

Forum:[Hack Forums](#)

Thread: [How To Get Started With Mac - A Troubleshooting and Beginner's Guide](#)

TheWHO? - December 31, 2016, 10:16 pm

Hi, welcome to my Mac introduction thread for beginners, I'm Aftermath and I've been using Mac almost all my life. I've learned mac from youtube videos, experimenting and from the web I am here to put everything I know into one thread.

I've divided this guide into sections, so that you can easily Navigate through the guide if you're interested in a specific topic covered in the guide.

Table of contents:

Introduction

Why Mac?

Mac utilities/pre-loaded software

Which Mac should you buy

Must have Mac Applications

Troubleshooting Your Mac

Helpful Links

Credits

Why Mac?

Trackpad

- Apple has kept Mac dedicated to keyboard and mouse input. The range of simple-to-use trackpad gestures make navigating OS X friendly and fast.

Genius Bar

- The Genius Bar is a in-person tech support for all your Mac problems the purpose of which is to offer help Apple products I've had Geniuses do everything from replacing broken keys on the spot to reinstalling my Operating System.

pre-loaded useful software

- Chess is a game that I have been playing all my life, I want to be good at it, When I discovered the chess app on a Mac, I was delighted. Now I can practice my chess game on my new laptop.

- iMovie is a video editing software application with many useful features

- Quicktime this is one of my favorites, some of the things I like about Quicktime include the ability to "pin" the screen on top of all other windows. If you are working and want to watch something at the same time, this feature is fantastic. Also Quicktime enables you to make screencasts

- iPhoto "One convenient home for all your photos and videos."

- Safari is a fairly lightweight browser that integrates with iCloud so you can access tabs open on other iOS or OS X devices

- GarageBand turns your Mac OS into a collection of clickable Instruments and a full-featured recording studio
- Pages lets you create documents that look great.
- Numbers is a powerful spreadsheet app, includes support for Multi-Touch gestures
- Keynote is a presentation app it makes creating a presentation as simple as touching and tapping
- Maps helps you find your destination. it's simple to get information on local points of interest.
- iBooks has a library with everything from the classics to the most recent best sellers.
- Mail is a third party application where you can view you emails
- FaceTime lets you place and receive video calls to users with support devices.
- Messages is the text-messaging software, use it for SMS and MMS messages.
- Contacts is a virtual address book holds together all your contact information for you to review and add to at any time.
- Time Machine is a backup software application, it creates automated backups periodically and can do silently backup's on everything on the hard disk
- Photo Booth is a software application for taking photos and videos with an iSight (Rear view) camera
- iTunes "is the best way to organize and enjoy the music, movies, and TV shows you already have — and shop for the ones you want to get. It's home to Apple Music, which gives you unlimited access to millions of songs, curated playlists"
- Game Center enables your users to track their achievements on a leaderboard, compare their best scores, and invite friends to play your game
- Preview is the image viewer and PDF viewer it enables users to view and print digital images and PDF's (Portable Document Format)
- Notes another one of my favorites that I use everyday, You can sync your notes across all your Apple devices connected to your iCloud.
- Mac App Store who can explain it better than apple them selfs "The Mac App Store makes it easy to find and download Mac apps as well as widgets and extensions — like editing extensions for the new Photos app. You can browse Mac apps by category, such as games, productivity, music and more. Or do a quick search for something specific. Read descriptions and customer reviews. Flip through screenshots. When you find an app you like, click to buy it. The Mac App Store has apps for just about everything and everyone. Here are a few of our favorites."

Macs Can turn into Windows

By which I mean that Boot Camp feature that comes with your mac

<https://support.apple.com/en-us/HT201468>

You can also use Parallels Desktop or VMware Fusion virtualization utilities to install a different operating system

Security

- On Mac OS there are less security Headaches for example Mac owners who uses no security software runs less risk of being infected by spyware or a virus than a Windows user who obsessively protects his/her PC

Handoff

Apple's Handoff feature lets you start an note document, or email on your iOS device and continue on your Mac OS without syncing or saving anything to a cloud drive like Google Drive. This also applies to reminders, web searches, and calendar adjustments. your devices all work together to help you complete your tasks without frustration.

Resolution

Retina MacBooks and iMacs boast screens that feature anti-reflective coatings and no air gap

Warranty

<https://checkcoverage.apple.com>

"Every Mac comes with a one-year limited warranty and up to 90 days of complimentary telephone technical support. Extend your coverage to three years from the original purchase date of your Mac with the AppleCare Protection Plan. You'll get direct, one-stop access to Apple's award-winning telephone technical support for questions about your Mac, macOS, and Apple-branded applications such as Photos, iMovie, GarageBand, and more. In addition, you'll get 24/7 priority access to Apple experts via chat or phone. You can even get local repair service when you visit other countries around the world"

Source - <http://www.apple.com/support/products/mac.html>

Which Mac should you buy?

MacBook

originally released April 2016.

The MacBook is made for users who prioritize mobility over everything else, including performance and features.

Specifications

12-inch (diagonal) LED-backlit Retina display

1.1GHz dual-core Intel Core m3, 1.2GHz dual-core Intel Core m5, or 1.3GHz dual-core Intel Core m7 processor

Turbo Boost up to 3.1GHz

Up to 10 hours battery life¹

Up to 512GB SSD²

Force Touch trackpad

2.03 pounds³

From \$1299

MacBook air

originally released March 2015.

Apple currently offers two 13-inch models.

The MacBook Air is ideal for people who are looking for a mac but is on a low budget. It's also for anyone who is always on the go,

doesn't want to be bogged down by a bulky laptop, But need more than a iPad.

Specifications

13.3-inch (diagonal) LED-backlit widescreen display
1.6GHz dual-core Intel Core i5 or 2.2GHz dual-core Intel Core i7 processor
Turbo Boost up to 3.2GHz
Up to 12 hours battery life¹
Up to 512GB SSD²
Multi-Touch trackpad
2.96 pounds³
From - \$999

MacBook Pro

originally released October 2016

The MacBook Pro is for the demanding users who wants a computer that can be carried easily and also performs well.

MacBook Pro models sit at the top of the performance chart in term of Mac laptops.

13-inch model Specifications

2GHz dual-core Core i5 processor,
8GB of memory, 256GB of flash storage,
Intel Iris Graphics 540 integrated graphics,
and no Touch Bar.

\$1,499 model

Spoiler ([Click to View](#))

2.9GHz dual-core Core i5 processor,
8GB of memory, 256GB of flash storage,
Intel Iris Graphics 550 integrated graphics,
and the Touch Bar.

\$1,799 model

2.9GHz dual-core Core i5 processor,
8GB of memory, 512GB of flash storage.
Intel Iris Graphics 550 integrated graphics,
and the Touch Bar.

\$1,999 model:

15-inch model Specifications

2.6GHz quad-core Core i7 processor,
16GB of memory, 256GB of flash storage,
Intel HD Graphics 530 integrated graphics,
2GB Radeon Pro 450 discrete graphics,
and the Touch Bar.

\$2,399 model:

Spoiler ([Click to View](#))

2.7GHz quad-core Core i7 processor,
16GB of memory, 512GB flash storage,
Intel HD Graphics 530 integrated graphics,
2GB Radeon Pro 455 discrete graphics,
and the Touch Bar.

\$2,799 model

iMac

originally released October 2015.

The iMac is great for both New customers and Skilled users.

It can handle general-purpose and heavy-duty tasks equally well.

It's ideal for someone who needs to buy a complete computer setup (trackpad , mouse or keyboard, and display) and wants to maximize workspace efficiency.

Specifications

21.5-inch (diagonal) LED-backlit display

1.6GHz dual-core or 2.8GHz quad-core Intel Core i5 processor

Turbo Boost up to 3.3GHz

1TB 5400-rpm hard drive; 1TB or 2TB Fusion Drive; or 256GB SSD2

Magic Keyboard and Magic Mouse 2 or Magic Trackpad 2

From \$1099

Mac Mini

originally released October 2014.

Apple targets first-time Mac users with the Mac mini. If you're switching from a windows computer, you can use your PC's mouse and keyboard with the Mac mini.

Specifications

Highly energy efficient4

Up to 3.0GHz dual-core Intel Core i7 processor

Turbo Boost up to 3.5GHz

Up to 1TB hard drive; 256GB, 512GB, or 1TB SSD; or 1TB or 2TB Fusion Drive2

From \$499

Mac Pro

originally released December 2013.

The Mac Pro is ideal for professionals who work with apps that use as lots of processing cores for example video-editing apps, image-editing software, 3D programs, stuff like that.

Specifications

3.7GHz quad-core, 3.5GHz 6-core, 3.0GHz 8-core, or 2.7GHz 12-core Intel Xeon E5 processor

Up to 30MB of L3 cache

Up to 1TB SSD2

From \$2999

[Source](#)

Must have Mac Applications

- Caffeine keeps your computer from going into sleep mode

Download link - <http://lighthouse.com/caffeine/>

- f.lux is a tiny little utility that makes the color of your display adapt to more accurately mimic outside light.

download link - <https://justgetflux.com/>

- Alfred 2 is an application launcher, With Alfred, you can quickly perform calculations, execute web searches, and quickly find word definitions

download link - <https://www.alfredapp.com/>

- aText is for typing shortcut, You type a small word or combination of characters and it'll expand into full sentence

download link - <http://www.trankynam.com/atext/>

- Adium is a chat client that you can customize with all sorts of plugins, it also has encryption support for third-party chat services

download link - <https://adium.im/>

- Skype video and messaging app

download link - <https://www.skype.com>

Troubleshooting the Three Most Common Mac Problems

Problem One - Persistent Beach Ball

Step 1 - Check Activity Monitor

Mac usually gets the spinning beach ball when something is being over loaded.

To find out which software processes are hogging CPU cycles, sort by Activity Monitor's % CPU column.

A frozen process will appear in red text, saying Not Responding next to its name. If you recognize the process click on Quit Process, then click on Force Quit.

Step 2 - Reclaim Space

You can do this by emptying out your trash

You can also go through you download folder and delete what you no longer need

Spoiler ([Click to View](#))

Still not working?

A few other things can cause the spinning beach ball. here are a few more resources that will help you troubleshoot the problem.

<http://www.macworld.com/article/1151583/os-x/spinningbeachballofdeath.html>

<http://www.thexlab.com/faqs/sbbod.html>

Problem Two - Kernel Panics

Step 1 - Reboot and See If It Happens Again

Step 2 - Update All Your Software

Step 3 - Check Your Login Items

The problem may be one of the programs you have loading up on startup. That means its time to clear out your login items.

Still not working?

You may have a bigger problem causing the kernel panics. here are a few more resources that will help you troubleshoot the problem.

<http://support.apple.com/kb/TS3742>

<http://www.macworld.com/article/2027201/how-to-troubleshoot-a-kernel-panic.html>

http://news.cnet.com/8300-5_3-0.html?keyword=kernel+panic

Problem three - Your Display Isn't Working or Is Distorted

Step 1 - Reset the PRAM/VRAM and SMC

Turn on your Mac and hold down Command+Option+P+R until the computer reboots. This resets the PRAM/VRAM, which is where things like screen resolution, startup disk selection, screen resolution, and speaker volume are stored.

To reset your SMC (System Management Controller) Head over to

<https://support.apple.com/en-us/HT201295> and follow the instructions

The SMC controls everything on your computer ranging from the power to the fans

Step 2 - Boot Into Safe Mode

to figure out what's going on with your display or graphics card you would have to boot your mac into safe mode to see if the problems persist. Power on your Mac and hold down the Shift key until you get past the Apple logo. This boots into a stripped down version of OS X.

if you see screen glitches, pixelated graphics, or large black squares everywhere. it's probably a hardware issue and move on to the next step If now, it's likely a software problem, and you have a few different options for troubleshooting:Spoiler [\(Click to View\)](#)

1. Restart the computer again in normal boot mode to see if the problem resolves itself (this does

actually happen).

If not, go back into Safe Mode and check for software updates (Apple logo > Software Updates). If you get an update for your graphics card or logic board, install it.

2. Double-check your display options by going into System Preferences (Applications > System Preferences). Choose "Displays" and make sure the resolution and refresh rate are correct.

3. If you've recently installed a software update that possibly caused the issue, it's also worth checking out Apple's recently released updates and downloading and installing the most recent combo update again. Sometimes a simple re-install can fix strange issues that might have cropped up with display drivers.

Step 3 - Run Apple Hardware Test

Reboot your Mac and hold down the "D" key until the Apple Hardware Test starts (if you're on Snow Leopard or earlier you need to put in the install disc first).

select the "Basic test" option. Let it do its thing. If an error occurs, the Apple Hardware Test should tell you which piece of hardware is failing and you've found your problem. If not, select the "Perform Extended Testing" option. This might take an hour or two to complete.

Still not working?

here are a few more resources that will help you troubleshoot the problem.

<https://www.cnet.com/news/how-to-troubleshoot-faulty-display-output-in-os-x/>

<https://support.apple.com/en-us/HT201177>

Source

How to Use BootCamp Assistant

Boot Camp Assistant is a boot utility that assists users in installing Windows OS on Mac computers with Intel.

[Video: <https://youtu.be/EbWL1UjzAss>]

Helpful Links

News

<http://www.macworld.com/category/macs/>

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

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

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

Troubleshooting

<https://support.apple.com/>

<https://www.macupdate.com/>

<https://www.macfixit.com.au/>

Miscellaneous

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

Credits

[Apple](#)

[Wikipedia](#)

[macworld](#)
[digitaltrends](#)
[lifehacker](#)

d3f4 - December 31, 2016, 10:33 pm

Great tutorial, love the apps you suggested too man! Keep up the good work!

TheWHO? - December 31, 2016, 10:48 pm

(Dec 31, 2016 11:33 PM)The Finder Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Great tutorial, love the apps you suggested too man! Keep up the good work!

Thank you for the kind words, I will continue adding to this in the future.

SIM-403479 - January 1, 2017, 2:47 am

Very nice tutorial Aftermath.

I am a new Macbook user so I will definitely be reading this in more detail when I'm on it.

Thanks for the share!

TheWHO? - January 1, 2017, 3:31 pm

(Jan 1, 2017 03:47 AM)Jamieeee Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Very nice tutorial Aftermath.

I am a new Macbook user so I will definitely be reading this in more detail when I'm on it.

Thanks for the share!

I am glad you enjoyed the tutorial.

debug - January 1, 2017, 3:41 pm

You could have simply linked the articles you c&p'd instead.

TheWHO? - January 2, 2017, 11:18 am

Thanks for all the feedback.

VDGamingFTW - January 2, 2017, 12:32 pm

Interested in this service

High Quality guide, really deep yet easy to follow. I now have a really solid understanding,

happyandconfused - January 3, 2017, 8:04 am

This is a nice tutorial/guide for new mac users. Covered a lot of information I wish I knew when I first bought my mac a couple of months ago. Especially the part about kernel panics ?

TheWHO? - January 3, 2017, 2:13 pm

Thanks for all the feedback.

?I???po?N? - January 5, 2017, 1:13 pm

Quite a nice guide! If I had the money I would probably buy a mac-book next to my normal PC for music production and other multi-media stuff.

TheWHO? - January 6, 2017, 12:47 pm

(Jan 5, 2017 02:13 PM)?I???po?N? Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Quite a nice guide! If I had the money I would probably buy a mac-book next to my normal PC for music production and other multi-media stuff.

Thanks for the feedback.

p4r14hd0g - January 6, 2017, 1:32 pm

This is easy to follow for a Mac user like me! Thank you! :)

TheWHO? - January 6, 2017, 1:51 pm

If you have any suggestions on what I should add Please Let me know thanks guys.

Archeery - January 6, 2017, 1:56 pm

Awesome tutorial! I've recently switched to Apple's MacBook from having windows my entire life & I'm absolutely loving it! I'd like to see an increase in Mac OS subjects/threads here on Hackforums. Way too many people here bash Macs, instead of giving it a try!

TheWHO? - January 6, 2017, 5:32 pm

(Jan 6, 2017 02:56 PM)Bow N Arrows Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Awesome tutorial! I've recently switched to Apple's MacBook from having windows my entire life & I'm absolutely loving it! I'd like to see an increase in Mac OS subjects/threads here on Hackforums. Way too many people here bash Macs, instead of giving it a try!

yes I agree people should give it a try, Thanks for the kind words buddy.

intporn - January 8, 2017, 10:34 pm

Thanks for the guide! I just got my macbook pro late last year and was anxious if I can do the transition smoothly. After reading your guide I couldn't imagine going back to windows in the near future haha.

TheWHO? - January 9, 2017, 1:59 pm

I am glad you guys are enjoying this guide.

D9ni3l - January 9, 2017, 2:43 pm

Very intreseting, Thanks you!

TheWHO? - January 9, 2017, 6:54 pm

(Jan 9, 2017 03:43 PM)D3ni9l Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Very intreseting, Thanks you!
Your welcome buddy.

TheWHO? - January 13, 2017, 2:17 pm

Thanks for all the feedback.

A P P L E - January 27, 2017, 4:45 pm

'AFTHEMATH', you are an absolute KING for making this. More people should go with Apple & learn all the awesome features Apple has to offer. Too many people are fixed on Windows & don't have the spunk to branch out & try new things. Thanks again for this remarkable thread, cheers. ?

TheWHO? - January 29, 2017, 4:20 pm

Thanks for all the feedback.

TheWHO? - February 3, 2017, 2:23 pm

(Jan 27, 2017 05:45 PM)A P P L E Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) 'AFTHEMATH', you are an absolute KING for making this. More people should go with Apple & learn all the awesome features Apple has to offer. Too many people are fixed on Windows & don't have the spunk to branch out & try new things. Thanks again for this remarkable thread, cheers. ?
Thanks for the kind words.

spycho - February 5, 2017, 3:15 am

It was a really good tutorial. Thank you!

TheWHO? - February 5, 2017, 6:24 pm

(Feb 5, 2017 04:15 AM)spsycho Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) It was a really good tutorial. Thank you!
Your welcome buddy.

SDS143 - February 25, 2017, 11:11 am

I love Mac and Apple, just its so expensive . Funny thing is I'm using Bootcamp to dual boot Mac Os Sierra and Windows 10 =)

Jona - June 11, 2017, 8:22 am

I messaged you on Skype. Please check Skype. Also am interested in your Rs Account Cracker on AbuseWith.Us. Please check AbuseWith.Us

Strafe - June 25, 2017, 4:07 pm

"On Mac OS there are less security Headaches for example Mac owners who uses no security software runs less risk of being infected by spyware or a virus than a Windows user who obsessively protects his/her PC"

-This is untrue, I haven't had an security issue in years on Windows(with no Anti-Virus), It depends on the user not the machine.

"The Genius Bar is a in-person tech support for all your Mac problems the purpose of which is to offer help Apple products I've had Geniuses do everything from replacing broken keys on the spot to reinstalling my Operating System."

-Pretty sure windows has this too and it's called any repair shop. Not a reason for "Why Mac?"

"pre-loaded useful software"

-On windows this is called Bloatware, Windows has it too but users don't want it.

"Macs Can turn into Windows"

-You can also turn Windows into a Mac... however if you're using it as a main operating system you're just paying more for worse hardware to run Windows on a Mac.

"Apple's Handoff feature lets you start an note document, or email on your iOS device and continue on your Mac OS without syncing or saving anything to a cloud drive like Google Drive."

-Not too sure on this part, but I'm pretty sure it would NEED to "syncing or saving anything to a cloud drive" in order to push content from one device to another, if not how is this done?

"Every Mac comes with a one-year limited warranty and up to 90 days of complimentary telephone technical support."

-That's pretty garbage, on a lot of PC parts you can find 3-5 year warranties.

"Caffeine keeps your computer from going into sleep mode"

-Mac actually needs an application to do this? lol...

"Skype video and messaging app"

-Not a mac only application, and by no means a must have.

Now that being said I still do appreciate the time and effort you put into this post to inform other members, however I just can't agree on those points.