

Your questions answered

If your Mac is a miscreant, your iPod unruly and your accessories plain out of order, allow our resident Apple Mac drill sergeant Rob Buckley to whip them back into shape



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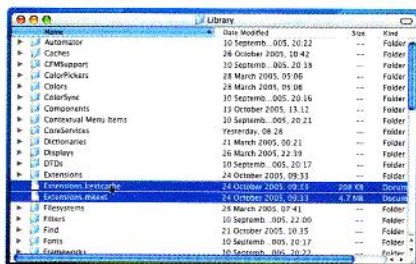
Not so super any more

XI've bought myself a 20GB iPod, and notice that there are some new menu items available. I'm trying to get my head around the 'On-The-Go' playlist option. As instructed by the iPod, I hold down the centre button when playing a song in an attempt to add it to the On-The-Go playlist, but nothing seems to happen. What am I doing wrong?

Kevin Margoyles
Email

AIt's always tempting to blame software when a problem crops up, particularly if you've just done an update, but often it can be something unrelated that's secretly at fault. It might well be coincidence that you've had this problem occur at the same time as you upgraded OS X. So before running you through possible software issues, we'd recommend getting a DVD cleaner disc out and giving your SuperDrive a thorough clean. Yes, it may be something that simple and silly that's at fault. Odds on it's not though, but you'll thank us if it is.

First on the list after a drive polishing: check that you have the latest firmware for your SuperDrive. It's available from www.apple.com/support/downloads/superdrivefirmwareupdate.html. If that doesn't help, go into your Preferences folder in your Library folder and trash the following files (if they're there): 'com.apple.finder.plist', 'com.apple.cdhub.plist', 'com.apple.digihub.plist', 'com.apple.sidebarlists.plist', 'com.apple.dvd.plist'. Now log out and then log back in again.



When caches go bad, it's misery for everyone. Trash them and bring peace to your Mac

Still having problems? Try setting up another user account in the Accounts Preference pane. Now log into it and see if you can use any discs. If you can, something's obviously screwy with your existing account and you might have to do some sleuthing to find out exactly what's gone wrong. But at least you'll be able to use your discs a bit.

If that doesn't work (and we will get this working), resetting your NVRAM might do the job. Restart your Mac, but hold down the Command, Option, O and F keys simultaneously during startup. At the prompt,

type the following commands one by one, pressing the Return key after each (your system will automatically restart after pressing Return the last time): 'reset-nvram'; 'set-defaults'; 'reset-all'.

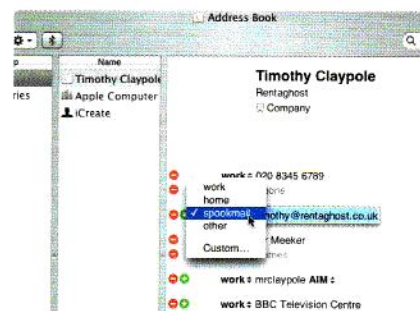
Still not working? Well, we're not out of ideas just yet. Go to 'System', 'Library' and delete 'Extensions.kextcache' and 'Extensions.mkext'. Now restart.

Keep your fingers crossed, because if none of that works, we'd advise contacting Applecare. A number of drives, both combo and super, have been manifesting the same problems and have had to be replaced. We hope you're not that unlucky.

Attaching labels



In Address Book, you have the ability to customise phone numbers (eg 'Kerry's mobile 2' etc), but these don't seem to



You can create custom labels in Address Book, but they won't sync with .Mac

update in the address book in .Mac. It only seems to have space for 'home', 'work', 'mobile' - no others. Is there something I could do so I have all the phone numbers in my Apple address book in my .Mac address book?

Timothy John Kaye

A Afraid not, Timothy. If you want your fields to sync with .Mac, they have to have the same names as .Mac fields. Remember, the .Mac address book isn't intended to be identical and have the exact same capabilities or fields as the OS X address book, any more than you'd expect a mobile phone's directory to be identical to Address Book.

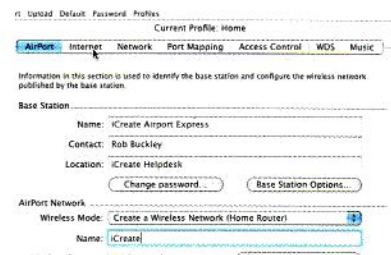
Of course, it would be nice, given Apple came up with both, but it's only something that Apple can make come true.

A tale of two routers

XI have an Airport Express and a D-Link DSL 300T modem, but can't get a wireless connection. I've got the modem to connect, but the Airport Express just says 'Connecting to PPPoE'.

Neil McKie

A PPPoE is a way of obtaining an Internet connection, so you definitely don't want your AirPort Express trying that. Let the modem do the work; let AirPort create the network.



Joining the highway

1 Open up Airport Admin Utility from your 'Utilities' folder, authenticate to the Airport Express and switch to the 'Internet' tab

Dock-tastic

X Since the latest Tiger update, I've noticed a couple of anomalies. When I put in a DVD, DVD Player doesn't launch. It's the same with music CDs – iTunes won't come up immediately. I looked at the System Prefs, under CDs and DVDs, and noticed that all the settings are set to 'Ignore'. I changed them back to their normal settings ('Start up iTunes' etc) and closed down the System Prefs pane, but if I go back to the CDs and DVDs pane, they're all set to 'Ignore' again. What gives?

I've also noticed that if I delete an application icon from the Dock then restart my Mac, the deleted icon comes back. I tend

to think that these two problems are somehow related. These are such niggly little troubles, but they're driving me crazy! Please help!
Terry Smelker

A It does sound like a related problem: corrupt preferences. If your Mac can't read your CD and DVD preferences correctly, it will go to its default behaviour, which is to do nothing. If you try to change your preferences while they're corrupt, they'll still be corrupt after the rewrite, so your Mac will revert back to the default again. Ditto with your Dock preferences. If they get corrupted but not so badly that they can't be read, the Dock won't take any


notice of changes you might have made to it and will revert to its backup.

How to fix it? Well, first we'd recommend running Disk Utility's 'Repair Permissions' and 'Verify Disk' commands to check there's nothing odd happening with your disk: to get one corrupt preference file is an accident – to get two might suggest something bad is happening. At the very least, make sure you also have a backup of your files. Then you can go into your Preferences folder in your Library folder and trash the following files: 'com.apple.dock.plist', 'com.apple.dock.plist.backup' and 'com.apple.digihub.plist'.

Alternatively, you can download a copy of Preferential Treatment (free, homepage.mac.com/jonn8/as/html/pt.html), which can scan all your preference files for corruption and identify other potential problem-causers.

Once you've trashed the offending files, you'll have to log out and back in again for your Mac to become fully aware of their disappearance. You'll also have to reset your preferences and change the icons in your Dock because your Mac will now be using completely clean new preference files. But that should dispel your nagging problems.

Images on Safari

 When I use Safari to open a PayPal home page, I can't see the link images. All I get are question marks. When I first used Safari, I could see everything. Then one day, they were gone!
Ryan Style

A iChat AV has no prejudices, and should allow you to chat quite happily to your PC-owning pals. However, you need to make sure that you have the latest version of iChat AV downloaded (version 2.1) if you

Apple updates

WebObjects 5.3.1

This installer updates the Application Server components in Mac OS X Server 10.4 to WebObjects 5.3.1. Probably of interest to roughly five people – that's how widely it is used now.

AirPort Extreme Driver Update 2005-001

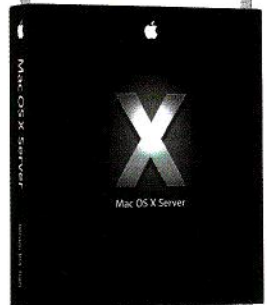
Resolves AirPort compatibility issues with certain third-party wireless cards and access points for OS X 10.3.3 through 10.3.9. Not even half a meg, but some issues reported.

AirPort Update 2005-001

Pretty much the same as the AirPort Extreme Driver Update, except this is for OS X 10.4.3 only. Again, issues reported so hold off if you're not experiencing any difficulties.

Mac OS X Server 10.4.3

Much the same as regular OS X 10.4.3 – same bugs, same improvements – but with some server-specific changes. Includes the ability to add podcasts to blog server entries.



Xsan 1.2

Bug fixes and reliability improvements for Apple's storage area network technology. You won't have one of these unless you're rich or need to store stupendous amounts of data.

G5 System Firmware Update

'Improves the reliability' (ie stops the crashing) of G5s, especially after they have been inactive for two hours. Only for the 1.8GHz, single-processor Power Mac G5 (Late 2004) computer.

Java 2 SE 5.0 Release 3

For those on the Java cutting edge, this supplements but doesn't replace the Java 1.4 installation in Tiger. Big and beta, so only install if you need it.

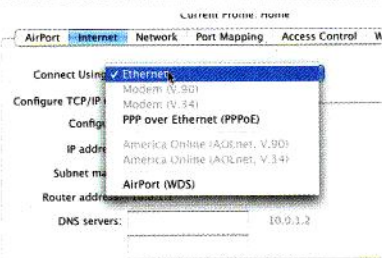
Preferential Treatment

Checking Preference Files

Scanning /Users/icreate/Library/Preferences/
com.apple.airport.adminutility.plist...

Stop

If OS X is behaving strangely, your preferences might be corrupt. Use a free program called Preferential Treatment in order to find out for sure



Stop connecting

2 For 'Connect Using', switch from 'PPP over Ethernet (PPPoE)' to 'Ethernet'. The AirPort Express will stop asking for an Internet address it was never going to get.



What's your number?

3 For the 'Configure TCP/IP' option, make sure you've selected 'Using DHCP'. This means your AirPort Express will be given a network address by the D-Link modem.



Stop spreading the word

4 Now go to the 'Network' tab and make sure that the 'Distribute IP addresses' checkbox is not ticked. Now click 'Update' and you should be done.

02 be using Safari

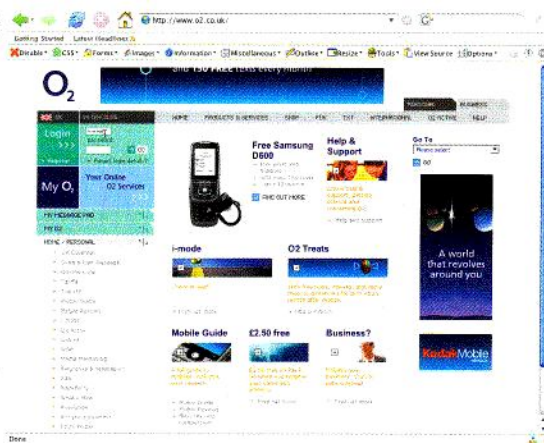
Can you tell me if there is a problem with using Safari the 02 site? I can enter my passwords and username in the appropriate boxes but nothing happens. I can find no mention of this anywhere else. The helpline at 02 says it might be a Mac problem and nothing to do with them. Does Safari have problems accessing secure sites?
Andy Volans

A Browser incompatibilities are thorns in the sides of both Web and browser developers. Getting everything to work for all people is almost impossible at times. Safari has been known to have problems with all kinds of sites (as have most other browsers), and certainly it had problems with the 02 site in the past. The usual workaround is to try another browser, such as Internet Explorer (tinyurl.com/n50x), Camino (www.caminobrowser.org) or

Firefox (www.getfirefox.com), to see if you have better luck with that.

However, we think your problem might be solved by updating to OS X 10.4.3. This includes an update to Safari that improves a whole lot of things and makes it the first browser to pass the 'Acid2' compatibility test – a real-world test designed to see how well a browser displays various site designs, including those that have been incorrectly put together.

Certainly, when we tried the 02 website we were able to enter user IDs and passwords and then try to log in. True, not having an 02 account, we got messages along the lines of 'You're just making stuff up now, aren't you?', but



If you have problems using Safari on a particular website, try one of the many other Mac browsers that are freely available

that's a whole lot better than not getting anywhere at all.

So our advice is to try upgrading to 10.4.3, and if that doesn't work try another browser.

want to chat to other people using AOL Instant Messenger.

You'll also need to make sure that your mates have downloaded the latest version of AIM (which is version 5.5) for their PCs. Some older versions of AOL Instant Messenger will refuse to work. Your friends will also need to be running Windows XP on their machines and have the latest drivers for their webcams installed.

The odds are that your communication problems can be made to disappear just by addressing one of these issues.

There's some stuff you need to do at your end as well. Check that your own camera is set up correctly by pressing on the camera icon next to your name in the iChat window. This will enable you to check that nothing has gone awry in your video

preferences, and you can also make sure that your microphone is enabled. To chat to a PC mate, click on the camcorder icon next to their name in the 'Buddy List' window and they should receive an invitation to join you in a video chat. As soon as your friends get their video set-ups working, point your own camera at your monitor to show them the attractively designed resizable iChat interface. It should make them green with envy.

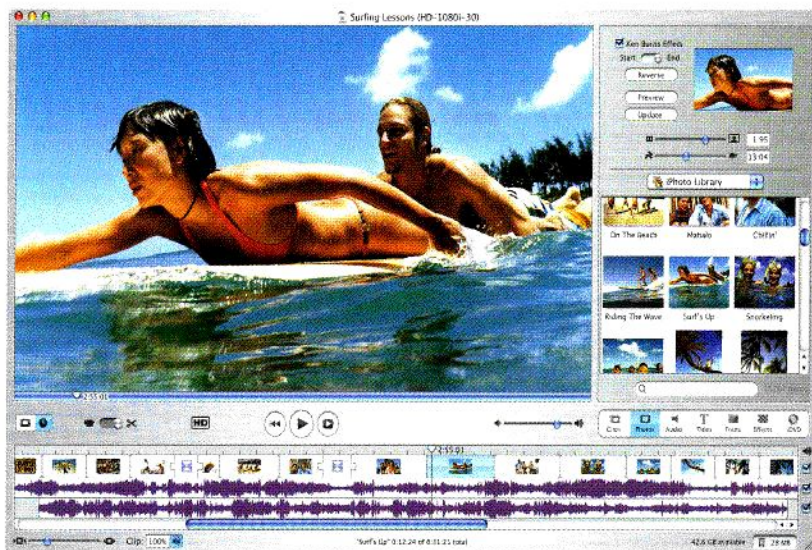
Go Tiger team

I own a Samsung VP-D70 digital camcorder and a PowerMac G4. I have iLife '04 installed and was looking forward to capturing and editing the many hours of home video I have

But my Mac refuses to see my camera! It's not the FireWire interface on the G4, as my wife's iPod works fine. Neither is it the camera, because I've used it successfully on both my father-in-law's early PowerBook G4



Yet more cache trouble. Fortunately, Safari has a way to fix its own problems



Even though it's iMovie that's one reader's having troubles with, upgrading to OS X is the solution

Video killed the browser

I'm having a problem viewing the video content on the BBC's news website. When I try to look at a news report video, a drop-down menu appears with the warning 'MIME application/x-mplayer2 plug-in is missing'.

I know I could download Real Player, which is available from the BBC's site, but



1 Get real
Go to www.real.com and click the 'Free Player' button at the top of the site. After entering your details, pick a site to download Real Player from.

I would prefer to be able to run video in Safari itself.

Jim Ormiston

A What this error message actually means is that you have chosen the Windows Media Player option on the BBC website but don't have Windows Media Player installed (go to <http://tinyurl.com/ip5y> for a copy).



2 Real time
Drag Real Player to your 'Applications' folder and double-click to configure it. After Safari restarts, return to the BBC news page; hit 'Change how I view or hear this'.

We would not recommend selecting this option however, for two reasons: Firstly, not all of the content on the Beeb's site is available in WMP format – and secondly, neither the standard WMP browser plug-in nor the alternative Flip4Mac's (www.flip4mac.com) is really very good at showing WMP content in Safari. Instead, we'd advise you to get hold of Real Player for the BBC Website.



3 Real play
This time choose the 'Real Player' option and click on 'OK'. The news player will now reload and you'll be able to view the videos in Safari.

and his Power Mac G4. It doesn't appear to be iMovie-related either, as my father-in-law has iMovie 3 installed. The only significant difference between our machines is that I'm still using Panther while my father-in-law has upgraded to Tiger. Do you have any suggestions?

Richard Lees

A Since people use iPhoto and iMovie to access the content on their camcorders and digital cameras, it's easy to think those applications have that capability built in. But like printing, the ability to access a peripheral comes from whatever drivers have been installed into OS X itself.

That's one of the reasons why OS X is so much more stable than OS 9: programs can no longer access hardware directly, as they did with OS 9, which caused all sorts of failures and instability. Instead, they have to ask OS X to access the hardware for them. iMovie and iPhoto don't install drivers of their own, but rely on OS X's own drivers, which is why the Image Capture program in your Applications folder, for example, can access exactly the same cameras as iPhoto can.

So, in fact, you've answered your own question. The drivers necessary to use the Samsung VP-D70 come with Tiger but aren't available in Panther. You'll have to upgrade to use your camcorder with iMovie, but Tiger's pretty great so it will be worth the investment.



Even though it doesn't come with new Macs any more, you can still get Internet Explorer from the Microsoft website

Banking on IT

I can't find Internet Explorer. HSBC tech support insists it's preinstalled, but a search of both the hard drive and Apple Help showed nothing.

Peter Mann

A HSBC is a little behind the times. For one thing, Safari works fine with the HSBC site (we've just tried it). Secondly, while IE used to be installed by default on all Macs, once Apple developed Safari, IE was given a firm shove out the door. If you have a new Mac, you won't find IE on it.

But don't worry. If you don't like Safari or find it doesn't work with some sites, you can still download IE – from the Microsoft site, of course. Check out <http://tinyurl.com/n50x>.

With a bit of application

X I've installed FileMaker Pro 8, and a new Applications folder has been created in my user account, where the FileMaker software resides. Why hasn't it been installed with all my other apps? Gary J. Hargraves

A For most things, OS X has a user folder, an all-users folder and a system folder. So there's ~/Library, /Library and /System/Library; ~/Library/Fonts, /Library/Fonts and /System/Library/Fonts, etc. A user can change anything in their directory and it'll affect only them; an administrator can change anything not in the /System folder and it'll apply to all users; Apple can change the system itself.

Non-admin users can install apps in an Applications folder in their home directory, and it will acquire the Applications folder logo. To make FileMaker available to all, log in as an admin user and install it again.



Installing applications into your home directory may be unusual, but it's correct behaviour