



MAC FACTS

from

Mac Help Desk

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🍏 Apple Solution Experts 🍏

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A Message from Dru

Wishing you and yours a happy and safe Thanksgiving. As we sit before a meal, whether large or small, on Thanksgiving, please take a moment, however brief, to say a prayer of thanks. Despite everything that may be happening in our lives, whatever threats or terrors; loss of work or loved ones; success in business or relationships; ups; downs; goods; bads; for better or worse we live in the greatest nation this world has ever seen. We live in a nation that was founded on the concepts of 'life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.' We live in a nation that recognizes that each person be allowed to worship in the faith and the manner of their choosing. We live in a nation that is often divided, but unites to help its own and others of the world. We live in a nation where might doesn't make right and that all citizens have an opportunity to become whatever their destiny chooses. We live in a nation that may not be perfect, a nation that has a dynamic constitution (and a dynamic Constitution), and a nation that is a beacon of hope to every people locked in countries whose idea of human rights is allowing you to live for another day to serve the State. So take a moment with family and friends and count your blessings. We have much to be thankful for.



These folk weren't too scared to join the Mac Help Desk family last month: Abacus Printing, William Hamelmann, Dimension Marketing Group, Elizabeth Frater, Erin Caruth, Alpha-Bet, Joyce Hebling, Master's Touch School of Music, Jim Stewart, and Derrick Hall. Glad y'all are here.



Party time? Live music enlivens any party. If you're planning a holiday gathering, I have just the band for you - LoveSong. According to *Dallas Music Weekly*, "LoveSong is one of Dallas' premiere small bands." For more info, or to book an event, go to - <http://www.machelpdesk.com/lovesong>



Apple Corps of Dallas needs you to P-A-R-T-Y! Saturday December 1st, 9 am - 1 pm. Richardson Civic Center. It's our annual Holiday Party and Swap meet. Come have a glass of cheer, meet lotsa great Mac folks of all ages (just like you), and shop (and swap) for Mac stuff. Best of all it FREE! We'll be Mac gaming, too! So bring the entire family. For more info go to - <http://www.acd.org>





Hard Drive Partitioning - Mac Basics

By Charles W. Moore

I keep reading that people have their hard drives partitioned. Can you please give me a hint how I could do the same thing on my 20GB HDD (as I understand, I have to boot from another drive and can only have a blank disk partitioned).

*Thanks for your help and kind regards.
T. Piolino*

A Mac user could go forever without partitioning his or her hard drive and be perfectly happy, and probably most do -- even many power-users.

Back in the old days, before Mac OS 8.1, there was a particularly compelling reason for partitioning one's hard drive into two or more virtual volumes. Under the old, Mac OS Standard (HFS) disk formatting protocol, a volume, no matter what its capacity was, would be subdivided into a maximum of 65,536 "blocks" of data.

This was no problem on a floppy disk or on the old, small hard drives of 20, 80, or at most a few hundred MB capacity. However, it could waste hard drive space, since even the smallest file --say a couple of sentences of text -- would occupy an entire block, and as the drive capacity increased, the blocks just got bigger, wasting even more space. Even a 10k text file on, say, a 4 gigabyte drive, will occupy 65 K, the smallest block size under HFS formatting on that size drive.

The workaround was to partition the drive, since the smaller multiple volumes would naturally have smaller block sizes. For example, when I created four partitions on my PowerBook 5300's 500 MB hard drive, and restored the same collection of files, I found that I had magically gained about 35 MB of free space.

However, as hard disk capacities grew to 1 GB and beyond, the block sizes with HFS formatting became simply ridiculous, so starting with OS 8.1, Apple introduced the Mac OS Extended Format -- HFS+ -- which increased the maximum number of formatting blocks on a drive to 4.29 billion, making each block minuscule compared with HFS formatting.

HFS plus consequently removed one of the main reasons for drive partitioning, so is there any advantage to for partitioning today? I think so.

Hard drives nowadays are humongous compared with even a few years ago. My Mac Plus ran on 800 K floppies or an external 20 MB hard drive. My LC 520 came with a 160 MB drive, the PowerBook 5300 a 500 MB unit, and my WallStreet G3 PowerBook came with a 2 GB drive. My Cube and Pismo PowerBook shipped with 20 GB hard drives, and you can get a 48 GB drive with the newest TiBooks (*and up to 80 GB on the new G4s - Ed.*).

I find that having any drive, but especially the big ones, partitioned into smaller volumes, is helpful for organizing things better. I have settled on four partitions as being ideal for me. I use the top

level partition for my working system and its associated files. The second partition is for applications; the third one is for document archives; and the fourth is a general dumping ground for everything else -- mostly software installers or anything really big. Works for me. Having the files on my hard drive organized this way also speeds up Sherlock searches, because you can specify just one volume to be searched.

However, one of the biggest advantages of doing this is that it allows me to keep several system versions installed on my hard drive, and select which one I want to start up with in the Startup Disk control panel, which can be very convenient. On my WallStreet, I have OS 9.0; OS 9.1; and OS 9.2.1 installed (I also have SuSE Linux 7.1 installed on yet another, AUX partition, but that's another movie). I find this multiple systems approach very useful for troubleshooting system problems. It also enables me to install a new system, most recently OS 9.2.1, without disturbing my existing working system. In the latter case I was very glad that I did, because I did not like OS 9.2.1's propensity to lock on waking from sleep.

I even partitioned to little 20 MB hard drive on the old Mac Plus so that I could keep System 7.0 for Internet access, and System 6.0.8 for speed.

Partitioning can also be convenient for Macs that are used by more than one individual -- everyone can have their own personal volume with files, applications, and System preferences set up the way they like (provided they install a system on that volume).

The best time to partition a hard drive is when you first get the Mac. That's because you must erase the drive's directory in order to format the partitions, which means backing all of your files up to another volume(s), which is time consuming if you have a lot of files and applications.

On a new Mac, or after your files are safely back up (in two places for really ,important stuff) partitioning is very easy to do using the Drive Setup utility that ships with every new Mac operating system. Version 7.3.5 and later of the earlier HD SC Setup utility will also format SCSI drives on older Macs with partitions.

Boot your Mac from another volume such as the system restore CD or a system installed on a Zip Drive or FireWire Drive, and start up Drive Setup, which can be found in the Mac OS Utilities Folder inside the Applications (Mac OS 9) older on your CD or boot disk. When Drive Setup starts up you will see a List Of Drives window which should show your Mac's hard drive, and whatever disk you have used to boot from.

Select the Mac Hard Drive or whatever your hard drive is named and click Initialize, which will erase all of the file directory information from your hard drive; then choose Customize Volumes from the Function menu. The Custom Setup window will appear.

Use the pulldown menu in the window to specify how many partitions you want to have (a partition map of your subdivided drive which will appear in the Volumes box with the appropriate number of dividers, which can be dragged up or down to configure the relative size of each volume).

Specify the type of formatting you want (usually HFS+) in the pulldown menu in the Volume Info box.

Once the partitions are configured to your satisfaction, click OK and quit Drive Setup. You will see that you now have two or more hard drive icons (plus your boot volume) visible on your desktop.

Now you will have to reinstall a system on at least one of the new partitions in order to boot from the hard drive. Restore your application and document archive files, and you're done.

Selecting Drive Setup Help from the Help menu will assist you in making the steps required to partition your drive, if you're still unclear on any points.



NEWSLINE

Apple Makes Waves With New iPod

by Jakob Peterseil

Just in time for the holiday buying season, Apple introduced its new iPod portable MP3 player to the public on November 10. The company has created enormous hype for its first non-computer product in several years, and in the realm of portable digital audio, the iPod lives up to its “revolutionary” billing.



The thin, silver handheld, which weighs in at only 6.5 oz., is designed to store up to 1,000 songs at a time (the equivalent of about 100 CDs worth of music), and play for ten hours from a single charge of its lithium battery. The unit, which retails for \$399, comes equipped with a large, easy-to-read LCD screen that can display up to six lines of text, and a simplified five-button interface designed for operation with one hand.

But the major innovation of the iPod is the way it transfers audio files. Instead of using a traditional USB connection to transfer music from computer to portable unit, the iPod utilizes Apple's much quicker FireWire interface. Delivering more than 30 times the bandwidth of USB, FireWire makes it possible to transfer an entire CD from a Mac to the iPod in just ten seconds.

One thousand songs can be transferred in ten minutes. These are the fastest transfer times achieved so far by a portable MP3 unit, faster than burning a CD or recording a cassette tape, signaling a promising step forward for portable MP3 technology. But iPod is still very much a Macintosh peripheral, designed for use with Apple's iTunes PC jukebox software and dependent on the FireWire port that comes standard with most new Macs but is missing from most PCs. This begs the question of whether iPod is capable of creating much of a stir in the digital music community outside of a handful Mac users willing to spend \$399 for the unit.

A Lot Easier Than Programming Your VCR

Apple has made much of the iPod's five-gigabyte hard drive, which doubles as a FireWire disk to store files and applications. But units with as much as 20 gigabytes of storage space, like Creative's NOMAD Jukebox, have been available for some time. Several, like the Archos Jukebox, which

features six gigabytes of storage space, retail for significantly less than the iPod. But most critics agree that the iPod improves on existing portable MP3 technology in several ways.

Typical of Apple products, the iPod is distinguished by its user-friendliness. Portable MP3 units in general tend to be bulky and tedious to use, with short battery life and long transfer times. But the iPod is a triumph of form and function. The unit itself is not much bigger than a cassette Walkman, and its large buttons and easy-to read LCD screen make navigation easy on the fingers and the eyes. Users can organize songs by artist and album, or create their own playlists. The jog dial at the front of the unit makes running through long lists of tracks quick and easy.

Transferring songs from a computer to a portable used to be tedious work. But thanks to iPod's compatibility with Apple's iTunes jukebox software, the process is sped up considerably. According to Apple, once the iPod is plugged into a Mac equipped with iTunes software, the songs and playlists from your computer are automatically transferred to the iPod. If you add new songs or playlists to your iTunes jukebox, simply plug in the iPod and it automatically updates your portable cache with the new iTunes songs—all in a matter of seconds. The 'plug-and-go' feature of the iPod seems to represent the closest any unit has come to where portable MP3 technology should be: as quick, if not quicker, than grabbing a cassette tape or a CD - and just as convenient.

Can iPod Bridge the Mac-PC Divide?

Unfortunately, the iPod - for now, at least - remains a Macintosh peripheral. Along with its hefty price tag, the fact that only about 5% of computer users will be able to use the iPod seriously limits its potential for success. But the unit may end up exerting an influence beyond what its consumer base might indicate. Apple, always among the vanguard of computer technology, is the first computer manufacturer to utilize FireWire technology in earnest. Microsoft only got around to supporting it in its operating systems with Windows XP, and Sony, which markets a version of FireWire called i.Link, has largely ignored its potential for use with peripheral devices. This is difficult to understand, since FireWire is one of the fastest peripheral standards ever developed. This makes it seem like a natural choice for use with portable devices and, in fact, it represents the greatest step forward for Apple's iPod. If it should prove successful, the iPod might be the system to convert the PC world from USB connections to FireWire for good.

But even aside from its technological innovations, the iPod is vintage Apple: sleek, sexy, and seriously expensive. Like most Apple products - from the Mac to the G4 cube - the iPod will probably enter the market riding a lot of hype and din, and quickly settle down into a cozy and elitist consumer niche. One can only hope that the rest of the industry takes notice. It could be a while before PC users are offered a portable MP3 player as innovative, powerful - and just plain cool - as this.



Thanks for taking the time to read this month's newsletter. Hope you enjoyed it. If you have any comments or suggestions for stories (or would even like to write a story - hint, hint), please send them to me at machelpdesk@home.com. Feel free to share this newsletter with a friend. The newsletter archives are located at <http://www.machelpdesk.com/page6a.html>. Y'all come back now, y'hear!