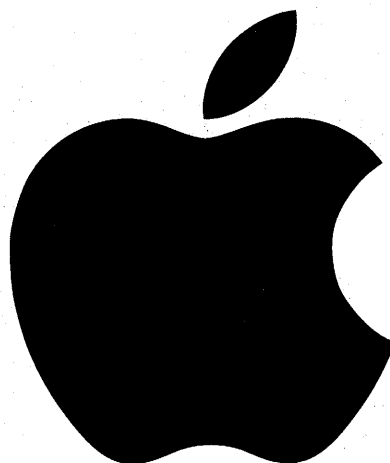


7.5x9Title v3



# At Ease for Workgroups User's Manual

Includes installation, setup, and  
information about how At Ease works

## 7.5x9Copyright v3

### Apple Computer, Inc.

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## Inside At Ease Software

This chapter contains “behind the scenes” information about how At Ease works. You may find this information especially useful when you troubleshoot problems.

### **Why At Ease Needs AppleShare or Apple Filing Protocol (AFP) Server Software**

At Ease software works in conjunction with AppleShare or AFP server software. AppleShare and AFP are server processes that At Ease uses to communicate between the client computer and the At Ease databases. Each time the At Ease server process starts up, it creates an AppleShare or AFP account that has the user name “At Ease User” and an encrypted password that is known only to At Ease software. You can’t see what the password is. You shouldn’t modify this user account. But if you do change the name or password, or delete the account accidentally, At Ease recreates it when the server process is restarted.

Each time a client computer starts up, it connects automatically to the AppleShare or AFP server using the At Ease User account. Once the computer has connected to the server, you see the user login dialog box. The client computer remains connected unless you’ve set it to disconnect from the server if the computer remains idle for a specified period of time. (See “Disconnecting the Server Automatically” on page 26 for more information.)

When a user logs in, either the computer remains connected to the server through the At Ease User account, or reconnects using a different user name and password. The account that’s used depends on how you set options in At Ease. (For more information see “Setting How Users Mount the Volume That Stores Workgroup Documents” on page 23.)

## How At Ease Starts Up

When a client computer starts up, and a user logs in, the following happens:

- At Ease locates and opens the user, workgroup, and computer databases.
- A login dialog box appears. Users either type a name or choose a name from a list, depending on how you've set up At Ease.
- At Ease validates the user name and password by comparing what the user entered to the databases.

**Note:** The password is encrypted (using MD5 encryption) and compared with encrypted passwords stored in the databases.

- If the user belongs to more than one workgroup, the user chooses one from a list of his or her workgroups.
- The workgroup environment and other settings are enabled.
- The user sees server and workgroup login messages, if there are any.

## How At Ease Ensures Security

At Ease is designed so the client system extensions can't be disabled by pressing and holding the Shift key as the computer starts up. Users cannot turn At Ease off in the Extensions Manager control panel, nor can they move At Ease extensions from the Extensions folder in the System Folder.

At Ease has a number of other safeguards to ensure security. The safeguards work in the Panels, Restricted Finder, and Finder environments:

- Users cannot rename At Ease files, or change the file type or creator.
- When a user shuts down or restarts the computer, user changes are saved and then the login process is started.
- Users can't force quit an application to get around At Ease security. (This option must be turned on in At Ease Administration.)
- Users can't eject removable media or unmount server volumes. An administrator password is required to do so. (This option must be turned on in At Ease Administration.)

## How At Ease Locates and Saves Files

The Places dialog box provides an easy way for users to find their own documents, and to prevent users from accessing locations from which they can't save or read files. Users don't have to navigate through a file hierarchy to find files relevant to them.

The location that initially appears in the Places dialog box is one that's valid for the user, such as the user's own documents folder and shared folders.

## How Client Computers Are Updated From the Server

A copy of the Items folder is stored automatically in the System Folder of each client computer. This optimizes performance because it is faster for At Ease to look up information locally than to get it from the server. The folder contains information about the location of the At Ease server, so that your users usually don't have to choose a server before they can log in. The local copy of the Items folder enables your users to work off-line. If the copy on the client computer is deleted, it is recreated gradually. (Each time the client computer retrieves information from the server, it's copied to the local System Folder.)

The local Items folder is also updated when you make changes in At Ease. When a client computer is connected to the server, but no users are logged in, At Ease checks periodically to see if any items need to be updated. At Ease does not check for changed information if a user is logged in to a computer—updating doesn't happen until a user logs out.

## How At Ease Keeps Track of Users, Workgroups, and Computer Lists

Information about users, workgroups, and computers is stored in database files located in the Users, Groups, and Computers folders. (These folders are located in the Items folder in the At Ease sharepoint folder, described in the next section.) Each folder contains two database files. One file contains an index of each record in the database (such as the name of a workgroup) and the other file contains the specific information for each record (such as workgroup members, privileges, and environment).

Although the users, groups, and computers databases are not part of a larger relational database, each refers to information stored in the other databases. For example, the users database contains a list of workgroups that a user belongs to. To maintain consistency between databases, At Ease checks references from one database to another and updates the databases as needed. You do not need to do anything to the databases for them to function properly. If you attempt to modify the databases directly, you will introduce inconsistencies and may lose the information stored in them. If this occurs, you'll need to recreate user, workgroup, and computer information by using At Ease Administration, or by restoring information from a backup copy.