

# California Computer Care

News,  
Views,  
Tips and  
Cool Techniques  
for CCC Members

June 2004  
Vol. VII, No. 6

We  
speak  
Geek,  
so you  
don't  
have to.

# How to Update

Eventually, it is going to happen, you need to update some software! If software publishers would just stop making new versions and let us fully learn to use the ones we have, life would be *sooooo* much easier. But, along comes an update and it has that new feature that you just have to have.

Whether you use Mac OS 9 or Mac OS X, the basic process is similar. Let's take a *worst-case* view of the issue and talk about updating the most important software you have: the operating system (OS). So, to get you in the proper mind set, think of that favorite task: painting your house.

## Step 1: *Scrape it.*

Every piece of commercial software (and most shareware and freeware) comes with a *Read Me* document that will give you important information about the install process. Mac OS usually calls this document: *Before you install*. By reading *Before you install*, you will learn if the updated version has problems with other software that you may have (delete these before you install the update) as well as any hardware or software pre-requisites that need to be met prior to the installation. So, scrape off that funky software, replace that non-compliant RAM and spackle up them holes.

## Step 2: *Clean it.*

You won't need TSP, but you will need to make sure that your Mac has no unsolved, pre-existing problems. If Mac hasn't been behaving properly, find out why and fix the problem. Do not expect a software update, especially an operating system update, to solve current performance problems.

Even if everything is working well, you still need to wash down your Mac before proceeding. So, if you have Alsoft *DiskWarrior*, start up your Mac with the *DiskWarrior* CD

(use *DiskWarrior 2* for Mac OS 9 or *DiskWarrior 3* for Mac OS X) and use its test and repair functions to replace the directory on your hard disk drive. Then, for Mac OS 9, start up with and use *TechTool Pro 3* (if you have a copy) to test and repair any problems that *TTPro* finds. Once done, restart and run *Disk First Aid*. The last cleaning procedure for Mac OS 9 users is to restart and *Rebuild the Desktop* (hold down the Option and Apple keys during start up).

Mac OS X users should also do the *DiskWarrior* trick to make sure that no directory problems exist. After that, use *Disk Utility* (a free part of Mac OS X) to repair wonky permissions on your startup hard drive. If you have more than one hard drive, use *Disk Utility* to find and repair any problems with the other drives. Lastly, use a cache cleaner like *MacJanitor*. *MacJanitor* is free and available from:

[http://personalpages.tds.net/~brian\\_hill/macjanitor.html](http://personalpages.tds.net/~brian_hill/macjanitor.html)

## Step 3: *Paint it.*

Now, you finally get to install the update. Follow the update's instructions to the letter, as this is no time to be creative. In most cases the basic install procedure, usually called *Easy Install*, is the best way to go.

When installing an update, particularly an operating system update, be sure that no other software is running. Check the Application menu (Mac OS 9) or the Dock (Mac OS X) to verify that all applications, except the *Finder*, have been quit.

When the update is done, the update installer will usually demand that you restart your Mac. It is a good idea to restart even if the installer does not ask you to do so. Mac OS 9 users can take this opportunity to do another Desktop Rebuild. *Couldn't hurt!*

#### Step 4: *Clean up.*

Even the best installers can leave a few spatters and flakes about. Use *Disk Warrior*, *Disk First Aid* and *Disk Utility* (as appropriate to your Mac) to clean up the small messes that may be left behind. Mac OS X users: *Do not forget to repair disk permissions!*

#### Step 5: *Stand back and admire your work.*

Test out that new, updated software. Try the improved features. Experiment with the new capabilities. Is it faster? Does it now do all of the things you always wanted it to do? Does it finally live up to the publisher's advertising hype?

And, wasn't that worth it?

## *A July Vacation*

I'll be away July 11 through 18 for my first vacation since May 2001. Consequently, there will be no July CCC newsletter.

I don't go anywhere that my Powerbook doesn't go (and *vice versa*), so I'll be regularly checking email. Don't be shy about sending your usual email questions and comments (*I don't want to go cold turkey, you know*). Thanks!

## *Special Deals for You*

The good folks at *Marin Mac Shop* are offering special discounts to *California Computer Care* clients. To qualify for these deals, just mention my name or *California Computer Care* at time of purchase. Here are some examples:

#### June Specials:

*5% Discount off Microsoft Office 2004, 10% Off Any Game or Education Title.*

#### July Special:

*20% Discount off All Media, Books, Cables and Epson Consumables (paper, inks, etc.).*

#### August Special:

*Up to \$150 Off any eMac, iMac, iBook, Powerbook or PowerMac G5 purchase. Savings vary by model.*

#### September Special:

*10% Off All Apple Software Titles. Includes Pro products like Final Cut Pro.*

#### October Special:

*5% Off Any iPod or iPod Accessory.*

#### November Specials:

*Free Brenthaven Case with PowerBook Purchase, Free Epson Printer with eMac, iMac or PowerMac G5 Purchase.*

Remember to mention my name or CCC to qualify for these specials.

## *June Tip*

Be space conscious.

Your Mac's hard drive can fill up quickly with large, space-consuming picture, music and movie files. An overfilled hard drive will make your Mac slow and inefficient. At worst, files can become corrupted or lost altogether! Don't let this happen.

A good, basic rule is to never allow your hard drive to be over 90% full. Ideally, you want your hard drive no more than 75% full, but a maximum between 75% and 90% is fine.

For example, a 40GB hard drive should always have more than 4GB of available space on it (10GB available would be much better). Remove old, seldom used files by throwing them away, or, if you want to keep them, back up old files to CD, Zip, or another hard drive. *Then toss 'em.*

All Macs can have more than one hard drive. So, if you'd like to add another hard drive, contact us to learn the best way to add space for your Mac and your peace of mind.

California Computer Care

P.O. Box 9445

Santa Rosa, CA 95405

(800) 540-8989

help@calcompcare.com

Like an  
auto club  
for your  
computer.