What's going on?

Status light
This lets you know if your AirPort Express is working. Flashing green means starting up; green means working; flashing orange means there's a problem.

Prints and the wireless revolution

USB port
Share a USB printer wirelessly with every Mac on your network simply by plugging it into the USB port of the AirPort Express. Neat, eh?

Get yourself connected

Ethernet port
If you are somewhere that has a compatible broadband connection, you can connect your AirPort Express to it with an Ethernet cable.

New adventures in hi-fi

Line-out audio port
Connect your AirPort Express to a stereo with this connection. You'll need a mini to RCA or optical connector such as those in the AirPort Express Stereo Connection Kit.

Tutorial: Get started with AirPort Express

AirPort Express's AirTunes enables you to beam your music files wirelessly to your stereo system. We're going to show you how this magic works in just nine easy steps

Task: Beam music wirelessly from Mac to stereo
Difficulty: Beginner
Time needed: 15 minutes

So you've got all your music on your Mac. You've ripped all your CDs, some of which you've thrown away now, and you've bought loads of tunes from the iTunes Music Store. It's all there, waiting to be played. Unfortunately, your Mac's on the other side of the house from your party room and you'd rather bathe in the glorious surround sound of your stereo, rather than the tiny speakers on your Mac. So how do you get your music to your stereo system without constantly having to burn CDs?

Enter AirPort Express with AirTunes. The latest step in Apple's plan to make the Mac the centre of your digital lifestyle, AirPort Express is a reasonably-priced wireless base station that can share your broadband Internet connection and USB printer with any wireless-equipped computer, be it Mac or PC. It's so small, you can even throw it in your bag and take it with you on trips abroad or just round a friend's house.

Best of all, it comes with AirTunes. Simply connect AirPort Express to the audio input of your stereo system using a mini-jack and RCA or optical connectors, and open up iTunes. You'll notice immediately that you can now change the destination of your music from your Mac's speakers to your stereo. You'll never have to worry about changing CDs at your party again.

Once everything is plugged in, it only takes nine steps to configure AirPort Express to share your Internet connection and music. Actually, that's not quite true – there's a secret tenth step that you have to do just once: for all of this to work, make sure you've installed the software on the CD that comes with AirPort Express, because you'll need the AirPort Express Assistant to configure it. Also, every computer that wants to use AirTunes will need to have iTunes 4.6 up and running. But once that's all done, you can happily blast out your iTunes Library on your stereo.
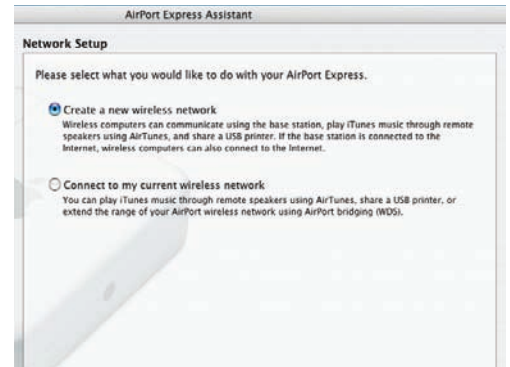
1: Plug everything in
Connect your audio cable to the audio output port of AirPort Express. Now plug in AirPort Express and wait until the green light stops flashing.
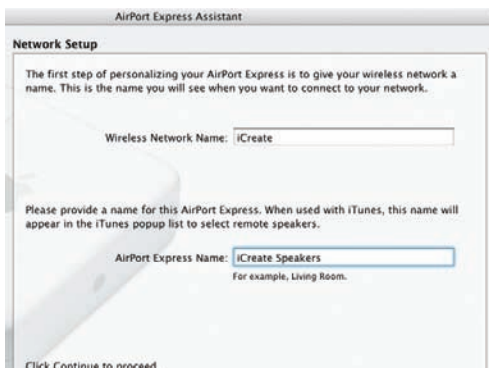

2: Open the AirPort Express Assistant
Ensure your Mac has joined the network the AirPort Express created, and open the AirPort Express Assistant in your 'Utilities' folder. Click 'Continue'.

3: Create a new wireless network
You can click 'Continue' again because you're setting up a new network. If you already have a network, you can get the AirPort Express to join it at this stage.
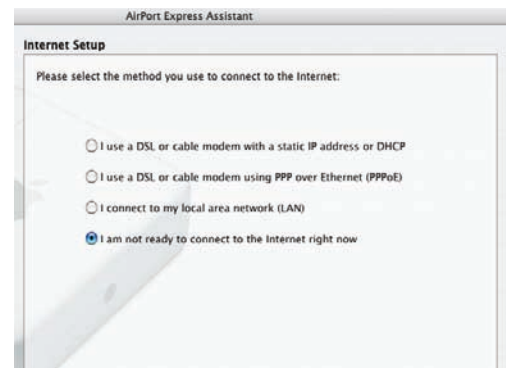

4: Everything's in the name
The Assistant will then (fingers crossed) ask if it's found the correct AirPort Express. Click 'Continue'. Now give it two names: one for itself, and one for iTunes.

5: Keep everything secure
Give your wireless network a password and a security level. WPA is the most secure but won't work with everything. At the very least, choose WEP.
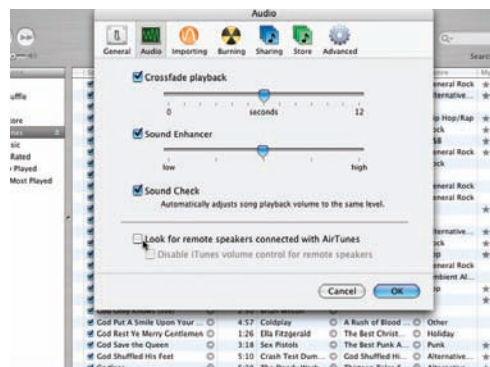

6: Configure Internet access
If you've connected your AirPort Express to a network, use this screen to configure how it should get a Net connection. Otherwise, take the bottom option.

7: Even more secure
Give the AirPort Express its own password so only you can configure it: make sure it's different to your network password. Check your settings and update it.

8: Begin the search
Start up iTunes and tell it to look for your stereo system. Go to the 'iTunes' menu, select 'Preferences' and click the 'Audio' tab. Click the bottom check box.

9: Find your speakers
Using the new pull-down menu at the bottom of the iTunes window, change the destination of your music to your stereo system, turn it up to 11 and rock out!