



# Mac OS X Mountain Lion

## Exploring OS X Mountain Lion

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Perhaps you just bought a new **Macintosh** computer that includes **Mac OS X Mountain Lion**. Or maybe you're thinking about **upgrading to Mountain Lion** from a previous version of OS X (pronounced O-S Ten). On the other hand, you may be a **Windows** user who is considering switching to a Mac.

No matter what your situation is, we're going to show you the basics of using OS X Mountain Lion, including some of its new features like **iCloud integration** for **syncing** your **computer and mobile iOS devices**, the **Notification Center**, access to **social networking**, and new options for **sharing**.



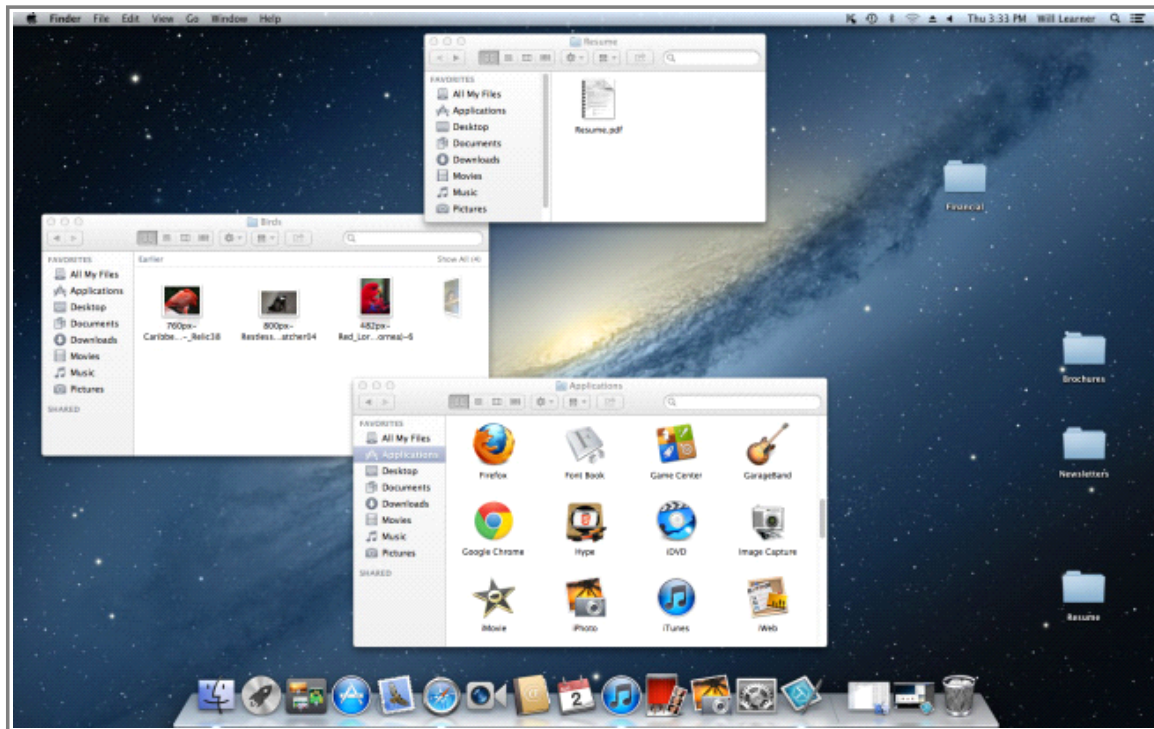
*The Notification Center*

## What is Mac OS X Mountain Lion?

OS X Mountain Lion (version 10.8) is the most recent **operating system** designed by **Apple** and released in 2012. It is generally used with **Apple Macintosh computers (Macs)**. Like other operating systems, it allows you to **run programs, organize your files, browse the internet, and more**.

Although Mountain Lion is new, other versions of **Mac OS X** have been around for years. Previous versions include **Lion** (version 10.7), **Snow Leopard** (version 10.6), **Leopard** (10.5), and **Tiger** (10.4). If you are upgrading from OS X Lion, Mountain Lion will be a relatively **minor upgrade**.

Mountain Lion was designed with **mobile devices** in mind. Many of its new features use **iCloud** to make it easier to **transition** between your Mac and your iPad or iPhone. Because iCloud stores your files and syncs your devices, you'll now be able to begin an activity on one device and continue it on another. This means you'll have access to the same web pages, files, and photos from each of your devices.



*Mac OS X Mountain Lion*

An **operating system** manages all of the hardware and software on a computer. Without it, the computer would be useless. To learn more about how operating systems work, check out [Understanding Operating Systems](#) and [Getting to Know the OS](#) in our Computer Basics tutorial.

## OS X Mountain Lion Features

OS X Mountain Lion has added [hundreds of new features](#) that make it more convenient to use. Many of these features are designed to make it easier to switch between your Mac and your iPad or iPhone. Below are a few of the most useful updates.

➤➤➤ Watch this video from Apple to learn more about OS X Mountain Lion's features.

### Notifications

Notifications are **pop-ups**, **banners**, and other **audio/visual cues** that work with the applications on your computer. They're designed to let you know when something needs your attention, or when there's been any recent activity (for example, on Facebook). You can receive notifications three different ways:

❖ **Notification Center:** The Notification Center is where you'll view most of the notifications on your computer. It summarizes new activity rather than alerting you to each item one by one. To open the Notification Center, click the **icon** in the top right corner of your screen. Then click a **notification** to view more information about it.

❖ **Alerts:** Alerts can be set up to display a **banner** or **pop-up** whenever there's new activity. They impart a little more urgency than the Notification Center, so they might be a good choice for apps that are especially important to you.



*The Notification Center*


❖ **Badge App Icon:** The badge app icon is a **small red number** designed to let you know when there's a notification waiting inside one of your apps. The badge means different things depending on the app. For example, in the **App Store**, it could mean that you have an update waiting for one of your current apps.

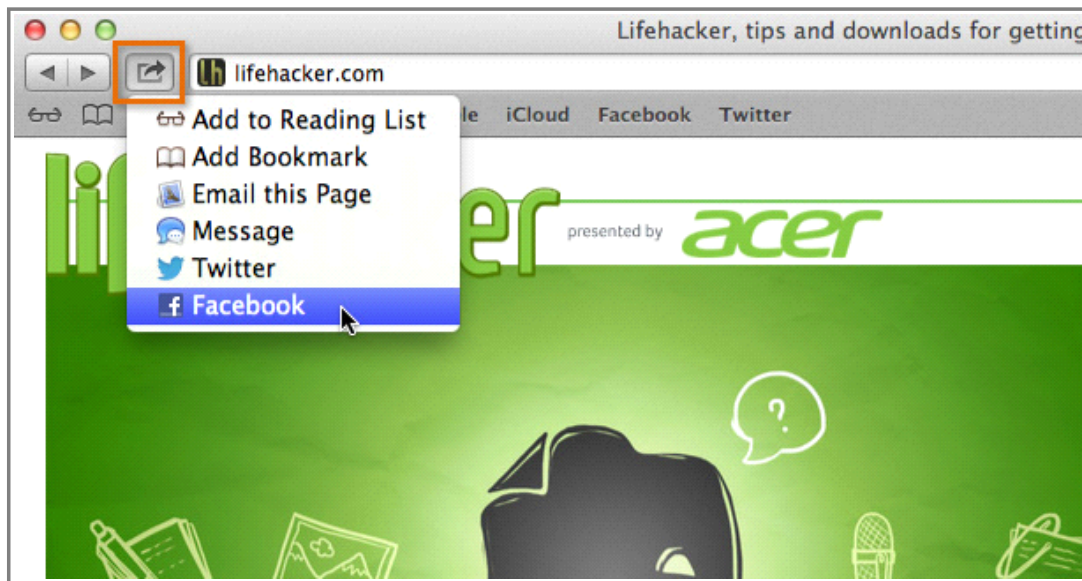


*Badge app icon*

Many applications generate notifications **automatically**. You'll learn over time which ones do, and which ones don't. To find out how to customize your notifications, visit Lesson 6 of this tutorial, [Changing Your Computer's Settings](#).

## Sharing Options

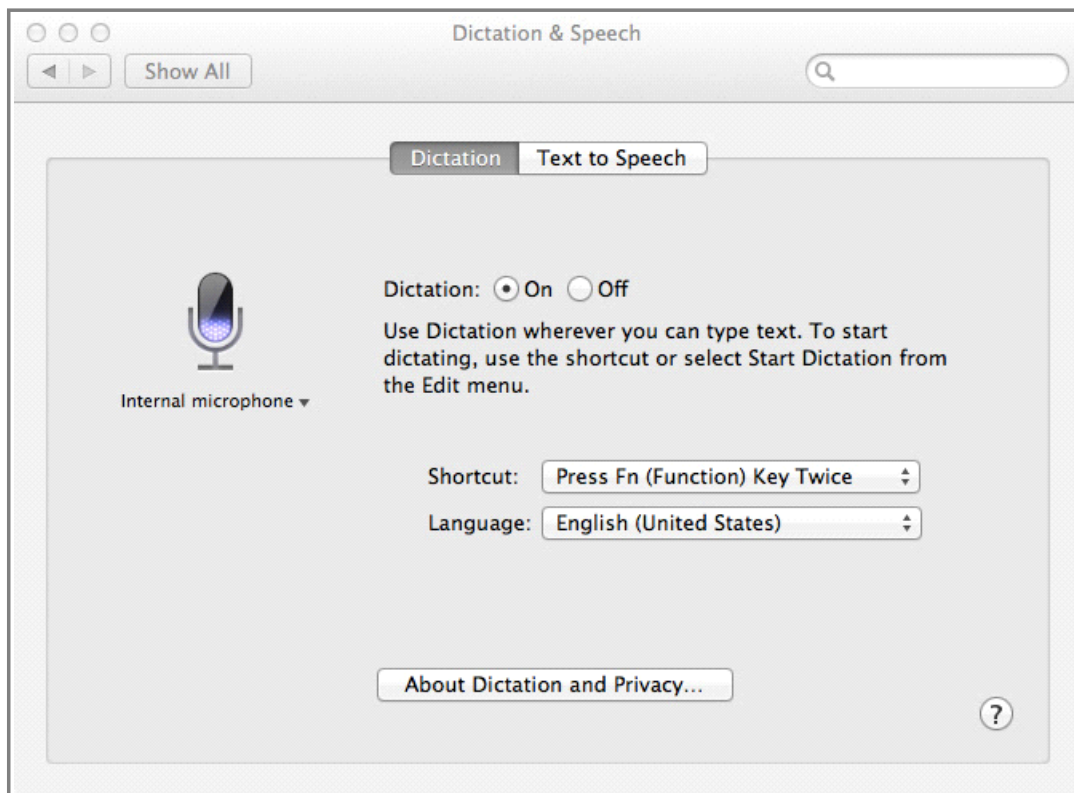
Mountain Lion has included a **Share button**  in many of its applications that you may recognize from iOS devices. You can use this button to quickly share photos, videos, websites, and more across a variety of networks—including email, instant messaging, Twitter, and Facebook.



Using the Share button

## Dictation

The dictation tool allows you to **speak to fill in any text field** to create emails, reminders, or messages. It's important to know that the dictation tool **requires an internet connection** to send your spoken words to Apple where they are converted and then returned to you as text. You can enable dictation in your **System Preferences**.





*Voice dictation settings*

## Twitter and Facebook

You can now **tweet** and **receive messages** through the Notification Center. OS X Mountain Lion also offers full Facebook integration as of fall 2012—all have to do is sign into Facebook in your **System Preferences**, and you'll be able to post things to Facebook from almost any app. You can even integrate your Facebook friends with the people you have in the **Contacts** app.

## Additional iOS Features

Mountain Lion has added other popular iOS features like **Game Center**, **Reminders**, and **Messages**. You'll be able to enjoy the benefit of iCloud syncing these apps on each of your Apple devices.

## Are You Upgrading From an Earlier OS?

If you're upgrading from Snow Leopard or an earlier version of OS X, you should be aware of some features that were introduced in Lion such as **Mission Control** and **Launchpad**. Mission Control allows you to view all of the documents and applications that are open, and it also allows you to switch between different **virtual desktops**. Launchpad makes it easy to launch and manage your applications. To learn about the many other changes and improvements that Lion introduced, visit our [OS X Lion tutorial](#).



*Mission Control*

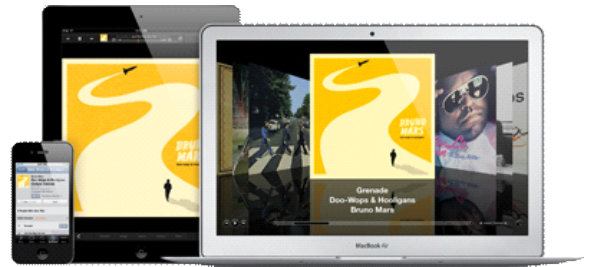


*Launchpad*

## Syncing

Did you know you can **sync your computer** with your other devices if you have an iPad, iPhone, and iPod Touch?

If you've never heard of syncing before, that's okay. It's designed specifically so you don't have to think about it once you set it up (or do anything special to maintain it). It just happens in the background.



Syncing is what links your Mac to your **other Apple devices**—and your other devices to **each other**—so you can access the same content anytime, anywhere. For instance, you could take a photo on your iPad, then view it instantly on your laptop. You could create a to-do list on your work computer, then keep up with it on your iPad, iPhone, or iPod Touch.

Are you starting to see how useful syncing can be? It's a big part of using OS X Mountain Lion if you have more than one Apple device, so it's important that you understand what it means (even if you're not sure how it works yet!). Some content syncs automatically once you set up the applications on your computer. Other types of content will need to be enabled in **iCloud**.

## What is iCloud?

[iCloud](#) is a **free service** from Apple that does many different things. It allows you to store your content "in the cloud" instead of on your computer (which can save you a ton of storage space). But some of its most popular features have to do with **syncing**.



Imagine being able to start something on your Mac, then pick it back up immediately on a different device. That's the benefit of syncing with iCloud. It aims to connect all your files, information, and other types of content, so you never lose access to the things you love. And it's not just for OS X Mountain Lion; it's for your other Apple devices too.

We'll take a closer look at **iCloud** in Lesson 7 of this tutorial, [Syncing with iCloud](#).

## Introduction to Apps

Whenever you want to perform a specific task with a computer, you'll use an **application** (also known as an **app**). There are many different types of apps, including web browsers, games, word processors, and more.

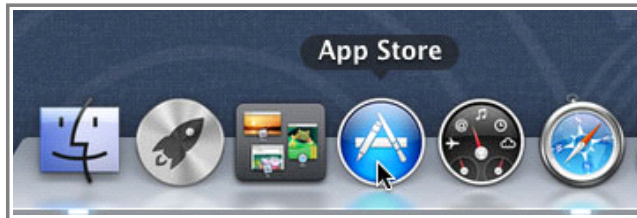
**OS X Mountain Lion** comes with a wide range of **built-in apps** that you can access as soon as you turn on your computer. They're a great place to start for new users because there's nothing to download or install.

Many of these apps are ready to use right out of the box, like **Safari** (a web browser) or **Photo Booth**. Others require a little more setup, like **Mail**, **Contacts**, and **Calendar**.



*The Mac App Store*

To get the most out of your Mac, you'll probably want to download some additional apps from the **Mac App Store**. The Mac App Store was introduced in **Snow Leopard**. You can access the App Store from the **Dock** or from **Launchpad**.



*Opening the App Store from the Dock*

The App Store is also important for another reason: If you are upgrading from **Snow Leopard** or **Lion**, you will need to use the App Store to download **Mountain Lion**. Unlike previous versions of OS X, Mountain Lion is **not available on a CD or DVD**. In the next lesson, we'll talk more about how to **upgrade to Mountain Lion**, including the software and hardware requirements.

## Using the App Store

The **App Store** gives you access to thousands of apps aside from the ones you already have. You'll find everything from games, to entertainment, to productivity tools—even apps that can help you with common tasks like studying for an exam, cooking dinner, or keeping track of travel details. In short, if you have something in mind, there's a good chance you'll find an app for it in the App Store.



A lot of the content in the App Store **costs money**; however, you'll still find thousands of apps and other resources that you can **download for free**, or for as little as \$0.99. If you're not sure which apps to try first, the App Store can help by giving you recommendations, or showing you what's popular with other iPad users.



*Apps for OS X Mountain Lion*

## Apps Starter Kit

Still not sure where to begin? The **Apps Starter Kit** from Apple might be able to help. This resource is designed to show you some of the most "essential apps" for new Mac users. To access it, open the **App Store**. Then look for **Quick Links** on the right, and click **Apps Starter Kit**. (You might want to check out some of the other links too.)





**Quick Links in the App Store**

Inside, you'll find a list of **apps**. Some are free, but most are paid. To learn more about an app, click the one you're interested in. You can download them all, or just a few.



# APPS STARTER KIT

Your new Mac already comes with an amazing bundle of apps to get you started, including iPhoto, iMovie, GarageBand, iTunes, FaceTime, Photo Booth, and more. But if that's not enough, we've narrowed down a selection of other great apps that let you draft documents; create presentations; peruse headlines; manage recipes, inventories, and finances; and more. Whether you're a recent switcher or a veteran user, there's something here to help you make the most of your Mac.

**Apps Starter Kit** Sort By: **Featured**

 <b>1Password – Passw...</b> Productivity ★★★★★ 183 Ratings \$34.99	 <b>Day One</b> Lifestyle ★★★★★ 227 Ratings \$9.99	 <b>Delicious Library 2</b> Reference ★★★★★ 14 Ratings \$34.99	 <b>Diptic</b> Photography ★★★★★ 76 Ratings \$0.99
 <b>djay</b> Music ★★★★★ 56 Ratings \$19.99	 <b>Evernote</b> Productivity ★★★★★ 249 Ratings FREE	 <b>Fantastical</b> Productivity ★★★★★ 19 Ratings \$9.99	 <b>GarageBand</b> Music ★★★★★ 179 Ratings \$14.99
 <b>iBooks Author</b> Productivity ★★★★★ 93 Ratings FREE	 <b>iClip</b> Utilities ★★★★★ 6 Ratings \$18.99	 <b>iMovie</b> Video ★★★★★ 115 Ratings \$14.99	 <b>iPhoto</b> Photography ★★★★★ 99 Ratings \$14.99
 <b>Keynote</b> Productivity ★★★★★ 133 Ratings \$19.99	 <b>Mint QuickView</b> Finance ★★★★★ 148 Ratings \$7.99	 <b>Motion FX</b> Entertainment ★★★★★ 435 Ratings FREE	 <b>Numbers</b> Productivity ★★★★★ 102 Ratings \$19.99
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**Apps Starter Kit**