

Give your Mac a Tune-Up

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What you absolutely must do!

Back up!

- What should you backup?
 - At a minimum, archive critical personal documents and libraries (such as iPhoto & iTunes)
 - Backing up entire home directory - or even entire hard drive - is desirable

Back up!

- How often should you backup?
 - As often as needed to stay up to date
 - For many items, this can be as little as once a month
 - For other items, it will be daily

Back up!

- Do you need a backup utility?
 - The Finder can work in many cases
 - For faster backups and especially if you want a bootable clone of your drive, use a specialized utility
- Do you need offsite backups?

Keep software up-to-date

- Use Software Update
- Download from Web instead?
 - Delta updates or Combo Updates?
- Should I update immediately?
- What about third-party updates?
 - Vendor, VersionTracker, MacFixIt

Maintain records

- Keep track of passwords, serial and registration numbers
 - Use Keychain Access?
 - Use a third-party utility (such as Steel or PasswordWallet)

Maintain records

- Internet passwords
 - Autofill: Safari, Firefox etc.
 - Security risk?

Are you prepared for disaster?

- Have you tested out the Restore feature of your backup utility?
- Have you set up a troubleshooting account?
- Do you know where your Mac OS X Install DVD and other critical discs are?
- Do you have an alternative startup disc or drive handy (with custom utilities)?
 - Make a custom bootable DVD or flash drive?

Respond to early-warning signs

(such as slowed performance, more frequent crashes etc.)

Quit unneeded open applications

- Use Command-Tab
 - Command-Tab plus Command-Q for quicker quits
- Use the Dock

Restart your Mac

- Restart periodically
- Can cure a variety of ills, including:
 - Memory leaks and other memory “loss”
 - Ports (USB, FireWire) not working
 - Unexplained application crashes

Check About This Mac

- Are you running the OS version you think your are?
- Launch System Profiler via More Info

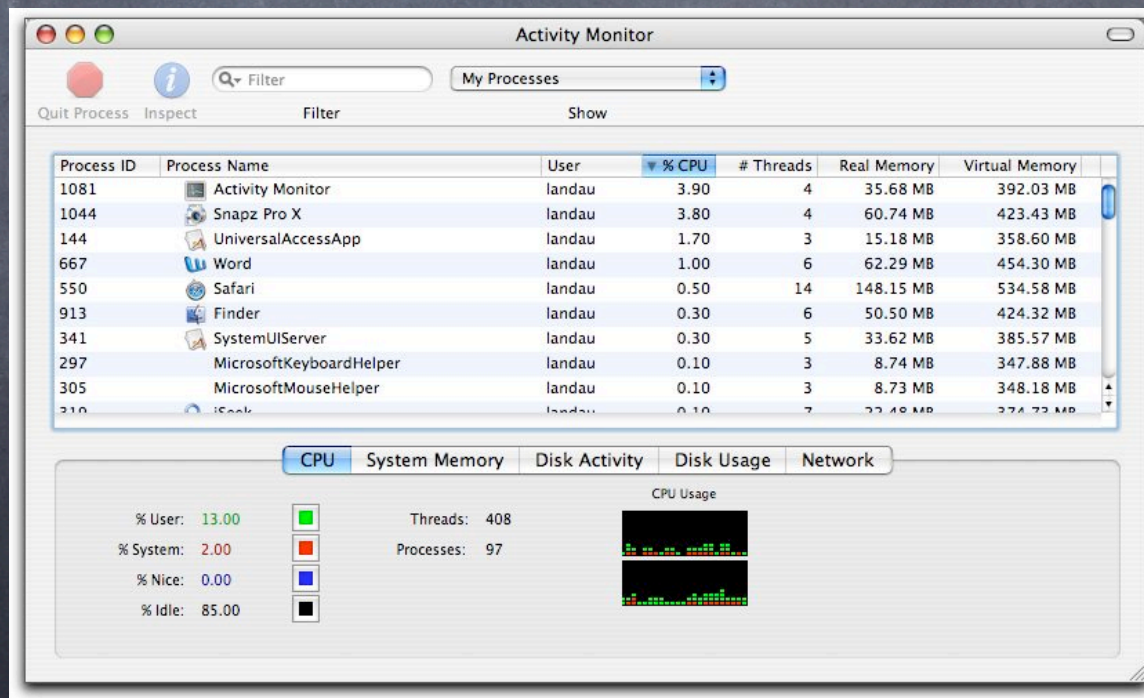


Check System Profiler

- Check USB and FireWire sections
 - If problems suggested, check cables and ports, etc.
- Check memory & anything else of interest
 - Examples to come

Check CPU usage

- Use Activity Monitor
- Potentially quit processes with high usage

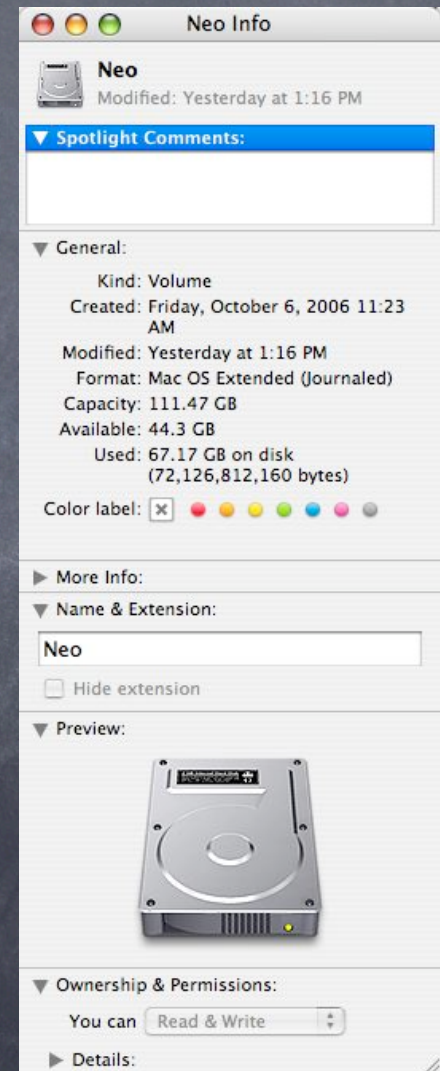


Check Memory usage

- About This Mac: Is all your memory there?
- System Profiler: Memory slots
- Activity Monitor: Check for:
 - Memory hungry processes?
 - Free and inactive memory
- Should you get more memory?
- Check for defective memory?
 - Test with a utility such as Rember (or MemTest, run in single user mode)

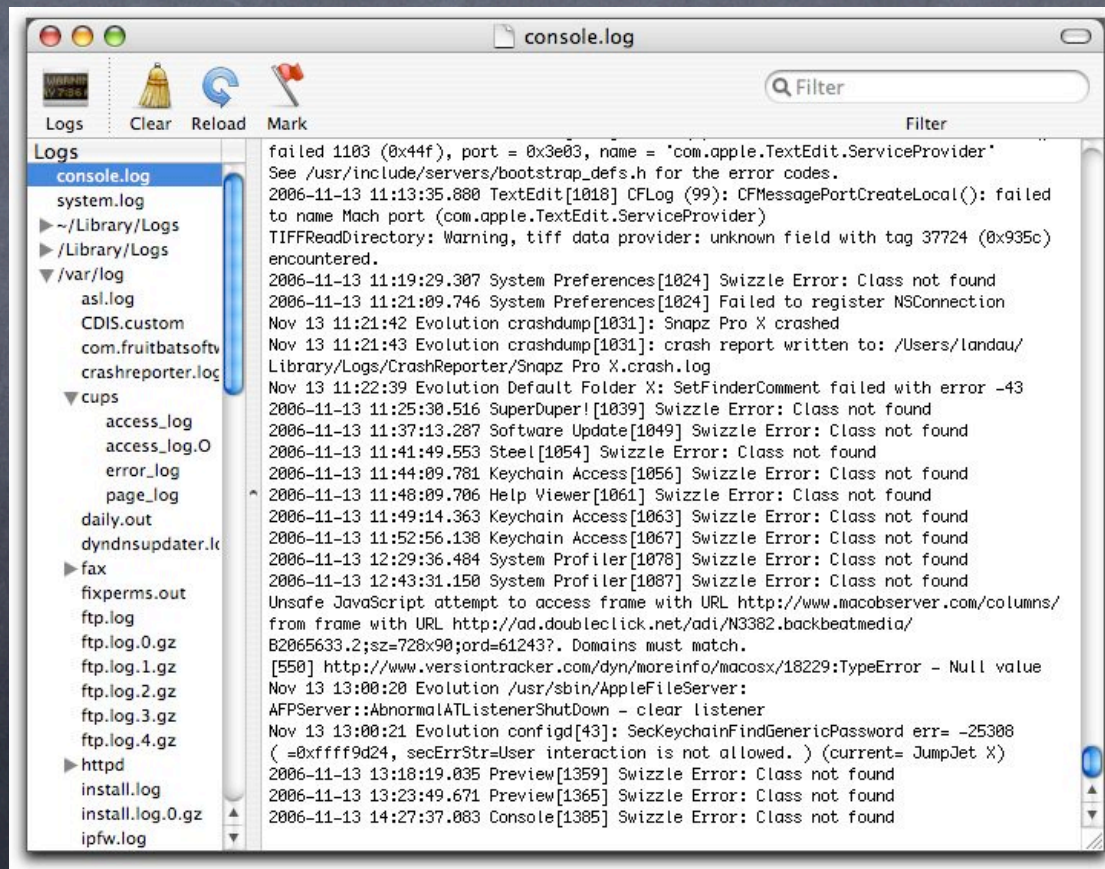
Check free disk space

- Keep at least 5-10% free on startup drive
- Check free space via:
 - Info windows
 - Activity Monitor's Disk Usage
- What to delete? Advice still to come



Check Console Logs

- Checking for error messages in Console logs can occasionally help spot trouble before it “starts.” Check especially: console.log



Check Login Items

- In System Preferences > Accounts > Login Items; Look especially for:
 - Kind = unknown
 - Names linked to applications you no longer have installed
- Delete unknown or unneeded items

Disk Utility's First Aid

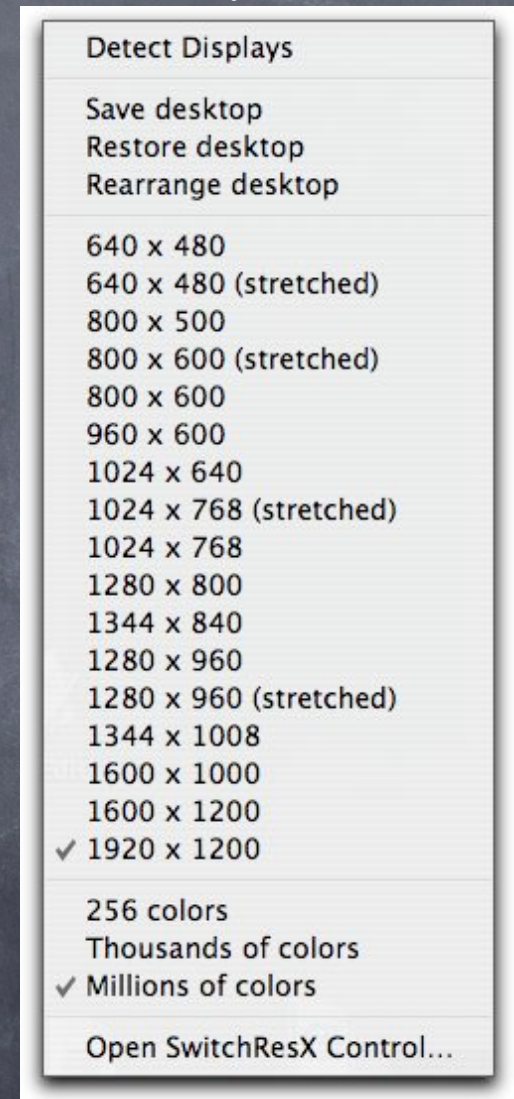
- Click: Verify Disk or Repair Disk
- Can Verify but not Repair current startup disk. Alternatives:
 - Single user mode:
 - Use <fsck> command
 - Use applejack

General maintenance

(not essential but often desirable)

Organize your Desktop

- Memorize Desktop icon positions
- Even better, get icons off the Desktop
- Close document windows that are not needed, especially Safari Web pages



Run Unix maintenance scripts

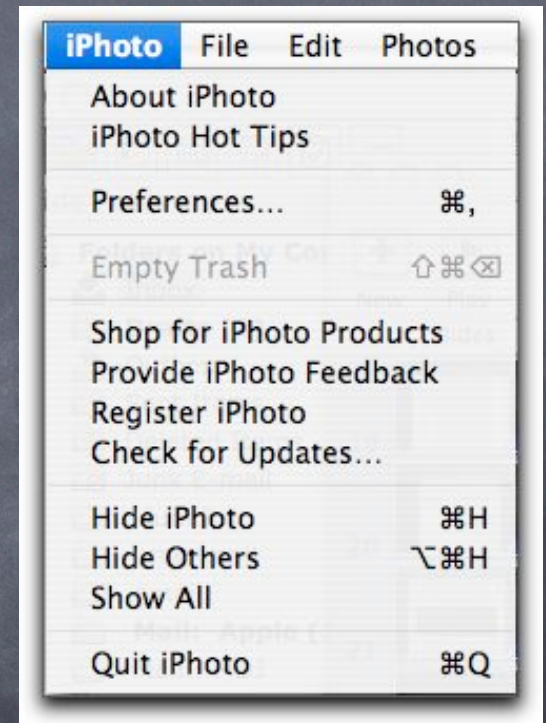
- Maintenance scripts
 - When do they run?
 - What happens if you skip them?
 - Delete logs and update locate database not done
 - What can you do to force them to run?
 - Use utilities such as MacJanitor or Macaroni

Trash unneeded files

- Why delete files at all?
 - Frees drive space
 - Improves performance
 - Cache files may become corrupt or "out of date"

Empty the Trash!

- Put files in trash & Empty Trash!
- Use Compost System Preferences pane
 - if you are “on the fence”
- Empty iApp Trashes as well
 - iPhoto, iMovie etc. have trashes that are not emptied automatically
 - You can remove songs from iTunes Library without deleting

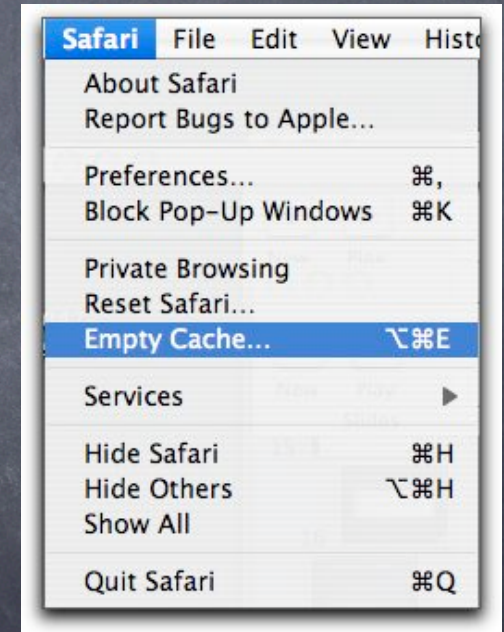


Search & Destroy large files

- Especially check for:
 - Contents of Previous Systems folder
 - Unwanted music and movie files
 - Old installers and disk images
 - Applications you no longer use
 - Large cache files

Search & Destroy large files

- Can search for and/or delete large files via:
 - Spotlight's Find: "Size" "Greater Than"
 - Utilities such as WhatSize? and GrandPerspective
 - Delete files in Cache folders manually
 - Delete files in Cache folders via Safari's Empty Cache command and/or utilities such as TinkerTool System and Font Finagler



When deleting apps...

- Just dragging application to the Trash is often not sufficient
- Use an Uninstaller if available. Otherwise:
 - Check Application Support folders etc.
 - Even check Startup Items folder
 - Consider applications such as TidyUp or AppZapper

What you don't generally need to do

Defragment / Optimize

- Utilities such as Drive Genius and TechTool Pro can do it
 - **But why bother?**
- Optimize vs. Mac OS X "optimizing"
 - **Neither one is really needed**

Repair Permissions

- First Aid: Repair Disk Permissions
 - *A controversy?*

Hardware Checks

- S.M.A.R.T. test of hard drive: **Of value?**
 - Disk Utility: S.M.A.R.T. check
 - Other S.M.A.R.T. utilities
- Other hardware tests: **Of value?**
 - Apple Hardware Test?
 - TechTool Pro?
 - Memory tests?

Security

- Virus detection utility
 - Do you really need one?
- Firewall
 - Optional if you use a router with NAT enabled

For more help and info:

Ted Landau's Mac OS X Help Line
www.macosexhelpline.com

MacFixIt:
www.macfixit.com