Macs or any Mac running 10.4 or later or Apple Partition Map for PowerPC Macs running any version of Mac OS X), and click OK. Choose Mac OS Extended (Journaled) from the Format pop-up menu and click the Apply button. In the sheet that appears click the Partition button and your flash drive will be formatted as a Mac OS X Extended (Journaled) drive.

- Christopher Breen





• **SEPTEMBER MAC USER GROUP MEETING**

Date: Saturday, 9/12/2009

**Place: Sonoma Public Library
755 West Napa Street**

Time: 9 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

Topic:

**TWITTER
FACEBOOK
MYSPACE**

—

Social Networking

**SEPTEMBER MEETING
9/12/2009**

NO AUGUST MEETING!

**THIS IS YOUR AUGUST-SEPTEMBER
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**SONOMA VALLEY COMPUTER GROUP
MAC USERS NEWSLETTER**



Apple User Group

for Mac and Windows Users

