

Apple MacBook Essentials

This Apple MacBook Essentials guide is designed to provide you with the foundational steps and key resources needed to optimize your MacBook or iPad experience.

The journey begins on the Apple website via the [Apple Learning Center](#) and the [Apple Forum](#). These resources offer a wealth of information tailored to various Apple products and services. Check out the [Apple YouTube Channel](#) and the [Apple Device Support Tutorials](#).

Getting Started with macOS

These official Apple guides are the best place to begin.

- [Getting started with MacOS](#)
- [Welcome to MacBook Air Getting Started Guide](#)
- [Switched from Windows to Mac](#)
- [Microsoft 365 for Mac Quick Start Guides](#)

Why create an Apple ID?

An Apple ID is essential for accessing and using Apple's ecosystem of services and devices. Here are a few key reasons why an Apple ID enhances your overall experience:

1. **App Store and iTunes** --> Download apps, music, movies, and books.
2. **iCloud Services** --> Sync and back up data like photos, contacts, and documents.
3. **Find My Device** --> Locate lost Apple devices and protect your data.
4. **Device Setup and Personalization** --> Customize settings and preferences across devices.
5. **Apple Support** --> Access warranty information and receive personalized assistance.

For either device, it is important to create an Apple ID so that one can proceed to download relevant apps in the Apple Store. Here are helpful links:

- [How to create a new Apple ID](#)
- [How to reset Apple ID](#)
- [How to reset Apple ID on the web](#)

Reset an account password

This process is useful [if you forgot your Mac login password](#).

1. Boot to **Recovery Mode** → ⌘ + R
2. Select **Utilities > Terminal**
3. Run this command: *resetpassword*
4. Choose account & set new password.

Add a user or group on MacBook computer

Creating individual accounts on your Apple MacBook for each user is highly recommended, enabling personalized MacOS desktop experiences. Utilizing group settings in MacOS facilitates shared access permissions, such as granting simultaneous rights to multiple users, or assigning group-specific permissions to files or folders.

For instructions on adding a user or group on MacOS, please refer to the following link: [Add a User or Group](#).

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How to setup external displays

Here are quick links for setting up an external monitor or using your Apple iPad as a second display.

- [Connect one or more external displays with your Mac](#)
- [Use your iPad as a second display for your Mac](#)

How to install printers

Check out the Apple quick links before for setting up a local printer.

- [Add a printer to your printer list so you can use it on Mac](#)
- [Choose your default printer on MacBook](#) in case that you have more than one printer.
- [Connect an Air Print printer](#) to a Wi-Fi network.

Screensaver and Hot Corners

Steps on changing a screensaver and setting up hot corners on an Apple MacBook, go [here](#). For further reference, Apple MacBook User Guide offers a guide on [how to change lock screen settings on Apple MacBooks](#).

Lock out and Password prompt after inactivity

These features are essential steps for securing an Apple MacBook.

- [Set your Mac to log out when not in use](#)
- [Require passwords after waking](#)

File Management

Effective file management plays an essential role in enhancing productivity and organization. Check out Apple's guide on [Ways to organize files on your Mac desktop](#) and [Organize files in folders on MacBook](#).

Essential File Storage Tips

Time Machine

Experiencing the loss of critical work or personal data can be a frustrating and costly experience. A solid backup and recovery plan is essential to prevent such occurrences. Use [Time Machine](#) to back your files on an external SSD, USB thumb drive, or Network-Attached Storage (NAS).

Cloud Solutions

Cloud solutions, like [iCloud](#), [Microsoft OneDrive](#) and [Google Drive](#), provide basic file redundancy and convenience. Advantages of cloud file storage lies within its accessibility from anywhere with an internet connection, data redundancy, and backup options.

Consider using both a cloud storage and Time Machine. This approach ensures redundancy and minimizes the risk of losing your data permanently.

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Basic Wi-Fi Troubleshooting on macOS

1. Check Wi-Fi Status

- Click the **Wi-Fi icon** in the menu bar.
- Ensure **Wi-Fi is turned on** and you're connected to the correct network.

2. Restart Wi-Fi & macOS

- Turn Wi-Fi off, wait 5–10 seconds, and turn it back on.
- If that fails, restart your Mac.

3. Use Wireless Diagnostics Tool

- Hold **Option (⌥)** and click the **Wi-Fi icon**.
- Select **“Open Wireless Diagnostics...”** → Follow the on-screen assistant.
- Or go to: Applications > Utilities > Wireless Diagnostics

4. Check IP Address

- Go to **System Settings > Network > Wi-Fi**.
- Ensure you have a **valid IP address** (e.g., 192.168.x.x or 10.x.x.x). If it says **self-assigned IP**, try renewing the lease.

5. Renew DHCP Lease

- In the Wi-Fi settings, click **Details** (on your connected network), then **TCP/IP > Renew Lease**.

For more information, check out Apple MacBook link: [here](#).

Slow computer performance

System slowdowns are often caused by excessive background applications, insufficient disk space, or aging hardware. Click on the **Apple Menu** and choose **System Settings**. Scroll down and select **General > Login Items**. Under the **Open at Login** section:

- **To disable an app:** Select the app and click the **“–” (minus)** button.
- You can also **toggle off** items listed under **“Allow in the Background”** if you do not want them running in the background.

How to make MacOS secure

Securing your Apple MacBook involves a combination of best practices, system configuration, and regular maintenance. Below are key steps to enhance the security of your macOS device.

- Regularly update macOS and all installed applications. Security vulnerabilities are often patched in updates. To ensure your Apple device has the latest features and security enhancements, learn how to [update MacOS](#).

Important: Save all open files before proceeding with the installation of a macOS update. macOS update times can vary, so consider updating during a break or at the end of the day to avoid interruptions.

- Use [Time Machine](#) to back up your files regularly
- Enable a screensaver for privacy and security reasons. (See section above)
- Lock out and Password prompt after inactivity. (See section above)
- [Enable FileVault](#) to encrypt your entire disk.
- Use [Find My Mac](#) to locate or remotely lock your device if lost.
- Enable Firewall in **System Settings > Network > Firewall**.

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Learning MacOS Command Lines

Exploring the macOS command line provides a deeper appreciation for the capabilities behind this remarkable operating system. This MacOS command cheatsheet resource offers advanced functionalities and can be particularly handy as a quick reference to enhance one's command line proficiency.

MacOS Commands Cheat Sheet

| System Information | |
|---|---|
| whoami | Show current username |
| sw_vers | Shows the current MacOS version |
| How to open Terminal | |
| Open Terminal -> You can find it in Applications > Utilities, or use Spotlight Search (Cmd + Space), and proceed to type "Terminal" | |
| Resetting Network Adapter | |
| To disable and re-enable your Wi-Fi adapter (effectively resetting the wi-fi) | |
| sudo ifconfig en0 down | Turn off Wi-Fi |
| sudo ifconfig en0 up | Turn on Wi-Fi |
| How to Update all apps on macOS using Terminal | |
| sudo softwareupdate -l | Shows available software updates |
| sudo softwareupdate --install -a | Installs all available updates |
| List Directory and Terminate Apps | |
| ls | Listing Directory |
| top | List currently running processes |
| killall AppName | Force Quitting Apps |
| Ifconfig | |
| The ifconfig command is a powerful tool for managing and configuring network interfaces. | |
| Ifconfig -a | Display all network interfaces and status |
| Ifconfig en0 | View Specific Interface Information |
| sudo ifconfig en0 up | Enable a Network Interface |
| sudo ifconfig en0 down | Disable a Network Interface |
| sudo ifconfig en0 inet 192.168.1.100 netmask 255.255.255.0 | Change IP Address |
| # This sets a new IP address and subnet mask for the interface en0. | |
| sudo ifconfig en0 alias 192.168.1.101 netmask 255.255.255.0 | Add an Alias IP Address |
| # This adds an additional IP address to the interface en0 | |
| sudo ifconfig en0 -alias 192.168.1.101 | Remove an Alias IP Address |
| # This removes the alias IP address from the interface en0. | |
| sudo dscacheutil -flushcache | Clears DNS Cache |
| How to ping a website | |
| Ping is used to test the reachability of a host on an Internet Protocol (IP) network. | |
| ping google.com | Ping Google website |
| ping 8.8.8.8 | Ping Google website (via IP address) |
| To allow users to manage printers and printer settings | |
| sudo dseditgroup -o edit -t group -a everyone _lpadmin | |
| # Allow staff to add printers and manage print queue without admin rights | |

TECH TIPS

| Name Server Lookup (nslookup) | |
|---|--|
| nslookup www.example.com | Query a domain |
| nslookup 8.8.8.8 | Query an IP address |
| nslookup www.example.com 8.8.4.4 | Set DNS Server |
| Route command | |
| Adding a route allows you to manually direct network traffic for a specific IP addresses or subnet. Often used for tasks like configuring VPNs, accessing certain subnets, or fixing connectivity issues. | |
| sudo route add -net <network> <gateway> | |
| sudo route add -net 192.168.1.0/24 192.168.0.1 | Add a Route to a Specific Subnet |
| sudo route add -host 10.0.0.5 192.168.0.1 | Add a Route to a Single Host |
| sudo route delete -net <network> <gateway> | Delete a Route |
| netstat -rm | View the current routing table. (Old) |
| Ifconfig grep utun | View the current routing table |
| sudo pmset -a tcpkeepalive 1 | Prevents VPN from disconnecting |
| How to disable IPv6 | |
| sudo networksetup -listallnetworkservices | List All Network Services |
| sudo networksetup -setv6off Ethernet | Disable IPv6 for Ethernet |
| sudo networksetup -setv6off Wi-Fi | Disable IPv6 for Wi-Fi |
| sudo networksetup -setv6off VPN | Disable IPv6 for VPN |
| How to prevent macOS laptop to turn off monitor when closing lid | |
| sudo pmset -a disablesleep 1 | To disables sleep completely, even when the lid is closed |
| sudo pmset -a disablesleep 0 | To re-enable sleep |
| pmset -g | Displays power management settings |
| How to prevent system from sleeping | |
| caffeinate | Keeps Mac awake. Ctrl + C to stop. |
| caffeinate -di | Keep display and system awake |
| The Substitute User (su) command | |
| The su (substitute user) allows you to switch to another user account the terminal. | |
| su <username> | Use the su command |
| # Replace <username> with a username of the account you want to switch to | |
| # The root user account is disabled by default. | |
| su <username> | Switches to another user account, requiring the password of that user. |
| sudo <command> | Runs a single command with administrative (root) privileges. |
| sudo -i | Gives you a root shell without needing to enable the root account |

Disclaimer:

Use macOS Terminal commands at your own risk. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this guide, performing administrative tasks incorrectly can lead to issues such as data loss, compliance impacts, or service disruption. Always back up important data before running commands. If you are unsure about any step or its potential consequences, consult a qualified IT professional before proceeding.

Final Tips for MacOS Beginners

- Explore [System Settings](#) to personalize your Mac.
- Use [Spotlight Search](#) (Cmd + Space) to quickly find apps and files.
- Take advantage of [Trackpad Gestures](#) for intuitive navigation.
- Visit [Official Apple Support](#).