

01-15-2023, Mac Basics/Beginners SIG

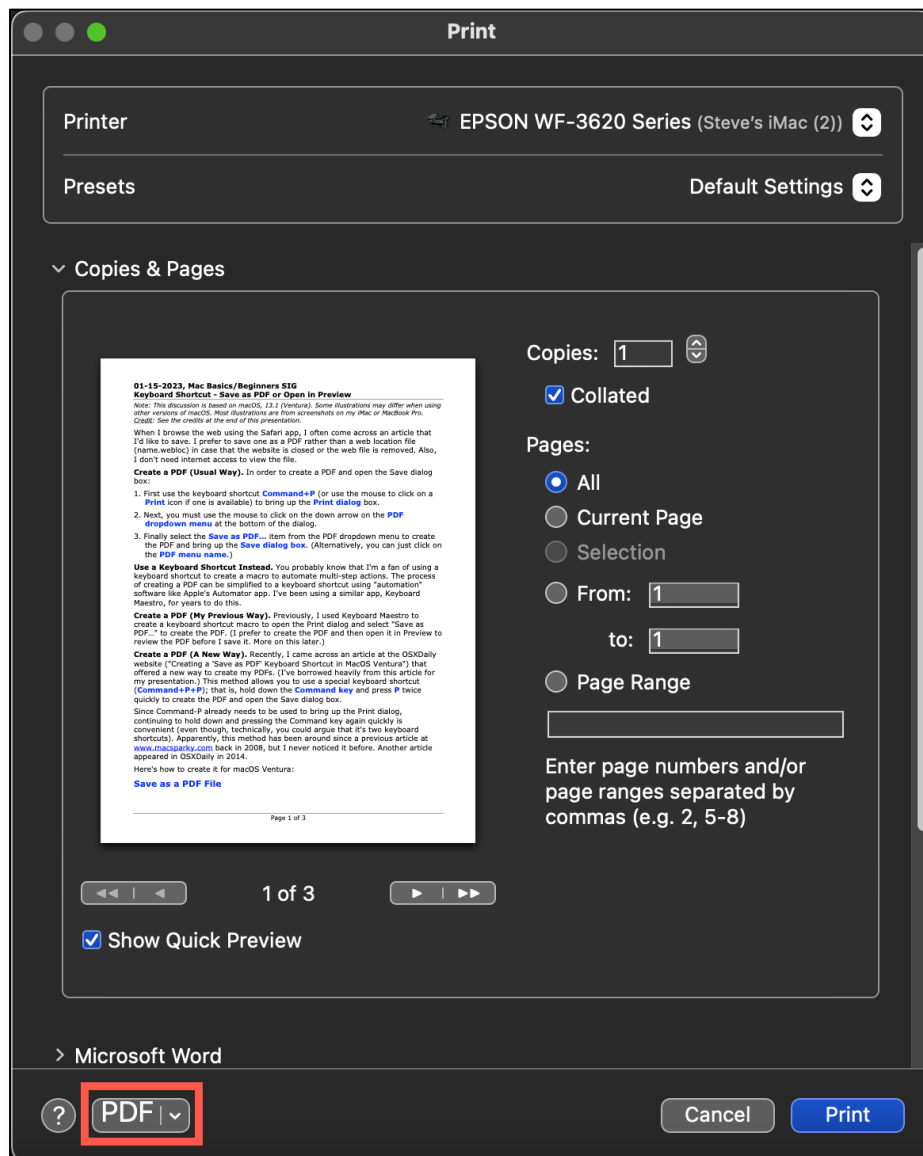
Keyboard Shortcut - Save as PDF or Open in Preview

Note: This discussion is based on macOS, 13.1 (Ventura). Some illustrations may differ when using other versions of macOS. Most illustrations are from screenshots on my iMac or MacBook Pro.
Credit: See the credits at the end of this presentation.

When I browse the web using the Safari app, I often come across an article that I'd like to save. I prefer to save it as a PDF rather than a web location file (**name.webloc**) in case that the website is closed or the web file is removed. Also, I don't need internet access to view the file, and I can use Quick Look to view offline.

Create a PDF (Usual Way). In order to create a PDF and open the Save dialog box as shown below:

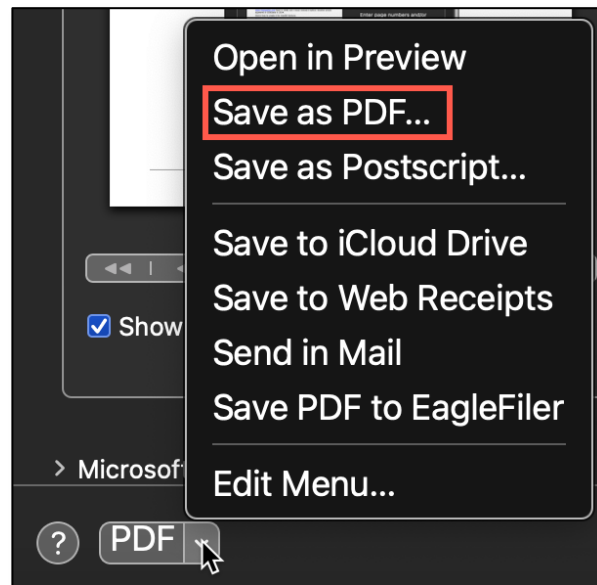
1. First use the keyboard shortcut **Command+P** (or use the mouse to click on a **Print** icon if one is available) to bring up the **Print dialog** box.
2. Next, you must use the mouse to click on the **down arrow** on the **PDF dropdown menu** at the bottom of the dialog as shown below:



Print Dialog Box (PDF Dropdown Menu)

Keyboard Shortcut - Save as PDF or Open in Preview

3. Finally, select the **Save as PDF...** item from the PDF dropdown menu to create the PDF and bring up the **Save dialog box**. (Alternatively, you can just click on the **PDF menu name**.)



Print Dialog Box (Save as PDF...** Selected from the PDF Dropdown Menu)**

Use a Keyboard Shortcut Instead. You probably know that I'm a fan of using a keyboard shortcut to create a macro to automate multi-step actions. The process of creating a PDF can be simplified with a keyboard shortcut using "automation" software like Apple's Automator app. I've been using a similar app, Keyboard Maestro (<https://www.stairways.com/main/>), for years to do this.

Create a PDF (My Previous Way). Previously, I used Keyboard Maestro to create a keyboard shortcut macro to open the Print dialog and select "Save as PDF..." to create the PDF. (I prefer to add one more step after creating the PDF in order to open it in Preview and review the PDF before I save it. More on this later.)

Create a PDF (A New Way). Recently, I came across an article at the OSXDaily website ("Creating a 'Save as PDF' Keyboard Shortcut in MacOS Ventura") that offered a new way to create my PDFs. (I've borrowed heavily from this article for my presentation.) This method allows you to use a special keyboard shortcut (**Command+P+P**); that is, hold down the **Command key** and press **P** twice quickly to **create the PDF** and open the **Save dialog box**.


Since Command+P already needs to be used to bring up the Print dialog, continuing to hold down the Command key and pressing **P** once more again quickly is convenient (even though, technically, you could argue that it's two keyboard shortcuts). Apparently, this method has been around since a previous article at www.macsparky.com back in 2008, but I never noticed it before. Another article appeared in OSXDaily in 2014.

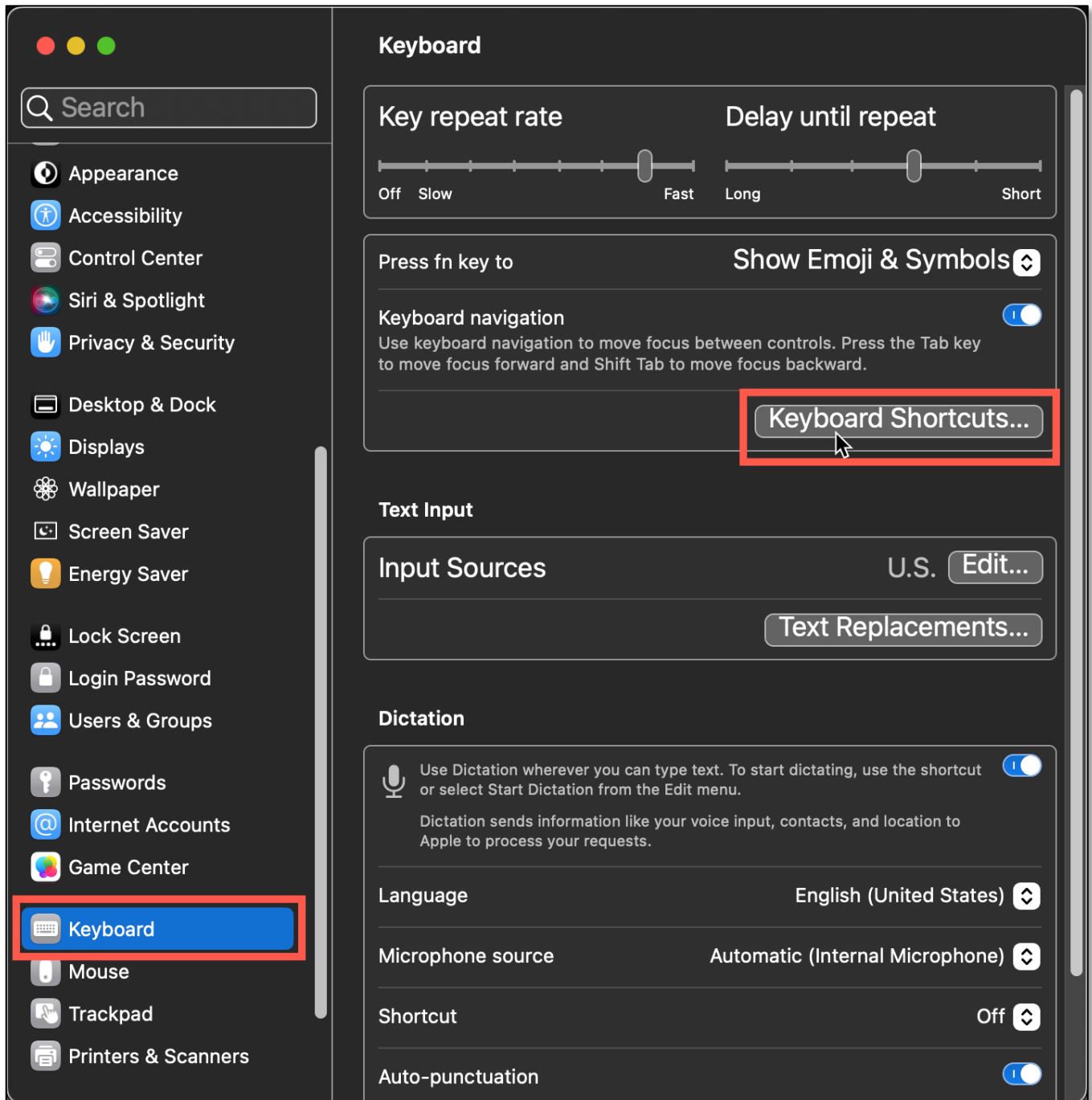
Here's how to create it for macOS Ventura:

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Save as a PDF File

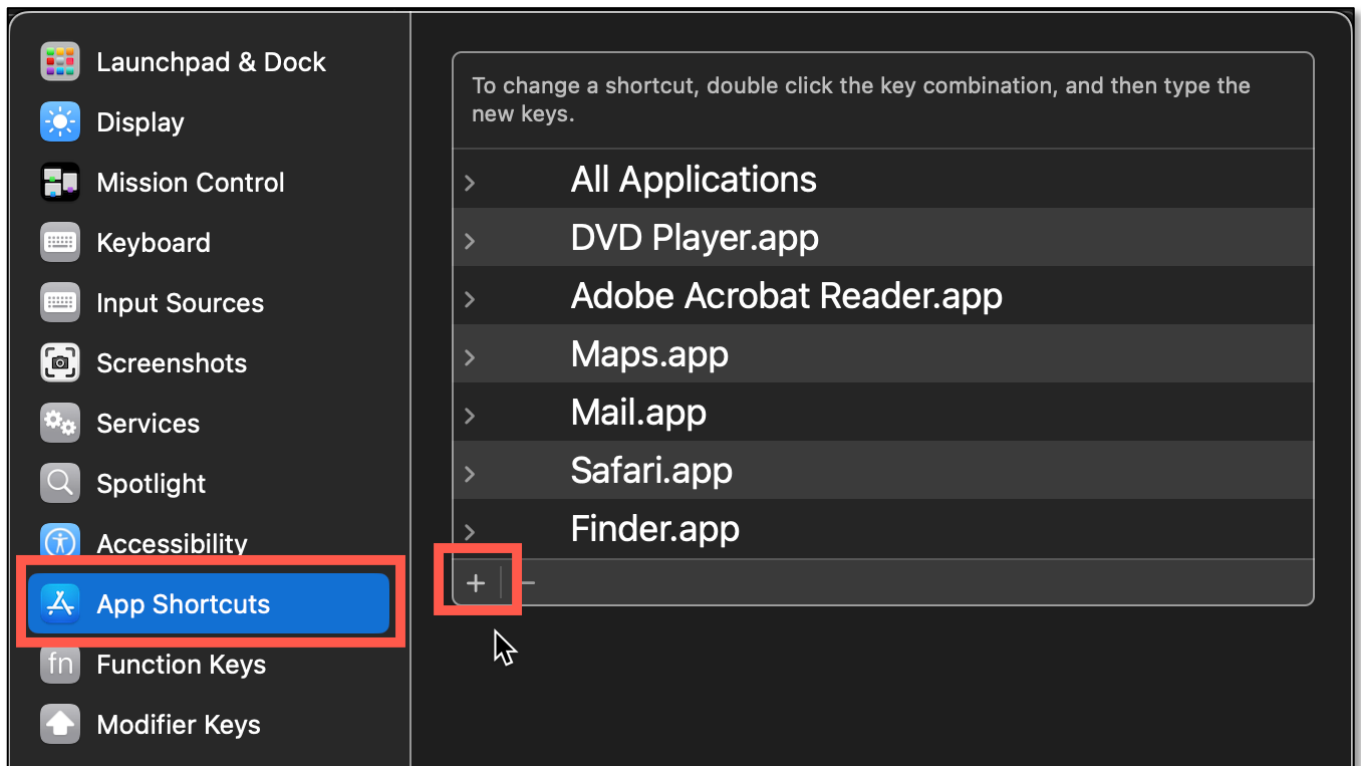
1. Open **System Settings**. Do this by clicking on the  Apple menu in the upper left corner. Also, you may have placed an icon for System Settings in your dock. If so, just click on it. (I use a keyboard shortcut to bring up System Settings.)
2. Choose **Keyboard** from the left side menu options list.
3. Click the **Keyboard Shortcuts...** button.



Keyboard System Setting – Select **Keyboard Shortcuts**

Keyboard Shortcut - Save as PDF or Open in Preview

4. Select **App Shortcuts** from the left side menu options list, then click on the plus [+] button to add a new shortcut. This will automatically place your shortcut in the "All Applications" group.



Keyboard System Setting (Keyboard Shortcuts > App Shortcuts) – Add New Shortcut

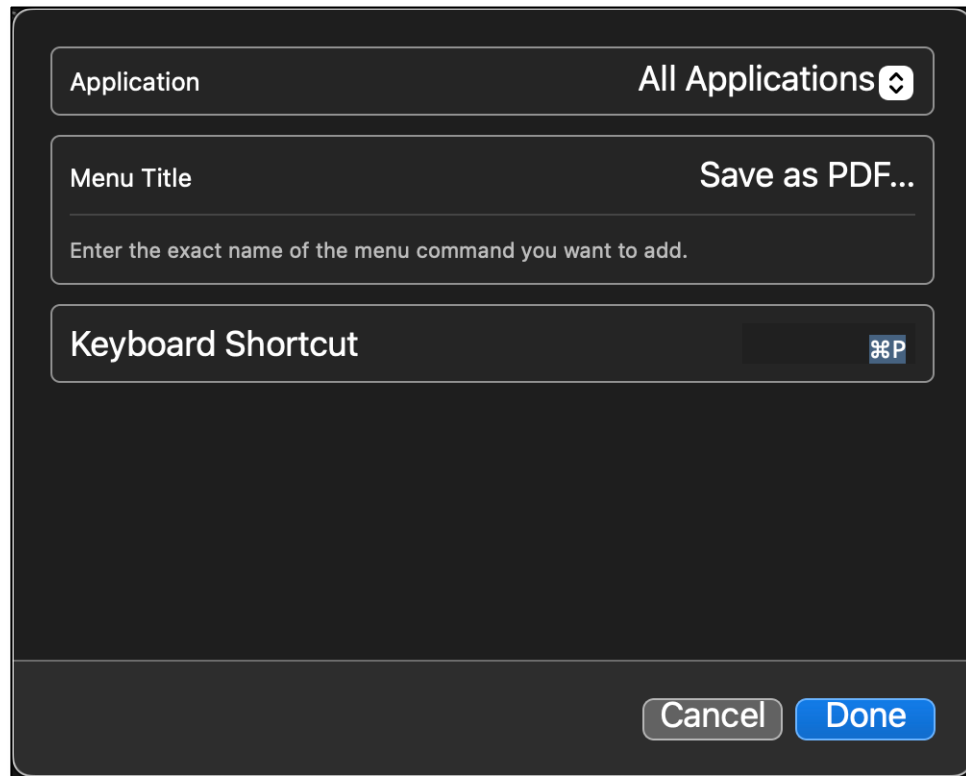
5. In "Menu Title" type "**Save as PDF...**" exactly, being sure include the three periods [...] at the end. (See the image on the next page.)

*Note: Three periods [...] is called an ellipsis. Instead of pressing the period [.] button three times, you can type Option+Semicolon [;] (**Option+;**) to create it.*

6. Next, click or tab into "Keyboard Shortcut" and press **Command+P**.
7. Click the **Done** button to add the keyboard shortcut.

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Keyboard Shortcut - Save as PDF or Open in Preview



Keyboard System Setting (Keyboard Shortcuts) – Add New Shortcut (**Save as PDF...**)

This will place your new keyboard shortcut in the **All Applications** group.

Alternatively, you could first open the All Applications group, click the plus **[+]** button to add a new shortcut to this group, and then create the shortcut.

8. Finally, close out of System Settings.

The "Save as PDF" keyboard shortcut is now ready to be used. From now on, the action that you take to create a PDF will be different from what you've been accustomed to. Instead, you will simply hold down the **Command** key and press **P** twice (**Command+P+P**) to activate the keyboard shortcut for **Save as PDF** and open the Save dialog box.

This method works because once you're in the "Print" dialog box, hitting Command+P again will bring up the "Save as PDF..." menu item. So, pressing **Command+P+P** tells macOS to go directly to the **Save as PDF** menu item to create the PDF and open the Save dialog box.

Pressing Command+P a second time seems like that it would be a conflict with the Command+P keyboard shortcut that brings up the Print dialog, but it doesn't. They are separate actions.

***Note:** This special keyboard shortcut isn't limited to the Safari app. It also works in others, too (although I haven't tried every app, so your mileage may vary). I did notice the in the Mail app, that I had to pause briefly (very slight delay) until the Print dialog box showed up before continuing to type Command+P the second time.*

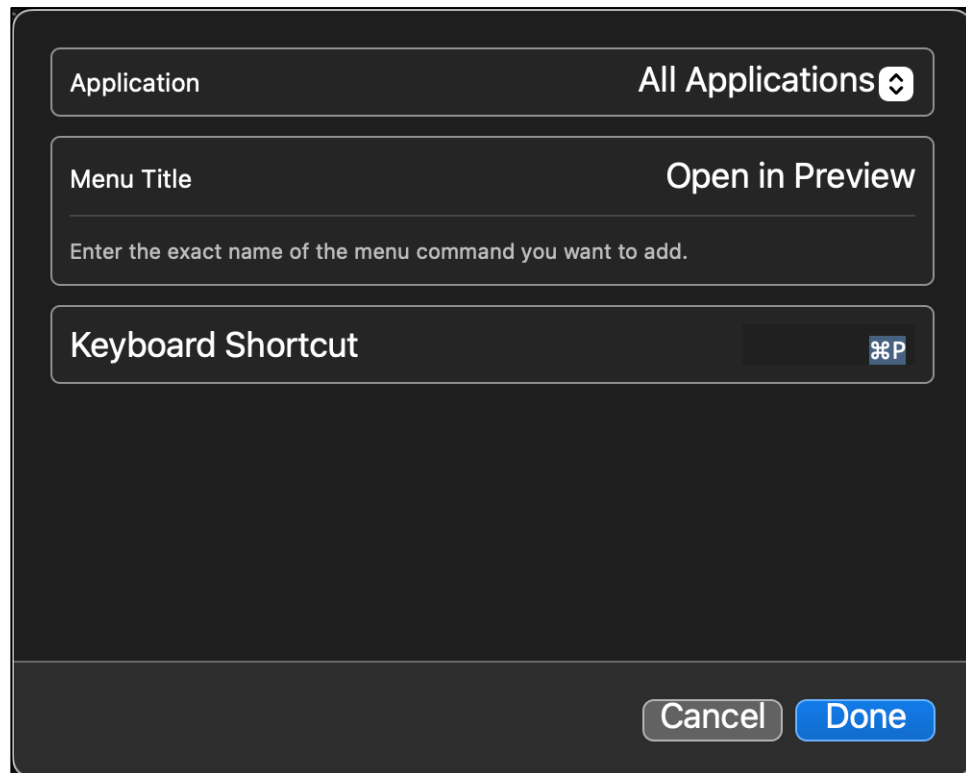
Save as PDF in Earlier Versions of macOS

In earlier versions of macOS, like Monterey, there is *no ellipsis* at the end of "Save as PDF". Because of this difference, in the "Menu Title" (Step 5 above) simply type "**Save as PDF**" *without* the three periods on the end. Then follow Steps 6 to 8 as before.

Open in Preview

As I mentioned earlier, I prefer to create a PDF and then open it in the Preview app for review before saving it. To accomplish this, it's only necessary to change which menu item is selected in the PDF menu at the bottom of the Print dialog box.

Instead of entering "Save as PDF..." in "Menu Title" (Step 5), type **Open in Preview**. Then finish the steps to create the special keyboard shortcut as shown below:



Keyboard System Setting (Keyboard Shortcuts) – Add New Shortcut (Open in Preview**)**

Summary

If you like to use keyboard shortcuts to automate various actions in macOS, you may find this one for creating a PDF handy. It allows you to choose an open file and then press **Command+P+P** (hold down the **Command** key and press **P** twice) to create the PDF.

Next Presentation

For the next presentation, we'll take a look another macOS feature or utility.

Have a favorite Mac Tip or utility? 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

Credit: Creating a "Save as PDF" Keyboard Shortcut in MacOS Ventura

<https://osxdaily.com/2022/12/06/creating-a-save-as-pdf-keyboard-shortcut-in-macos-ventura/>