

October 21, 2018, Beginners/Mac Basics SIG

A Few Mac Tips, Part 2

Note: This discussion is based on MacOS, 10.13.6 (High Sierra). Some illustrations may differ when using other versions of macOS or OS X. Illustrations are from screenshots on my iMac.

As I mentioned in my previous presentation (*A Few Mac Tips, Part 1*), the next few presentations will discuss a variety of **Mac Tips** that are some of my favorites.

Where Did I Save That File?

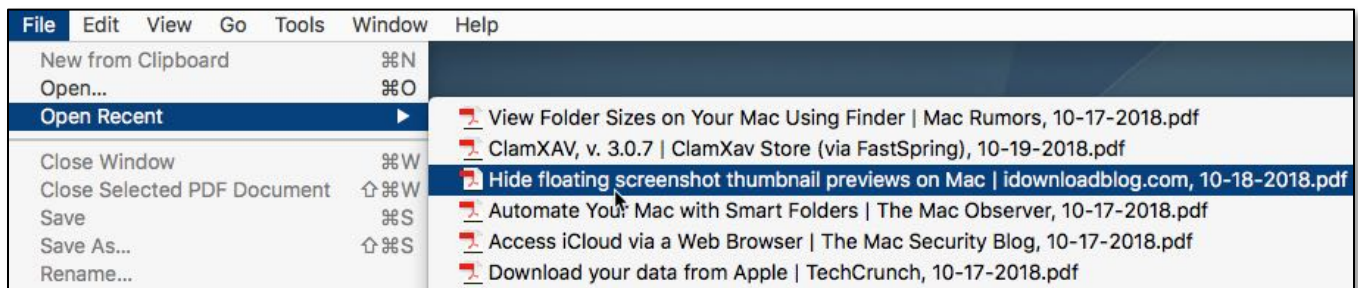
Did you ever saved a file and then forgot where you saved it? 🤔 I sure have. So, how can you find it? Here are four ways:

1. App's Last Saved Location. Apps tend to save new files to the location where the last one was saved. So, if you know which app that you used and where it saved the last file, try looking there first.

2. Application > Open Recent. If you remember which application that you used when you saved the file (or happen to still be in the app), look under the **File** menu for the **Open Recent** menu item.

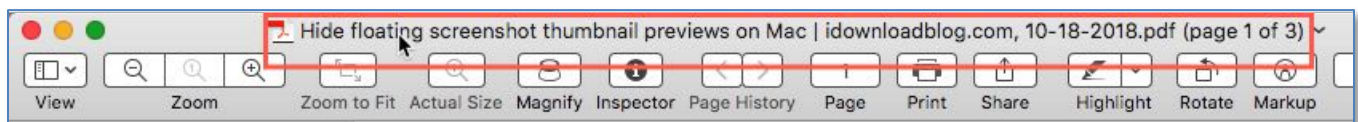
If saved recently enough, chances are that your file will still show up under the pop-up list when you select **Open Recent**.

Select your file from the list to open it. Here's an example from the Preview app:



Preview App: File > Open Recent

Once you have the file open, look at the top of its window for the filename, which will also be preceded by a small icon used by its application.



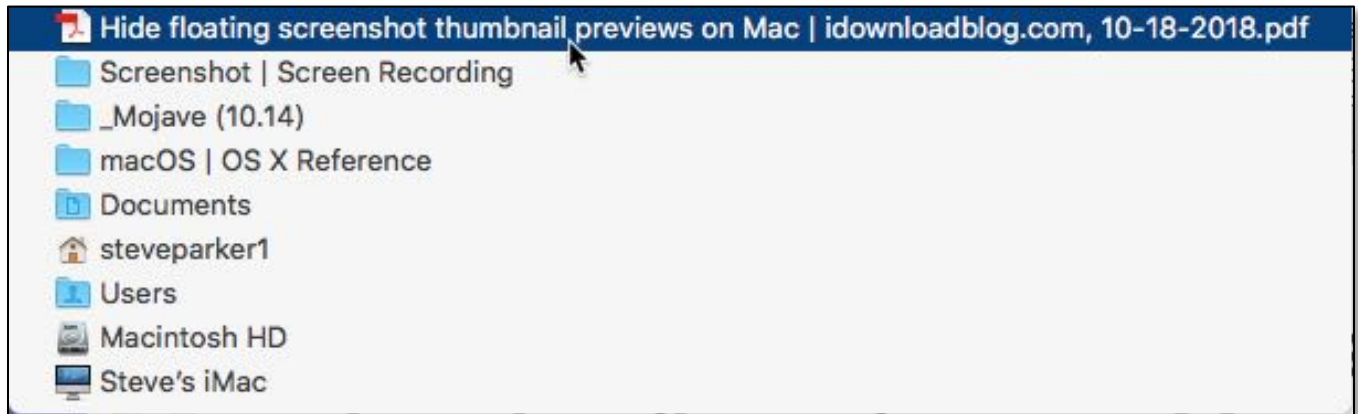
Preview App: Locate the Filename or its Icon

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Now Right-Click (Control-Click) on the filename or its icon and take a look at the pop-up list:



Preview App – Filename Pop-up List (After Right-, Control-Click)

The pop-up list provides a graphical display of the file's location by showing all the folders in the path from the file's location all the way back to the main drive on your computer.

In the case of the selected file on my iMac, I have the file stored deep in the file structure on my Mac:

Filename > Screenshot | Screen Recording > _Mojave (10.14) ... Macintosh HD > Steve's iMac

Put another way, my file (*Hide floating screenshot thumbnail previews on Mac | idownloadblog.com, 10-18-2018*) is located:

- in the **Screenshot | Screen Recording** folder,
- which is located in the **_Mojave (10.14)** folder,
- which is located in the **macOS | OSX Reference** folder,
- which is located in the **Documents** folder,
- which is located in the **steveparker1** folder (my home folder),
- which is located in the **Users** folder,
- which is located on the **Macintosh HD**,
- which is found on **Steve's iMac**

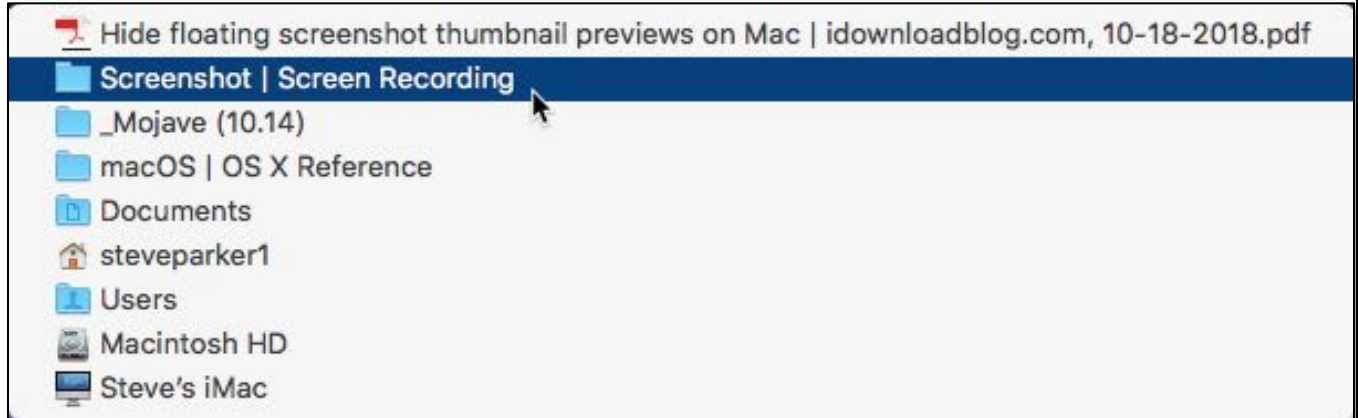
Having this file path information, I can now use the **Finder** to go to my **Screenshot | Screen Recording** folder to find my file.

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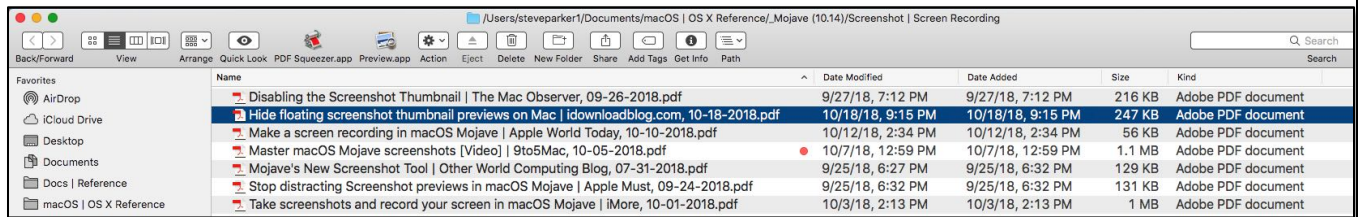
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Tip: A quick way to go the desired folder (and skip using the Finder first) is to again Right-Click (Control-Click) on the filename or its icon and select the folder containing the file (the next icon after the file) from the pop-up list:



Preview App – Select Folder From the Filename Pop-up List (After Right-, Control-Click)

A new Finder window will open with the contents of the selected folder with the file highlighted:



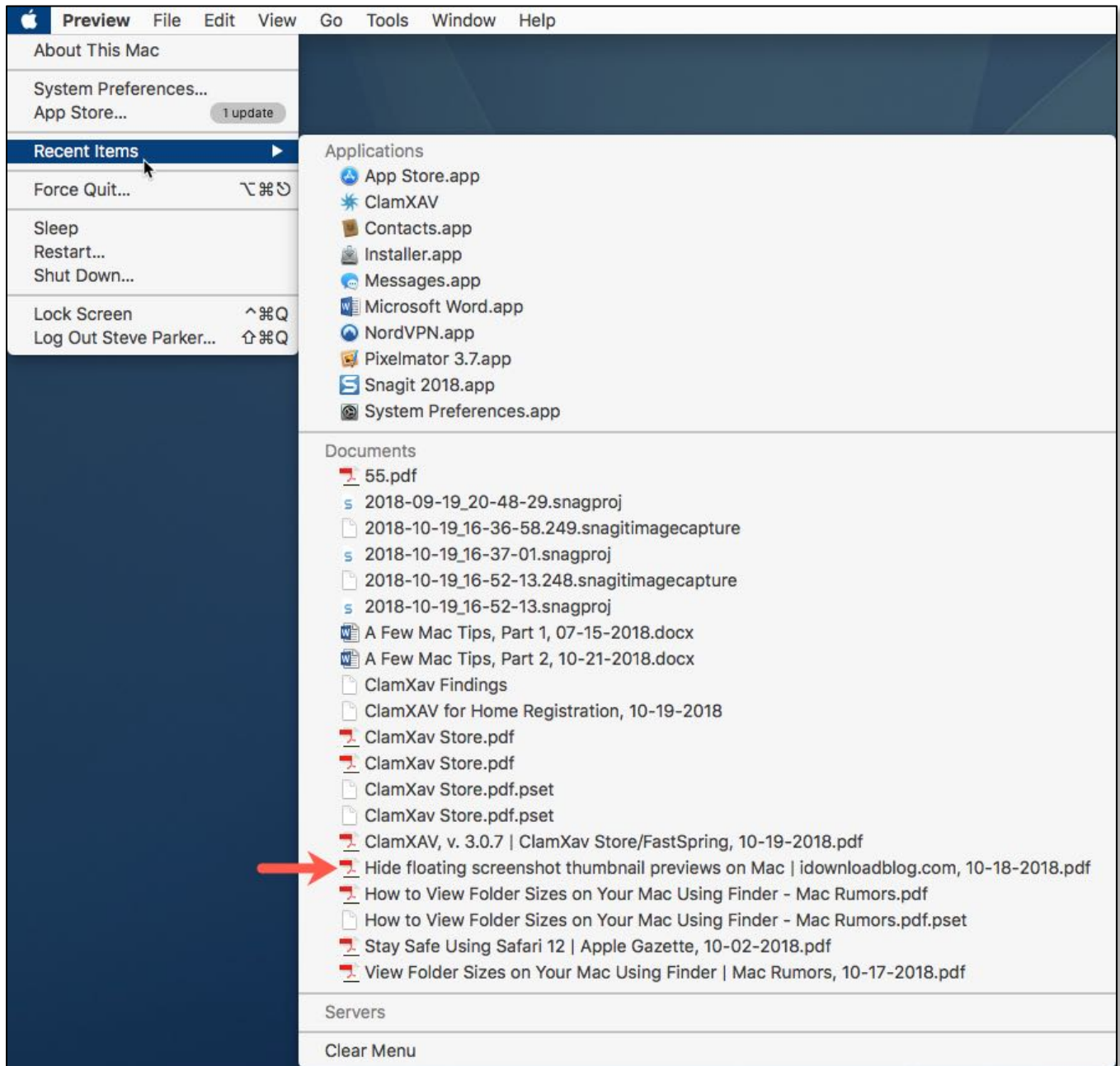
Finder Window of Selected Folder (With the File Highlighted)

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3. 🍏 Menu > Open Recent. Another way to locate your file is to go to the 🍏 menu and select the **Recent Items** menu item:



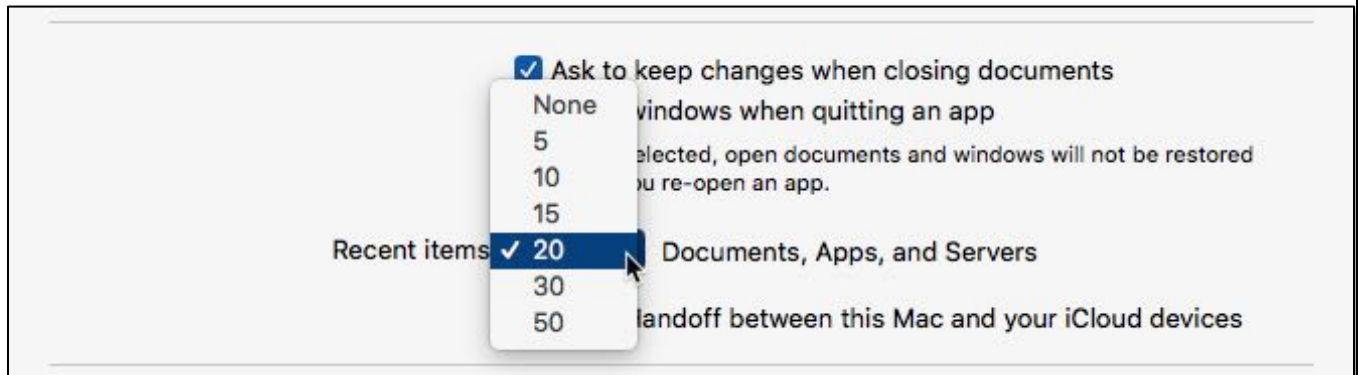
🍏 Menu > Open Recent

Notice that the Recent Items pop-up list shows recent Applications, Documents, recent Servers. There's my document (marked with a ➡).

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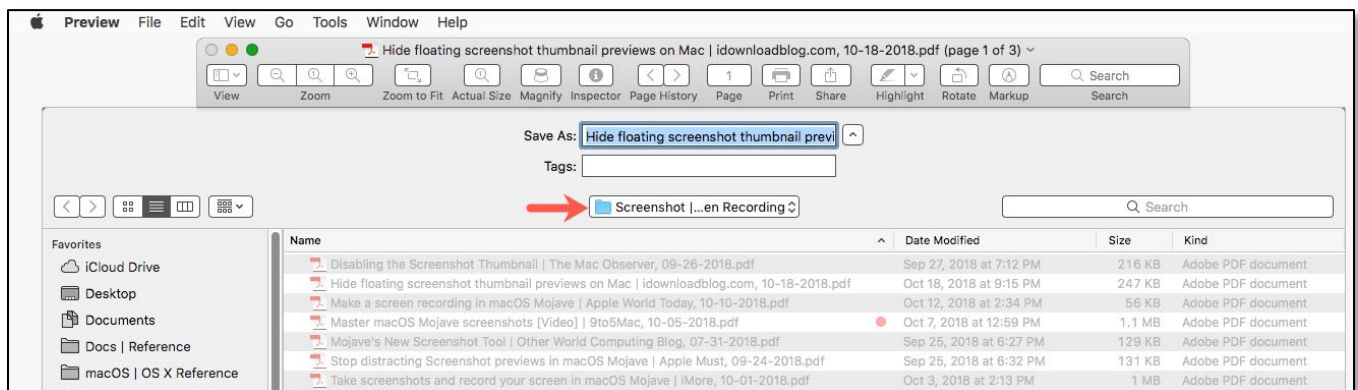
Note: You can control the size of the **Recent Items** list in a setting under **System Preferences > General**:



Finder Window of Selected Folder (With the File Highlighted)

This setting is located near the bottom of the **General System Preference**. As you can see, the size of the list can be varied from None (which removes **Recent Items** altogether from the Apple menu) to 50 items.

4. Save As. If you *just* saved your file and didn't note *where* it was being saved, try immediately using the **Save As...** command [keyboard shortcut: **Shift (⇧) + Command (⌘) + S**]. The **Save As** dialog box will open up to the same location as the previous Save, thus showing you where the file was saved (marked with a **→**):



"Save As" Dialog Box

At this point, there's no reason to continue with the **Save As...** action since you now know the saved location for your file.

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Trackpad Gestures

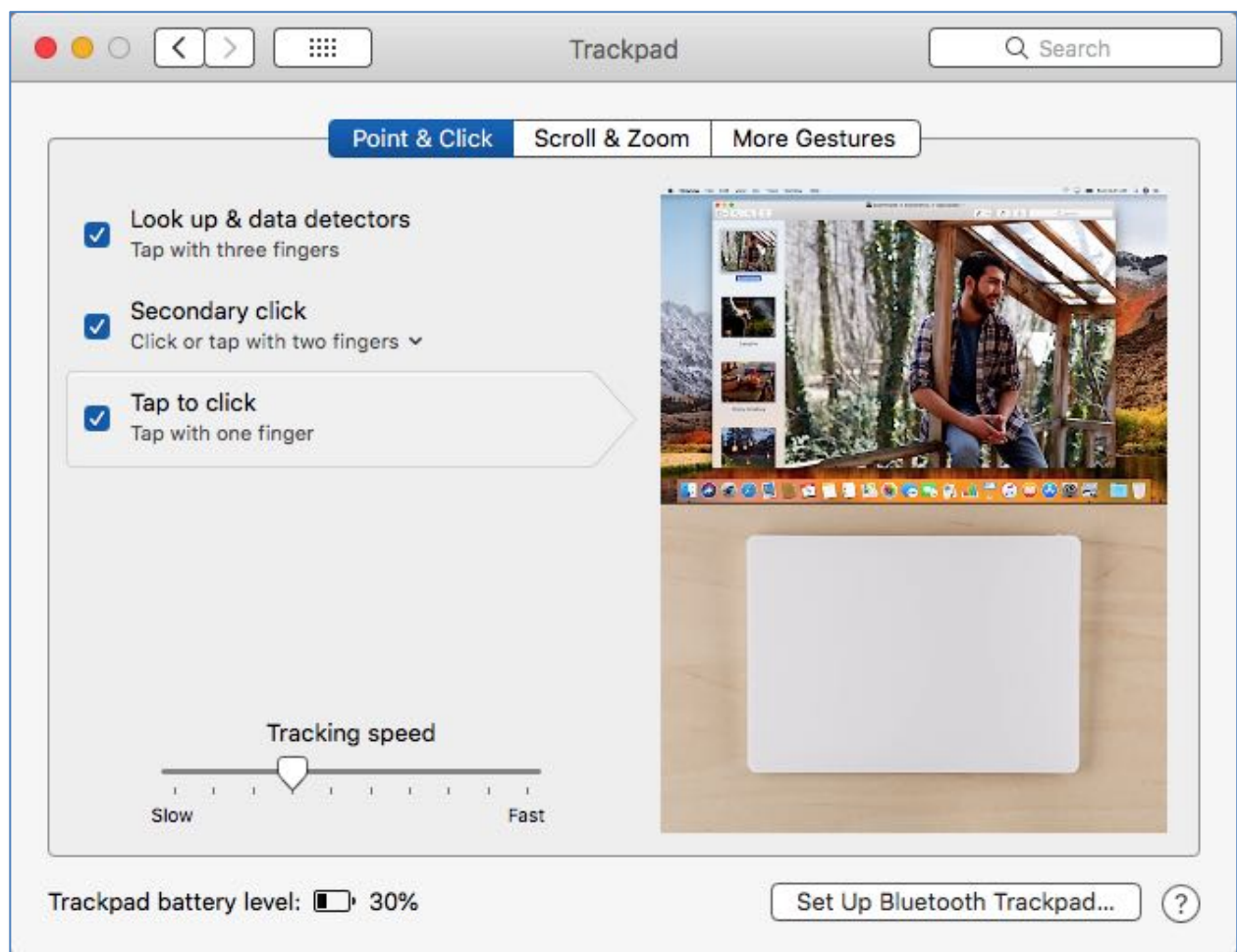
If you have a Mac with a trackpad (say, a MacBook), you can use it for much more than scrolling or selecting something. There are lots **Gestures** to try, so pick a few to see if you find them helpful. (I still use a mouse on my iMac but have added a trackpad to the left of my full-size keyboard on my iMac for a convenient way to use a few gestures.)

Basics. Probably the most common uses of a trackpad are:

- **Tap to Click** (such as selecting something in the Finder)
- **Double-Tap to Select** (such as selecting a word in a TextEdit document)
- **Scroll a Window** (drag up/down with two fingers)

Trackpad System Preference. Built-in trackpad settings are found in the **Trackpad System Preference** (**System Preferences > Trackpad**). The various gestures are found in one of three tabs (Point & Click, Scroll & Zoom, and More Gestures). As you highlight a gesture, a how-to-use mini-video example appears in the right side of the window. The **Tracking Speed** can also be adjusted with the slider. (A MacBook or MacBook Pro will also have a Click slider to adjust the clicking pressure.)

Here's the **Point & Click** tab:



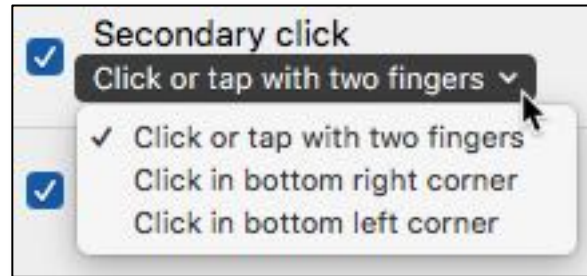
Trackpad System Preference (iMac) – Point & Click Tab

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We already noted the Tap to Click gesture. Here are the other two:

- **Secondary Click** – This gesture is the equivalent of a Right-Click (Control-Click) with your mouse, for example, to bring up a pop-up list in TextEdit. Notice the small downward-pointing arrowhead (▾). If present, it means that you have options for the gesture (in this case, Click or tap with two fingers, Click in the bottom right corner, or Click in the bottom left corner):



Secondary Click Options

- **Look Up & Data Detectors** (Tap with three fingers) – **Look Up** will display Dictionary, Thesaurus, and other information about a selection. **Data Detectors** are used by many apps to automatically detect data (such as dates, locations, or phone numbers) that can be used in other apps, such as Calendar or Contacts.

This gesture has become one of my favorite ways to look up the definition of words. When I come across a word or phrase (say, in a web article) for which I'd like to look up the definition, I just tap on it with three fingers to bring up the Dictionary.

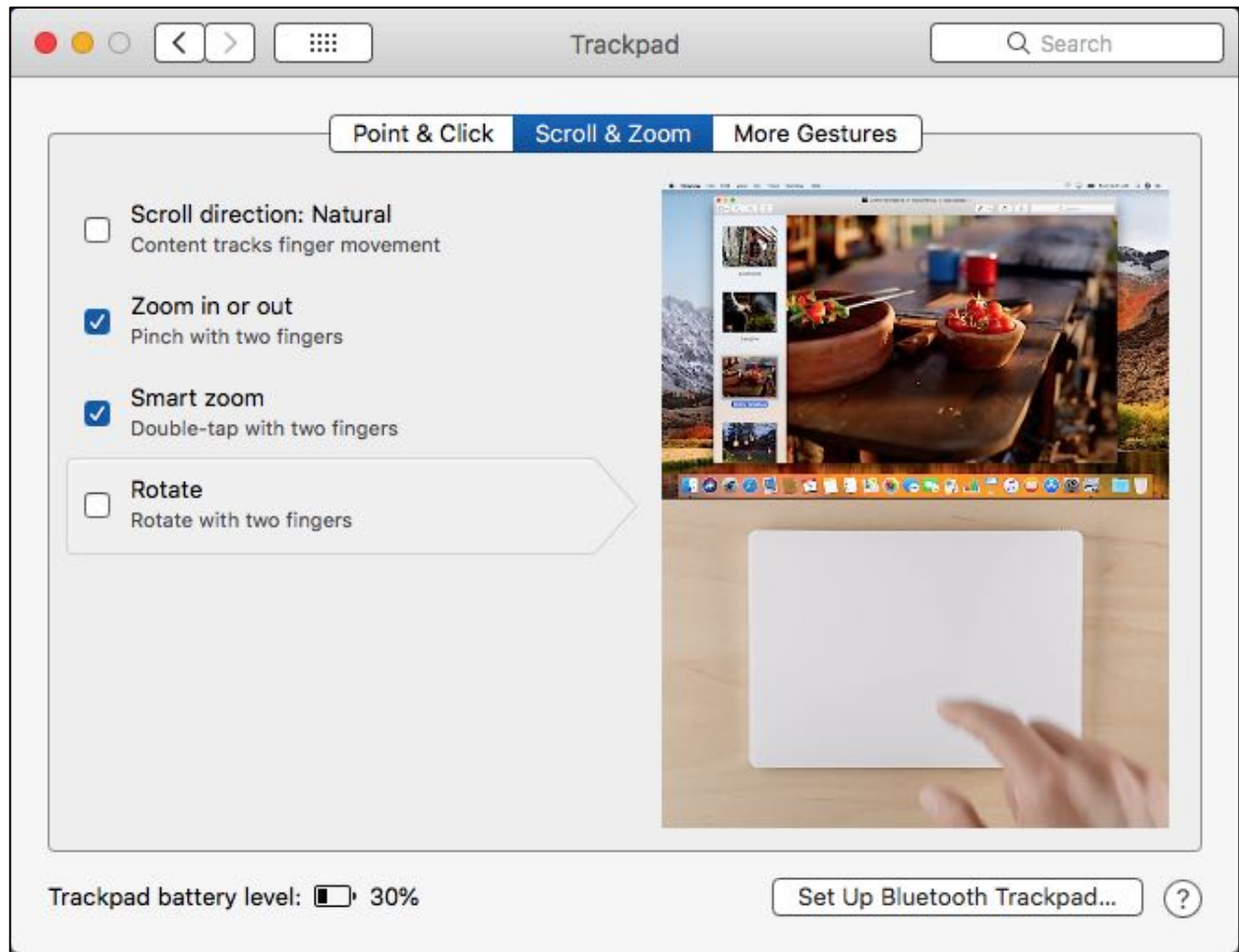
Note: I've found that, depending on the app being used, it's sometimes necessary to tap or click in the word or phrase first and then tap with two fingers to look up the definition.

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Next, the **Scroll & Zoom** tab:



Trackpad System Preference – Scroll & Zoom Tab

The **Scroll & Zoom** tab has four options. (As shown above, I happen to use two of them.)

Note: I've found that swiping gestures like these work best if you rest your fingers on the trackpad before using a gesture.

- **Scroll Direction: Natural** (Content tracks finger movement) – Apple calls this the “natural” way of scrolling, even with a mouse wheel (as found in the Mouse System Preference). It's been part of the macOS for some time now. I'm so used to the former (“unnatural”?) way of scrolling that I don't want to change to use this gesture. Your mileage may vary.
- **Zoom In or Out** (Pinch with two fingers) – This gesture does exactly what it says. It shrinks (Zoom In) or expands (Zoom Out) whatever is being displayed. This gesture can be handy if you're trying to view something on your screen that's too small to view comfortably. However, once zoomed out (expanded), it may be tricky to zoom back in to exactly the point where you started.

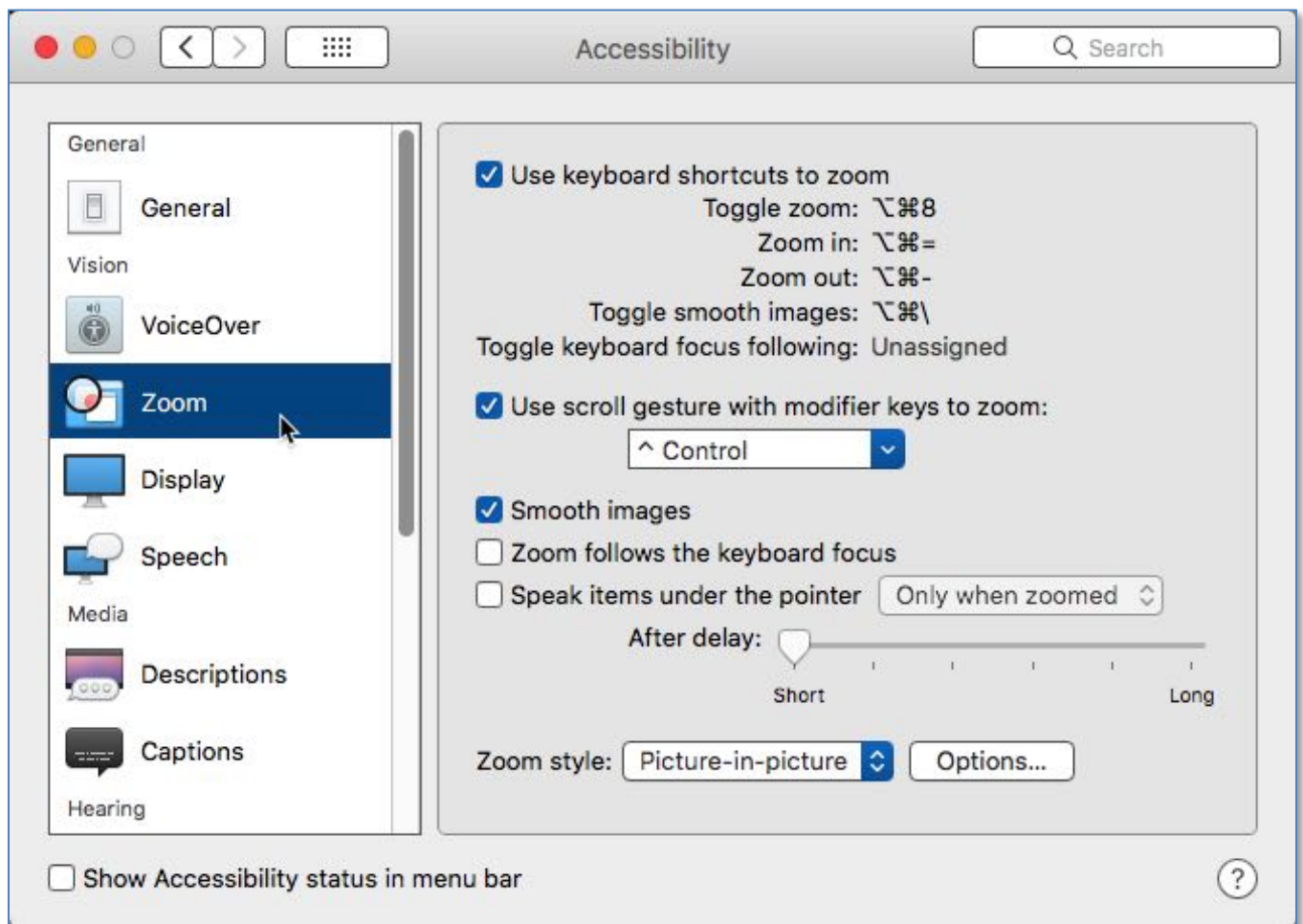
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- **Smart Zoom** (Double-tap with two fingers) – How well “smart” zoom works depends on the app being used. The intent seems to be that the first double-tap will Zoom Out, and a subsequent double-tap will Zoom In, back where you started.

In practice, again depending on the app being used, repeated double-taps may simply keep zooming out. If the app has a manual zooming feature, likely under its View menu, then you can use this feature to zoom back to your starting point or somewhere in between. With other apps, repeated double-taps may zoom out a couple of times and then zoom back. Again, your mileage may vary.

Note: These two Zoom gestures may be handy, but you might find the **Zoom** feature in the **Accessibility System Preference** easier to use to magnify something on the screen:



Accessibility System Preference – Zoom Feature

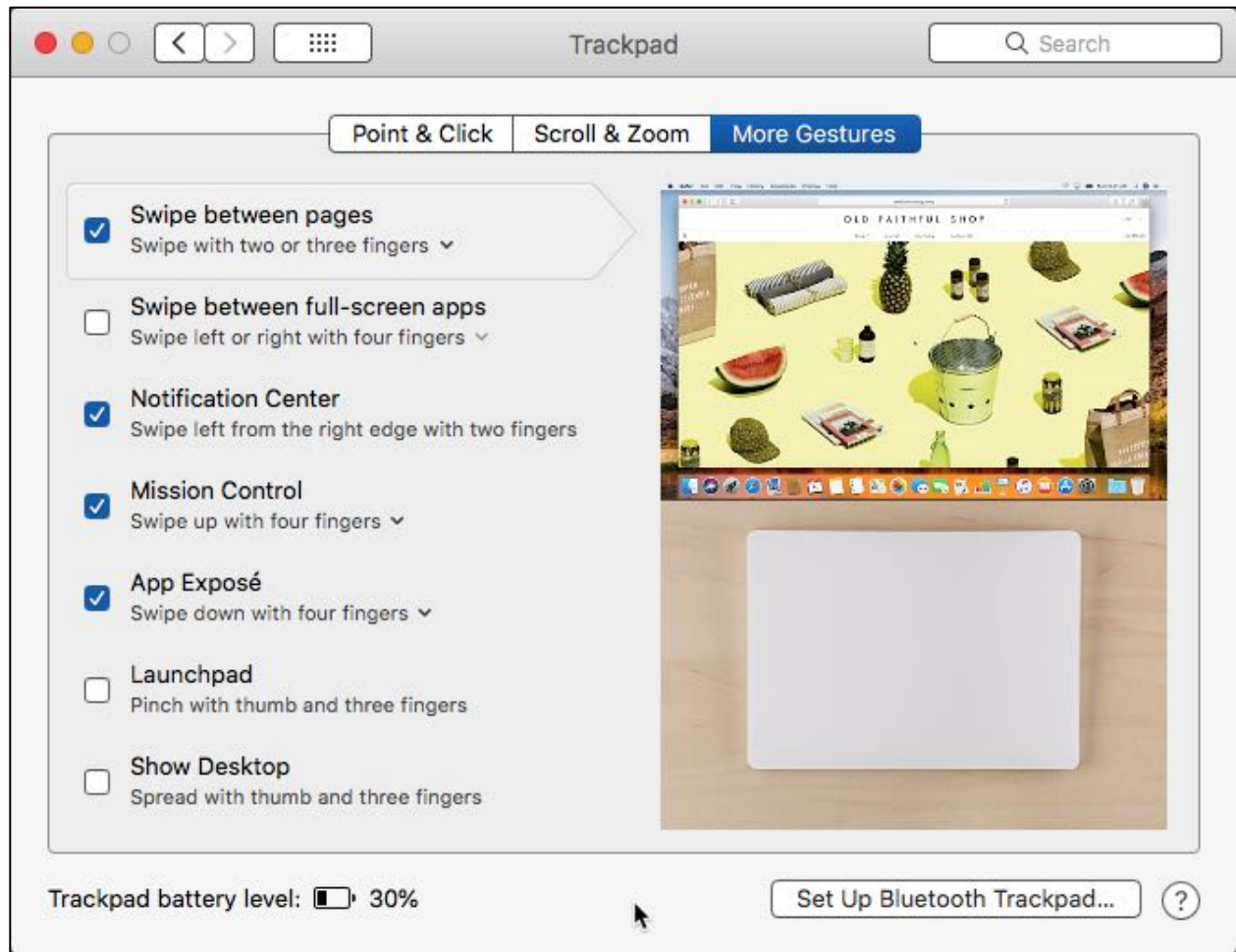
This Zoom feature puts a square magnifier (size and magnification are adjustable) that you move about the screen with the cursor. You can even invoke it with a gesture.

- **Rotate** (Rotate with two fingers) - This gesture also does exactly what it says, and it appears to be aimed at graphics programs where you're dealing with images. I haven't found this useful, so I don't use it.

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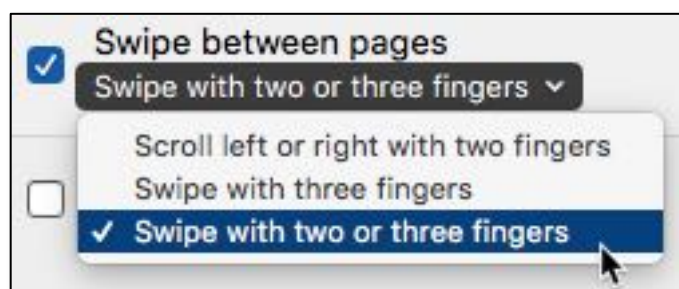
Finally, here's the **More Gestures** tab with its *seven* options—I use four of them:



Trackpad System Preference – More Gestures Tab

- **Swipe Between Pages** (Swipe with two or three fingers) – On apps that support it (such as a web browser like Safari), this gesture mimics the **Forward** and **Back** buttons when multiple pages have been selected.

This gesture has three options, notice the small downward-pointing arrowhead (v), (scroll left or right with two fingers, swipe with three fingers, or swipe with two or three fingers):



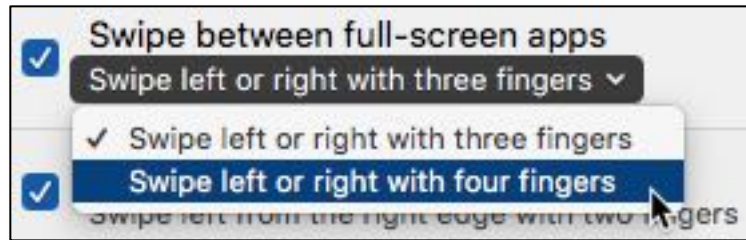
"Swipe Between Pages" Options

In practice, I've found that this gesture works pretty well but can be finicky at times.

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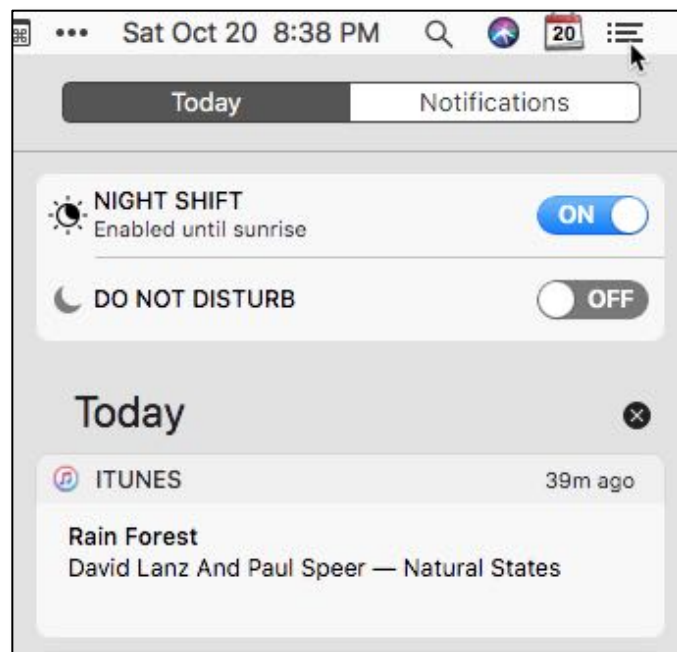
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- **Swipe Between Full-Screen Apps** (Swipe left or right with *three* or four fingers) – This gesture may be handy if you work frequently in full-screen apps (which I don't). It has two settings (swiping with three fingers or Swipe with four fingers):



"Swipe Between Full-Screen Apps" Options

- **Notification Center** (Swipe left from the right edge with two fingers) – Recall that the icon for the Notification Center (lists various notifications like alerts from apps) is located at the top right corner of the menu bar. Clicking on its icon causes the notification list to slide in from the right:



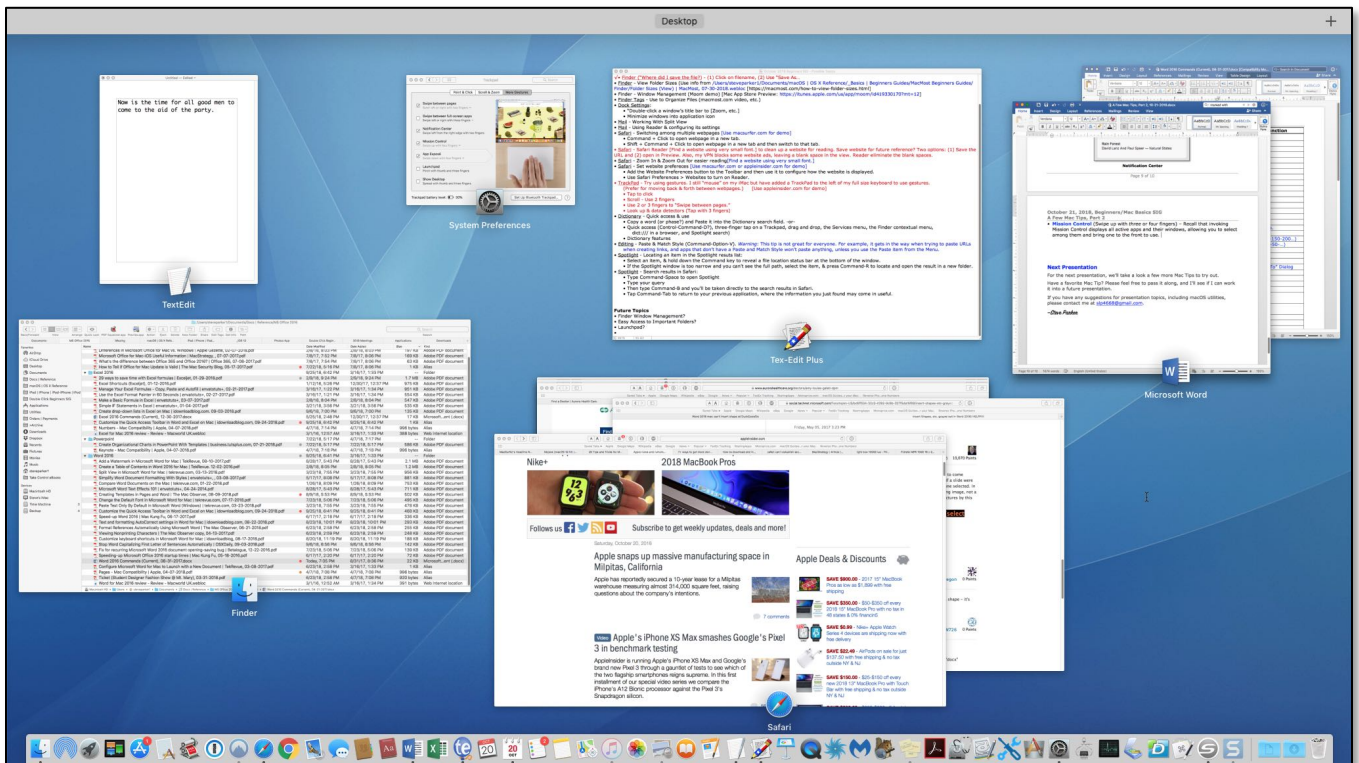
Notification Center (Upper Right-Hand Corner of the Display)

- **Mission Control** (Swipe up with *three* or four fingers) – Recall that invoking Mission Control displays all active apps and their windows—i.e., it's an app switcher—allowing you to select among them and bring one to the front to use:

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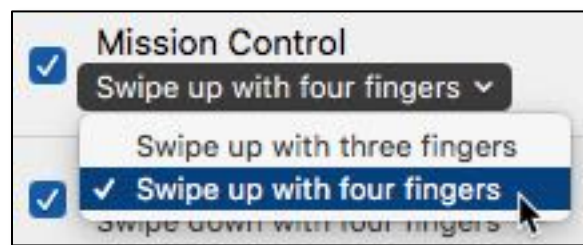
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Mission Control

Swipe up to bring up Mission Control. Swipe down to dismiss it, or dismiss it by using the **Esc** key.

You can choose between two gestures (swipe up with three fingers or swipe up with four fingers):



Mission Control Swipe Options

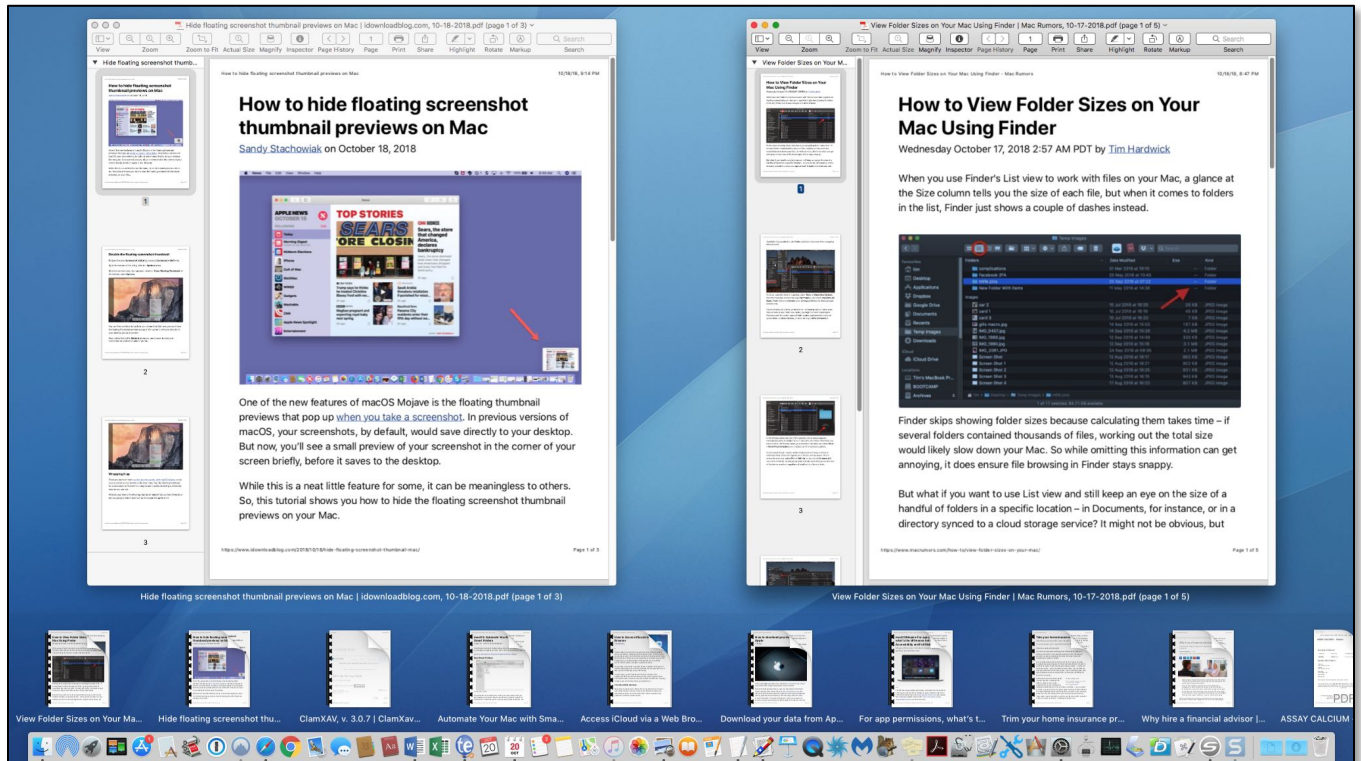
- **App Exposé** (swipe down with *three* fingers or four fingers) – Allows you to display all the open pages for the app that you're currently using. (See the next page for an example showing two open documents in Preview.) Notice that previously-opened documents are also displayed at the bottom of the screen.

Switch among open documents by using the cursor or the arrow keys.

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Preview - App Exposé Display

- **Launchpad** (Pinch with thumb and three fingers) – Launchpad is the macOS app launcher. Use this gesture to open Launchpad. When in Launchpad, use the reverse gesture (*spread* with thumb and three fingers) or the **Esc** key to close Launchpad.

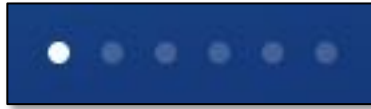


Launchpad Display

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If you have more apps than can be displayed on one page, Launchpad creates multiple pages. Select other pages by clicking on one of the white dots at the bottom of the screen:



Launchpad Page Selector

You can also move between pages with keyboard shortcuts:

Command (⌘) + Right Arrow (→) and **Command (⌘) + Left Arrow (←)**.

- **Show Desktop** (Spread with thumb and three fingers) – This gesture is the reverse of the one used for the Launchpad. Ditto for dismissing the Desktop. Unlike many other gestures, it apparently *can't* be dismissed with the **Esc** key.



Show Desktop

Next Presentation

For the next presentation, we'll take a look a few more Mac Tips to try out.

Have a favorite Mac Tip? Please feel free to pass it along, and I'll see if I can work it into a future presentation.

If you have any suggestions for presentation topics, including macOS utilities, please contact me at slp4668@gmail.com.

-Steve Parker