

Chapter

1

Getting Started

A computer's operating system or OS is the behind-the-scenes software that makes your computer work and in very specific ways. Snow Leopard is Apple's latest OS for the Mac. It is much like the version it replaces, Leopard, except that it does many things faster and more efficiently.

Apple has a well-deserved reputation for creating elegant software that is stable and easy to use. Stability is very important because without it, working on a computer can be very, very frustrating. Most Snow Leopard users use their Mac with few problems and little downtime because of its design.

In this chapter, you learn some key things that help you understand how to get started working with Snow Leopard. These basic operations are important to all Mac users, but often they are buried deep within Mac how-to books. Here, you can quickly discover how to find files, start programs quickly, work with Finder, choose energy saving settings, use Quick Look to preview files, and discover how to find and set preferences for your Mac. These are things you use again and again. Most everything you see here applies to both desktop and notebook Macs, but when there are differences, you are shown what to do.

Quick Tips

Shut Down and Restart Your Computer	4
Use Spotlight to Find Files	6
Start Programs with the Dock	8
Start Working with Finder	10
Change the Desktop Picture	12
Choose Energy-Saving Settings	14
Remove Files with Trash	16
Find and Set Computer Preferences	18
Use Quick Look to Preview Files	20
Browse Files with Cover Flow	22

Shut Down and Restart Your Computer

You can turn on your Mac by pressing the power button. However, the power button can cause problems if you use it to turn off your computer. Nor should you ever shut down a computer by turning it off at the power strip.

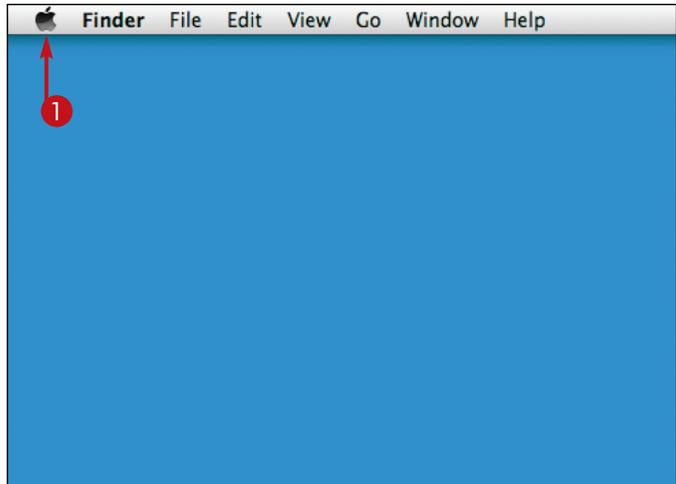
You may need to shut down a computer because you are going on vacation or you need to do some work on it. Restarting is often

required when you add programs or if a program is acting strangely.

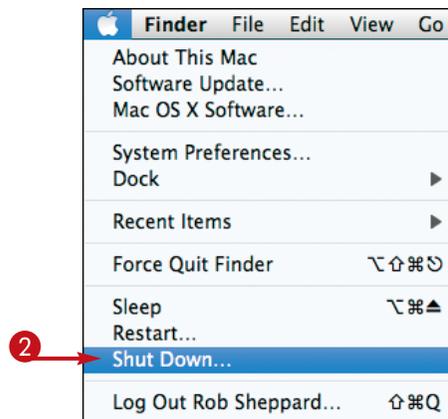
Always shut down and restart your computer with the operating system commands of Shut Down and Restart. This allows the OS to turn off important background programs as well as ensure that you do not lose data as you shut down.

SHUT DOWN

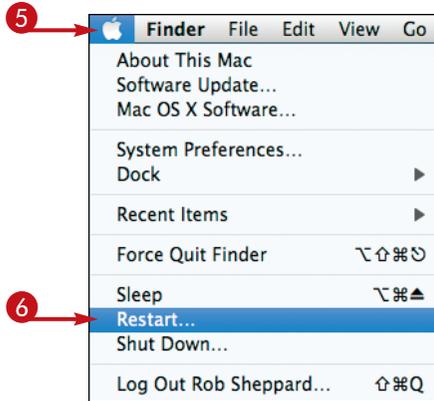
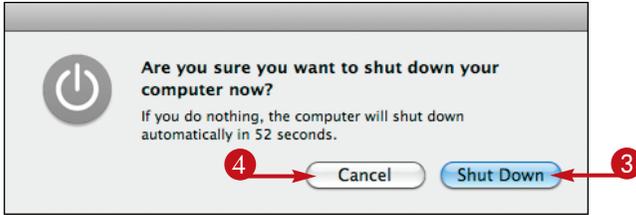
- 1 Click the Apple icon at the upper left of the screen.



- 2 In the menu that appears, click Shut Down.



Chapter 1: Getting Started



The Shut Down confirmation dialog appears.

- 3 Click Shut Down to shut down the computer.
- 4 Click Cancel to cancel the shutdown.

RESTART

- 5 Click the Apple icon again.
- 6 In the menu that appears, click Restart.

The Restart confirmation dialog appears.

- 7 Click Restart to restart the computer, or click Cancel to cancel the restart.



Try This!

There are times when you want to go directly to your Mac desktop, such as when you need to access new files, check folders on the desktop, or access something in Finder. Press F11 to instantly hide all open programs and display the desktop. Press it again and the programs come back. If you have a notebook type of keyboard, you have to press the fn key first.

Use Spotlight to Find Files

One of the great challenges everyone faces with computers is finding things. A Mac's hard drive is, in many ways, like a big storage room. All of your files, programs, photos, music, and so on, are tossed into that room.

Apple was very helpful in developing Spotlight to help you find your files on your hard drive. This is like an automatic personal assistant who

knows that storage room better than you ever will. As soon as you start typing the names of your files or other pertinent information, your Mac sorts through all of your stored information to find everything that matches. You get a list of possibilities that quickly lets you narrow down your search to find exactly what you want.

FIND FILES

- 1 Click the Spotlight icon, the magnifier at the upper-right of the screen.

The Spotlight search box appears.

- 2 Type text related to what you want to find.

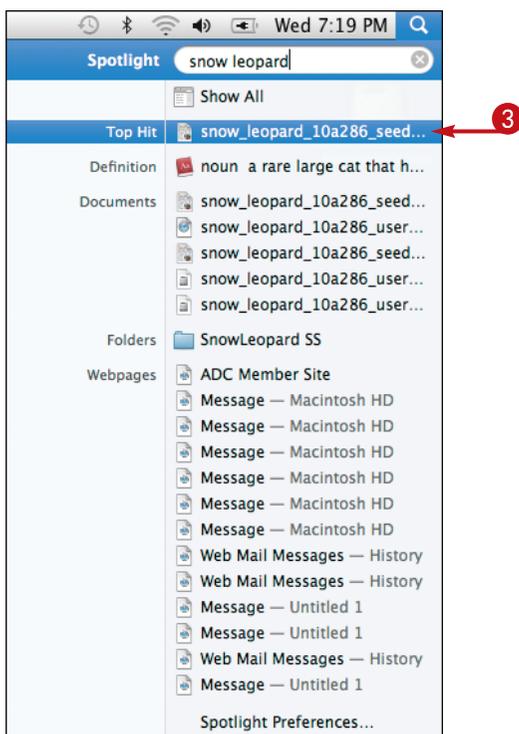
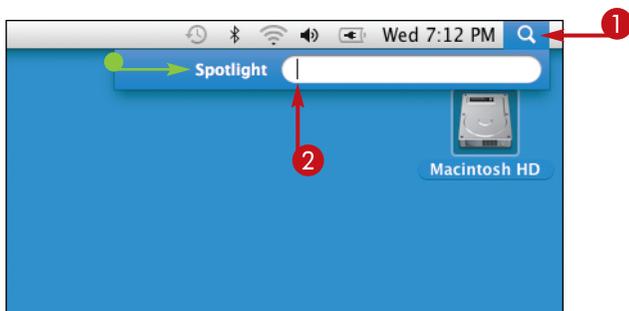
This can be a file name, part of a file name, text in a file, and so on.

Results from the search appear in a drop-down menu.

Your choices are arranged for you based on type of data.

- 3 Click what seems to be the best choice based on what you are trying to find.

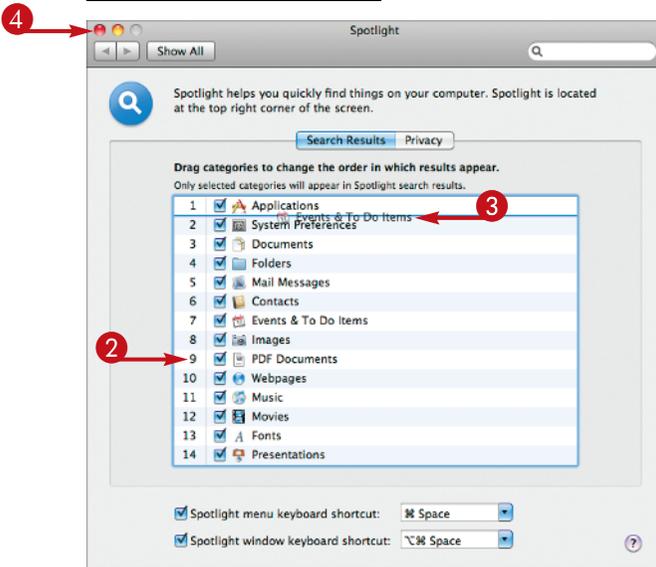
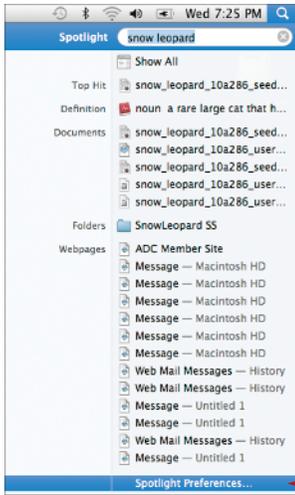
Snow Leopard opens the file for you.



Chapter 1: Getting Started

MODIFY SPOTLIGHT PREFERENCES

- 1 Click Spotlight Preferences to modify Spotlight for your use.



The Spotlight preferences appear.

- 2 Simplify the list of categories by deselecting the checkbox () next to the ones you do not use.
- 3 Click and drag a category to a new location, then drop it, to rearrange the list.
- 4 Click the red button at the top left to close Spotlight preferences.

TIP

Desktop Trick!

At the top left of all open windows are three buttons: red, yellow, and green. Sometimes all three will not display if the functions are not all available. The red button closes the window. The yellow button hides the window, putting it on the Dock at the bottom of the desktop. The green button expands the window to fill the screen.

Start Programs with the Dock

Your Mac comes with a number of programs already installed. You will use many of these quite frequently, and you will be adding new programs to your Mac as well.

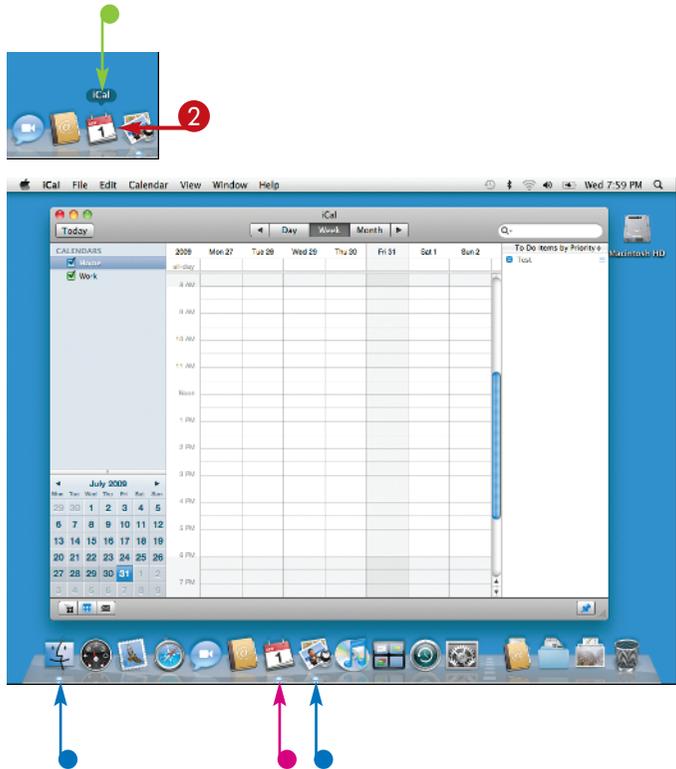
Apple makes the use of your programs very convenient by providing a Dock to hold your programs at the bottom of your screen. This Dock is preloaded with a number of programs

that most users want to access frequently, such as a Web browser and an address book. It also includes a folder of applications, downloaded files, and a trash can. With each new version of the Mac OS, the Dock becomes more elegant. Get to know the Dock well because it is a place you return to again and again.

- 1 Move your cursor over the Dock icons.
 - The name of the program appears.
- 2 Double-click the program to launch it.

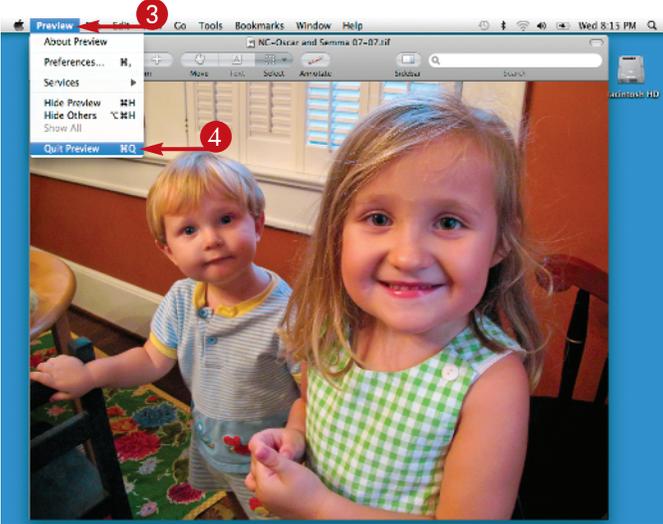
The program opens and its main window appears on the desktop.

- A small light appears under the icon on the dock to indicate the program is open.
- Click any program with a light to change immediately to it.



Chapter 1: Getting Started

Snow Leopard displays the program you chose (in this case, Preview).



- 3 To close a program, click the name of the program in the menu bar. A drop-down menu appears.
- 4 Click Quit Program Name (in this case, Preview). The program closes.



Try This!

Sooner or later, you will be using a program and it will stop working. You try everything, but it does not work and you cannot get it to respond. At this point, you want to force the program to shut down. Go to the Dock and click the Finder (📁). Then click the Apple icon at the top left. Click Force Quit in the drop-down menu. A dialog appears. Click the problem program and then click Force Quit.

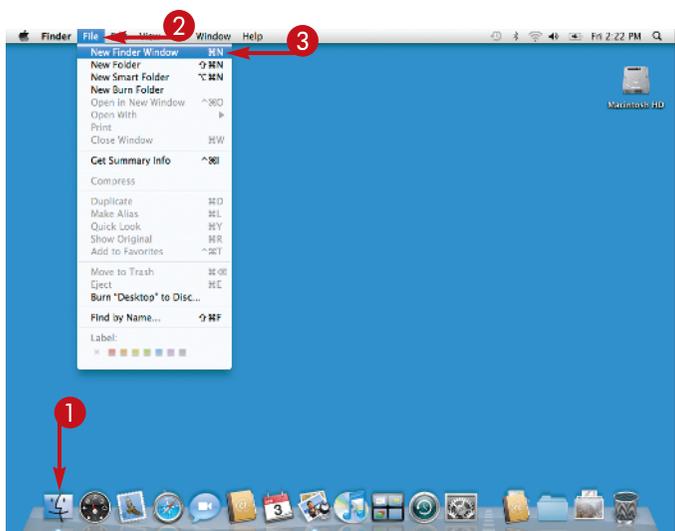
Start Working with Finder

Finder is a key part of your Mac and Snow Leopard. It is where you go to work with folders, find files, take care of trash, and much more. It is a file browser that gives you access to everything on your hard drive and any other drives you add to your Mac.

A browser is a program that lets you examine files without actually opening them. Finder

gives you several tools for doing just that, including Cover Flow for fast looks at your files. This saves a lot of time when looking for a file. In fact, you do not have to open it in order to access its information. It also works as a partner to Spotlight for finding your files.

- 1 Click the Finder icon in the Dock if Finder is not open.
- 2 Click File.
- 3 Click New Folder Window.



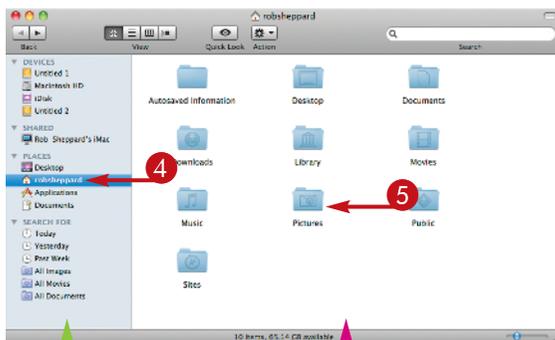
A Finder window appears showing your folders in a specific location.

- The left panel or sidebar shows you locations on your Mac where your folders are stored.

- 4 Click the home for your computer.

Note: The home is the name you have given your computer. In this example, the home is *robsheppard*.

- The right pane shows you the subfolders within the home location.
- 5 Double-click a folder to open it.



Chapter 1: Getting Started

The window changes to open your folder and display its contents.

- Click and drag the bottom corner to resize the window.
- Click and drag the slider to change the thumbnail size.
- Click the Cover Flow button to change the Window view.

There are four view types for a Finder window:

- Icon
- List
- Column
- Cover Flow

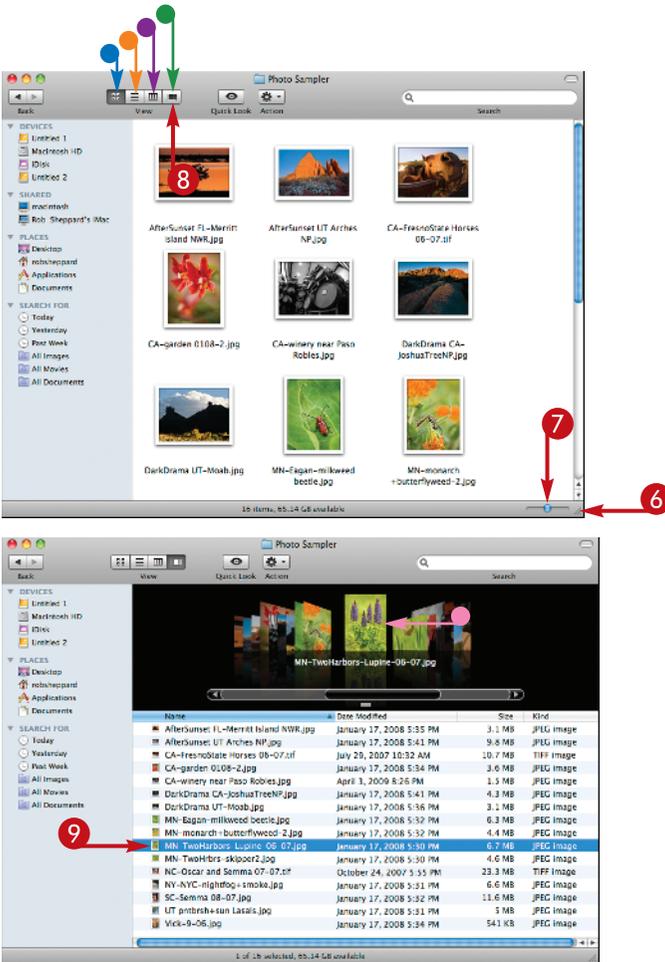
The Cover Flow view appears.

More on Cover Flow later in this chapter in the section, "Browse Files with Cover Flow."

- Click a file to bring it into view.

Note: You can open a file into a program by double-clicking the file name in any Finder view.

- A preview of the file appears here



Try This!

As you work with Finder, you may find that you want to quickly see something in a file and not have to open it into a program. Snow Leopard lets you do just that. Click on a file and then press the Spacebar. You immediately get a quick look at that file.

Change the Desktop Picture

Your computer comes with a desktop background image called *Aurora*. It is a dramatic image, but it can be a bit distracting. Many people like to use a simpler background that makes items on the desktop easier to see and use. Apple makes it very easy for you to change the image or background for your desktop. There are nearly 80 backgrounds

available, most of them with gentle tones and colors that are quite pleasant.

In addition, you can put a personal photo onto your desktop, perhaps a nature scene or a photo of your family. The important point is that you can customize the background as you want. You can make your Mac truly yours.

- 1 Click the System Preferences icon in the Dock.
- 2 Click Desktop & Screen Saver in the System Preferences window.

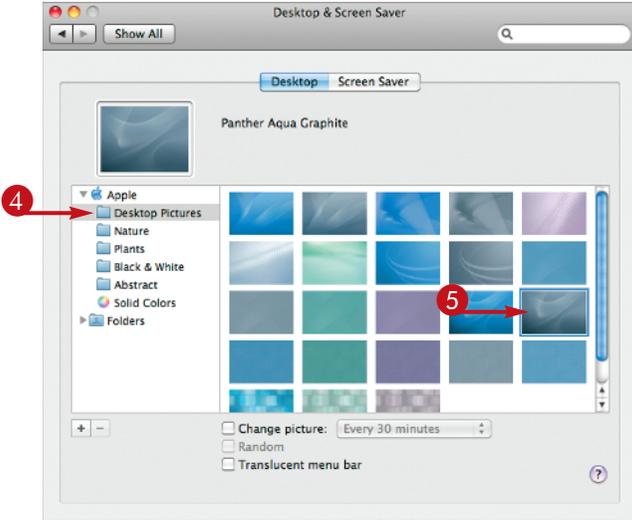


The Desktop & Screen Saver window appears with the Desktop options displayed.

- 3 Click a new image.
 - The background changes immediately.
 - Select the Change picture option to have the background change regularly.
 - Click the Translucent menu bar option for that effect.



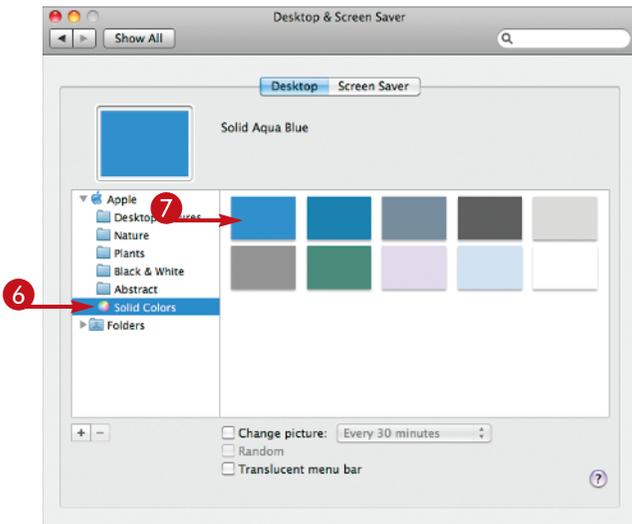
Chapter 1: Getting Started



- 4 Click Desktop Pictures for a selection of gentle backgrounds.

The display changes to show new backgrounds.

- 5 Click a new image.



- 6 For a simple background, click Solid Colors.

The display changes to show your options.

- 7 Click a new color.

Solid colors are not dramatic, but they provide a basic background that keeps the desktop clean and without distractions.



Important!

The background on your desktop strongly influences how you deal with folders kept there as well as your work with certain programs. Some people can find folders easy with nearly any image there, but for others, a simple image makes their work more efficient. In addition, if you do a lot of work with photographs, consider using a simple gray background that does not distract from your photo work.

Choose Energy-Saving Settings

Energy use and the environment are important concerns for everyone. Apple has changed a lot of things about its Macs to make them more energy efficient. First, Apple builds the Mac with energy-efficient technologies. Second, the Mac itself has capabilities to make it use energy more efficiently. In addition, you can even set up these capabilities to customize its energy use for your way of working.

Desktop and notebook computers are slightly different in the way they handle energy use. A desktop only has to control its overall time running to control its energy use, which also affects the life of the screen. A notebook has to control its overall time running when plugged in to a wall, but it also must control its power usage when running from batteries. You can control how quickly your notebook will use its battery power.

- 1 Click the System Preferences icon in the Dock.
The System Preferences window opens.
- 2 Click Energy Saver.

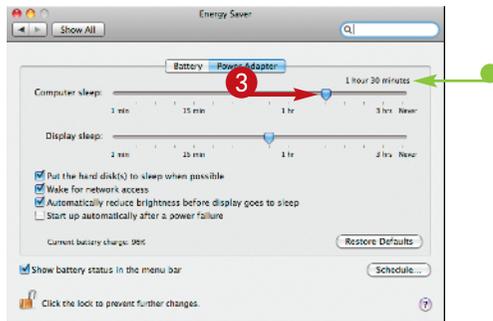


The Energy Saver window appears.

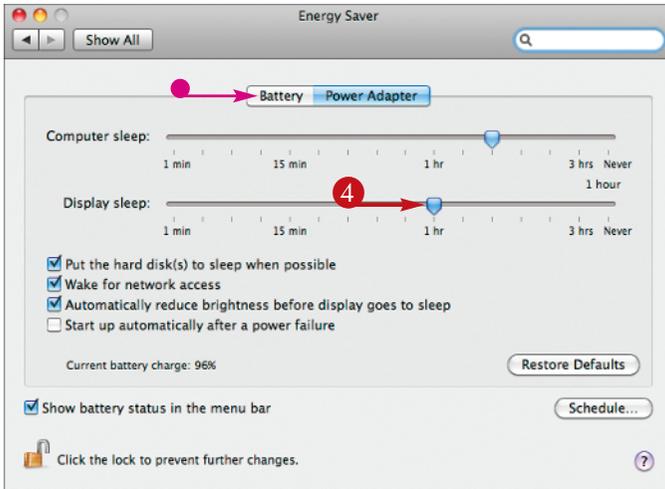
On a notebook, the Energy Saver displays as shown with the tabs Battery and Power Adapter.

On a desktop, the Energy Saver displays with the tabs Sleep and Options, but the sliders are the same.

- 3 Click and drag the first slider to change the time the computer goes to sleep.
 - The time you set appears over the slider bar.



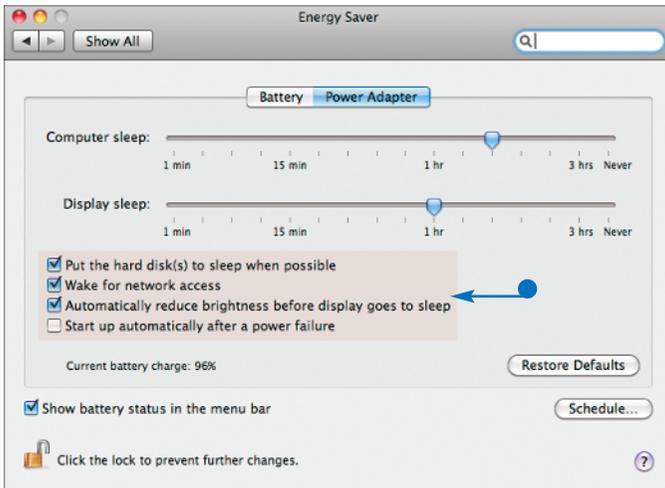
Chapter 1: Getting Started



- 4 Click and drag the second slider to change the time the display sleeps.

Display sleep greatly affects energy usage, including battery use.

- Click the Battery tab to change the settings for battery use with a notebook.



- Click the appropriate check boxes (✓) for other options.

The default settings work for most users.

These settings are in the Options tab for a desktop computer.



Did You Know?

There is a short warm-up time for any display that can affect how photos look. If you are not at your computer continuously in a day, but will be working with photos often during that day, allow your monitor to stay on longer so it does not have this warm-up time during that day. Be sure that your computer sleeps for the night so you gain energy savings and a longer display life.

Remove Files with Trash

One thing that you will always do is get rid of files you no longer need. Excess files clutter your hard drive and make it harder to find things on your computer. While hard drives are large today, having a lot of clutter on them makes your Mac work harder to access data and can even shorten its lifespan.

Get rid of anything you really do not need. It is very easy to do. You can even delete sensitive files in such a way that it is difficult for anyone to recover them. Simply deleting a file does not actually remove it from the computer — it only removes references to it and allows it to be written over by other data.

SEND A FILE TO THE TRASH

- 1 Open a Finder window with the files you want to remove.
You can also find the files with Spotlight.
- 2 Click the file you want to remove.
- 3 Drag it to the Trash icon on the Dock.



RESTORE A DELETED FILE FROM THE TRASH

- 1 Double-click the Trash icon.
 - A Trash finder window appears.
- 2 Click the item in Trash to select it.
- 3 Click the Action button at the top of the window.
A drop-down menu appears.
- 4 Click Put Back to put the file back where it came from.



Chapter 1: Getting Started

EMPTY THE TRASH

- 1 Double-click the Trash icon.
- 2 Click Empty Trash to empty the Trash.



TIP

Try This!

You can also empty Trash without opening its window. Click Finder from the menu, then click Empty Trash or click Secure Empty Trash to remove sensitive files more securely.

TIP

Try This!

Here's a helpful keyboard command to try: Press **⌘+Delete**. The Command keys are on either side of the spacebar. You cannot simply select a file and press delete to move it to Trash. With the Mac, you have to select the file and then press **⌘+Delete**. This puts the file directly into Trash.

Find and Set Computer Preferences

Your Mac is set by default with many common parameters that meet the needs of most users. However, some of these parameters might not be completely right for you.

You can change your Mac's preferences in what is called System Preferences, which is a key part of your Mac. You need to know how to access and use System Preferences because you go back to it again and again throughout your use of your Mac. You have already started

to use System Preferences when you changed the background and set energy-saving options. Controls over the Mac are grouped into four categories: Personal, Hardware, Internet & Network, and System. These categories are fairly intuitive to help you easily find and set preferences. This task is to help you become familiar with System Preferences and how it works.

- 1 Click the System Preferences icon in the Dock.

The System Preferences window appears.

- 2 Click Displays.

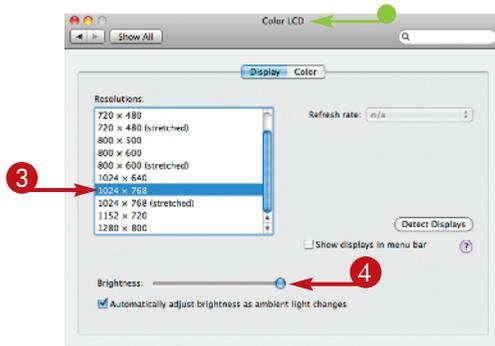


- 3 The display window appears and is named according to the type of display, in this case, it is Color LCD.

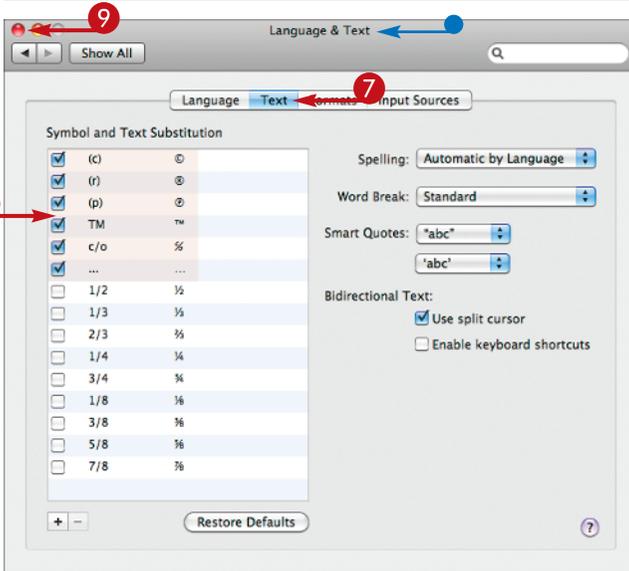
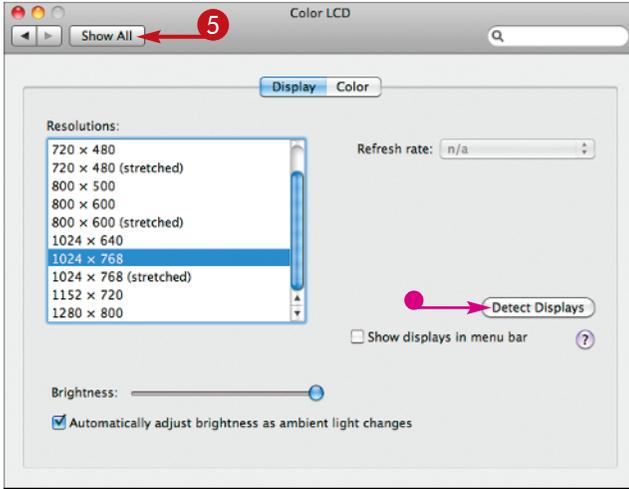
- 3 Click a resolution to change the resolution for your monitor.

Note: Change resolution only when a new display requires it.

- 4 Click and drag the Brightness slider to change the brightness of your screen.



Chapter 1: Getting Started



- Click Detect Displays when you add a display and it does not work.
- Click Show All to return to the main System Preferences window.
- When the main window appears, click Language & Text.
- The Language & Text window appears.
- Click the Text tab.
- Click appropriate text substitution options ().
- Click the red button to close System Preferences.



Try This!

If you are using a notebook, consider using the Brightness control when you travel. You can lower it when the lights are low in an airplane, for example. If your battery starts to look low and you have no immediate access to power, try setting the Brightness control as low as you can. This can dramatically conserve battery power.

Use Quick Look to Preview Files

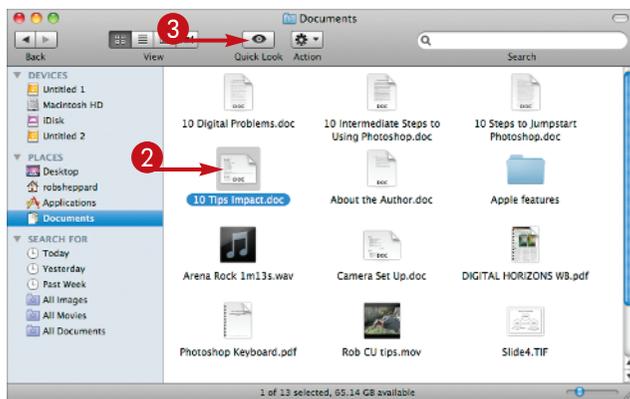
One of the long-standing challenges of using a computer is being able to quickly look at a file to see what it is without having to open it with a program. Opening a program takes time, and after that time, you may find that the file you opened is not the one you want after all. Then you have to start the process all over again.

With Quick Look, Apple gives Mac users the ability to literally quickly look at files. This way

you can be sure you have the right file before opening a program for editing. This also ensures you have the right file to copy for someone else. You cannot do any work in this view or go in and look at details of the data in the file. However, you can easily determine what the file is and what it contains. You can access nearly any file type directly from Finder with this handy resource.

PREVIEW A TEXT FILE

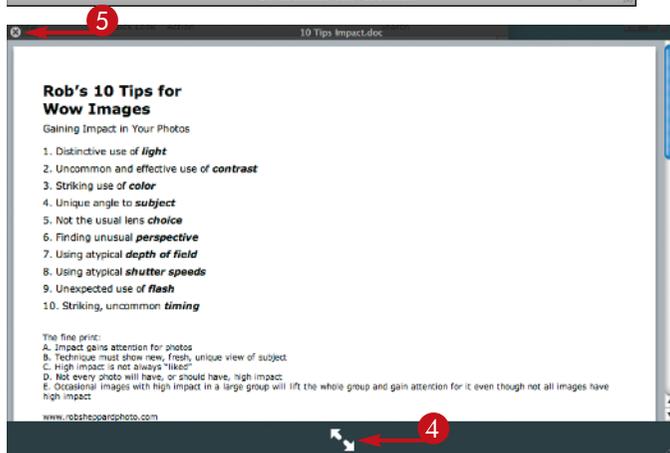
- 1 Open a new Finder window through the Finder menu.
- 2 Click a text file.
- 3 Click the Quick Look icon or press the spacebar.



The Quick Look window appears with your file.

- 4 Click the arrow at the bottom of the window to enlarge the window.
- 5 Click the X at the top left to close Quick Look.

You can also press Esc to close the window.



Chapter 1: Getting Started

PREVIEW A MEDIA FILE

- 6 Click a video or movie file.
Press the spacebar and the video appears.
- 7 Pause the video by clicking the Pause button.
- 8 Click and drag the slider to change your position within the video.



- 9 Click a photo file.
- 10 Select all photos by ⌘ -clicking them.
- 11 Click the Quick Look button for an instant slide show.
- 12 Use the arrows to move through the show.



Try This!

A standard keyboard command for selecting everything is $\text{⌘}+\text{A}$. This is very handy if you have a folder that has all of the same type of file and you want to select them all to go through them with Quick Look. You can use the instant slide show capability of Quick Look to go through them all, although a true slide show comes from image files.

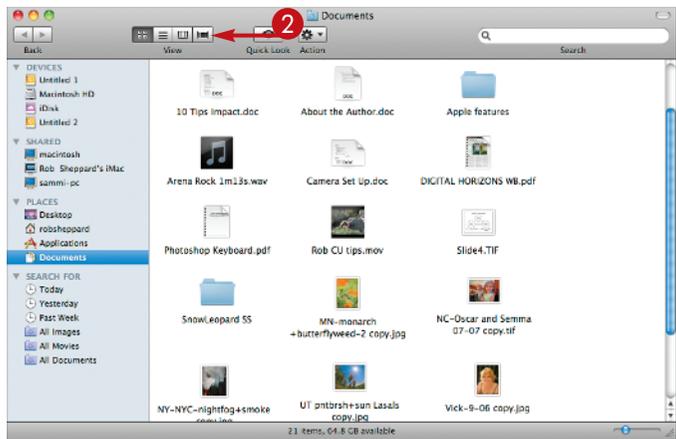
Browse Files with Cover Flow

Another way of quickly looking at your files is to use Cover Flow. This does not offer the detail of Quick Look, but it is a fast and easy way of looking at a lot of files in a folder. In addition, it is a very elegant and pleasant way to browse your files.

Cover Flow comes from iTunes. In iTunes, you can look at all of your music as if you were quickly scanning a library of covers for your

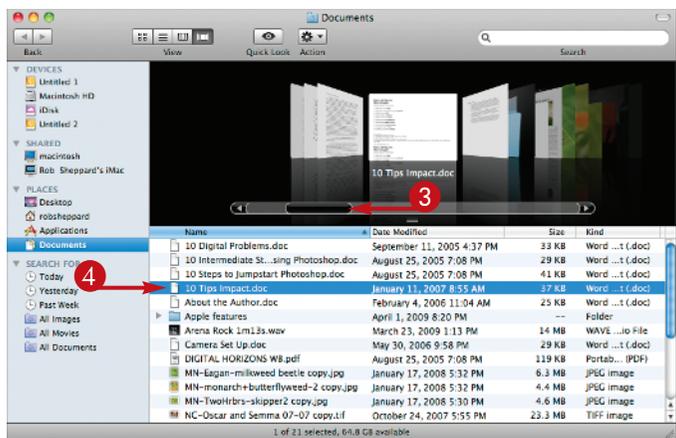
albums. The display shows the covers standing up and reflected on a dark surface. This was so popular that Apple decided to include it with the Mac OS. Now you can see photos, text documents, videos, and more as if they are album covers in this same environment. It almost looks like everything is on stage ready for your use.

- 1 Open a Finder window through the Finder menu.
- 2 Click the Cover Flow icon.

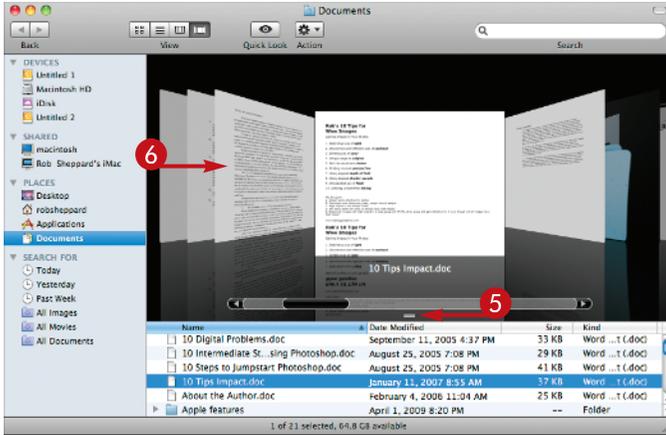


The Cover Flow Finder window appears with your files.

- 3 Click and drag the slider to flow from one file to the next.
- 4 Click specific files to move to them.



Chapter 1: Getting Started



- 5 Click and drag the size icon below the slider to resize the display area.
- 6 Click file thumbnails in the Cover Flow area to go to them.



- 7 Click a photo file.
- 8 Click and drag the Cover Flow slider to move quickly from photo to photo.



Try This!

If you have more files in a folder than can be displayed at once in Finder, you see special sliders appear at the bottom and/or the right sides of the Finder. By clicking and dragging on the bottom slider, you can move the view of your files and folders to the left and right. By clicking and dragging on the right slider, you can move the view of your files up and down.