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How to turn off and turn on Spotlight on macOS Mojave and Catalina?

Saturday, 10 November 2018 00:00 | Written by Bradley Taylor | [E-mail](#)

Have you ever used Spotlight to freeze or trap in search? Spotlight runs with the computer booting, and if it doesn't work, it slows down the computer. Some mac users feedback that Spotlight occupies high cpu and high disk I/O, after upgraded to macOS Mojave or Catalina. So how do we turn off and turn on the spotlight on macOS Mojave or Catalina? There is no option to turn off and turn on Spotlight in the system preferences.

As the spotlight is a system privilege service, turn Off and turn on Spotlight in macOS Mojave is more complicated than in old macOS. First we need to disable SIP(System Integrity Protection module) on mac, then disable spotlight on macOS Mojave and later. Here are the detail step to complete it.

1. Check the SIP state

Run Terminal application(/Applications/Utilities/), type the following command(**csrutil status**) and hit the return key:

```
cdcd — -bash — 80x24
Last login: Sun Nov 11 21:51:33 on ttys000
[CdCdekiMac:~ cdcd$ csrutil status
System Integrity Protection status: enabled.
CdCdekiMac:~ cdcd$
```

If you are using the macOS Mojave, by default, the state is "enabled", or it's "disabled".

2. Disable the SIP

If the SIP status is enabled, we need to turn it off. SIP(System Integrity Protection) cause sudo privilege, root user enabled, and admin access have no function. Disable the SIP is safe, once you are done with the steps, you can re-enable it.

Step #1: Reboot your Mac

Click the menu on your Mac and select Restart.

Step #2: Boot into macOS Recovery Mode

Hold down **Command + R** on your keyboard immediately after your Mac begins to restart. Continue holding both keys until you see the Apple logo or a spinning globe. Startup is complete when you see the Utilities window.



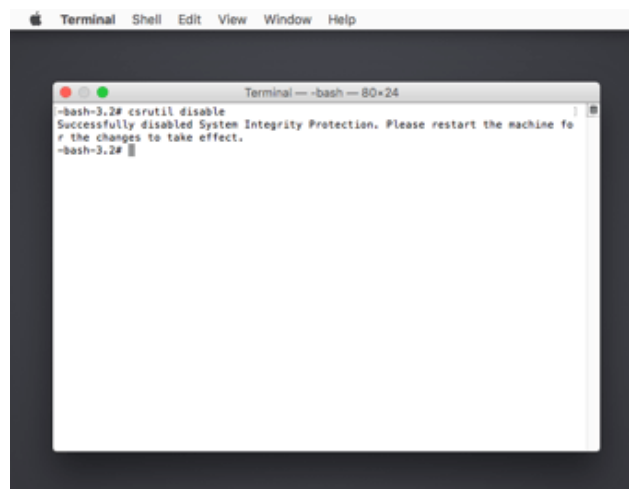
Step #3: Run Terminal app

Click the **Utilities** menu and choose **Terminal**. The Terminal window will appear on your screen.



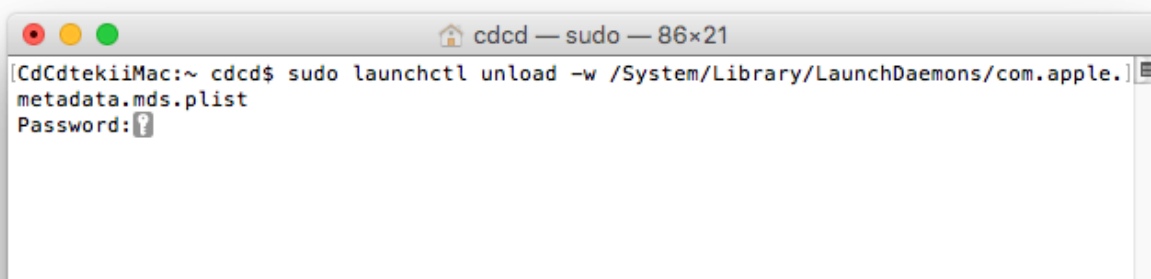
Step #4: Disable file system protection

In the **"Terminal"** window, type in **"csrutil disable"** and press "enter" then restart your Mac.



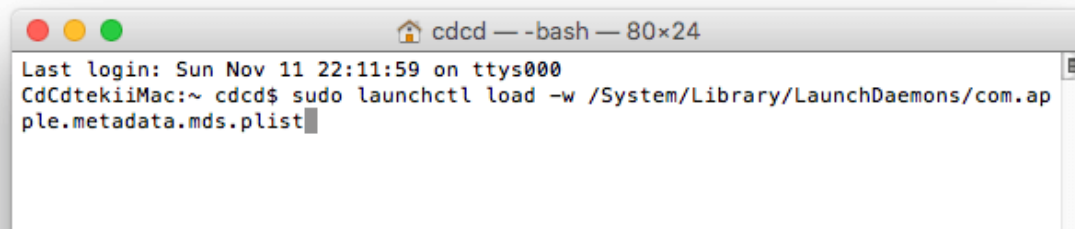
3. Turn Off the Spotlight

Run Terminal application(/Applications/Utilities/), type the following command (**sudo launchctl unload -w /System/Library/LaunchDaemons/com.apple.metadata.mds.plist**) and hit the return key:



And enter the password, then Spotlight will be disabled.

If you need to enable Spotlight again, type the following command (**sudo launchctl load -w /System/Library/LaunchDaemons/com.apple.metadata.mds.plist**) in Terminal and hit the return key:



How to Re-Enable SIP(System Integrity Protection) in Mac OS X

Simply reboot the Mac again into Recovery Mode as directed above, but at the command line use the following syntax instead:

In the "Terminal" window, type in "**csrutil enable**" and press "**enter**" then restart your Mac.

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