The great slowdown:

How to make your
Mac faster & more
productive

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My Mac normally

When I'm trying to show my friends a video

I don't wanna run

Intro

All Macs begin to slow down with age — MacBook Pro, iMac, it doesn't matter. Performing several heavy tasks at a time, your Mac may get slower, and it's okay. Although, when you're facing unresponsive windows and slow load time more often these days, your Mac definitely needs a boost. In this handy ebook, we'll explain why your Mac gets slow and tell you what you can do to fix it.
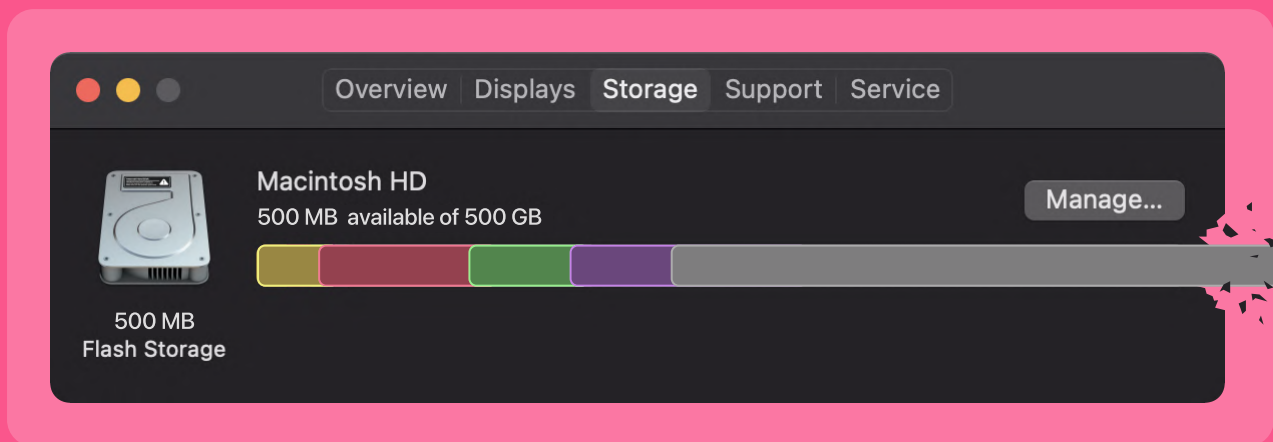
The true cost of a slow Mac

It's been calculated that slow computers reduce our productivity at the rate of 5.5 working days per year per employee. Somebody with a slow Mac is losing almost a week-long vacation!

How much time do we waste on slow computers?
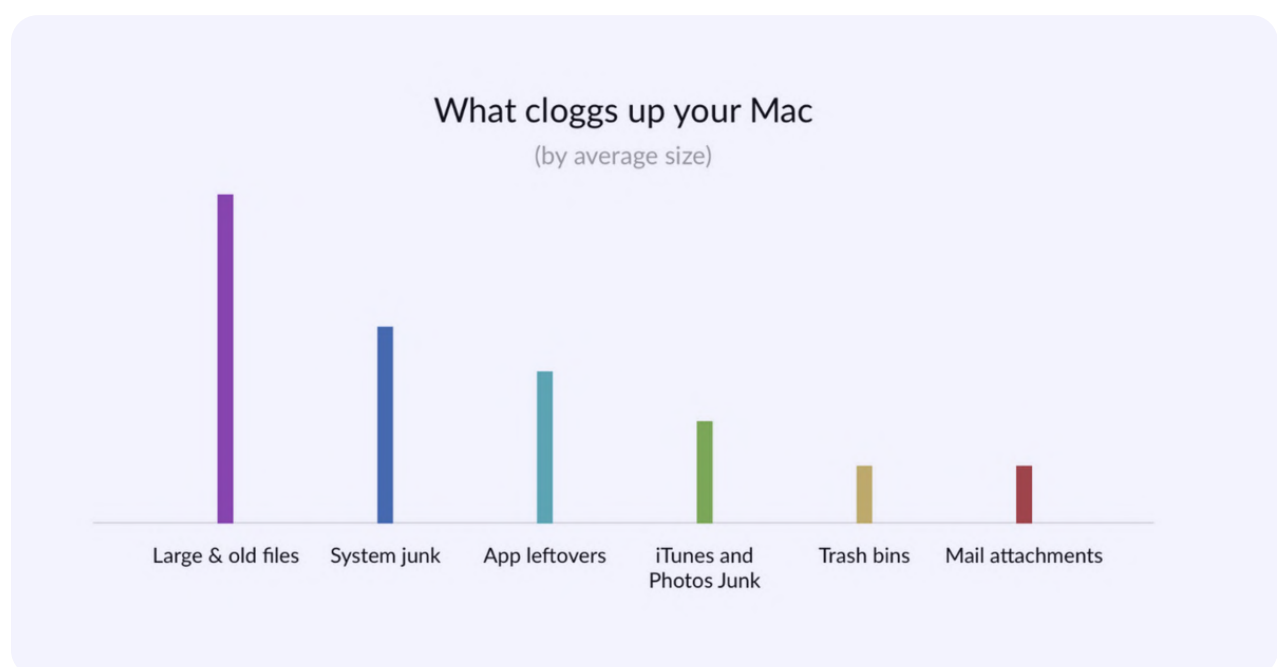
5.5

days per year
per employee

Chapter 1

Freedom to your hard drive!

Nothing slows down a Mac more than having too much on your hard drive. If you can lighten the load on your Mac, you're sure to see an increase in speed. In this chapter, we're going to tell you how to clean up your Mac and remove files that are slowing down your machine.

1. Clean up your hard drive

Unfortunately, this isn't as easy as it sounds. Cleaning up old movie files, organizing your Desktop, and searching your Mac for old files is the easy part.

What cloggs up your Mac
(by average size)

| Large & old files | System junk | App leftovers | iTunes and Photos Junk | Trash bins | Mail attachments |

However, the hard part is cleaning up your system and figuring out all the stuff that can be safely removed for more space. The best option is to use a Mac cleanup tool, like CleanMyMac X — it knows what to clean and where to clean and is incredibly safe to use. It removes caches, logs, language packs, and more to help you speed up your Mac — Click here to download it free!

2. Optimize your storage

Apple developers have already anticipated the problem with slow-running Macs. You can easily find their helpful recommendations on managing and optimizing your Mac's storage:

1. Click the Apple menu and select About This Mac.
2. Here choose the Storage tab and select Manage.
3. In the new window that opens, you will see some suggestions.
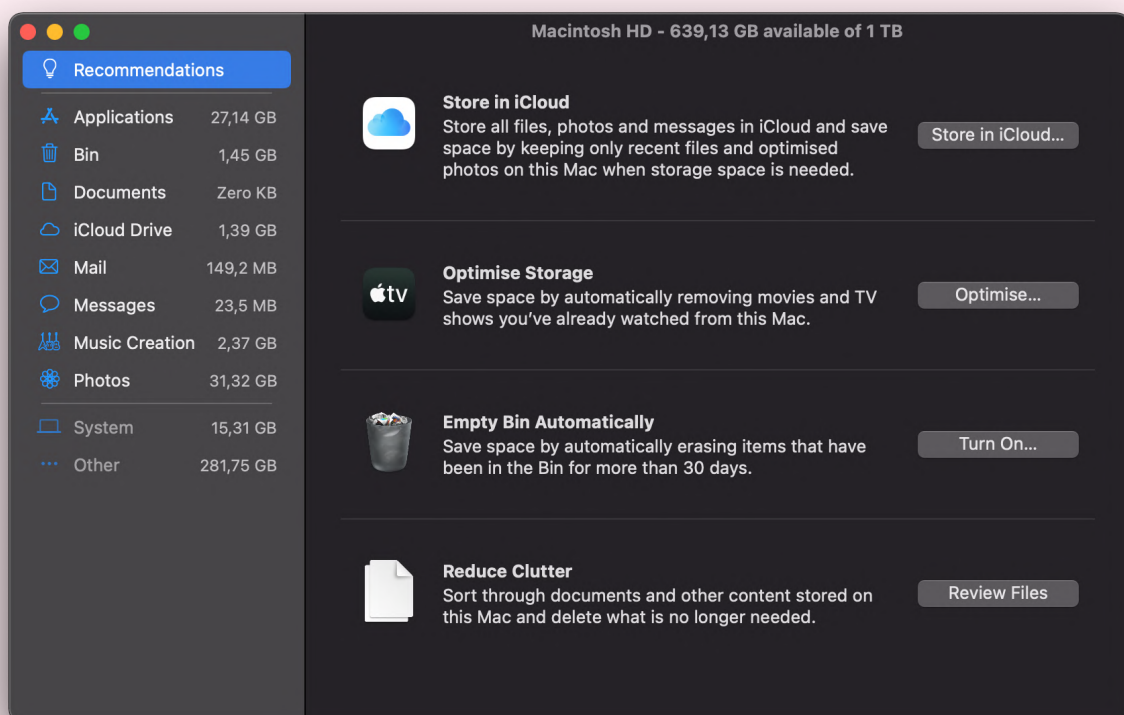
👉 You can transfer your files and data to iCloud to save up some space on your Mac. Just click **Store in iCloud** and choose files you want to save to iCloud storage.

👉 Another helpful tip is to optimize storage on your Mac by removing large files such as Apple TV films and TV shows.

👉 To make sure your Trash is not cluttered with old junk, you can set up **Empty Trash Automatically**.

👉 Finally, give a swift look at your documents and remove the items that are piling up — just click **Review Files** to do that.

3. Trim down cache files on your slow Mac

😱

**User caches make up for about
70% of junk on your Mac**

Cache files come in many flavors: system cache, user cache, app-generated caches, and more. User caches (tied to your user account) make up for about 70% of junk on your Mac. The manual deletion method involves a bit of clicking and typing. So here you are.

1. Open Finder and click "Go to Folder" in the Go menu.
2. Type in ~/Library/Caches and press Enter
3. Locate a cache folder tree.
4. Go into each folder and delete its contents.
5. Empty the Trash.

💡 It's not recommended to remove the folders themselves, but only their insides.

For a bulletproof solution, you can clean out caches with CleanMyMac X - it was made just for this purpose, though it has lots of other uses. [Download CleanMyMac X for free](), install it, and click Smart Scan. From there, you will be able to delete all types of cache and temporary files.

4. Declutter your desktop

If you use your desktop as a file dump, it's high time for a cleanup. Not many people know this, but every desktop icon is, in fact, a little active window that your macOS has to render and process. If there are myriads of icons, no wonder your Mac is slow.

To make your Mac run faster, organize files on your desktop into separate folders. Right-click on your desktop and select Use Stacks. Then, you can move them to another location. Cleaning the desktop isn't the funniest job in the world, but it does pay off in terms of adding speed to your Mac.

5. Uninstall unused apps

As your Mac may be behaving slowly due to storage issues, it's good to check whether you have some free space left. Unused apps are the biggest space-wasters. All of us download applications that seem helpful and exciting at first but turn to clutter up our disk instead of being used frequently.

How many apps do we really need?

According to The Verge, an average person spends in apps **4.2** hours of their day. Given it's only **9** apps on average that we use every day, should we consider deleting the rest of the apps we don't use?

So, it's time to get rid of those apps or at least honestly tell yourself which ones you don't use anymore.

1. Go to Finder > Applications.
2. You will see all applications installed on your Mac. Organize the list by size to reveal the largest apps.
3. Right-click the app and select Move to Trash.

When you delete the apps, the chances are that some leftover files will remain on your Mac. That's why it's a good idea to clean your machine of such remnants with a dedicated tool like CleanMyMac X. Its Uninstaller module shows how many apps you have and gathers all leftovers in one tab – so you can quickly delete them.
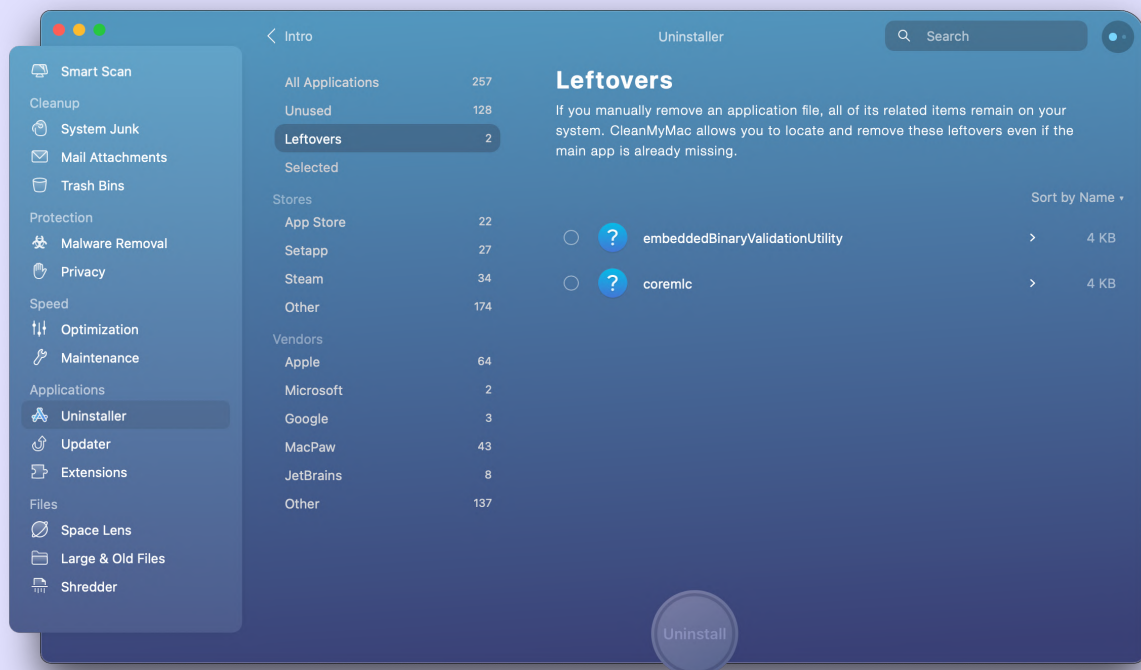
6. Clean up Downloads and Trash folders

There are two places that usually become "data dumps" on anybody's Mac. That's **Downloads** and **Trash** folders. As an outcome, your drive space shrinks, and performance drops.

👉 Right-click the Trash icon and choose Empty Trash. Now, go to your Downloads and sort files by size. There you'll probably encounter things you hardly remember downloading, like old movies or photo albums.

👉 If you want to identify large and old files on your Mac quickly, there is no better way to do that than with [CleanMyMac X](#). Its Large & Old Files module shows you the largest files and lets you delete them straight away.
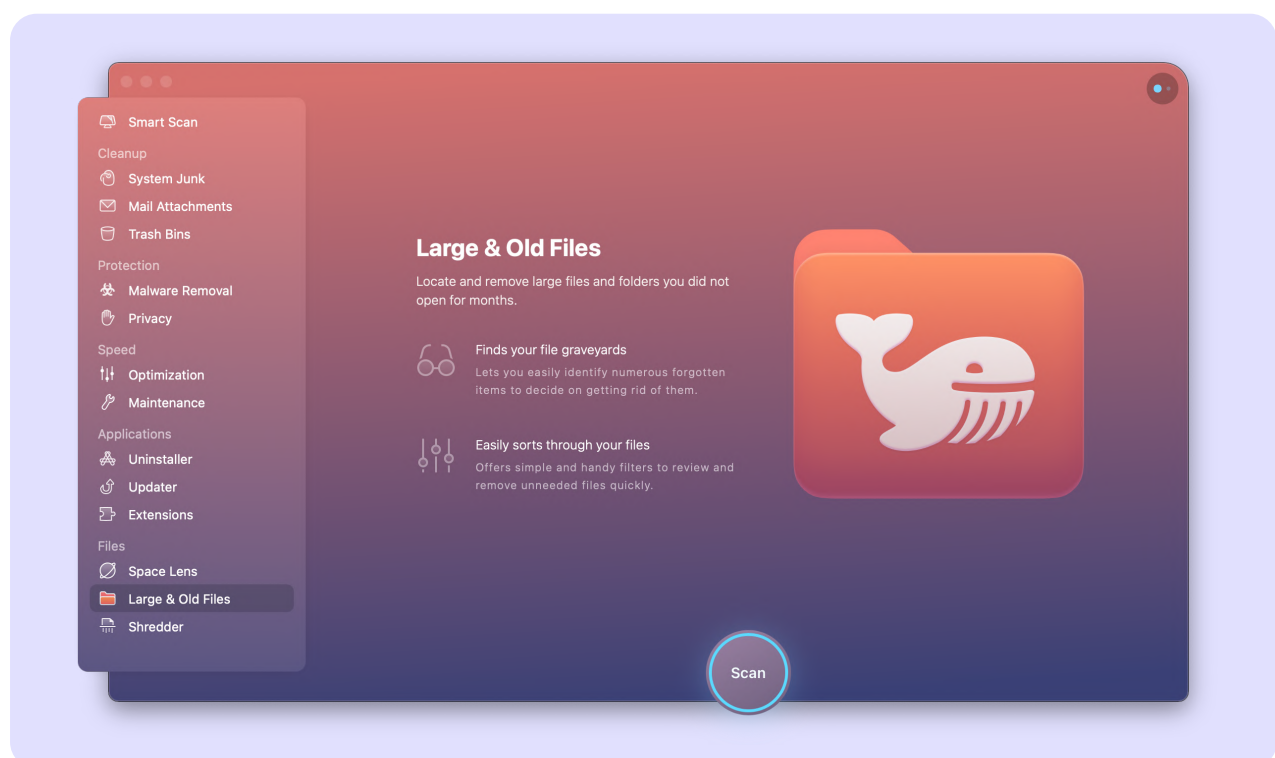
7. Move your pics to an external drive

How many gigabytes of photos are there on your drive? 5 GB, 10 GB, have any idea? That's exactly the point. We seldom bother to check how many photos we have collected over the years. In any case, there will be more than you expect. This results in a lagging computer because your hard drive space is quickly vanishing.

How to organize your pictures

When naming folders, use the **yyyyMMdd** format.

This way, when you sort items by name, you'll see a nice chronological view.

So, here's how to get you a few gigabytes of extra space and put your photo library in order:

1. Quit Photos.
2. Go to the external drive in the Finder to choose a new storage place.
3. In a new Finder window, locate your current Photos library. It is usually located in Users > [username] > Pictures.
4. Drag and drop your library to its new destination.

After your library is copied and you've checked that it opens from the new destination, you may delete your current library to save disk space.

Key insights from Chapter 1

🤓 Cluttered hard drive = slow Mac

✅ Optimize your storage: Apple menu > About This Mac > Storage > Manage

💻 Use Stacks to reduce clutter on your Desktop

👍 Uninstall unused apps: Finder > Applications
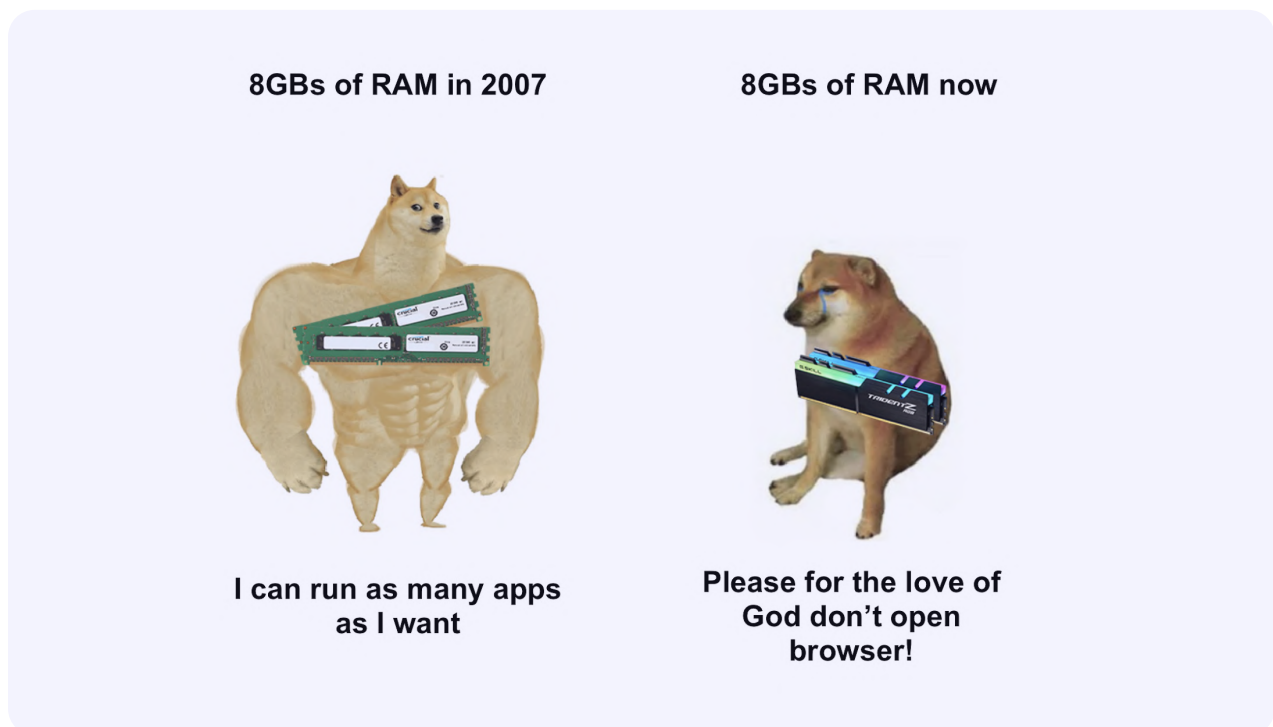
✨ Use [CleanMyMac X](#) for a full Mac declutter

Chapter 2

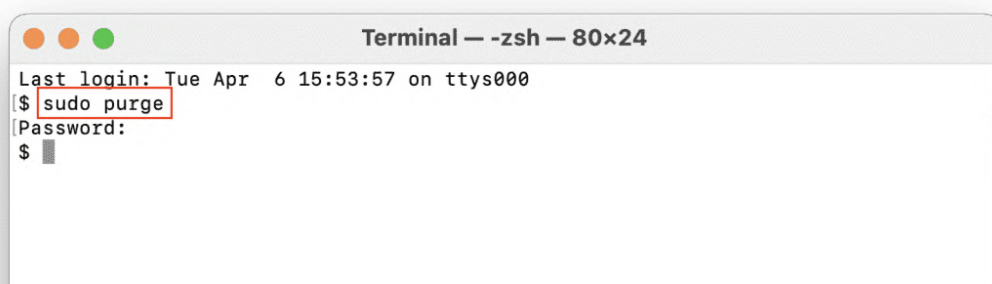# Your Mac skipped its morning coffee? Here's how to speed it up

1. Free up RAM

RAM stands for Random Access Memory. This memory is like fuel for all your apps. That is the reason you often get the "Your system is out of application memory" message.

A native macOS tool, Terminal has a special command to release your available RAM.

1. Go to Applications > Utilities > Terminal.

2. Now copy-paste the following command into the Terminal window: sudo purge

3. Enter your user password to confirm.

4. Hopefully, you'll immediately see the results.

Tip

A safer option is to free up RAM using **CleanMyMac X's Menu App**. It shows you how heavily your RAM is loaded and helps you free it up with just one button click.
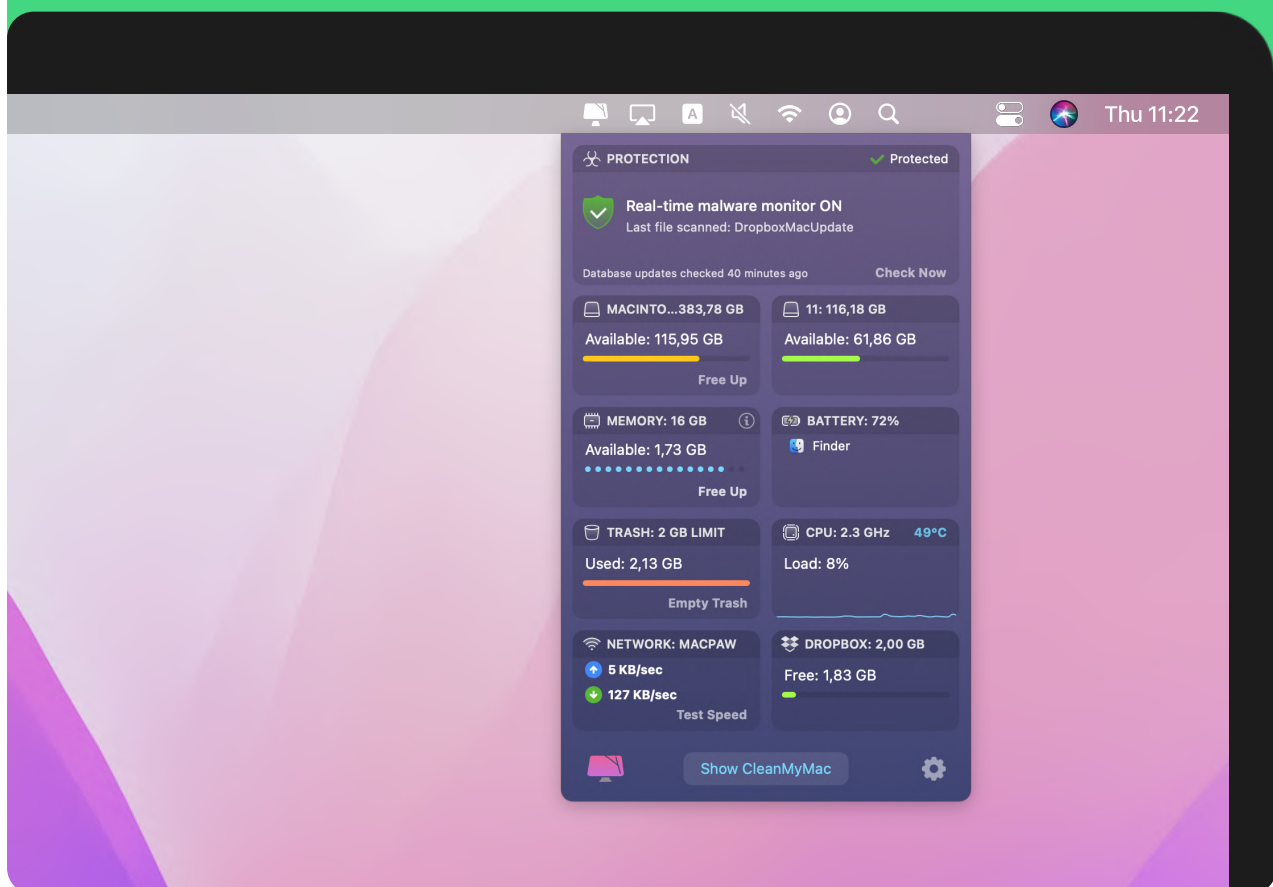
2. Quit background apps

When you've got too much running in the background, your Mac can't even handle simple tasks.

To quickly see the list of all active apps, you can use the Force Quit menu. Just press **Option-Command-Esc** to launch it and select the app or apps that you want to quit. Then press the Force Quit button — your Mac should get quicker now!

⌥
option

⌘
command

esc
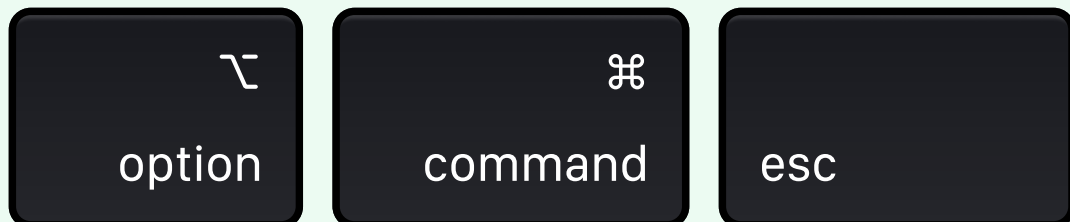
Why does Chrome use so much memory?

In a parallel test versus Safari, Chrome browser showed 10x more "memory utilization." The test was performed on a brand new macOS installation.

Apparently, Chrome is loading much more scripts in the background than other popular browsers. As AppleInsider explains the experiment, the average RAM usage for Chrome for a single open Twitter tab was 730 MB. Meanwhile, Safari used just 73 MB.

3. Manage your startup items

When you start your Mac, a lot of things load up in the background. Not only do they slow down your startup, but they continue to do so the whole time you're on your Mac.

💡 Give your Mac a clean start and make macOS run faster. CleanMyMac X lets you turn off all login items and startup agents — just tick off the items you want to disable and hit the Perform button. [Download CleanMyMac X here](#) and get a faster Mac in a couple of minutes.

4. Update your macOS

Your Mac's OS is extremely important to how it performs. An older OS typically runs slower — that's why Apple releases new macOS every year or so.

Having the latest macOS version is good practice (the latest version right now is [macOS Big Sur](#)) — think of it as new software that makes your Mac run more smoothly. So, to update your macOS and speed up your Mac, go to the Apple menu and click About This Mac. Then click Software Update. If a new version is available, update the software, and you're good to go!

Update your Mac:

Apple menu 🍏 → About This Mac → Software Update

If, for some reason, your Mac is running slow after the macOS Big Sur update, don't panic. It could happen that disk permissions are broken. You can repair them with CleanMyMac X. [Download](#) the app and go to the Maintenance tab, click "Repair Disk Permissions."

5. Remove browser extensions

Most of us use our Macs online 90% of the time. In other words, if your browser is slow, your Mac will be slow too. Even the fastest machine can be dragged down by hundreds of opened tabs and extensions.

A quick way to remove browser extensions

Chrome: chrome://extensions/

Safari: Command-Comma ➡️ Extensions

The rule of 9 tabs

To make your Mac run faster while in the browser, minimize the number of opened tabs. Some programmers prefer having no more than 9 open tabs at a time. This way, you won't overload the browser, and the title for each tab will be perfectly visible.

6. Disable your biggest memory-hoggers

If your Mac's been particularly laggy, there could be some energy-draining app wasting its resources. CleanMyMac X identifies such programs and lets you quit them to boost your Mac's efficiency.

1. Launch CleanMyMac X ([download it here](#) if you don't have it).
2. Click the Optimization tab.
3. Go to Heavy Consumers and quit memory-hogging apps.
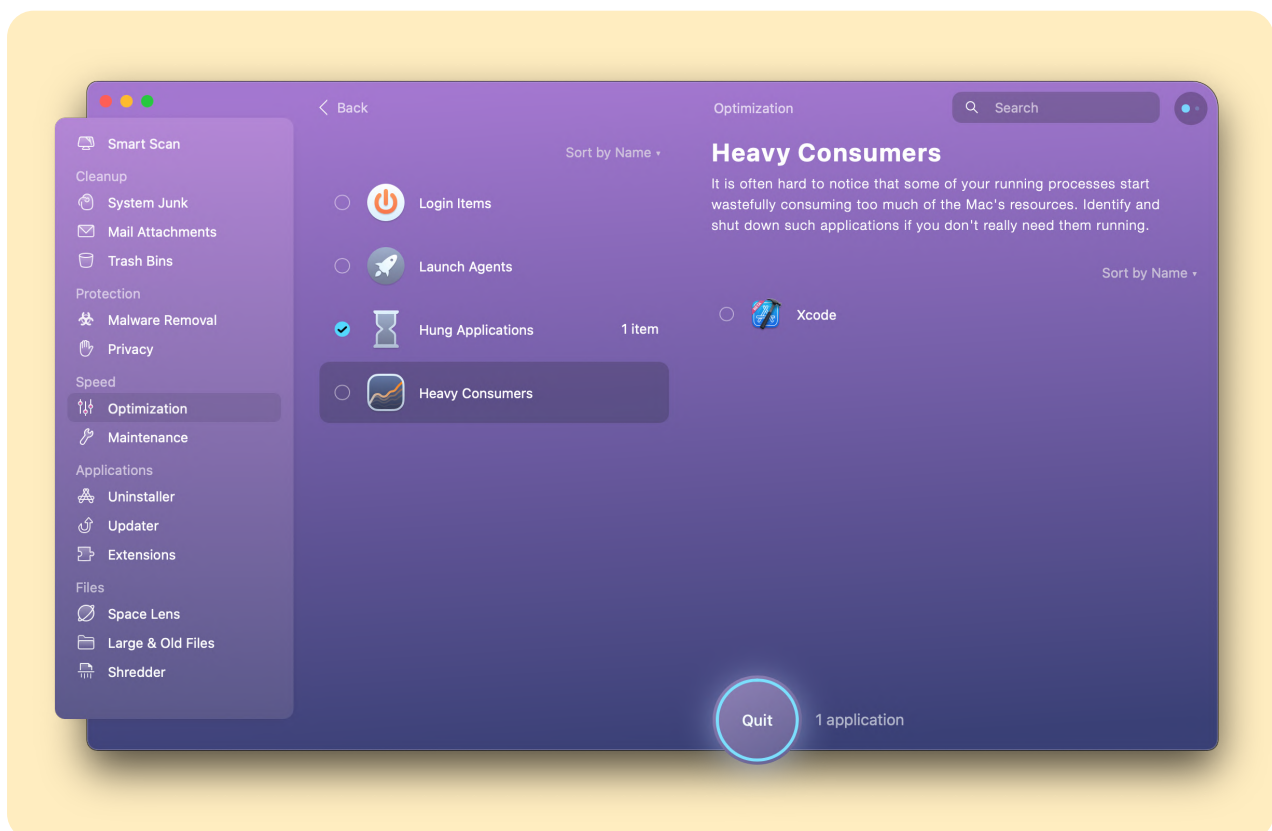
7. Merge Finder windows

This lesser-known trick has been hiding in plain sight and will soon become your best weapon against window overload. **"Merge All Windows"** works for Finder as well as Preview. You can find it inside the Window menu in the upper bar.
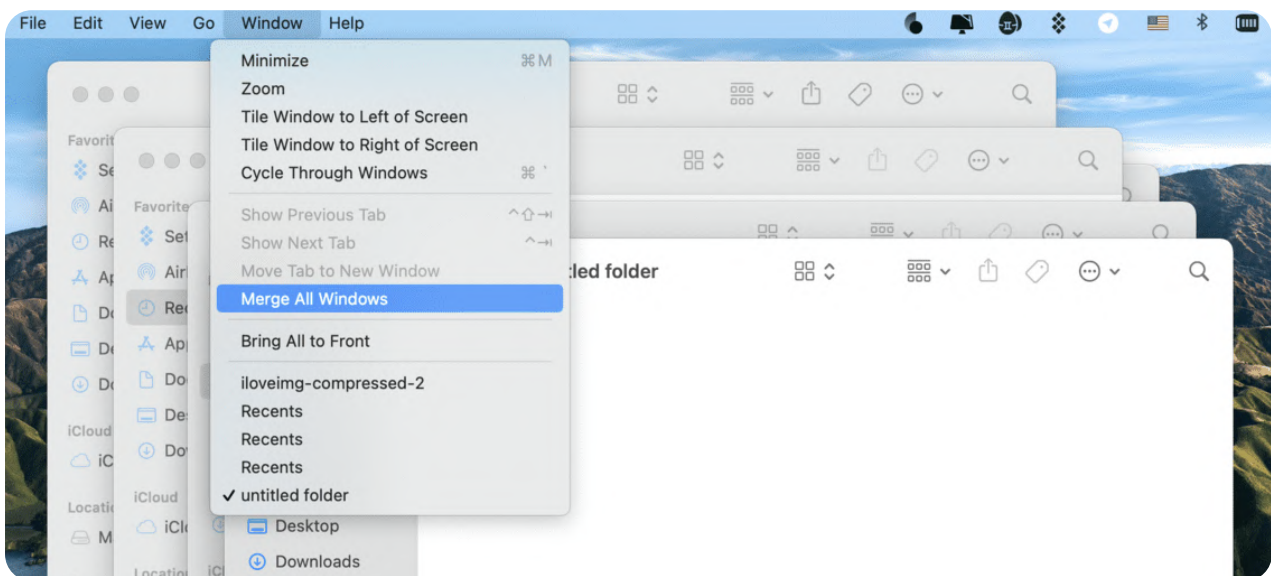

1. Click Finder
2. Click Window
3. Select "Merge All Windows"

See what happened? All your scattered windows joined together in one. From there, you can close them one by one, thus saving your precious memory resources.

Key insights from Chapter 2

🗯️ To make your Mac faster, give it some space to breathe

💡 Use sudo purge command in Terminal to free up RAM

✅ Disable background apps: Option-Command-Esc

👌 Merge Finder Windows: Finder > Window > Merge All Windows

💫 Disable heavy memory consumers with CleanMyMac X
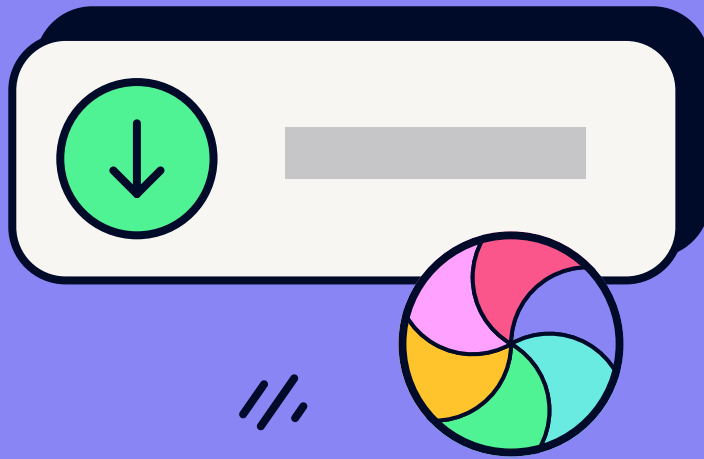
Chapter 3

Double your Mac's speed with these 5 productivity hacks

Praising Macs for their design, simplicity, and security, we often overlook how functional they are. There are so many features, shortcuts, and tricks that, once understood, can simplify your life and make using Mac even more fun. Are you excited to learn those? Then here are the top 5 amazing Mac hacks that will change your life.

And hey, did you know that:

DID YOU KNOW:

According to one IBM study, Mac users are 22% more productive than Windows users

1. Add to your reading list

Are you one of those people that keep over 50 browser tabs opened just in case? If so, you need to try Safari's Reading List feature. Press **Shift-Command-D** to add the page to the Reading List. You can now open your article by clicking the Sidebar button and then the Reading List button.
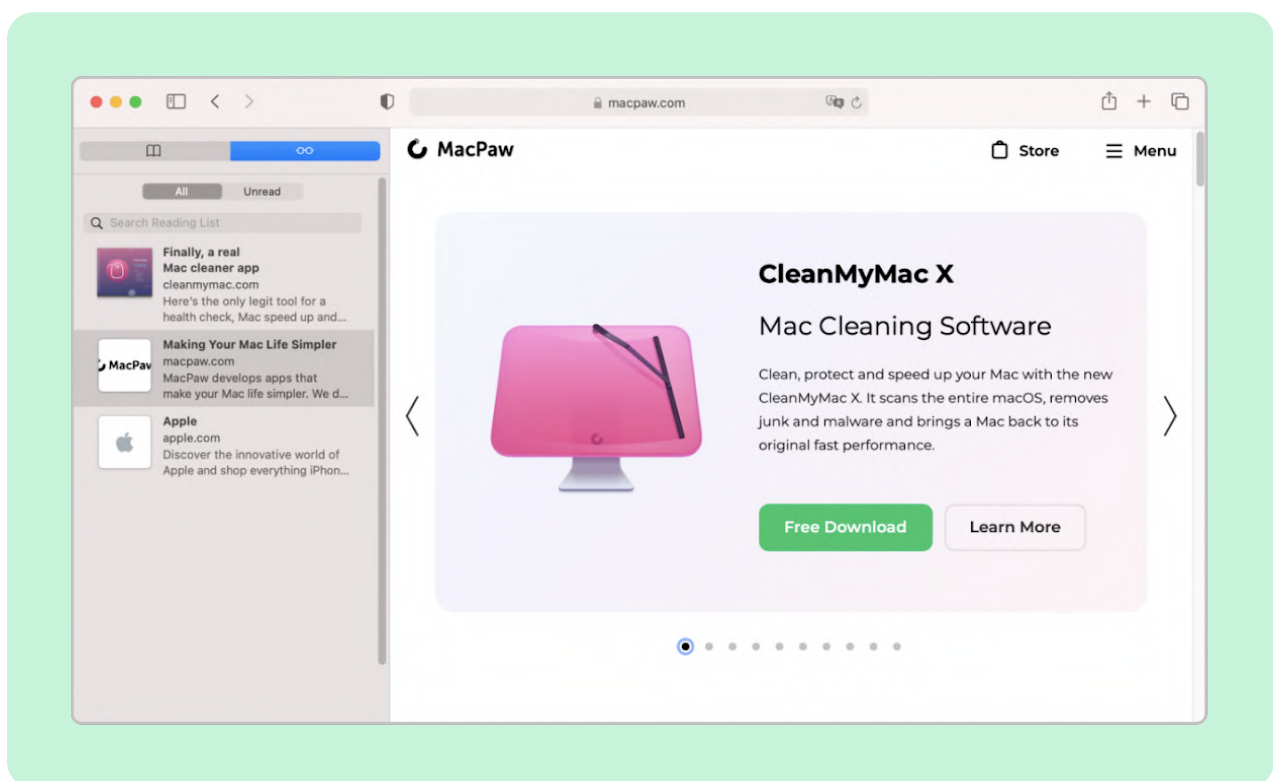
The best thing is you can save a page to read when you're offline: just Control-click the page in the Sidebar and choose Save Offline. Now you can read your articles anywhere without the need to connect to the internet.

2. Rename multiple files at once

If you're dealing with lots of files and need to create structure out of the disorganized mess, renaming all your files at once is the one trick to learn. First, highlight all the files you want to rename: Shift-click all the items to be renamed. Then Control-click and choose Rename. In the pop-up menu below Rename Finder Items, select Format. Next, choose a name format and click Rename.
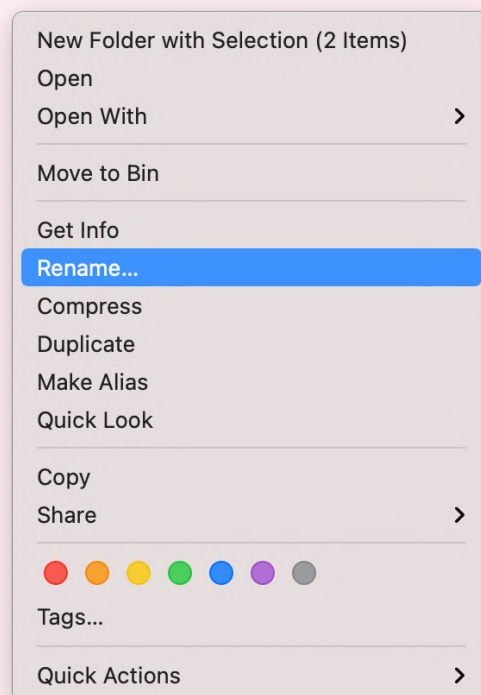
Now your files look much more organized!

3. Turn your desktop folders into emojis

If you're looking for a fun way to personalize your Mac, this hack will do the trick. Regular blue folders might seem a bit dull, so why don't you turn them into emojis? Here's how to do that:

1. Search for the emoji you'd like to use in Google.
2. Download the image and then open it.
3. Click the markup icon and then click and drag a box around the emoji.
4. Press Command-C to copy the selected area.
5. Go back to your folder and right-click it.
6. Choose Get Info.
7. Double-click the blue folder icon and then press Command-V.

🌹 work 💖 photo 🌙 downloads

The emoji icon should appear. Voila! Now your desktop looks a bit brighter.

Bonus hack

See the largest folders

When your Mac runs out of free space, it's difficult to tell what exactly may take up the most storage. Sometimes, it's downloads; sometimes, it's the apps or those unknown files that fall into the "Other" storage category.

One quick way to see what's hiding on your Mac's drive is to use CleanMyMac X. Its Large & Old Files module scans your storage and uncovers large files and folders you forgot existed. Then, you can safely remove them to save space on your Mac. To try out all CleanMyMac X features, **download the free version here**.
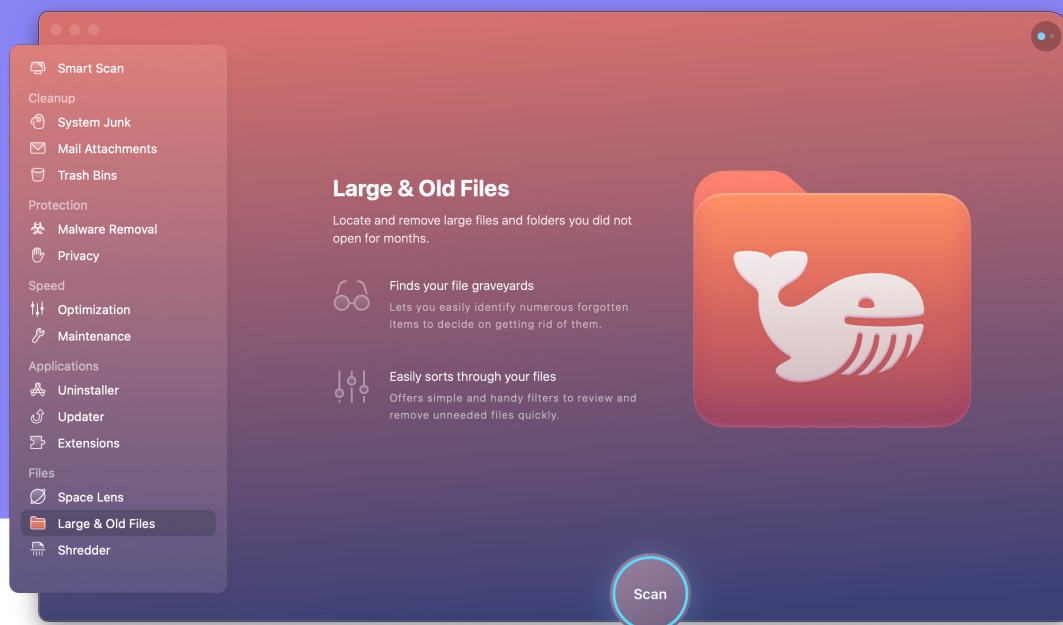
4. Use Split View

The Split View feature screams multitasking. Although we don't advise you to multitask, we do insist on trying the Split View. It will divide your screen, letting you use two apps without manually moving and resizing windows.

1. Go to the upper left window corner and click and hold the green full-screen icon.
2. Choose "Tile Window to Left of Screen." The app window will automatically resize and move to the left side.
3. You will see the other app on the right side of your screen.
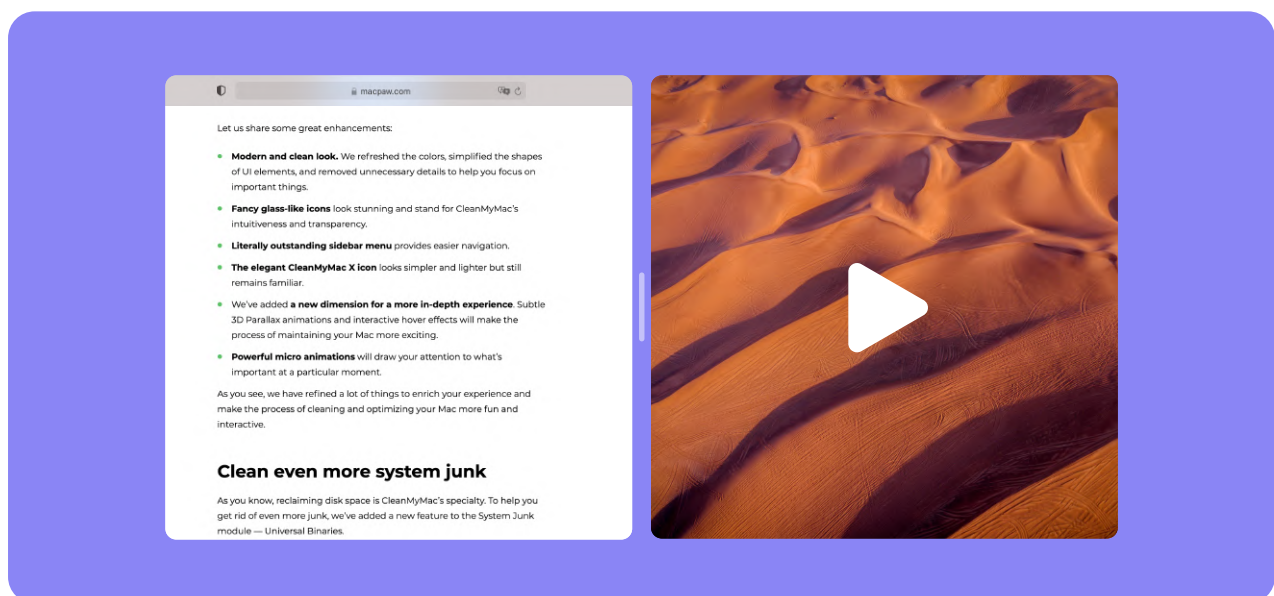
Now, you can use both windows simultaneously.

5. Find the Wi-Fi password for your other devices

Wi-Fi passwords always get lost and forgotten. The great news is, you can recover your password on a Mac — and you don't even need a third-party app for that. Apple Keychain remembers all the passwords you have ever entered and can help you recover the one you need.

1. Go to Finder > Applications > Utilities.
2. Open Keychain Access.
3. Enter your network's name in the search field and press Return.
4. Once Keychain finds the entry, double-click it.
5. Check the box next to "Show password."
6. Enter your login info to confirm.
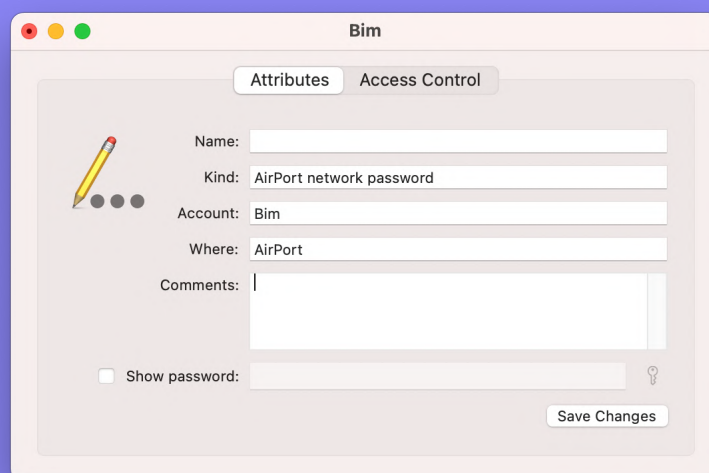
Your network password should appear. The next time you need to find that secret combination that always slips your mind, Keychain Access is your best friend.

Key insights from Chapter 3

📖 Add a page to Reading List in Safari: Shift-Command-D

♣ Rename multiple files at once: Shift-click files > Control-click > Rename

👀 Use the "Split View" feature to master multitasking

🔍 Identify the largest folders on your Mac using CleanMyMac X

3 culprits that slow down your Mac

Sometimes Macs get slow, and although it's frustrating, there are many ways to fix it and tune up your Mac for out-of-the-box performance. To sum up, here are the three things to check if your Mac's been slowing down:

1. Lack of free hard drive space
2. Heavy memory consumers
3. Too many browser tabs

Hopefully, your Mac's running much faster now! And for all other issues, there's **CleanMyMac X** 😉