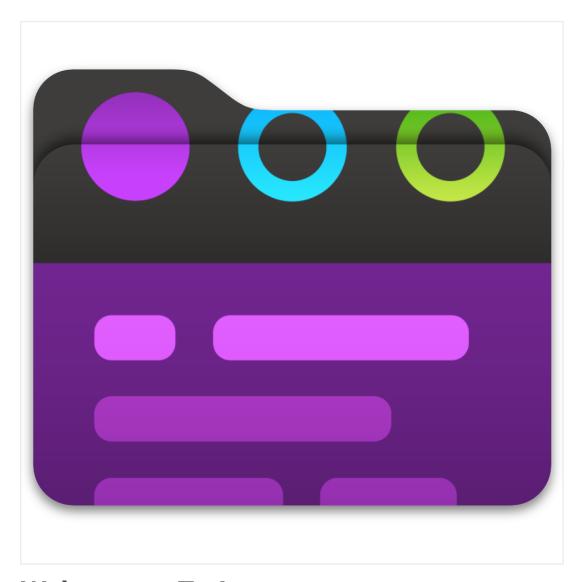# Tot Help, Merged

Welcome to Tot!

Tot is a simple app that lets you *collect & edit* text.

Tot uses a single window to hold seven individual text documents. Simply click on the colored dots at the top of the window to switch between documents.

(If you're colorblind, make sure the "differentiate without color" setting is turned on in Accessibility settings and the

dots will be numbered instead..)

Click on the arrow below to continue to the next section.

Use Tot for many tasks.

Tot can be used for to-do lists, notes, brainstorming, and more. We've used Tot to keep track of release notes, for doing research on new projects, starting blog posts, creating this tutorial, and anything else that requires typing without much friction.

The formatting is purposefully simple: there's only *italic* and **bold** (with ⌘I and ⌘B keyboard shortcuts). The text is displayed in just one font (which you can customize). With Tot, the most important thing is the content, not how it looks. As you'll see in a bit, these formatting limitations also provide powerful capabilities.

Keyboard shortcuts work just as you'd expect, even the more obscure ones like ^A and ^E to move to the start and end of a paragraph.

Click on the arrows below to continue.

Your text is saved automatically and synced to iCloud.

Everything you enter is captured as soon as you stop typing and is then available from the network. If you use more than one Mac, for example at home and work, your

notes are wherever you are! Even better, there's an app for iOS that lets you access everything from your pocket!

Tot's text is easy to get at: the window appears any time you click on the *Dock* icon. Use the keyboard to select a view with ⌘1 to ⌘7, then ⌘W or Escape when you're done. There's even a configurable keyboard shortcut to display the window: your hands never have to leave the keys!

You *never* have to save, although you'll find that's a hard habit to give up: ⌘S syncs immediately with visual feedback. If you need all or part of your text in a file, use *Save As* in the *File* menu (or ⇧⌘S.)

```
Plain Text
==========

Tot also allows you to work with plain
text. Click on the "a" icon at the
bottom of the window to toggle between
the styled and plain views. Like
TextEdit, a ⇧⌘T works, too.

If you're familiar with [Markdown]
(https://daringfireball.net/projects/
markdown/syntax), Tot's syntax will be
familiar for things like **bold text**
or adding _emphasis_.

Tot is _not_ a full Markdown editor,
```

and never will be. It uses a subset
that's easy to understand and
efficient at storing the popular
features of rich text. RTF and HTML
are more expressive, but have unneeded
complexity for the simple tasks
performed here.

Similarly, Tot isn't an image editor,
yet you can do this:

```
                ( )
                (oo)
        .——————\/ ——— Tot is
udderly fantastic.
        / |       ||
      *   ||w———||
        ^^        ^^
```

Plain text is also where Tot's limited
formatting starts to shine: select
some words and use ⌘I or ⌘B.
Constraints can be powerful.

All great ideas start out messy. Unorganized text, links,
references, and general chaos on your desktop. If you've
ever had dozens of Untitled text windows littered about,
you know the feeling.

Tot is a great place to put your mess.

As you're collecting text with abandon, Tot's limited formatting helps keep the mess under control. A first step in getting things into a presentable format.

Of course copy and paste works as expected, but there's a twist. Tot converts text to match whichever mode you're in. If you copy styled text that uses Comic Sans, the pasted text will be matched to your preferred font for both rich and plain text. (Thank goodness!)

Additionally, Tot handles imported text intelligently by doing Markdown conversion:

• In plain text mode, any rich text will be converted to its equivalent in Markdown. If you copy "something **bold**" on a web page, it will end up as "something **bold**" in the plain text.

• With rich text mode, the opposite happens. Any pasted text with Markdown formatting will be styled using your selected font.

The same conversions happen during drag and drop with a refinement: text is only converted when the file has a Markdown extension (.markdown, .mdown, or .md). Tot also lets you to copy a file in the Finder and paste the contents with ⌘V. All of these automatic conversions can be circumvented with *Paste as Plain Text* in the *Edit* menu.

Tot's status bar lets you keep track of your work: it

updates the text statistics as you type or when a selection is made. There's also a ↑ icon that lets you share all or part of the text in a mail, message, or tweet. When you don't need this stuff, it's easy to hide using the *Window* menu or the ⌘/ shortcut.

Make Tot your own.

At the top-right of Tot's window there is a toggle for settings. Here are some things that you can do to make the app fit your workflow:

Use a menu bar icon with a detachable window: With this setting, the window is tucked away at the top of your screen, but you can drag it away when needed.

The *Smart Icons* setting will show a Dock icon when you detach the popover window from the menu bar: useful for folks who use Command-Tab to switch windows. When there is no Dock icon, this is also where you can Quit the app.

Appearance: Tot looks great whether you prefer a dark or light interface. And you'll either love or hate the colored background, so make your choice!

Set a system-wide hotkey: This setting allows Tot to become a keyboard-only app: the key combination you specify will bring up the window and allow you to type or navigate with keyboard shortcuts.

In addition to the settings view, you can also configure Tot

using the menu bar:

Style the text view: The font for both rich and plain text can be customized along with the size and tab spacing using *Format* in the menu bar or from the context menu while you're editing text.

Configure the text view: Sometimes smart quotes are just what you need, sometimes they screw up your code. Use the *Edit > Substitions* and *Spelling and Grammar* menus to tweak the text view to your needs. Each dot has its own settings and they are synced to other devices. (They are currently unused on iOS because there's no standard way to modify the settings there.)

Floating window: When you're taking notes, it can be helpful to have Tot's window above all others. Use *Window > Display as Floating Window* and the window will always be visible and ready to go!

And speaking of menus, if you find an item with a keyboard combo that you don't like (switching tabs!), take a look at our handy guide for customizing shortcuts.

Tot loves links.

Whether you're in plain text or rich text, Tot handles links intelligently. If you drag a link from a web browser, you'll get the page title and URL formatted as rich text or as Markdown inline link. In plain text mode, it's easy to edit the parts individually; rich text gives you a clickable link.

This conversion also happens if you copy and paste a block of text from a web page: text and links are converted on the fly. If you're entering URLs manually, they'll automatically be detected as you type.

Links aren't limited to just web pages. Click here to see "tot" in the dictionary. Here are other useful examples:

dict://CHOCK
x-bbedit://open?url=file:///etc/hosts
facetime:18005551212
tel:1-800-555-1212
ssh://root@example.com

Try dragging a message from Mail into Tot's window: you will get a link that's a simple way to reference conversations and other information!

Take a shortcut.

Tot fully supports Shortcuts on both macOS and iOS. There are actions to get, set, and show text from any dot. You can also query a dot to get more advanced information, like text counts, the modification date, JSON representations, and more.

These features turn Tot into a great scratchpad for automation, and with support for both platforms, your workflows work anywhere.

Created by Craig Hockenberry *and* Gedeon Maheux

Inspiration from Andre Torrez

Great ideas from Luke Adamson, Arik Devens, Brad Ellis, John Gruber, Sean Heber, Daniel Jalkut, Paul Kafasis, Casey Liss, Chris Parrish, Anthony Piraino, Manton Reece, Brent Simmons, John Siracusa, Ben Thompson, and Talos Tsui. Even John Moltz for being a muse.

Tot got its start with a simple goal: something like tyke, but with multiple editors in a window that could be dragged away from the menu bar.

Once that was working, I showed it to some friends and several asked for rich text in addition to plain text. It occurred to me that using a subset of Markdown could achieve that, and be pretty darn useful for the kinds of things I did with Tot.

After a bunch of typing and sweating over design details, we now have a tool that's indispensible. We hope you like it, too.

This work was funded in part by Patreon supporters: join us for wallpapers, icons, and more cool things like Tot.

Stay in touch! Our Twitter accounts and blog will get you the latest news.

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@iconfactory