

- » Identifying the important parts of your iMac
- » Locating the right home for your computer
- » Plugging stuff in and getting hooked up
- » Playing with your bundled software
- » Buying additional stuff that you might need

Chapter **1**

Okay, This Machine Looks Really, Really Weird

You bought a brand-new iMac, and there it sits, in the box. Waiting. Waiting for you.

If you're a little nervous about unpacking that shiny aluminum and glass rectangle, I completely understand. Face it: The latest iMacs follow in the footsteps of many revolutionary iMac designs that have come before. In other words, it doesn't *look* like a computer at all, and that can be a bit disconcerting. And if you're switching from a Windows PC to the Apple universe, you might find yourself floating weightlessly in your office or your living room without a familiar bulky black PC case to anchor yourself — hence, the reluctance you might be feeling.

However, dear reader, let me assure you that you've indeed made the right choice. I commend you! Today's line of Intel iMacs are the fastest, leanest, and easiest-to-use self-contained all-in-one computer ever built. Practically everything's in

one shining panel (except for your keyboard and mouse). You have one of the best backlit LED screens on the planet, a super-fast processor, plenty of RAM (memory), and a regular laundry list of the latest technology. Best of all, you don't have to be a techno-nerd to use all that power — it even comes in your choice of colors!

In this chapter, I introduce you to your new dream machine — whether you choose an Intel iMac or its powerful big brother, the iMac with an Apple M1 processor — and give you an overview of the most important locations within iMac City. I show you how to unpack your new computer, what wires go where, and where your iMac should set up housekeeping. I preview the awesome software that's waiting within that powerful panel. Finally, I list the accessories that help keep both you and your new iMac computing smoothly.

Intel iMac or M1 iMac — That Is the Question

Until recently, the iMac was offered with an Intel processor, identified by the year it was produced and the size of the screen. With the arrival of the M1 processor (often called *Apple Silicon*), our venerable computer is now available in two models:

- » The Intel iMac is the standard home and small-office version, offering enough power for all the Apple applications I cover in this book — as well as gaming, entry-level photography, music production, and video editing work. This is “the iMac for Most Of Us,” as I call it, with the right mix of performance and affordability. The Intel iMac currently offers two display sizes: 21.5" and 27".
- » The M1 iMac is the equivalent of a sports car, suitable for high-end, expensive applications that demand the best performance possible: professional-level video editing, 3D modeling, image editing, and other processor-intensive programs. The downside? You're going to pay more for an M1 iMac, of course, and I would recommend that you opt for the 16GB of RAM for the best performance.

Because both iMac models can run the applications I present later in the book, I won't be differentiating much between the two processor families (except when I'm describing hardware features in this chapter). If you haven't purchased your iMac yet, remember that the standard iMac model offers plenty of performance for the average Mac owner.

Here's a good yardstick for comparing the Intel iMac to the M1 iMac, presented as a Mark's Maxim:



MARK'S
MAXIM

If you need the power of an M1 iMac, you're likely to know that already.

An Introduction to the Beast

The iMac might look like a sculpture straight out of a museum of modern art, but it still sports everything that it needs to function as a computer. In this section, I identify the important stuff that you need to live your life — you know, write a term paper in Pages, hear the music you downloaded in Music, or manage the affairs of those lazy Sims.

Major parts of your major appliance

Every computer requires some of the same gizmos. Figure 1-1 helps you track them down. Of course, as you'd expect, a computer has a “body” of sorts in which all the innards and brains are stored (the body, in the case of your iMac), a display screen, a keyboard, a mouse or trackpad, and ports for powering and exchanging data with peripherals.

That magnificent screen

What a view you have! The standard Intel iMac is graced with either a 21.5" LED or a 27" 5K Retina display; the M1 iMac uses a 24" 4.5K Retina display. All models feature display backlighting for outstanding color and brightness.



TECHNICAL
STUFF

LED and Retina screens use far less electricity than their antique CRT ancestors, and they emit practically no radiation (less, in fact, than even the LCD screens that Apple once used).

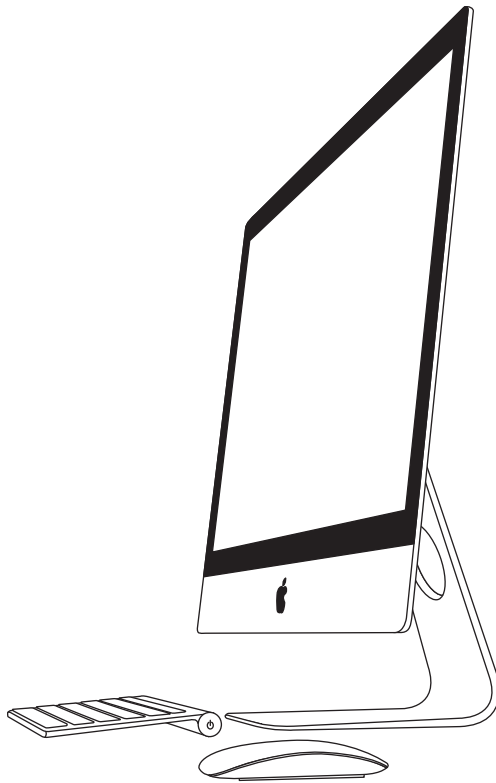
All these displays offer a *widescreen* aspect ratio (the screen is considerably wider than it is tall), which augurs well for those who enjoy watching movies. (A favorite editor of mine loves it when I use the antique word *augur*, meaning *to predict or foretell*.) For example, the 27" iMac boasts a whopping 5120 × 2880 resolution.



TIP

That reminds me: Throw away your printed dictionary! You won't need it because macOS Monterey includes a fantastic Dictionary application, which uses the Internet to retrieve definitions. More on launching applications in Chapter 3 . . . and yes, the Dictionary app does contain the word *augur*.

FIGURE 1-1:
The charismatic
form of your
aluminum iMac.



The keyboard and mouse

Hey, here's something novel for our favorite all-in-one computer — something *external* (outside the computer's case). Gotta have a keyboard and mouse (or trackpad), right? And you gotta love the options with iMac: You'll go nomadic . . . um, that is, wireless and free.

The iMac comes standard with a truly 21st-century combo of an Apple wireless Magic keyboard and a Magic Mouse 2. The M1 iMac can also be ordered with a Touch ID keyboard, which can read your fingerprint for security. You can also configure your new iMac with an expanded keyboard that includes a numeric keypad. (If you eschew the mouse as a pointing device, the Magic Trackpad 2 is also available when ordering a new iMac for \$50 more.)

The Magic input duo lets you sit back and relax with your keyboard in your lap and without being tied down by a cord. (Say it with me: “Death to cords, death to cords.”) Just stay within about 30 feet of your iMac screen, and sweet freedom is yours. You can also feel safe using these wireless peripherals because they offer secure, 128-bit, over-the-air encryption, which helps keep sensitive information

safe while you type and click away. One downside of the wireless keyboard, though: Unlike older wired keyboards, the wireless model doesn't include any USB ports, and you will need a supply of batteries. (Go rechargeable!)



TIP

If you prefer using a wired keyboard and mouse, they'll work fine with your iMac (and you can forget batteries altogether). Don't forget, however, that your keyboard needs to be Mac-compatible.

The keyboard layout is a particular favorite of mine because from here:

- » You can either control the sound volume (using the volume control buttons F11 and F12) or mute all that noise (using the Mute button F10).
- » Mission Control and Launchpad — two outstanding features of Monterey that you find out about later in the book — are each available with a single keystroke.
- » A handy-dandy Media Eject key lets you eject a CD or DVD (if you have an external optical drive).



REMEMBER

Today's iMac models don't have a built-in optical drive. If you have one of these machines, don't drive yourself batty looking for a disc slot!



TECHNICAL
STUFF

Both the wireless Magic Mouse 2 and Magic Trackpad 2 need a flat surface to rest upon, but that's what TV trays are for, right?

Yes, your computer has a foot . . . just one

You and I — normal human beings — would say that the iMac is supported by a sturdy aluminum *stand*, but Apple calls it a *foot*. The foot lets you tilt the iMac panel up and down for the best viewing angle. Most important, though, the foot minimizes the computer's desk space requirements (or its *footprint*). (Engineers . . . sheesh.) And yes, that foot is perfectly balanced and quite stable, so there's no danger of your treasured aluminum supercomputer taking a dive.

If you decide to get really snazzy and mount your older iMac Pro to the wall, you can remove the foot and install the VESA mounting adapter (available separately for about \$80). You can use any VESA standard mounting bracket on your wall, too. You can be positioned within 30 feet or so of your wall-mounted iMac Pro with a wireless Apple keyboard and mouse (or trackpad). Of the previous iMac generation, only the iMac Pro can use a VESA mount — however, the new 24" M1 iMac can be ordered from Apple with a built-in VESA adapter instead of a foot.

Hey, Hewlett-Packard or Dell, can you mount one of those monolithic desktop PCs to the wall? *I think not.*

Food for your ears

A machine this nice had better have great sound, and the iMac doesn't disappoint. You have a couple of options for iMac audio:

- » The 21.5" Intel iMac sports built-in stereo speakers (and a microphone to boot). The 27" Intel iMac raises the bar with stereo speakers and three microphones. And not to be outdone, the 24" M1 iMac delivers a whopping six speakers and three microphones!
- » Built-in ports connect your iMac audio to either:
 - More powerful (and more expensive) external speaker systems
 - A set of headphones
 - A home stereo system

You can also use wireless Bluetooth speakers with your iMac.

The power cable

Sorry, but you can't get a wireless power system . . . yet. (Apple's working hard on that one.) With the wireless keyboard and mouse/trackpad setup, though, the power cable is actually the only required cable that you need to run your computer! Now, that's *sassy*.

The power button

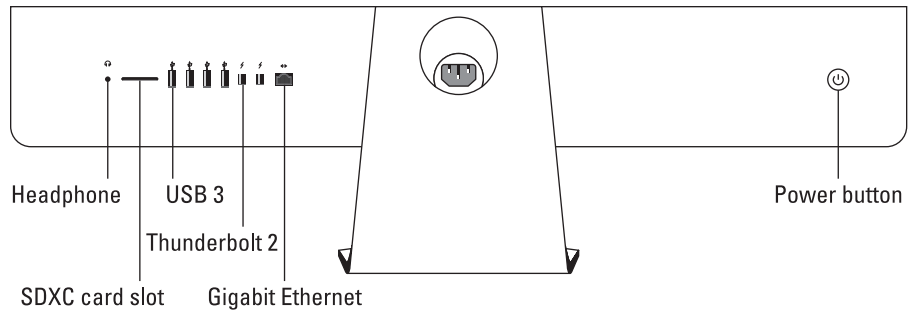
Yep, you have one of these, too. It's on the back of the case. (If you're looking at the screen, it's at the lower-left corner.)

Those holes are called ports

Our next stop on your tour of Planet iMac is Port Central — that row of holes on the back of your computer (see Figure 1-2). Each port connects a different type of cable or device, allowing you to easily add all sorts of extra functionality to your computer.

One of the holes is an exception to the Rule of Ports: The iMac's SDXC card slot accepts the same type of SD memory cards as most of today's digital cameras and video cameras. (In other words, that hole is not for connecting a cable; you insert the card instead.) The SDXC slot appears as a tiny horizontal slot on the Intel iMacs.

FIGURE 1-2:
Only slightly less
sexy — it's the
back end of a
standard Intel
iMac.



Each of these stellar holes is identified by an icon. Here's a list of what you'll find as well as a quick rundown on what these ports do:



- » **USB:** Short for *Universal Serial Bus*, the familiar USB port is the jack-of-all-trades in today's world of computer add-ons. Most external devices (such as portable drives, scanners, and digital cameras) that you want to connect to your iMac use a USB port. Both current Intel iMac models sport four USB 3.0 ports on the back, and the M1 iMac can be ordered with two USB 3.0 ports if you desire. USB 3.0 connections are much faster than the old USB 2.0 standard, but you can still use your USB 2.0 devices with the faster ports (at the slower speed, of course).

For the specs on connecting your keyboard and mouse, see the upcoming section “Absolutely essential connections.”

For more on USB ports, get the lowdown in Chapter 21.



TIP



- » **Ethernet:** The standard iMac includes a standard 10/100/1000 (1Gb) Ethernet port, so it's ready to join your existing wired Ethernet network. (Alternatively, you can go wireless for your network connection; find more on that in the next section and in Chapter 11.) On the iMac Pro side, hold onto your hat: The Pro also supports 2.5Gb, 5Gb and even an amazing 10Gb Ethernet connection! (Apple knows that professionals are more likely to use a superfast network between computers.)



- » **Thunderbolt 3:** Yes, I know, it's a dumb name, but it really *is* that fast. Thunderbolt 3 (also called USB-C) ports offer the absolute speediest connection between external devices and your iMac, including the fastest (and most expensive) external drives and storage systems. Thunderbolt 3's appeal doesn't end there, though: In case that splendid screen isn't quite big enough, you can add an adapter or cable to this port and send the video signal from your iMac to an Apple Thunderbolt monitor, a standard LCD/LED monitor, or a flat-screen TV. (Apple also offers different adapters that can connect your iMac to standard VGA monitors and projectors.) All current iMac models sport two Thunderbolt 3 ports.

Connections for external audio



As I mention earlier, your iMac comes equipped with powerful stereo speakers on the bottom of the case, but you're certainly not limited to them. Apple provides a Headphone/Audio Line Out jack, allowing you to send the high-quality audio from your rectangular beast to a set of standard headphones or to an optical digital audio device, such as a high-end home theater system.



TIP

You can also connect USB or Bluetooth speakers to your iMac.

Important hidden stuff

When you bought your new digital pride and joy, you probably noticed a number of subtle differences between the standard 21.5" iMac, the 27" iMac, and the faster top-end 24" M1 iMac. I call these differences the *Important Hidden Stuff* (or IHS, in case you prefer acronyms), and they're just as important as the parts and ports that you can see:



TECHNICAL
STUFF

- » **Internal drive:** The current iMac can be equipped with flash storage (also called a *solid-state drive*, or SSD). Apple also offers a *Fusion Drive*, which is essentially a combination of a traditional magnetic drive and flash storage (offering the larger capacity of a magnetic drive and the improved performance of flash storage).

As I type these words, the iMac product line offers several different storage capacities, depending on the processor speed and screen size you choose: anywhere from a standard 256GB solid-state drive to an immense 8TB SSD. (Yes, friends and neighbors, *TB* means *terabyte*, or 1,000GB.) The bigger, the better. (Remember, though, that the iMac has room for only one internal drive.)

- » **Wireless Ethernet:** "Look, Ma, no wires!" As I mention earlier, your iMac can join an existing wireless Ethernet network with its built-in wireless hardware. With wireless connectivity, you can share documents with another computer in another room, share a single high-speed Internet connection among several computers, or enjoy wireless printing. Truly *sassy*!

You can use your iMac with any standard 802.11g, 802.11n, or 802.11ac wireless network. (The M1 iMac adds support for 802.11ax as well.) And yes, PCs and Macs can intermingle on the same wireless network without a hitch. (Scandalous, ain't it?) Apple's AirPort wireless devices have been discontinued, however, so you'll have to do some searching online to locate an Apple wireless network device.



TIP

- » **Bluetooth:** Let's get the old "digital pirate" joke out of the way: "Arrgh, matey, I needs me a wireless parrot." (Engineers again . . . sheesh.) Although strangely named, Bluetooth is actually another form of wireless connectivity. This time, however, the standard was designed for accessories like your keyboard and mouse, and devices like your tablet and smartphone. Bluetooth is built into every iMac.
- » **SDXC card slot:** As I mention earlier, this slot allows your Intel iMac to read photos and video directly from standard SD memory cards. Photographers and video fans, rejoice!
- » **FaceTime HD camera:** The iMac built-in video and still camera appears as a tiny lens and activity light at the top of your computer.
- » **Video card:** You'll be pleased as punch to find that your Intel iMac comes equipped with either Intel Iris Plus or fast AMD Radeon Pro graphics hardware. The AMD Radeon Pro cards are well suited for entry-level 3D applications, and . . . well, honestly, blasting the enemy into small, smoking pieces with aplomb. On the Apple Silicon side, proud owners of M1 iMac models can choose from either a 7-core or 8-core graphics system, offering blazing speed (the 8-core version offers significantly faster performance). Both built-in M1 graphics platforms are worthy of Hollywood-quality video editing and the most demanding 3D applications.

Choosing a Home for Your New Pet

If you pick the wrong spot to park your new iMac, I can *guarantee* that you'll regret it later. Some domiciles and office cubicles obviously don't offer a choice — you've got but one desk at work, for example, and nobody's going to hand over another one — but if you can select a home for your iMac, consider the important placement points in this section.

Picking the right location

You know the mantra: Location, location, location.

- » **There's always the wall.** Your Intel iMac Pro (or a specially-ordered M1 iMac) can disguise itself as a particularly interesting digital picture frame. With the right mounting adapter, you can hang your computer right on the wall and snub your desk altogether.



WARNING

This wall-mounted solution has three big problems:

- Your VESA mounting plate must be installed safely and correctly (for example, using the studs within your walls).

The iMac is slim and trim, but it's no lightweight, and it doesn't bounce well. You don't want it to take a high dive!
- You may have to remove your iMac from the wall mount to connect or disconnect cables from the ports on the back.
- External peripherals aren't happy campers with a wall-mounted iMac — that includes Thunderbolt and USB devices, which must either sit on the floor or on a nearby (and conspicuous) shelf. (Personally, I think the cables for external devices tend to spoil the appearance of a wall-mounted computer, so if you're using a wall mount, I recommend using a wireless Apple Time Capsule device for your backups!)



REMEMBER

Your M1 iMac or iMac Pro must be mounted at the proper height on the wall. It's not good ergonomic practice to sit more than 2 feet away from your screen, and the screen should be placed at (or slightly below) eye level.

My solution? Don't plan on using any external devices. Instead, opt for a wireless network with a remote printer and remote backup storage space, like a Time Capsule unit on your network.

- » **Keep things cool.** Your new iMac is nearly silent, but that super-fast processor generates quite a bit of heat. Fans inside the case draw the heat away. (Nothing like an overheated processor to spoil an evening of *Civilization VI*.)

Follow these three rules to keep your cool. Make sure that:

- The location you choose is far from heating vents.
- The location you choose is shielded from direct sunlight.
- You allow plenty of room below the machine (where the air enters the case) and behind the machine (where heated air escapes from the slot at the back of the case).

Hot air from a wall-mounted iMac can discolor the wall.



WARNING

Considering the convenience factor

Technology is nothing if you can't make it convenient:

- » **Outlets, outlets, outlets!** Your computer needs a minimum of at least one nearby AC outlet and perhaps a nearby Ethernet jack (if you use the iMac's built-in Ethernet port for connecting to a wired Ethernet network). Oh, and



TIP

don't forget a surge protector or uninterruptible power supply (UPS), which I discuss at the end of this chapter.

If you prefer to send your data over the airwaves, consider using wireless networking for your iMac. I discuss everything you need to know about wireless networking in Chapter 11.

- » **Don't forget the lighting.** Let me act as your mom. (I know that's a stretch, but bear with me.) She'd say, "You can't possibly expect to work without decent lighting! You'll go blind!" She's right, you know. At a minimum, you need a desk or floor lamp.
- » **Plan to expand.** If your iMac hangs out on a desk, allow an additional foot of space on each side. That way, you have space for external peripherals and more powerful speakers.

Unpacking and Connecting

You are going to love this section. It's short and sweet because the installation of an aluminum iMac on your desktop is a piece of cake. (Sorry about the cliché overload, but this really *is* easy.)

Unpacking your iMac For Dummies

Follow these guidelines when unpacking your system:



TIP

- » **Check for damage.** I've never had a box arrive from Apple with shipping damage, but I've heard horror stories from others (who claim that King Kong must have been working for the shipping company). Check all sides of your box before you open it.

Take a photograph of any significant damage (just in case).

- » **Search for all the parts.** When you're removing those chunks o' foam, make certain that you check all sides of each foam block for parts that are snuggled therein or taped for shipment.
- » **Keep all those packing materials.** Do *not* head for the trash can with that box and those packing materials. Keep your box intact, complete with all the packing materials, for at least a year until your standard Apple warranty runs out. If you have to ship it to an Apple Service Center, the box with the original packing is the only way for your iMac to fly.

And now, a dramatic Mark's Maxim about cardboard containers:



MARK'S
MAXIM

Smart computer owners keep their boxes for the life of their machine.

For example, if you sell your iMac or move across the country, you'll want that box. *Trust me on this one.*

- » **Store the invoice for safekeeping.** Your invoice is a valuable piece of paper indeed.

Save your original invoice in a plastic bag, along with your computer's manuals and original software, manuals, and other assorted hoo-hah. Keep the bag on your shelf or stored safely within that iMac box, and enjoy a little peace of mind.

- » **Read the iMac manual.** "Hey, wait a minute, Mark — why do I have to read the manual from Apple along with this tome?" Good question, and here's the answer: There might be new and updated instructions in the documentation from Apple that override what I tell you in this book. (For example, "Never cut the red wire. Cut the blue wire instead." Or something to that effect.)

Besides, Apple manuals are rarely thicker than a restaurant menu. You can also download them from the Support section of the Apple website.



REMEMBER

Connecting cables like a true nerd

The iMac makes all its connections really simple, but your computer depends on you to place the outside wires and thingamabobs where they go.

Absolutely essential connections

After your new iMac is resting comfortably in its assigned spot (I assume that's a desktop or a wall), you need to make a minimum of one connection: the power cable. Plug the cable into the corresponding socket on the iMac first; then plug 'er into that handy AC outlet.



TIP

Apple has thoughtfully already installed your batteries in your wireless keyboard and mouse (or trackpad). If you ordered your iMac with a wired Apple keyboard and mouse, of course, you have no batteries to worry about at all.

Adding the Internet to the mix

If you have Internet access or a local computer network, you need to make at least one of the following connections.



TIP

Your local cable and telephone companies can provide you more information on cable or DSL Internet service.

If you have high-speed Internet service, or if you're in an office or school with a local computer network, you'll probably connect through the iMac's built-in Ethernet port. You make two connections:

1. Plug one end of the Ethernet cable into the Ethernet port on the iMac.

If your iMac doesn't have an Ethernet port, you'll need an adapter for either your USB or Thunderbolt port. Note that if you ordered your 24" M1 iMac with an Ethernet port, that port is actually found on the power adapter!

2. Plug the other end of the Ethernet cable into the Ethernet port from your network.

It's probably one of the following:

- An Ethernet wall jack
- An Ethernet switch
- A cable or DSL Internet router (or sharing device)



TIP

Will you be joining a wireless network? If so, look to Chapter 11 to find all the details you need to configure Monterey for wireless networking.

Discovering All the Cool Things You Can Do

This section answers the most common of all novice computer questions: “What the heck will I *do* with this thing?” You find additional details and exciting facts about the software that you get for free, software you'll want to buy, and stuff you can do on the Internet.

What software do I get?

Currently, all iMac computers ship with these major software applications installed and ready to use:

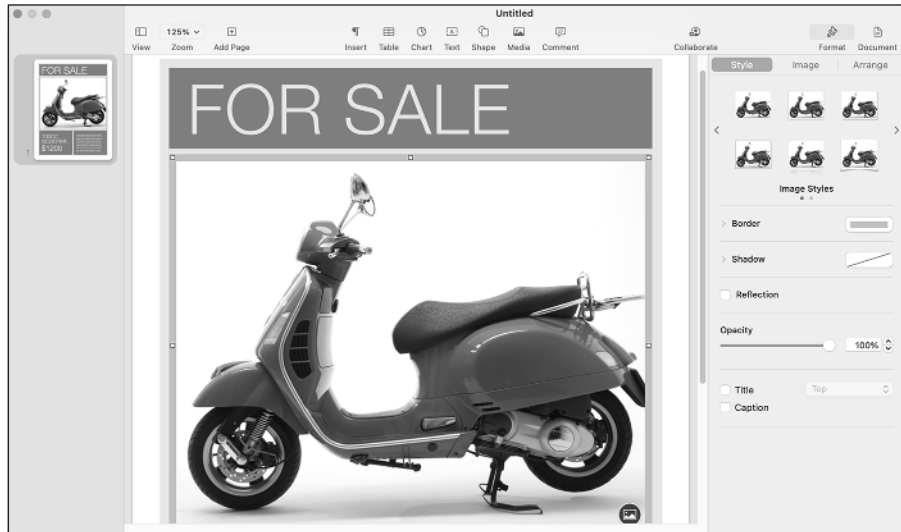
» **Apple's digital lifestyle applications:** You know you want these applications! They turn your iMac into a digital hub for practically every kind of high-tech device on the planet, including DV camcorders, digital cameras, portable music players, tablets, and even smartphones.

Chapters 13 through 16 of this book focus on the four major applications that accompany your iMac: Music & TV, Photos, iMovie, and GarageBand.

» **Apple's productivity applications:** Apple's powerful office productivity applications can be downloaded for free from the App Store. You can create documents, spreadsheets, and presentations within Pages, Numbers, and Keynote. (It's much like that Other Office Suite from those guys in Redmond, but you didn't hear that from me.) Chapters 17–19 show you the basics of producing great documents with these three applications.

Figure 1-3 illustrates a flyer under construction in Pages.

FIGURE 1-3:
Pages is a great
tool for home
and office.



REMEMBER

The installed software on your iMac might change as new programs become available.

Looking forward to fun on the Internet

What is a computer without the Internet? Apple gives you great tools to take full advantage of the online world, right out of the box:

» **Web surfing:** I use the Safari web browser every single day. It's faster and better designed than other browsers (although I might be biased). Safari includes tabbed browsing and offers shared bookmarks with your iOS devices through iCloud.

If *tabbed browsing* and *shared bookmarks* sound like ancient Aztec to you, don't worry. Chapter 8 is devoted entirely to Safari.



REMEMBER

- » **Web searches:** Siri (your voice-activated assistant) can search the entire Internet for stocks, movie listings, and business locations.
- » **FaceTime:** An easy way to videoconference with someone using another Mac, or even with those using iOS devices like the iPhone and the iPad, is through FaceTime. You'll find more on FaceTime in Chapter 12.
- » **Messages:** *Messages* lets you use your iMac to chat with others around the world for free via the Internet — by keyboard, voice, or (with your iMac's built-in FaceTime HD web camera) video! More on Messages appears in Chapter 12.

Always wear a shirt when videoconferencing.

- » **Email:** Soldier, Apple's got you covered. The macOS Mail application is a full-featured email system, complete with defenses against the torrent of junk mail awaiting you. (Imagine a hungry digital saber-toothed tiger with an appetite for spam.) Send pictures and attached files to everyone else on the planet, and look doggone good doing it.

Applications that rock

Dozens of useful applications are included with macOS. I mention the most important of them in later chapters, but here are three good examples to whet your appetite:

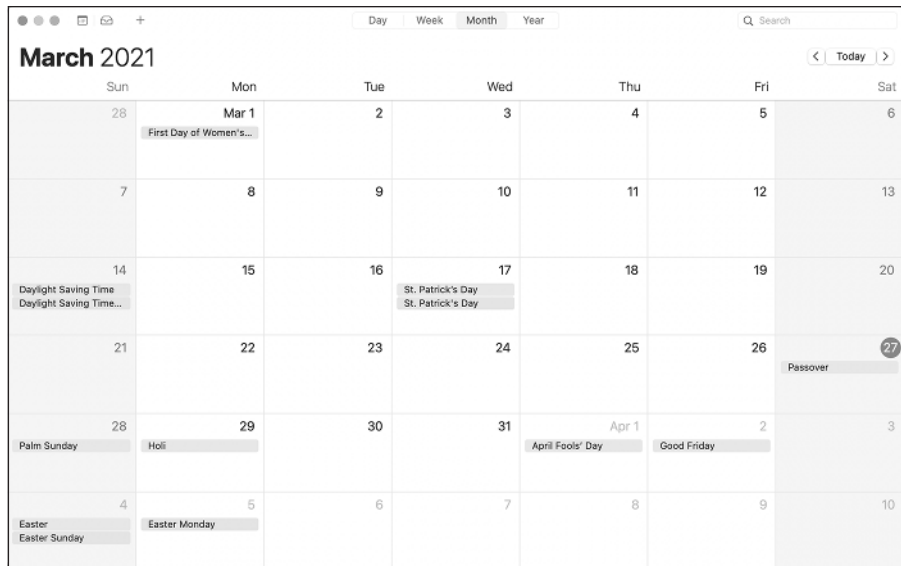
- » **Calendar:** Keep track of your schedule and upcoming events, and even share your calendar online with others in your company or your circle of friends. Figure 1-4 illustrates Calendar in action.
- » **DVD Player:** Got an external optical drive for your iMac? Put all that wide-screen beauty to work and watch your favorite DVD movies with DVD Player! You have all the features of a typical stand-alone DVD player, too, including a spiffy onscreen control that looks like a remote.
- » **Contacts:** Throw away that well-thumbed collection of fading addresses. The macOS Contacts application can store, search, and recall just about any piece of information on your friends, family, and acquaintances.



TIP

You can use the data you store in your Contacts in other Apple applications that are included with Monterey, such as Apple Mail and Messages.

FIGURE 1-4:
Hey, isn't that
Calendar running
on your iMac?
You are
iTogether!



Would you like to play a game?

“All productivity and no play . . .” Hey, even a hard-working person like you enjoys a good challenging game, so you can look forward to playing chess on your iMac right out of the box. Ah, but this isn’t the chessboard your dad used! Play the game of kings against a tough (and configurable) opponent — your iMac — on a beautiful 3D board. Heck, your iMac even narrates the game by speaking the moves!

Stuff You Oughta Buy Right Now

Your new aluminum supercomputer may need an additional purchase or two — but fear not, we’re not talking any outrageous expense here. I always recommend the same set of stuff for new PC and Mac owners. These extras help keep your new computer clean and healthy (and some make sure you’re happy as well):

» **Surge suppressor or uninterruptible power supply (UPS):** Even an all-in-one computer like your iMac can fall prey to a power surge. I recommend one of these:

- A *basic surge suppressor* with a fuse can help protect your iMac from an overload.



TECHNICAL
STUFF



WARNING



TIP



TECHNICAL
STUFF

- A *UPS* costs a little more, but it does a better job of filtering your AC line voltage to prevent brownouts or line interference from reaching your computer.

A UPS also provides a few minutes of battery power during a blackout so that you can save your documents and safely shut down your iMac.

- » **Screen wipes:** Invest in a box of premoistened screen wipes. Your iMac's awe-inspiring 5K Retina display can pick up dirt, fingerprints, and other unmentionables faster than you think.

Make sure your wipes are especially meant for flat-panel monitors or laptop computer screens.

- » **Blank optical discs and USB flash drives:** Many folks still consider an optical drive important, so if you'll miss watching DVD movies and importing/recording audio CDs, I'll bet you've already bought an external drive — and you'll need blank discs for recording music, video, and data. USB flash drives come in many different capacities, and your iMac treats a flash drive just like a traditional external drive. If your iMac is equipped with USB 3.0 ports, I recommend that you buy a USB 3.0 drive; they're significantly faster than the older 2.0 drives.

Looking for even more speed? Perhaps your iMac doesn't have USB 3.0 ports? If you want the absolute best performance from an external drive, super-fast Thunderbolt 3/USB-C SSD drives are also available, but they're pricey.

- » **Cables:** Depending on the external devices and wired network connectivity you'll be using, these are:

- A standard Ethernet cable (for wired networks or high-speed Internet)
- Thunderbolt or USB cables for devices you already have

Most hardware manufacturers are nice enough to include a cable with their products, but there are exceptions, especially USB printers. *Shame on those cheapskates!*

- » **A wrist rest for both your keyboard and mouse:** You might have many reasons to buy a new iMac, but I know that a bad case of carpal tunnel syndrome is *not* one of them. Take care of your wrists by adding a keyboard and mouse rest (even for a wireless keyboard/mouse combo hanging out on a TV tray).

