

September 18, 2016, Beginners SIG

Editing Documents On Your Mac

Note: This discussion is based on Mac OS X, 10.11.6 (El Capitan). Some illustrations may differ when using other versions of OS X.

Perhaps you're composing an email or a text, or maybe you're writing an article for work or a newsletter. Regardless, in each of these activities, you'll doubtless do some editing of the document that you're working on. This presentation will review various editing techniques using your Mac. For convenience, we'll use Apple's TextEdit and Pages applications to demonstrate.

There are *lots* of ways to do editing. Try out some of the following techniques. Maybe a few of these will prove useful to you.

Moving Around Text in a Document

This is really basic but worth repeating: How to move your cursor around in a document and how to select text using the keyboard. (*Note: These techniques apply generally to applications that follow Apple's design guidelines, but some don't follow all of them. Of note is Microsoft Word, at least Word 2011, where you'll find that the cursor movement is different, often reversed, from what is discussed below. Regardless, you'll soon get used to how all of this works in the applications that you use regularly.*)

We all know that you can move anywhere in a document by simply clicking on the location. You can also select text to copy, move or delete using the mouse and employing the "click and drag" method.

That said, don't forget about the arrow keys to move around. Using the [left](#) and [right arrow keys](#) will move the cursor by one character at a time, and the up and down arrow keys moves the cursor by one line at a time.

Add the [Option](#) and [Command](#) modifier keys, and many more movements become possible. (*Exception: In some applications, you'll find that the cursor movement is possibly different, perhaps [beginning](#) instead of [end](#), from what is discussed below.*)

Note: Many of these techniques work where there is any editable text (dialog boxes, filenames, etc.).

- Move Word-by-Word. Hold down the [Option](#) key while pressing the [Left](#) or [Right](#) arrow keys:
 - [Option-Right Arrow](#) will move the cursor to the [end](#) of the [next word](#) to the [right](#).
 - [Option-Left Arrow](#) does the opposite and moves the cursor to the [beginning](#) of the [next word](#) to the [left](#).
- Move Paragraph-by-Paragraph. Hold down the [Option](#) key while pressing the [Up](#) or [Down](#) arrow keys:
 - [Option-Up Arrow](#) will move the cursor to the [beginning](#) of the [next paragraph](#) [up](#) in the document.
 - [Option-Down Arrow](#) does the opposite and moves the cursor to the [end](#) of the [next paragraph](#) [down](#) in the document.

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- Move to the Beginning or End of a Line. Hold down the **Command** key while pressing the **Left** or **Right** arrow keys:
 - **Command-Right Arrow** will move the cursor to the *end* of the *line*.
 - **Command-Left Arrow** does the opposite and moves the cursor to the *beginning* of the *line*.
- Move to the Beginning or End of the Document. Hold down the **Command** key while pressing the **Up** or **Down** arrow keys:
 - **Command-Up Arrow** will move the cursor to the *beginning* of the *document*.
 - **Command-Down Arrow** does the opposite and moves the cursor to the *end* of the *document*.

Selecting Text in a Document

Before you can copy, cut, delete or move some text, you must first to **select** it.

- Selecting Text With the Cursor and Dragging. Probably the simplest and most basic Mac way to select text by first placing the cursor at the beginning of the text to be selected, clicking, and then dragging the cursor to the end of the desired selection.

The downside to this method is that you must move your hand from the keyboard to the mouse and back again. Using the arrow keys tends to keep your hands on the keyboard to continue writing and editing, making your activity a little more efficient.

When using the arrow keys, add the **Shift** key to the **Option** and **Command** modifier keys, and select text right from the keyboard.

- Selecting Text With the Cursor and the Shift Key. A basic Mac way to select text with the keyboard is to use hold down the **Shift** key while pressing the **Left**, **Right**, **Up**, and **Down** arrow keys:
 - **Shift-Right Arrow** selects text to the *right* of the cursor location.
 - **Shift-Left Arrow** selects text to the *left* of the cursor location.
 - **What about Shift-Up Arrow or Shift-Down Arrow?** Neither is particularly useful. If the cursor is somewhere in a line of text, Shift-Up Arrow selects the rest of the text in the line and also text in the line above from the end of that line to the same horizontal location of the cursor in the first line.
- Select Text Word-by-Word. Hold down the **Option** and **Shift** keys while pressing the **Left** or **Right** arrow keys:
 - **Option-Shift-Right Arrow** will *select* all of the characters in *rest* of the word to the *right* from cursor's current location *in* a word.
There's more: If the cursor is located at the *end* of a word or the beginning of the next word to the right, **Option-Shift-Right Arrow** will select all of the characters the right from its current location to the *end* of the next word. This includes the space between words if the cursor is located at the end of a word.

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Even more: Keep holding down **Option-Shift** while pressing the **Right Arrow** to **continue selecting** more words.

- **Option-Shift-Left Arrow** does the opposite of Option-Shift-Right Arrow. Selection is extended to the left of the cursor's position.
- Selecting Text Paragraph-by-Paragraph. Hold down the **Option** and **Shift** keys while pressing the **Up** or **Down** arrow keys:
 - **Option-Shift-Up Arrow** will select all of the text to the *beginning* of the current paragraph from the location of the cursor in the paragraph.

Again, there's more: If the cursor is located at the **end** of a paragraph or the space(s) at the end of a paragraph, **Option-Shift-Up Arrow** will select all of the text to the **beginning** of the current paragraph.

Even more: Keep holding down **Option-Shift** while pressing the **Up Arrow** to **continue selecting** more paragraphs.
 - **Option-Shift-Down Arrow** does the opposite of Option-Shift-Up Arrow and will select all of the text to the *end* of the current **paragraph** in the document, including any spaces after the paragraph, from the location of the cursor in the paragraph.

If the cursor is located at the **beginning** of the paragraph, then the entire paragraph, including spaces at the end, will be selected.

Keep holding down **Option-Shift** while pressing the **Down Arrow** to **continue selecting** more paragraphs.
- Selecting Text With Double-Click and Shift-Click. There are another couple of Mac basic to remember:
 - Select a word of text by simply **double-clicking** on the word with the mouse.
 - Once a selection has been made by any means, you can extend that selection by holding down the **Shift** key and **clicking on another location** in the text in a document (**Shift-Clicking**).
 - If the original selection was a complete word, Shift-Clicking *may* extend the selection through the next word that is clicked. *This is application dependent*. For example, in the TextEdit application, the selection is extended through the next word that's clicked. However, in the Pages application, the selection is extended only through the point where the cursor is clicked.
- Selecting Text With Triple-Click and Shift-Click. **Triple-Clicking** anywhere in a paragraph will select the entire paragraph. **Triple-Click** in a paragraph to select it and then **Shift-Clicking** in another paragraph *may* extend the selection through the next paragraph.

Again, this is application dependent. For example, in the TextEdit application, the selection is extended through the next paragraph that's clicked. However, in the Pages application, the selection is extended only through the point where the cursor is clicked.

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- Recap on Selecting Text With the Mouse
 - Click **once** to **place** the cursor in the text of a document.
 - Click **twice** (double-click) to **select** a **word**.
 - Click **three** times (triple-click) to **select** the entire **paragraph**.
 - **Extend** a selection by using the **Shift** key (application dependent).
- Selecting/Deselecting Text With The Command Key (Application Specific) in a Previous Selection. In a selection of text, it's possible to deselect or select part of it by dragging across the text while holding down the **Command** key. In TextEdit, this action deselects text within the previous selection while in Pages it selects new text instead. This technique is really more interesting than useful.
- Select All Text in a Document. The Edit menu item, **Select All** (Edit > Select All), **selects all the text** in a document. (It's keyboard shortcut is **Command-A**.) This can be helpful, for example, when you want to change all the formatting (such as changing to a different font) in a document.

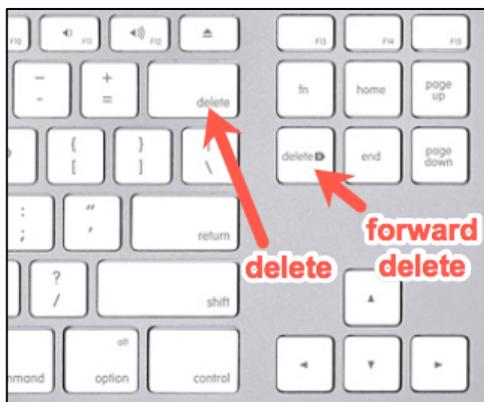
Moving and Copying Selected Text

Once some text has been selected in a document, it can be moved or copied to a different location.

- Moving the Selection. Once the text has been selected, then click and hold anywhere in the selection briefly (say, about a second or so), and finally drag the selection to a new location. If you don't first click and hold on the selection but instead immediately begin to drag, you'll end up making a new selection with the drag.
- Copying the Selection. As before, click and hold anywhere in the selection briefly, next hold down the **Option** key, and then drag the selection to a new location. This will result in the selection being copied to the new location.

Deleting Text

There are several ways to delete text using the **delete** and **forward delete** keys:



- Delete Key. Use the **delete** key (usually located next to the [=] key at the top right of the main part of a keyboard and labeled "**delete**" and sometimes with the **⌫** symbol). Each click will delete one character to the **left** of the

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cursor (that is, [behind](#) the cursor). If text has been previously selected, the selection will be removed.

Use the [Option](#) key with the [delete](#) ([Option-delete](#)) key to delete word-by-word to the [left](#).

- [Edit > Delete](#). Most word-processing applications have a [Delete](#) item under their [Edit](#) menu. This provides the same function as the delete key described above.
- [Forward Delete Key](#). On larger keyboards (sometimes called “extended” keyboards), there will be a [forward delete](#) key (usually located with another group of keys above the arrow keys). This key also is labeled “delete” and may be accompanied with the  symbol. This key operates exactly opposite of the standard delete key. Each click will remove one character to the [right](#) of the cursor (that is, in [front](#) of the cursor). If text has been previously selected, the selection will be removed.

Use the [Option](#) key with the [delete](#) ([Option-forward delete](#)) key to delete word-by-word to the [right](#).

Note: If your keyboard doesn’t have a Forward Delete key but does have a function ([fn](#)) key, you can still do a forward delete action by holding down the [fn](#) key and then pressing the [delete](#) key ([fn+delete](#)). Add the [Option](#) key to this combination ([fn+Option+delete](#)), and you can delete the whole word to the right of the cursor.

Cut, Copy and Paste

We’re all familiar with another set of basic Mac editing functions: [Cut](#), [Copy](#) and [Paste](#) ([Undo](#), too). They may be the most important computing technology of the past 30 years. Just think how much we rely on Copy and Paste, probably using them multiple times every day without even realizing it.

These commands depend on the concept of the [clipboard](#), a virtual container that holds whatever data you copy or cut. Although it’s generally invisible to the user, you can view the contents of the clipboard in the [Finder](#). Just choose [Edit > Show Clipboard](#). A small window appears, displaying whatever text or image is currently on the clipboard.

The Problem with Pasting Formatted Text. Copying and pasting of text is simple, but it can get a bit tricky when font styles are involved. You won’t have any problems when copying from or pasting into a plain-text editor application since it doesn’t deal with styled text. Also, when you’re working in the same document, you probably want any formatting in text that you copied or cut to remain intact when you paste it.

However, what will happen when you copy some text from a Web page and paste it into, say, an email application like Apple Mail? This will transfer all the styling from the copied or cut text—the typeface, text color, and even background color! All this style detail can be useful in some cases, but most of the time, you probably just want the pasted text to take on the look of the text around it, or to

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use the application's default style.

Get Rid of Formatting When Pasting Text. In many applications, there's a way around pasting styled text: the [Paste and Match Style](#) command found under the [Edit](#) menu (keyboard shortcut: [Option-Shift-Command-V](#)). Some applications might call it [Paste Text Only](#), [Paste Without Formatting](#), or [Paste Special](#).

The purpose here is to strip out any formatting from the copied or cut text on the clipboard and then paste the result into the target document, matching the style of whatever the paragraph formatting is at the insertion point. By using [Paste and Match Style](#), that selection that you copied from a Web page will now nicely match what you are using in your email message.

Next Presentation

Next month, we'll delve a little deeper into editing documents on your Mac.

--Steve Parker