

Mac Starter Guide for Education



macOS Sonoma



Introduction

Mac gives you all the tools you need for teaching and learning. In this guide, you'll learn about:

- Navigating and customizing your Mac
- Built-in features for productivity

If you already use iPhone or iPad, you'll see many of the same apps and controls on your Mac. So you can work seamlessly across all your Apple devices.

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Getting Started

To get started on your school network, you or your IT team will need to enroll your Mac into your school's services to access your Wi-Fi network, email, and calendar.

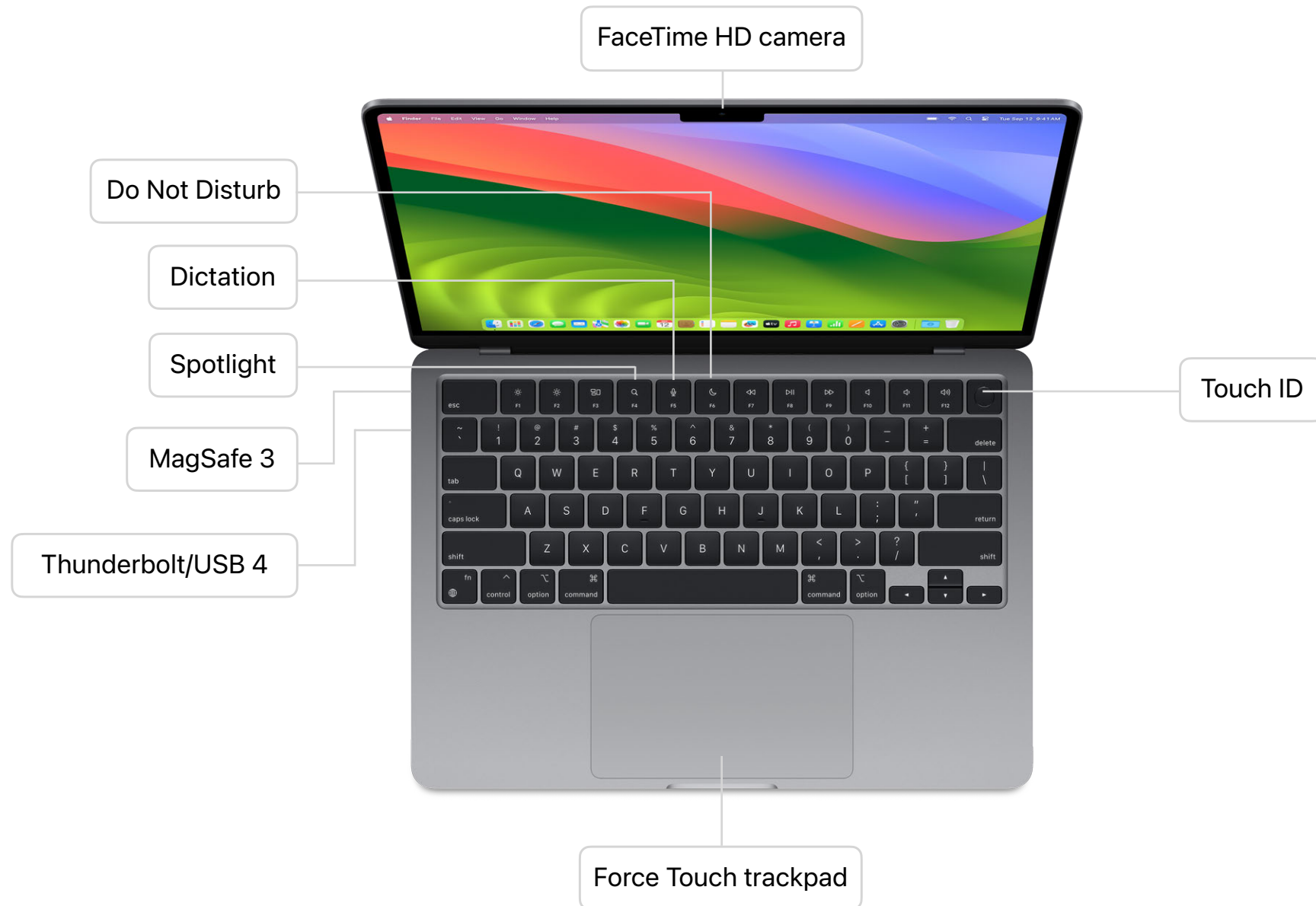
[Learn more about configuration profiles ↗](#)

Contact your IT administrator if you have any questions.

Tip

View managed features and restrictions. Choose  > System Settings > Privacy & Security > Profiles.

Hardware overview — MacBook Air (13-inch) M2 chip





Software overview

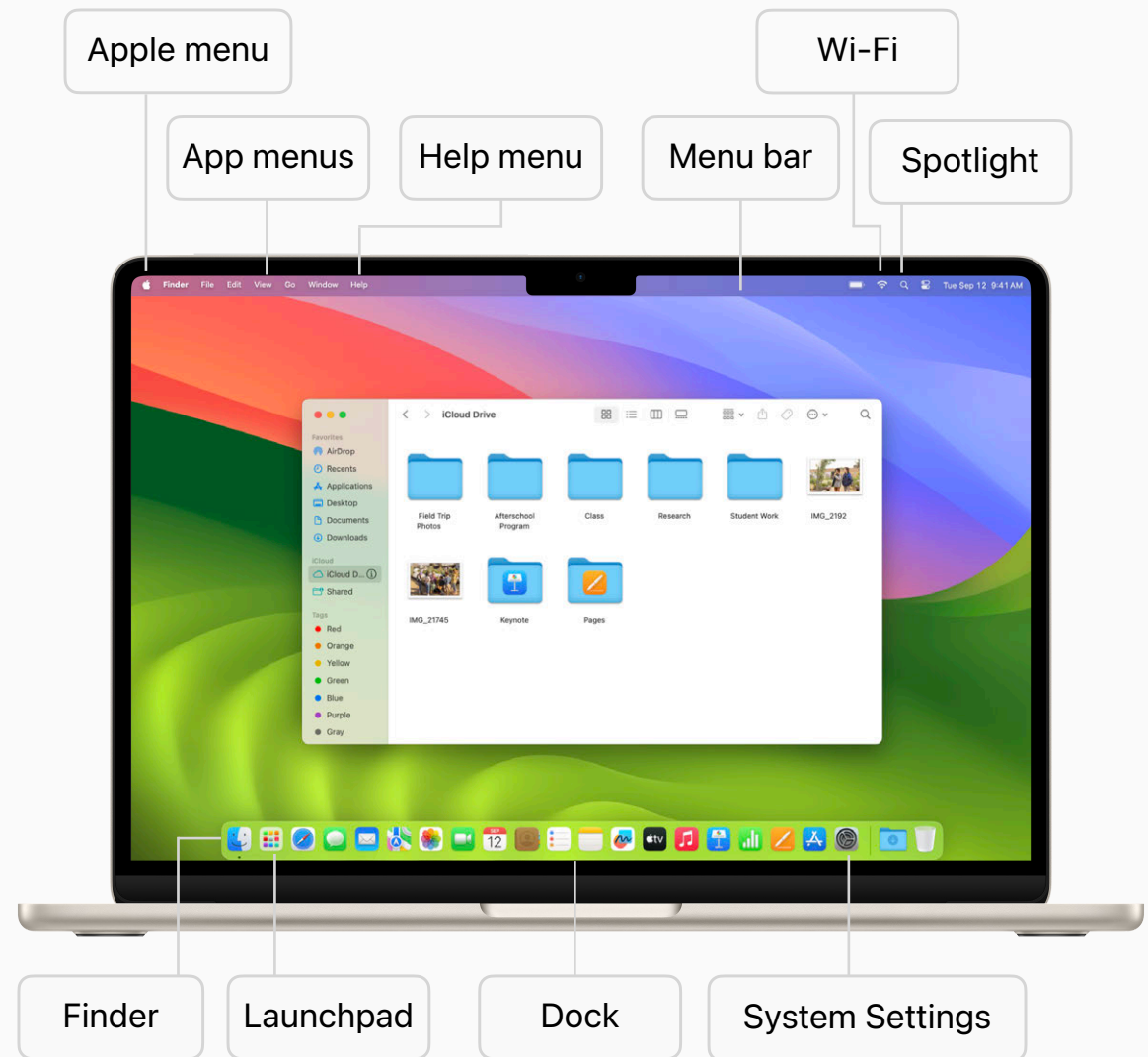
macOS is the operating system that powers every Mac.

The first thing you see when you turn on your Mac is the desktop. The desktop is the space between the menu bar at the top and the Dock located at the bottom of your screen.

[Get to know your Mac desktop ↗](#)

[Explore the menu bar ↗](#)

[Use the Dock ↗](#)



Tip

View managed features and Mac tips for Windows switchers. Change your Mac settings, open apps, and find and delete files. [Learn more ↗](#)



Browse and manage files

The Finder is the home base for your Mac. Use the Finder to view, organize, and modify your documents, images, and other files.

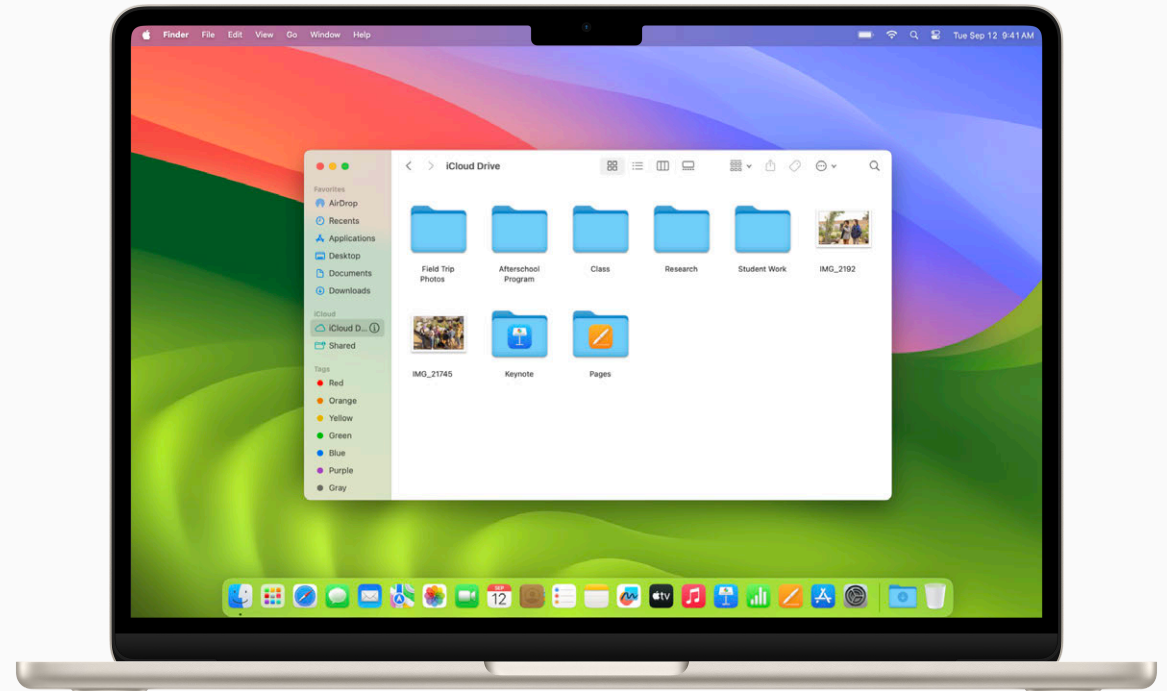
[Browse files ↗](#)

[Find files, folders, or apps ↗](#)

[Organize files in folders ↗](#)

[Choose your view ↗](#)

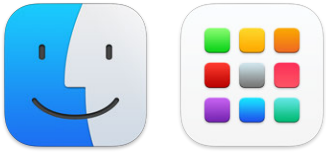
[Customize your toolbar ↗](#)



Tip

Preview a file without opening it. Use Quick Look to see a large preview of a file without opening it. Just select it, then press the Space bar.

[Learn more ↗](#)



Find and organize apps

You can arrange apps on your Mac in a variety of ways. Customize your Dock to access and open apps you use frequently. If the app you need isn't in the Dock, open Finder or Launchpad to view and open any app on your Mac.

[Open apps on your Mac ↗](#)

[Add, remove, or arrange apps in the Dock ↗](#)

[View all your apps in Launchpad ↗](#)

[Manage app windows ↗](#)

[Close or quit apps ↗](#)

[Discover apps included on your Mac ↗](#)





Search for anything on your Mac

Quickly find apps, documents, photos, and other files on your Mac. Find specific topics in messages or on the web, view and scroll previews of your files in Quick Look, and more.

[Search for anything on your Mac ↗](#)

[Narrow your search results ↗](#)

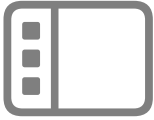
[Change your Spotlight settings ↗](#)

[Use Spotlight keyboard shortcuts ↗](#)



Tip

Search images. Spotlight uses information from images in Photos, Messages, Notes, and the Finder to enable searching by locations, scenes, or even things in images like text, a doc, or a car. It also allows for searching images from the web. [Learn more ↗](#)



Navigate between app windows

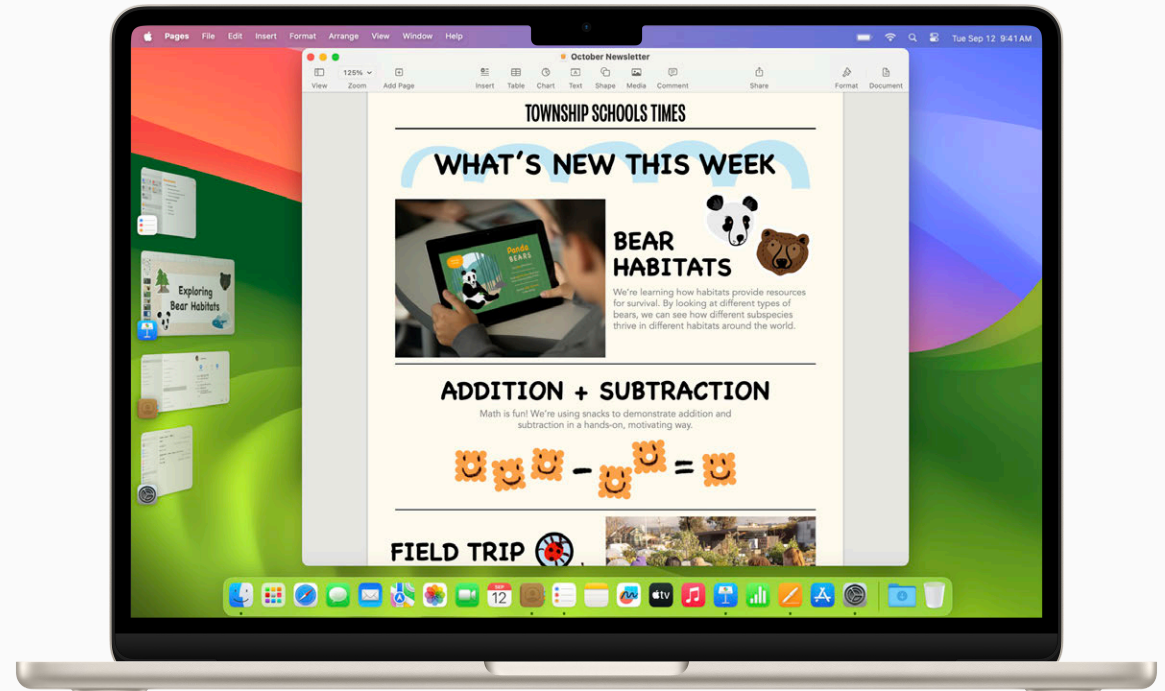
When you have multiple app windows open, only one window is active at a time. To make a different app or Finder window active, simply click it. With Stage Manager, you can organize your apps and windows into a single view so you can stay focused on your work and easily move between tasks.

[Manage app windows ↗](#)

[Use apps in full screen ↗](#)

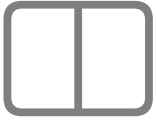
[See all the open windows on your Mac ↗](#)

[Organize your active app windows ↗](#)



Tip

Quickly switch between app windows. Press Command-Tab (or use Command-Tab with the arrow keys) to scroll through all the open apps.

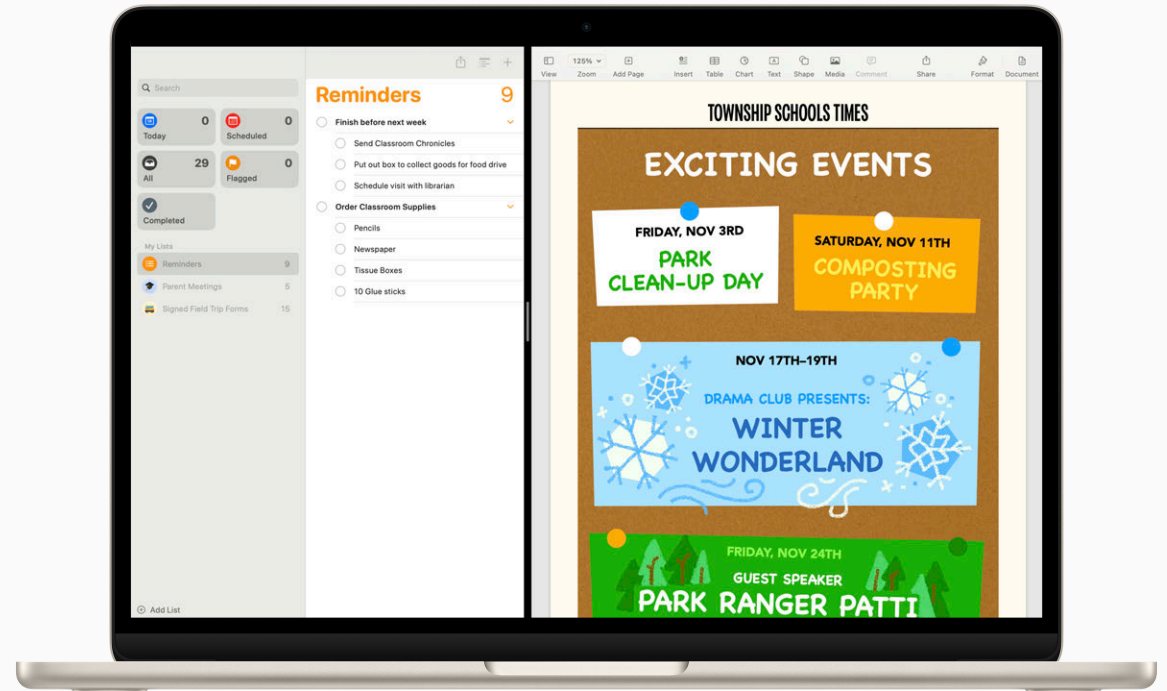


Work with apps simultaneously

Split View lets you fill your Mac screen with two apps for things like grading papers and lesson planning at the same time.

[Work in two apps side by side ↗](#)

[Use your iPad as a second display ↗](#)



Tip

Work in Split View on other displays. Make sure the “Displays have separate Spaces” option is turned on in Desktop & Dock settings.

[Learn more ↗](#)



Create multiple desktops

When you've got multiple app windows scattered across your desktop, Mission Control helps you navigate through them quickly and efficiently. Create additional desktops to support your workflows, like sharing a presentation with a student in one desktop while keeping personal documents in another.

[See all open windows and spaces in Mission Control ↗](#)

[Create additional desktop spaces ↗](#)

[Assign apps to different spaces ↗](#)




Tip

Make each desktop space unique. After you assign System Settings to all desktops, you can change the desktop picture in each space. [Learn more ↗](#)



Keep track of your day

Control Center helps you keep track of what's happening during the day. View upcoming classes, email, reminders, and more. And when you need to stay on task and minimize notifications, you can set up a Focus  from Control Center.

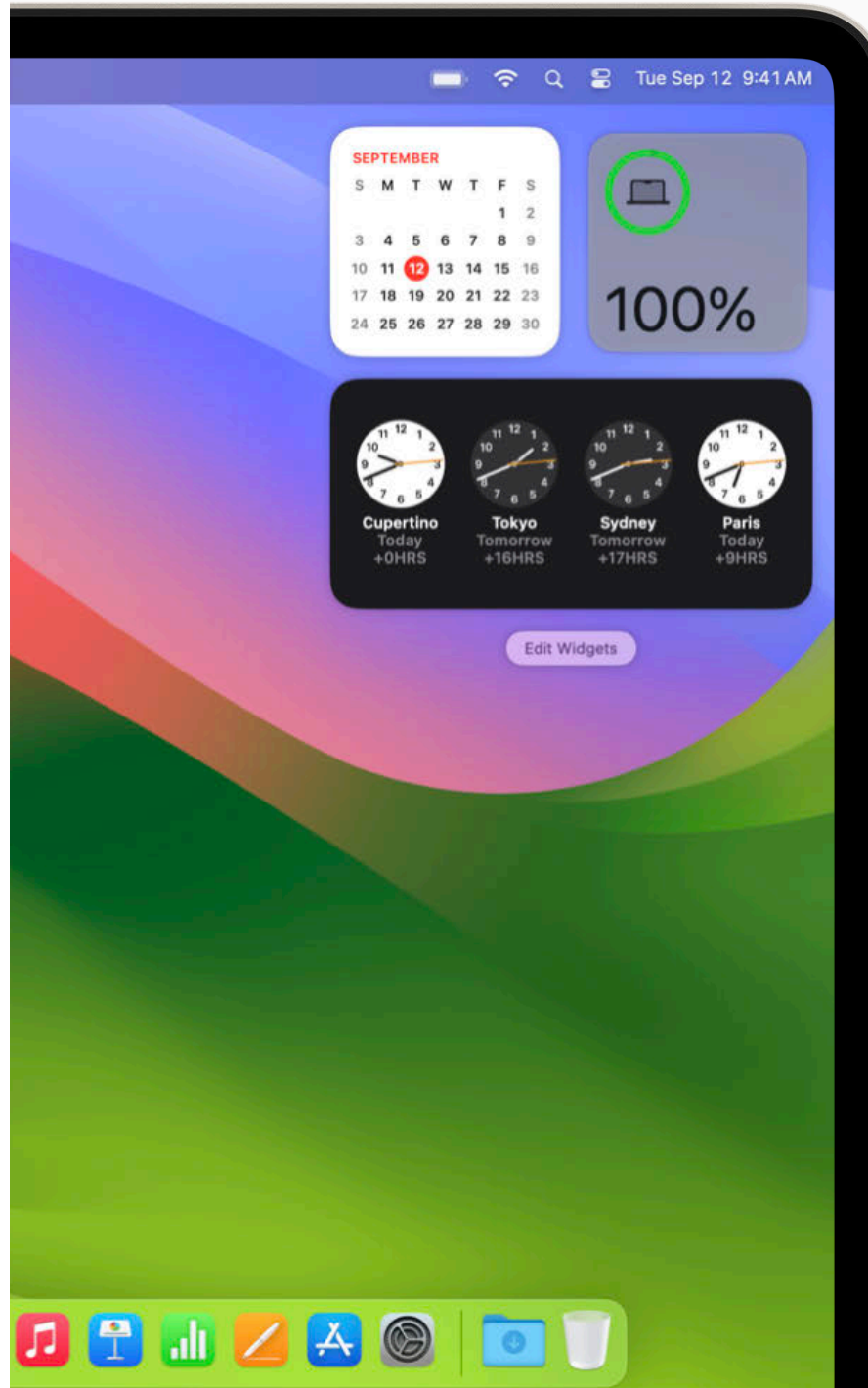
[Manage and customize notifications ↗](#)

[Change Notifications settings ↗](#)

[Set up a Focus ↗](#)

[Turn a Focus on or off ↗](#)

[Change Focus settings ↗](#)





Use keyboard shortcuts

Using keyboard shortcuts on Mac can save you time and help you quickly accomplish tasks that normally need a mouse, trackpad, or other device.

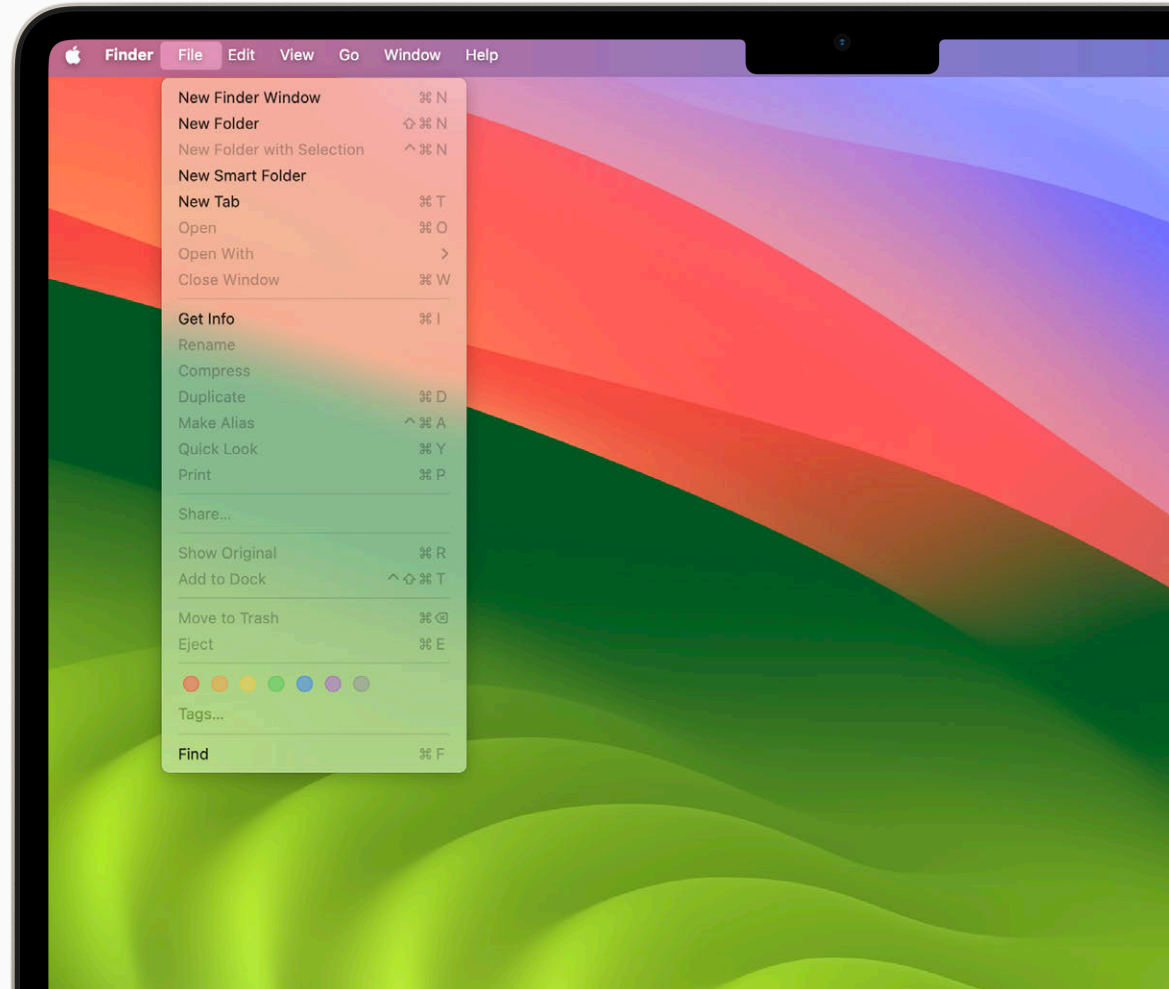
[Use macOS keyboard shortcuts ↗](#)

[Explore symbols used for shortcuts ↗](#)

[Common keyboard shortcuts ↗](#)

[Create your own keyboard shortcuts ↗](#)

[Windows keys on a Mac keyboard ↗](#)



Tip

What's it called on my Mac? The Command key on a Mac is similar to the Control key on Windows PCs. Simply substitute Command for Control to use PC shortcuts. [Learn more ↗](#)



Use trackpad and mouse gestures

With a Multi-Touch trackpad or Magic Mouse, you can use gestures to do things like zoom in on documents, browse web pages, rotate photos, and so much more.

[Use Multi-Touch gestures ↗](#)

[View trackpad or mouse gestures ↗](#)

[Change Trackpad settings ↗](#)

[Change Mouse settings ↗](#)

[Change mouse tracking and scrolling speed ↗](#)





Customize your desktop

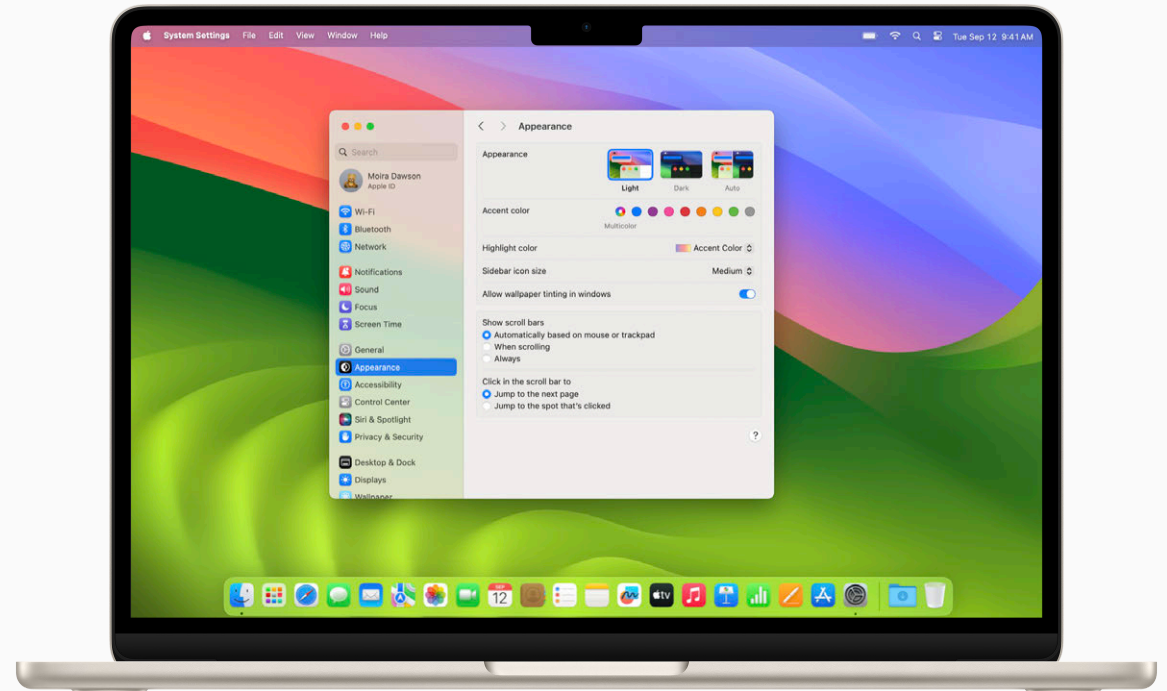
Setting the lighting and appearance of your Mac can help improve your productivity. Turn on Dark Mode to see darkened controls, and windows recede into the background to help you focus on your work. Or use Night Shift to adjust the colors on your display for easier viewing at night or in low-light conditions.

[Customize the desktop picture ↗](#)

[Change the desktop appearance ↗](#)

[Organize your desktop ↗](#)

[Make your desktop easier to see at night ↗](#)





Configure your settings

Manage your accounts, set up Wi-Fi, update your password, and more in System Settings. Some settings may already be configured by your school or district. Be sure to check with your IT team to learn more.

[Customize the settings on your Mac ↗](#)

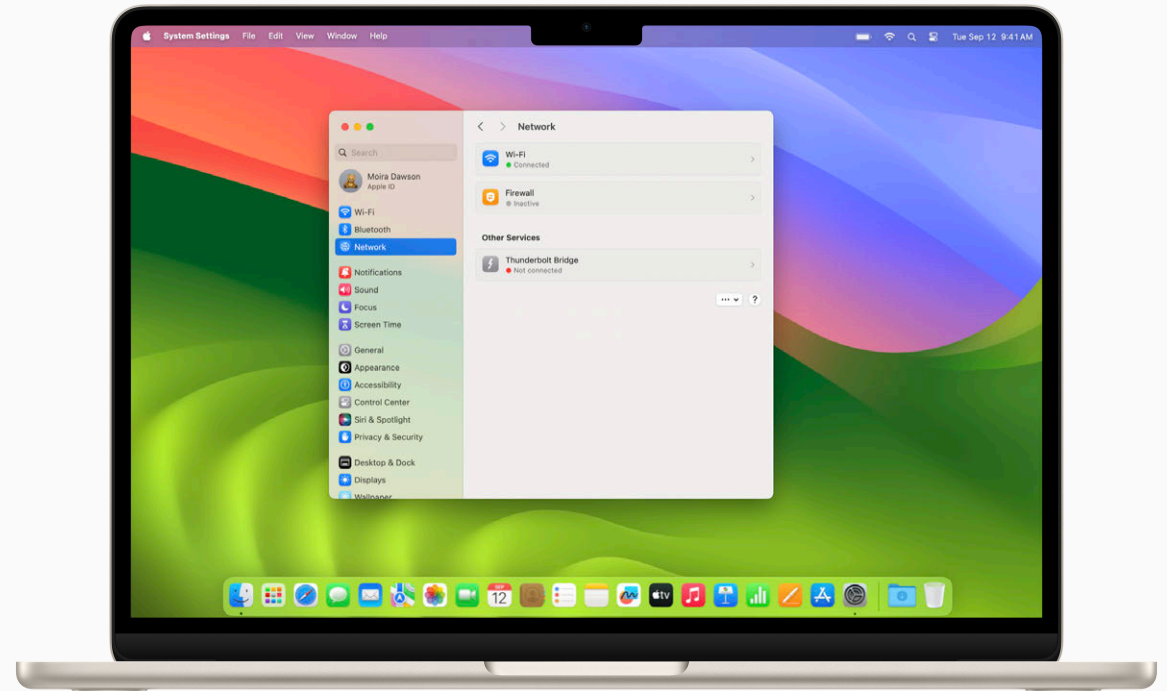
[Connect to a Wi-Fi network ↗](#)

[Change your password or user picture ↗](#)

[Use Touch ID to unlock your Mac ↗](#)

[Use a screen saver for extra privacy ↗](#)

[Set a password to wake your Mac ↗](#)





Personalize your Mac experience

Accessibility features are designed to support your vision, mobility, hearing, speech, and cognitive needs. You can make content larger on your screen, speak commands with Voice Control, and more.

[Set up accessibility features ↗](#)

[Control accessibility options with your keyboard ↗](#)

[Get accessibility support ↗](#)



Tip

Type requests to Siri. Open System Settings from the Dock, click Accessibility, then click Siri, and select the Enable Type to Siri checkbox.

[Learn more ↗](#)

Making the Most of Mac

Apple has a robust set of resources to help you and your learning community make the most of Mac, including the following:

- [Learning Center](#): Explore hundreds of resources for educators, including sample lessons and tutorials for Mac.
- [Apple Teacher](#): Develop foundational skills for using Apple products for teaching and learning with this free self-paced program.
- [Apple Learning Coach](#): Engage coaching educators with a free program to help teachers get more out of Apple technology.



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