



News You Can Use

NEWS

I will be out of town **July 9-16.**

Naturally, you can't *plan* computer failures, but keep these dates in mind for non-emergency work.

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QUICK TIPS

IPHOTO: TRY FILM ROLLS

Each time you import photos (either directly from the camera, or by dragging a file into the iPhoto window), iPhoto creates a new *film roll*.

A film roll is just a way to separate each group of photos from the rest. To enable this view, go to the **View** menu and choose **Film Rolls**. Now you'll see a roll marker between groups of photos.

You can click on the triangle to the left of the roll name; doing so will hide or show the entire roll. This helps reduce visual clutter.

You can also name and date the roll, by typing in the *information panel* at the lower left of the main window.

WAKE UP

When you wake your computer, it can take about 15 seconds to establish the the network connection.

If you immediately try to fetch email or load a web page, you may get a failure message.

Wait 15 seconds after wake-up and this won't happen.

Minor Fixes You Can Safely Do Yourself _____ X

Home Surgery 101

Repairing File Permissions

In OS X, almost all system files and programs have required *permissions* and *file ownership* that must be correct, or the system can exhibit random problems. These problems might be program crashes, inability to launch certain programs, or other, less obvious things. Sometimes the cause is an incorrect permission setting; how these settings become wrong is a mystery, but it happens occasionally.

Apple's *Disk Utility* program (in `/Applications/Utilities`) can verify and repair these file permissions. You may repair permissions at any time; doing so will not cause any problem, nor will there be any problem running a repair when nothing is wrong. It's also a good practice to run a repair before and after you install a software update.

Launch Disk Utility. In the left panel, highlight the name of your hard disk with a single click. In the right panel, click on *Repair Disk Permissions*. The process will run for several minutes, showing a list of all files it's fixing. When it's done, you can quit the program. That's it.

High-Speed Internet Failure

You may occasionally find that your high-speed Internet connection isn't working: you'll get an email error message or a "can't find server" error in a web browser. (First see "Wake Up" at the left.)

Most TV cable and telephone lines are on utility poles, susceptible to disturbance from weather, falling trees, and linemen working up there. Even a momentary cable outage can jam up the cable modem, so that your Internet connection fails.

The solution is to restart the cable modem. Here on Park Hill, I find I have to do this a few times a year. On Lodge Hill, however, some people have to restart several times during the winter.

1. Turn off your router or wireless base station if you have one. Just pull out the little power connector; don't remove other cables.
2. Turn off the cable or DSL modem the same way. Wait ten seconds.
3. Now reinsert the power plug for the cable/DSL modem.

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THE FINE PRINT**THE PRICE LIST****Standard Rate** is \$45/hr.**Apple Remote Desktop** help is billed at the reduced rate of \$35/hr.**Phone support** is *free*, except if the call runs to a half hour. Then it's billed at the further-reduced rate of \$25/hr.**Email support** is always free. Ask your questions and you'll get an answer, usually within a few hours.**Invoices** are mailed on the first of each month, covering charges incurred during the prior month. (So, for example, you'll be billed on May 1st for work done in April.)**New Clients** receive a one-time half hour discount !**WHAT'S IMPORTANT****Solving your problem** the *right* way, as much as humanly possible.**Not making things worse.** Some support folks try to fix one problem and end up creating new ones. Where does that leave you?**Keeping your costs down.** It's more important to provide good service than to squeeze out a few more bucks. When you see a "comp" item on an invoice, it's my way of helping to keep your costs low.

Wait a full minute.

4. Reinsert the power plug for the router/base station. Wait another minute. (Use caution to avoid mixing power cables!)
5. If you're running OS X, you should be ready to go without restarting the computer. If you're using MacOS 9 or an earlier version, restart the computer.

A New Cat? _____ X**My Tiger Is Still In Its Cage**

I have a copy of MacOS X 10.4.0 "Tiger," but I haven't yet taken the plunge to upgrade; I'm still running 10.3.6. Why?

- Most clients are running 10.3.x Panther, so it's easy for me to follow along on my computer as I answer a telephone question. If I were running Tiger, my computer would look different.
- Having lived on the "bleeding edge" for my years at Apple, I'm always wary of upgrades. A colleague used to say "There are two new features I really want, but am I prepared to lose *three* things I used to like?"
- Some applications need updates for Tiger. I'm still collecting the updated versions to have them ready.

Do This, Do That, Don't Do This, Don't Do That _____ X**Software Update Tips**

I generally advise everyone to leave *Software Update* set to manual mode, to avoid having updates automatically applied. (Go to System Preferences:Software Update to make the setting.)

When a new update appears, there are often minor problems that crop up once the world begins trying it for the first time. I like to know what to expect *before* finding it out on my computer. Macfixit.com typically discusses these unexpected problems. (Often, however, only a handful of users experience a problem. If the problem were widespread, then Apple would quickly provide a fix.) I like to wait to see if this is the case.

Applying a bunch of updates at once can cause problems. I prefer to apply them in small groups whenever possible. Which groups? Well, that takes some educated guesswork. Updates that don't require a restart are usually safe to apply together. Those that require a restart are often best applied separately.

Another problem used to occur when people skipped minor OS versions and "jumped" ahead. For example, if you updated from 10.3.1 to 10.3.4, you were skipping .2 and .3 and could have problems. Apple provides "combo updaters" which avoid this problem, but the combo is a large download. When I update a client system, I always apply a combo updater, just to be safe.

When in doubt, call or email for advice.