

## Training Session 6 - Macintosh System Preferences Part 1 - Personal

In this Training Session, we start to explore the **System Preferences**, which allow us to set the way our computer looks and operates.

Open **System Preferences** which is in the **Dock** and also under the **Apple** menu. There are four categories: **Personal**; **Hardware**; **Internet & Wireless**; and **System**.

**System Preferences** are very extensive and I will try to explain them in the most useful way for beginners.

**Cursor size:** The first thing you may want to do is make your cursor larger. This is especially desirable if you have a 'large' screen, and you want a **Desktop** picture. Click on **Universal Access**. Then click on **Mouse & Trackpad**. At the bottom of this pane you can use the slider to change the **Cursor Size** to your choice. Apple has for many years incorporated software for people with disabilities, and you can check out other options in this pane. Click on **Show All** to close this pane and return to the **System Preferences** pane.

**Personal:** The first row of icons allows you to personalise your computer to be the way you want it (these preferences are similar to the Control Panels on the PC).

Click on **Appearance** to open its pane. Here you can set a number of features. I have left all as are. Check out **Appearance:** and **Highlight color:** Leave **Place scroll arrows:** as **Together** (there is an App that lets you place scroll arrows together at both top and bottom of a window). Have a look at other options. Click on **Show All** again.

Click on **Desktop & Screen Saver**. This pane lets you set your **Desktop** and your **Screen Saver**. You have many options for the **Desktop**. Check out the pictures in the folders under **Apple**. You may need to click on the gray triangle to open the drop down list. Just click on a sample to change your desktop picture. You can also access and select any photo in your **iPhoto** library as well as any pics you may have in **Folders**. Under the pics display, you can chose to **Change picture:** at various intervals. You can select your pics to change at random. Finally, you can change the appearance of the menu bar. I prefer an uncluttered desktop, and use a **Desktop Pictures - Small Ripples**, which makes finding my cursor easy.

**Screen Saver** lets you set up how you want your screen to behave when you are not using your computer. These savers were used in the days of CRT monitors to prevent a static image from burning into the coating on the tube. They are not needed with modern LCD screens. I do not bother with them, and have set **Start screen saver:** to never, but feel free to experiment. Click on **Show All** again.

Click on **Dock**. We have covered this in the previous Training Session.

Click on **Exposé & Spaces**. This pane lets you set how your **Exposé** and **Spaces** work. **Exposé** allows you to view all open windows on the one screen. Check for your default setting (on my keyboard it is the F3 key). With all windows visible, click on the one you want on top. I have not felt a need to alter any of these settings, but feel free to explore. Note the **Hide and show:** keyboard shortcut for the **Dashboard**; you don't need to keep the **Dashboard** icon in your **Dock**.

**Spaces** can be very useful, I will expand their use in another Training Session. Click on **Show All** again.

Click on **Language and Text**. Your **Language** will probably be English. Under **Text**, explore Symbol and Text Substitution. Check **Spelling:** and select **Australian English**, leave **Word Break:** as **Standard** and **Smart Quotes:** as used by us. Under **Formats**, set **Region** to **Australia**, **Calendar** to **Gregorian** and **First day of week** to your choice (I use Monday). Use the **Customize...** for **Dates**,

**Times** and **Numbers**, with **Currency: Australian Dollar** and **Measurement units: Metric**. You can see that this **System Preference** is where you select all these settings. I haven't touched the **Input Sources** pane, leaving it set to **Australia**. Click on **Show All** again.

Click on **Security**. Select **General**. Here you can select whether you **Require password**, and if so, when. Notice the **padlock** in the lower left corner. To change these settings, you need to click on the **lock** and log in as the **administrator**, make your changes then click the **lock** again. I have changed my settings: **Disable automatic login**, and **Automatically update safe downloads list**.

**FileVault**: This allows you to encrypt the contents of your home folder. Have a look; if your work is commercially sensitive, you may want to use encryption. I have not used this pane.

**Firewall**: Make sure **Firewall** is on. Click on the **lock**, log in as the **administrator**, and click **Advanced...** You have three choices: **Block all incoming connections** probably stops email, too, so I have it unchecked. I have checked **Automatically allow ...** This should allow updating of software. **Enable stealth mode** should be ticked; you should never respond to a contact you were not expecting, (and never **Bounce** an email as this just confirms your email address to the scammer!) Click **OK**, close the lock and click on **Show All** again.

**Spotlight** is the magnifying glass icon at the right hand end of the menu bar; it is very powerful, and I think the **Mac** must index every word ever entered, including those in pdf files! You have two choices: **Search Results** allows you to select what you want searched. You can uncheck categories you don't need to search - more likely leave checked just those categories that are meaningful. **Privacy** allows you to prevent locations being searched. Note the **Spotlight** keyboard shortcut options available: **⌘Space** is fast. Check out **option ⌘Space**.

Note, there is extensive **Help** available in all these panes; just click on the Button with a ? in it.

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T S 1 - Macintosh 'Finder' - March 2011

T S 2 - Macintosh Finder Features - April 2011

T S 3 - Macintosh Finder Menu Items - May 2011

T S 4 - Macintosh Applications & Dock - June 2011

T S 5 - Macintosh Home Folder & Backing Up - July 2011