



KEEPING YOUR OS X MAC OPTIMIZED AND HAPPY

a brief tutorial for all users interested in the best system performance

Mac OS X is a vast improvement over the world of OS 9 in terms of system stability and power. Even though we no longer need to rebuild our desktops (or even reboot much, for that matter), there are still some system maintenance tasks you should perform on a regular basis.

GET PERMISSION

The easiest action you can take to keep your Mac running happy is to **Repair Permissions**. Every file and folder in OS X has a set of permissions assigned to it. Repairing permissions gone wonky will make your Mac happy!

Launch Disk Utility (1) by going to **Applications > Utilities > Disk Utility**. In the panel on the left, select your main system drive (you may only have one) and then click **Repair Permissions**. (2) Have a cup of tea or stretch for a few minutes. Aaaah. That's nice. And now your permissions are fixed, too.

You can Repair Permissions any time. Perhaps once a week or at least once a month. This would be a good time to give your Mom a call, too. She misses you.

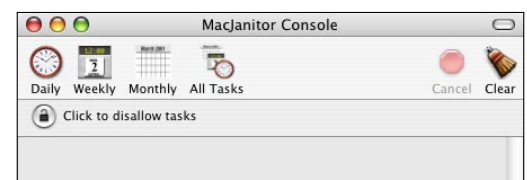
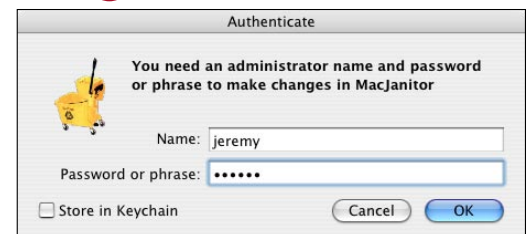
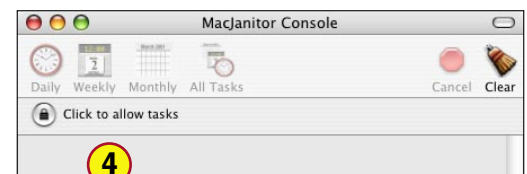
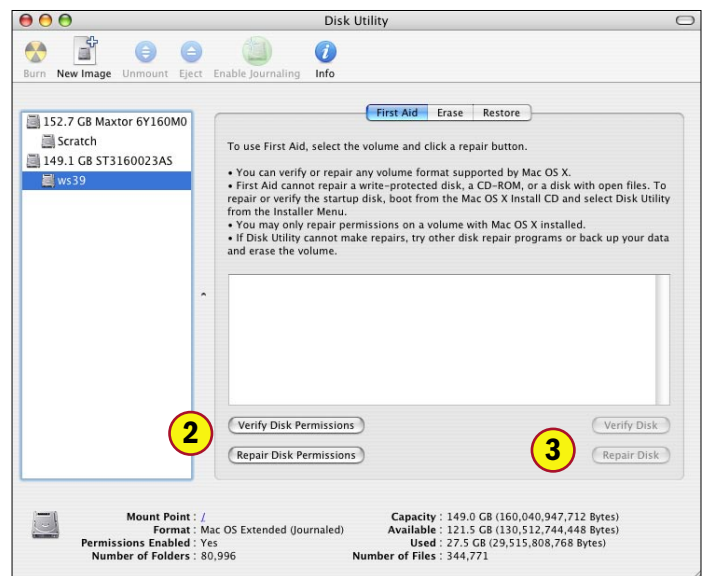
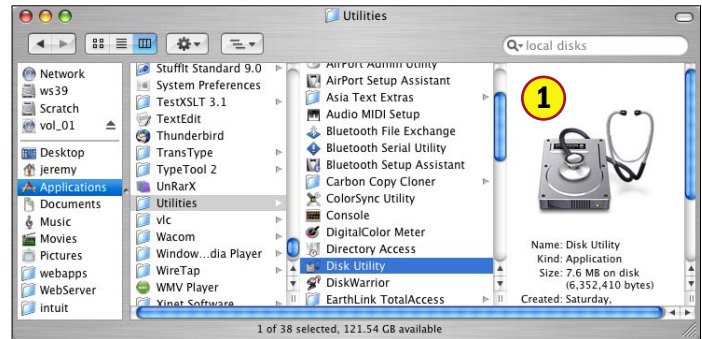
Notice that the button for **Repair Disk** (3) is not activated. This is because you are running off your system disk and the system files are in use. If you feel you have disk issues, you need to boot up off of your OS X System CD (insert CD, reboot and hold down the "C" key on your keyboard) and then run Disk Utility from the CD. Select your main system drive in the left panel and then click **Repair Disk**.

CALL THE JANITOR

Mac OS X has a rich legacy based on the UNIX system. If you have no idea what UNIX is, don't worry, it doesn't matter. What you do need to know, however, is that certain system clean-up tasks are scheduled to run in the wee hours of morning, probably while you and your computer are fast asleep. But it is asleep so the tasks never run!

Go online and download the free **MacJanitor**:
http://personalpages.tds.net/~brian_hill/macjanitor.html

After launching MacJanitor, click on the lock icon (4) to authorize the program. Enter your password and hit OK. Now you can click on the Daily, Weekly, Monthly or All Tasks buttons. These buttons run the scripts that normally run at 3:00-4:00 a.m. in the morning. The Daily and Monthly scripts run pretty quickly, while the Weekly script will likely run for a few minutes. Mmmm, tea time!



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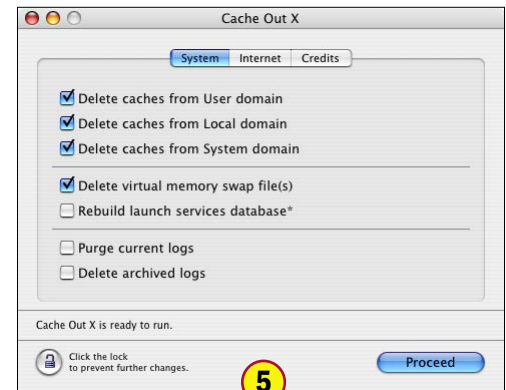
a brief tutorial for all users interested in the best system performance (part 2)

TRASH THE CACHE

Your Mac system stores all kinds of things in cache files. First off, it is pronounced “cash” not “cash-ay” so now you’ll sound well-educated if you ever publicly talk about such a nerdy thing as a cache file. You should clear these out once in a while and you can also clear out log files as needed. A convenient way to do this is to use a free program called **Cache Out X**, which can be found at:

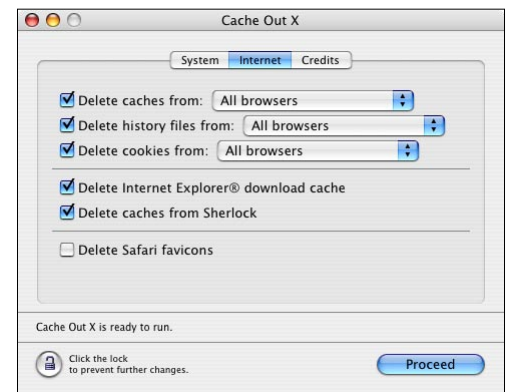
<http://www.nonamescriptware.com/>

You could run this program once a month. (5)

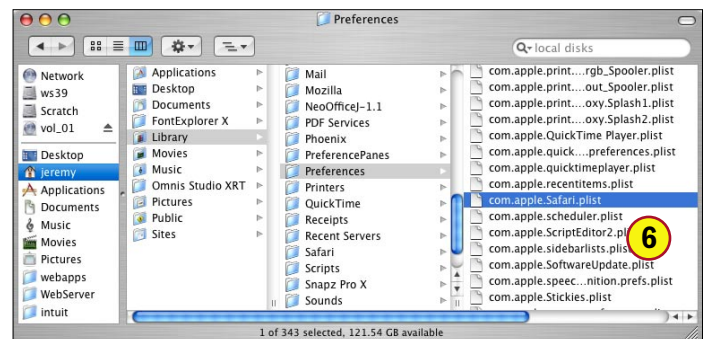


DELETE THE PLIST

Okay, it isn’t really called a “plist” but rather a **preference file**. If you have a particular application that is really acting up, deleting its preference file might alleviate the problem. Launching the program again will recreate the preference file automatically (reset your program prefs as needed).



To find your desired preference file, click once on your name (this is your home or user folder) in the left pane of your Finder window. Then select **Library > Preferences** and start searching through the files. In this example, we have selected the preference file for Safari. (6) Make sure the program is not running, delete the preference file, empty your trash and relaunch the program. Don’t forget to reset your program preferences!



TICKLE YOUR BRAIN

Make your Mac do some of the work for you by reminding you of when you should do some routine maintenance. Set up a Weekly calendar appointment in **iCal** and then repeat it weekly (7) forever with an alarm attached. When it goes off, run **Disk Utility** and Repair Permissions and then run **MacJanitor** and run the Weekly script. Also set up a Monthly calendar appointment with a repeat and an alarm and when it goes off do a Disk Repair, a Repair Permissions and run the Monthly script in MacJanitor.

HELPFUL TIP: Repair Permissions after every System Update or after installing new software.

REINSTALL? Applications, perhaps. But the Operating System? Rarely if ever.

