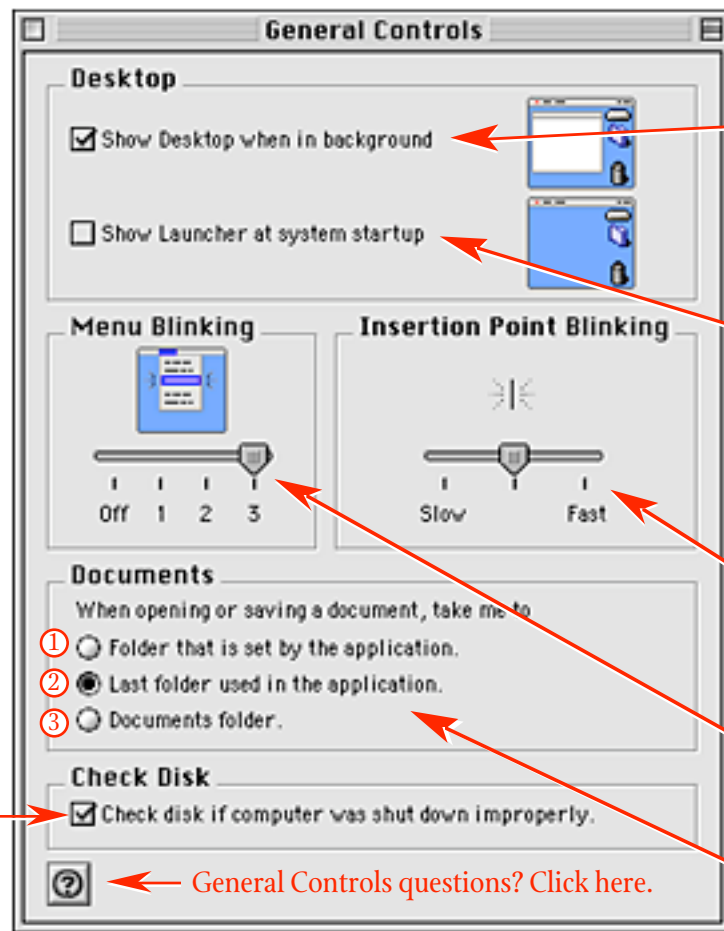


Control Panels

General Controls

You've got control of your Mac through the use of *Control Panels*. You'll find control panels under the Apple Menu in the Control Panels folder. Here you'll see dozens of programs specialized to control the functions of your Macintosh.

Let's take a look at *General Controls*. Use this control panel to change some of your Mac's basic operations. Illustrated below is the General Controls panel from Mac OS 9.1. Earlier versions are slightly different in appearance, but contain the same controls.



Desktop
This section allows you to change two behaviors.

- 1) If you want to see desktop icons, like your hard drive and the Trash can, when you are using an application, check the top box.
- 2) Checking the bottom box will cause the Launcher window to open whenever your Mac is started.

Menu Blinking/Insertion Point Blinking
Some folks prefer a faster or slower blink on the word processing insertion point. Pick your favorite here.

Turning off Menu Blinking will slightly speed up your Mac.

Documents
Here you can adjust where new documents are saved so

that you can find them easily. 1) Some applications want to save your new documents in a place of their choosing. If you primarily work with applications that do that, click the top button. 2) The second option is the traditional way Macs have worked since day one. If you are an old Mac hand like me, click the second button. 3) Most new users like the third option. If you check *Documents folder*, your newly created documents will all be saved to your Documents folder so that you only have one place to look for them (if you do not have a Documents folder, one will be automatically created for you). Highly recommended.

Check Disk Here's where that nasty message comes from! Please do not uncheck this box.

General Controls questions? Click here.

MindChimes

Having a rough day? Lots of computer work to be done? Would some pleasant, peaceful background sounds help? *MindChimes* to the rescue!

Here's a cute, fun and useful little application that soothes those frazzled nerves. A simple installer sets up *MindChimes* to automatically launch when you start-up your Mac (this can be changed, if you like). From then on you'll hear the tinkle, clink, clank and think of wind chimes.

Yes, really! *MindChimes* does its first class, virtual impersonation of wind chimes so well that you can almost feel the breeze.

Adjustments allow you to choose the wind speed (very gentle to strong gusts), volume and 11 different types of wind chimes (glass, bells, bamboo and lots more). You can even create your own, unique wind chime sounds.

If you prefer crashing waves to wind chimes, the *MindChimes* company also produces *OceanSongs*.

OceanSongs installs and sets up just like *MindChimes*. I don't find its lapping and crashing waves as authentic as *MindChimes*' tinkles, but you may find them to your liking.

With *OceanSongs*, you can control the the tone (pitch), volume and frequency of the waves. So, if gentle splashes or raging storms are your preference, you can have them.

I've been testing *MindChimes* and *OceanSongs* on my iMac 233 for several months and I have detected no conflicts or slowdowns caused by them.

Normally, I find adding doodads like these to be tempting trouble, but *MindChimes* and *OceanSongs* are so well behaved that I can easily recommend them.



You purchase *MindChimes* and *OceanSongs* at the *MindChimes* web site <http://www.mindchimes.com>. A quick download will bring them to you. *MindChimes* costs \$9.99, *OceanSongs* \$7.99 or both for \$14.99. There is a free *MindChimes* demo version if you'd like to try it out before buying. These are Mac only; no PC versions.

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Like an
auto club
for your
computer.

Mr. Curt Gets a Vacation

First one in 3 years. I'll be gone May 25 through June 4 to celebrate my niece's college graduation and my Dad's 78th birthday. I'll be checking email, so don't be shy about sending some (I don't want to go cold turkey, you know). Thanks!

May Tip

Background Printing can be a bit mysterious; here's what it does: Background Printing allows you to start a print job and then go and do other work while the printer prints. Without Background Printing, you have to wait until the print job is done before you can use your Mac for another task.

Most laser printers use Background Printing by default. Background Printing is optional on most inkjets.

Turn Background Printing on in the Chooser like this:

- 1) Open the Chooser.
- 2) Click once on your printer's icon.
- 3) Click the Background Printing On button.
- 4) Close the Chooser.

Control your Background Printing with the Print or Epson Monitors.