

10-16-2022, Mac Basics/Beginners SIG – Quick Look Tips (Part 1)

Note: This discussion is based on macOS, 12.5.1 (Monterey). 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.

Several years back, I presented a series about using **Quick Look**. After reading a recent MacMost.com article (Quick Look tips), it seemed like a good time to review Quick Look again. I've drawn much of the material for this presentation from the article (<https://macmost.com/17-things-you-may-not-know-about-quick-look.html>).

Quick Look Overview

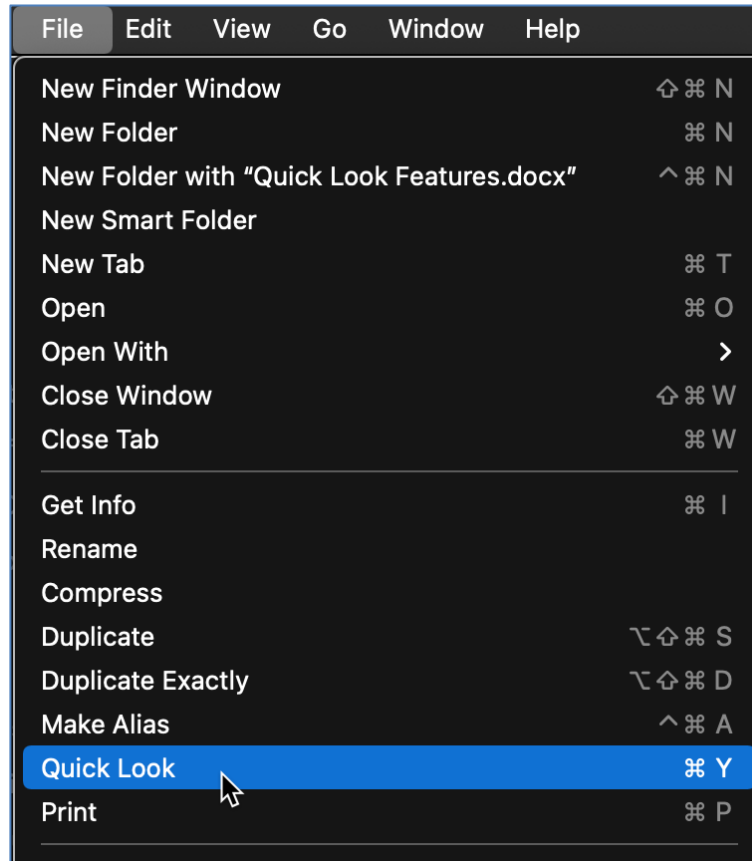
Quick Look has been around for many years (introduced in Mac OS X 10.5 in 2007), so chances are that you've probably used it, at least a few times.

As you may recall, Quick Look is a way to preview the contents of a file without having to actually open it by launching an application. Just use the Finder to select a file, and then tap the **Spacebar** to bring up the Quick Look window to display the contents of the file in a large floating window.

Viewing a File in the Finder Using Quick Look

Several Ways to View a File. There are several ways to view a file with Quick Look. First, select a file in the Finder by clicking on its icon or filename. Then choose among several options to view the file:

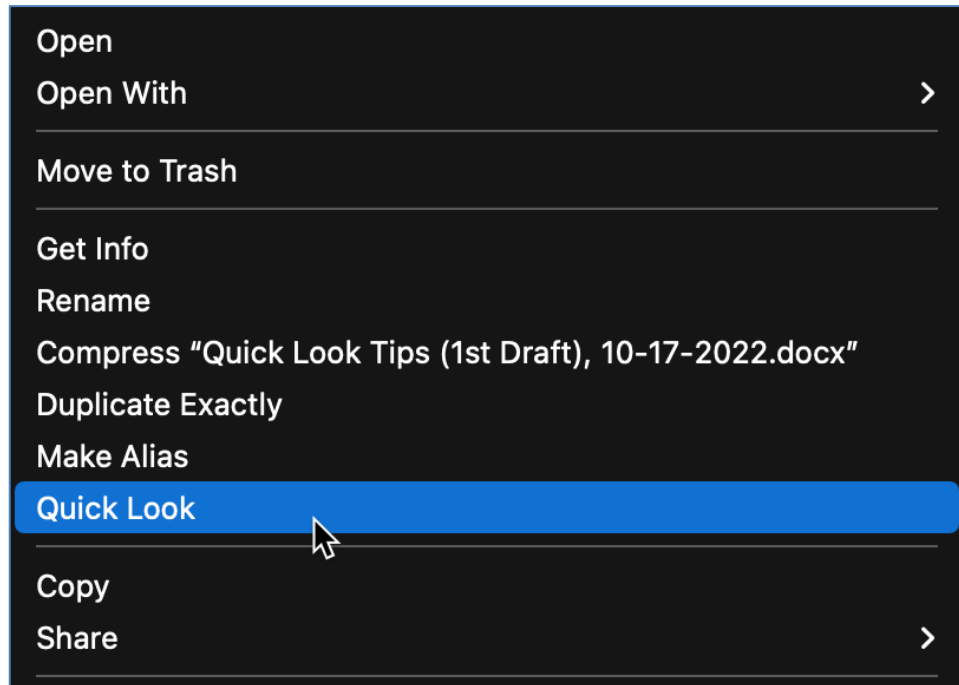
- Tap the **Spacebar** (the easiest method of all!).
- Choose **Quick Look** from the **File** menu:



File Menu (Partial View) > Choose Quick Look Menu Item

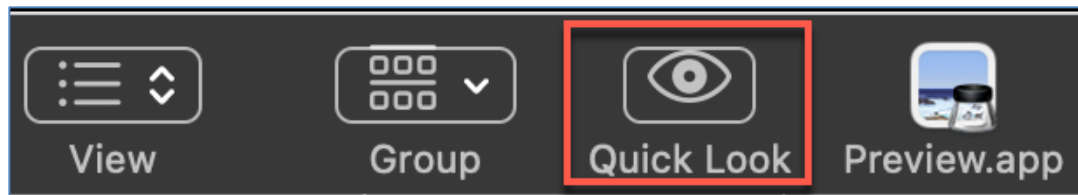
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- Use the keyboard shortcut: **Command (⌘) + Y**.
- **Right-Click** (Control-Click) the file's icon or filename and choose **Quick Look** from the pop-up contextual menu:



Pop-up Contextual Menu > Choose Quick Look Menu Item

- Choose the **Quick Look** action button on the **Toolbar** in the Finder window:



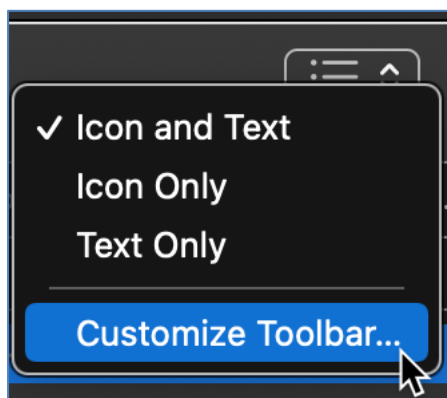
Quick Look Action Button on the Toolbar

Then the Quick Look window is displayed—in this case, a vacation photo. (See the next page.)



Quick Look Window (Vacation Photo)

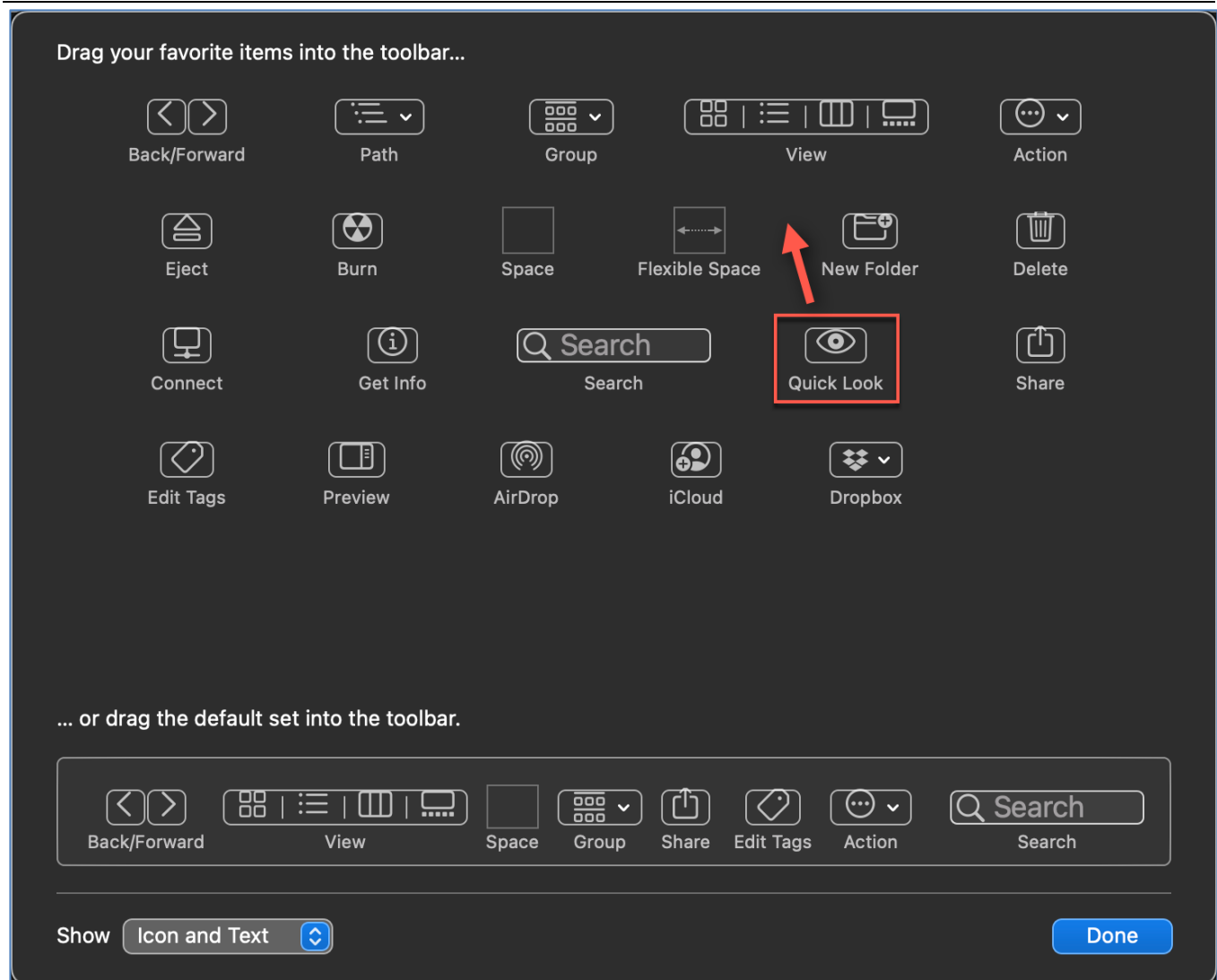
Note: If the Quick Look action button isn't displayed on the Toolbar, you can add it by Right-Clicking on the Toolbar to show a small pop-up menu. In that menu, choose the **Customize Toolbar...** menu item:



Customize Toolbar Pop-Up Menu

Choosing this will bring up a window with all the items that can be displayed in the Toolbar. (See the image on the next page.)

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Customize Toolbar Window

Then simply drag the Quick Look icon from the Toolbar window up to the Toolbar.

View Multiple Pages. If the file has more than one page, you can use the mouse to view other pages by dragging the **Scroll Bar** or by using the **Scroll Wheel** on the mouse. You can also use the **Page Up**, **Page Down**, **Home**, and **End** buttons to move about the Quick Look window.

Keep Quick Look Active. You don't have to bring up Quick Look and dismiss it when you want to look at another file. There's no need to use Quick Look to bring up the first file, dismiss Quick Look, go to the next file, and bring Quick Look up again. After using Quick Look to view a file, just select another file, and it will also be displayed in Quick Look. The Quick Look window doesn't go away until you dismiss it.


Multiple Ways to Dismiss. You can dismiss the Quick Look window with any of the actions that opened it.

- For example, you could open the window by the keyboard shortcut (**Command+Y**) and dismiss it with the **Spacebar**.

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- Also, you can use the standard **Close Window** keyboard shortcut, **Command+W**.
- Finally, you can always dismiss the window with the **Esc** key.

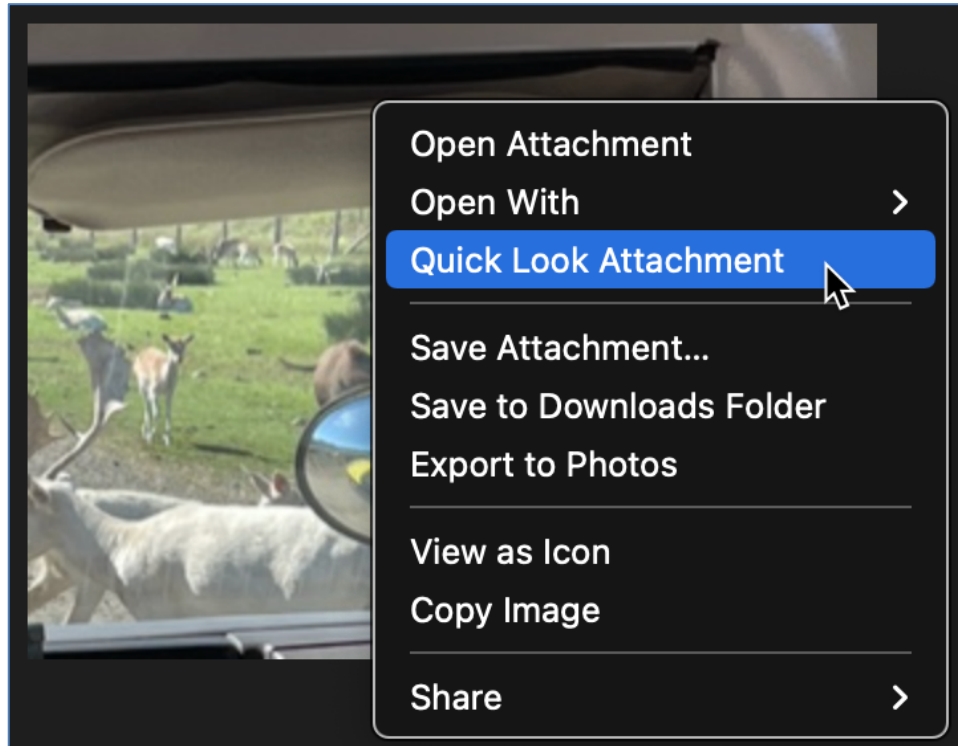
Move the Window. You can use the mouse pointer to move the Quick Look window around on the screen. (Maybe you just want to move it out of the way.) Click in the window's **Toolbar**, and drag the window to your desired location on the screen.

Resize the Window. Just like a Finder window, you can resize a Quick Look window as desired by dragging a side or corner. (Perhaps it's too large, and you want to shrink it a bit smaller.) Move the cursor to either the side or corner of the window until the pointer changes to a double-ended arrow shape . Then drag to resize.

Note: If you hold down the **Option** key when dragging the side of a window, the opposite side will be moved proportionally as well.

Viewing an Attachment in Mail Using Quick Look

My experience. Yours might vary. In Apple's **Mail** app, you can use Quick Look to view an attachment in an email message just like in the Finder—mostly. All the viewing options (except for Quick Look in the Toolbar which isn't an available button to add) are available. Here's an example of using a Right-Click to bring up the pop-up menu:

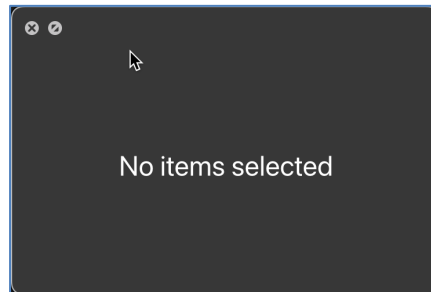


Mail App > Pop-Up Menu

Then the attachment is displayed in a Quick Look window.

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Viewing multiple attachments in the Mail app—I'm using version 16.0—proved to be a mixed experience. When there are multiple attachments, Mail's Quick Look menu item becomes **Quick Look Attachments...** (plural). With no attachments selected in the message and then choosing this option, the Quick Look window says "No items selected" (no surprise):

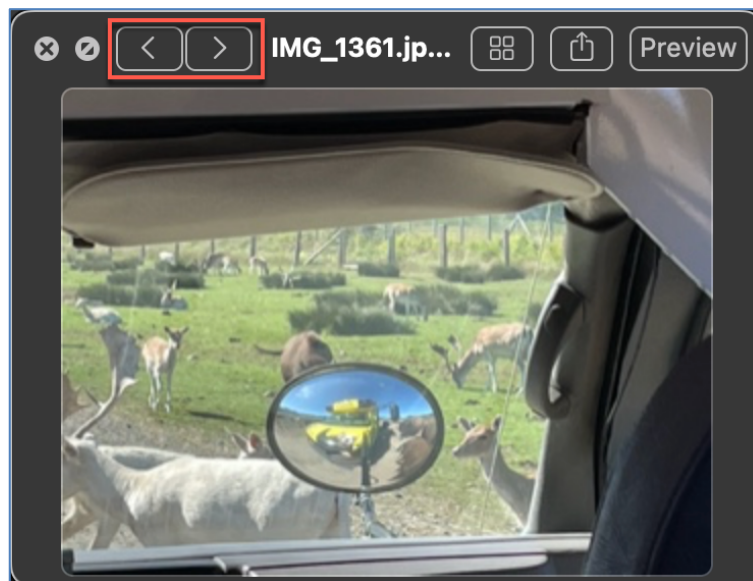


Mail App > Quick Look Attachments > "No items selected"

The traditional way to select multiple items (attachments in this case) is to select the first attachment and then Command-Click or Shift-Click to select another attachment. However, Command-Clicking to select another attachment didn't work for me, but Shift-Clicking did (mostly).

I found that in an email with three attachments I had to select the first attachment and then Shift-Click to select the next attachment. However, the selection process had to be in a specific order: first attachment, then second or third. Also, it wasn't possible to select attachments one and three without also automatically including selection number two. Selecting in the reverse order (say, second attachment and then the first one) didn't work; ditto for three attachments).

After I selected in the proper order, a single Quick Look window was displayed showing the first attachment. However, this Quick Look window was different in that it also had **Forward** and **Back** arrows in its toolbar:



Mail App > First Quick Look Attachment (With Forward & Back Arrows)

Clicking the arrows cycled the Quick Look window through the attachments.

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Using Mail's **Select All** (**Command + A**) under the Edit menu—even with some text in the message—and then choosing Quick Look also resulted in a Quick Look window the attachments.

Summary

Quick Look has a lot to offer when viewing files:

- Open for a “quick look” without using the default app
- Multiple ways to open Quick Look
- View multiple pages
- Keep Quick Look active to view multiple files
- Multiple ways to dismiss
- Move and resize a Quick Look Window
- View an attachment in Apple Mail

Next Presentation

For the next presentation, we’ll finish our review of Quick Look with a detailed look at the Quick Look window and its features.

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:

17 Things You May Not Know About Quick Look

<https://macmost.com/17-things-you-may-not-know-about-quick-look.html>