

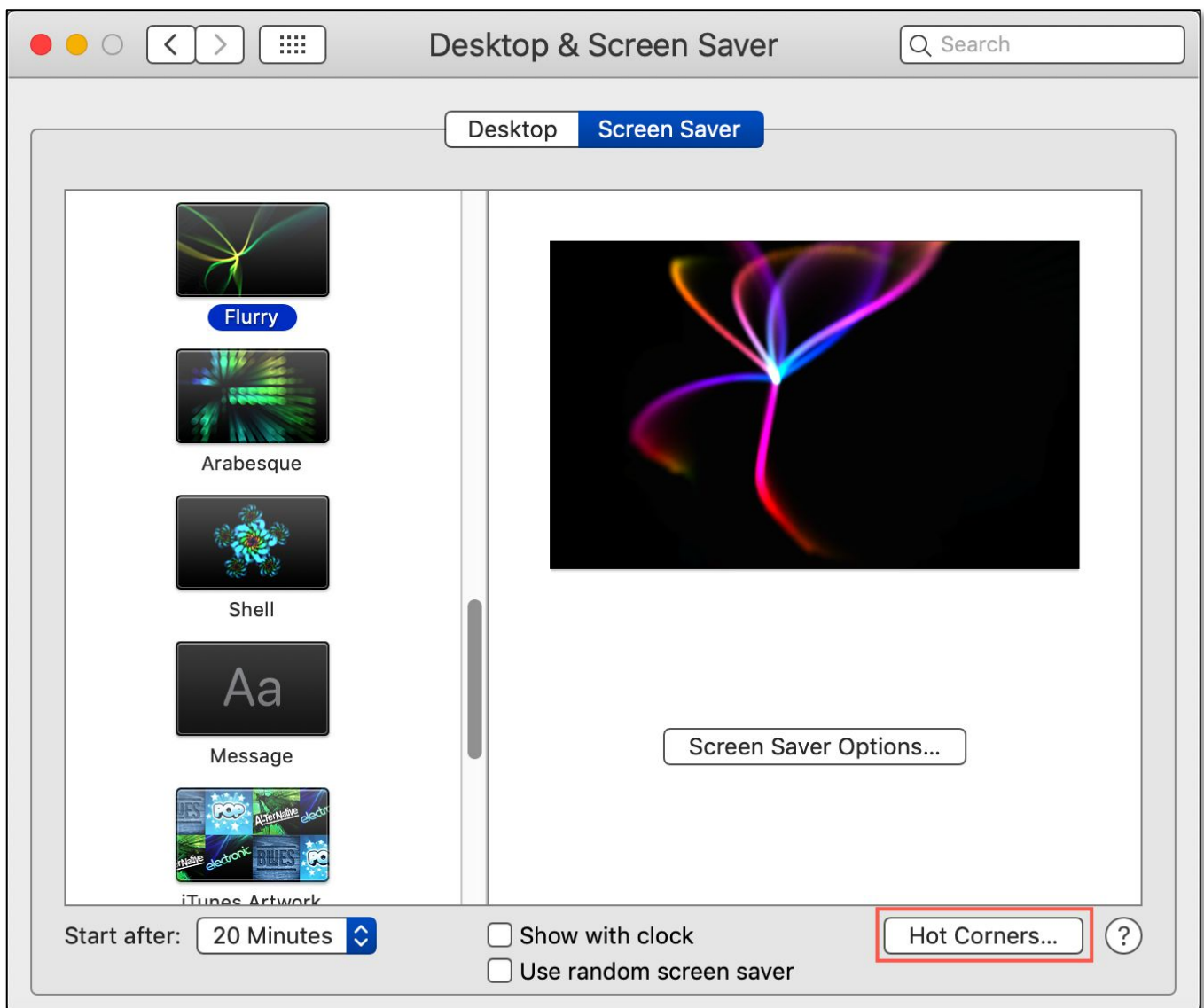
## Reasons to Put Your Mac's Pointer in a Corner, 06-13-2021

*Note: This discussion is based on macOS, 10.14.6 (Mojave). Some illustrations may differ when using other versions of macOS or OS X. Most illustrations are from screenshots on my iMac.*

Your Mac can be a really a busy place, with lots of open windows and icons spread all around. If you want to show the Desktop or move to a single app's windows, you might find that you have to click around a lot or use keyboard shortcuts to get there.

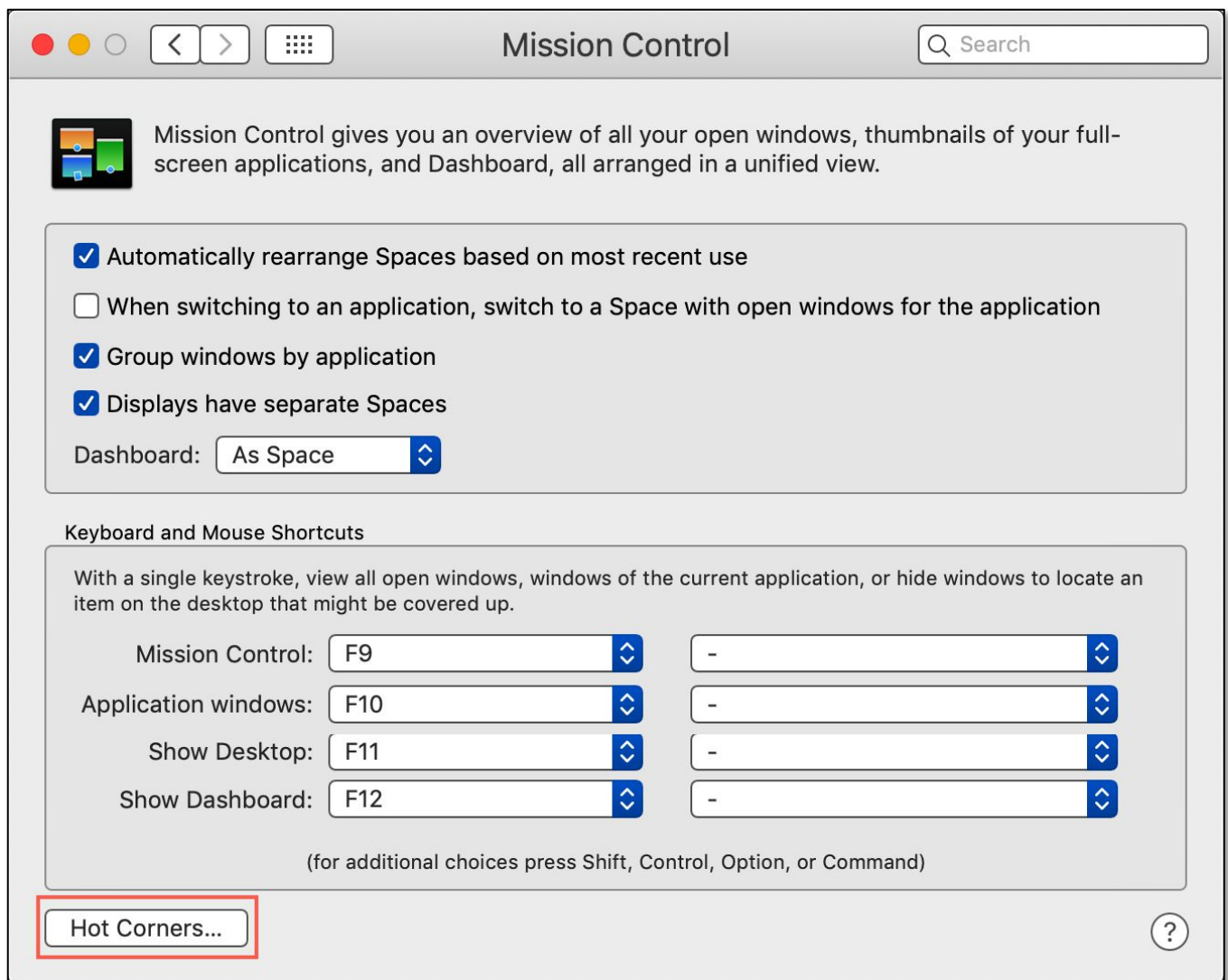
There's another way to access many of the Mac's special views with just a flick of your mouse pointer. Read on!

**Hot Corners.** A feature called **Hot Corners** has been around in macOS for a long time. It allows that "wrist flick" for your mouse pointer to access those special views. You can access the features of Hot Corners in macOS System Preferences in either of two **preference panes**: **Desktop & Screen Saver** or **Mission Control**. In either one, click the **Hot Corners** button to set up your hot corners. (See the **Desktop & Screen Saver** image below and the **Mission Control** image on the next page.)



**Desktop & Screen Saver Preference Pane – Hot Corners**

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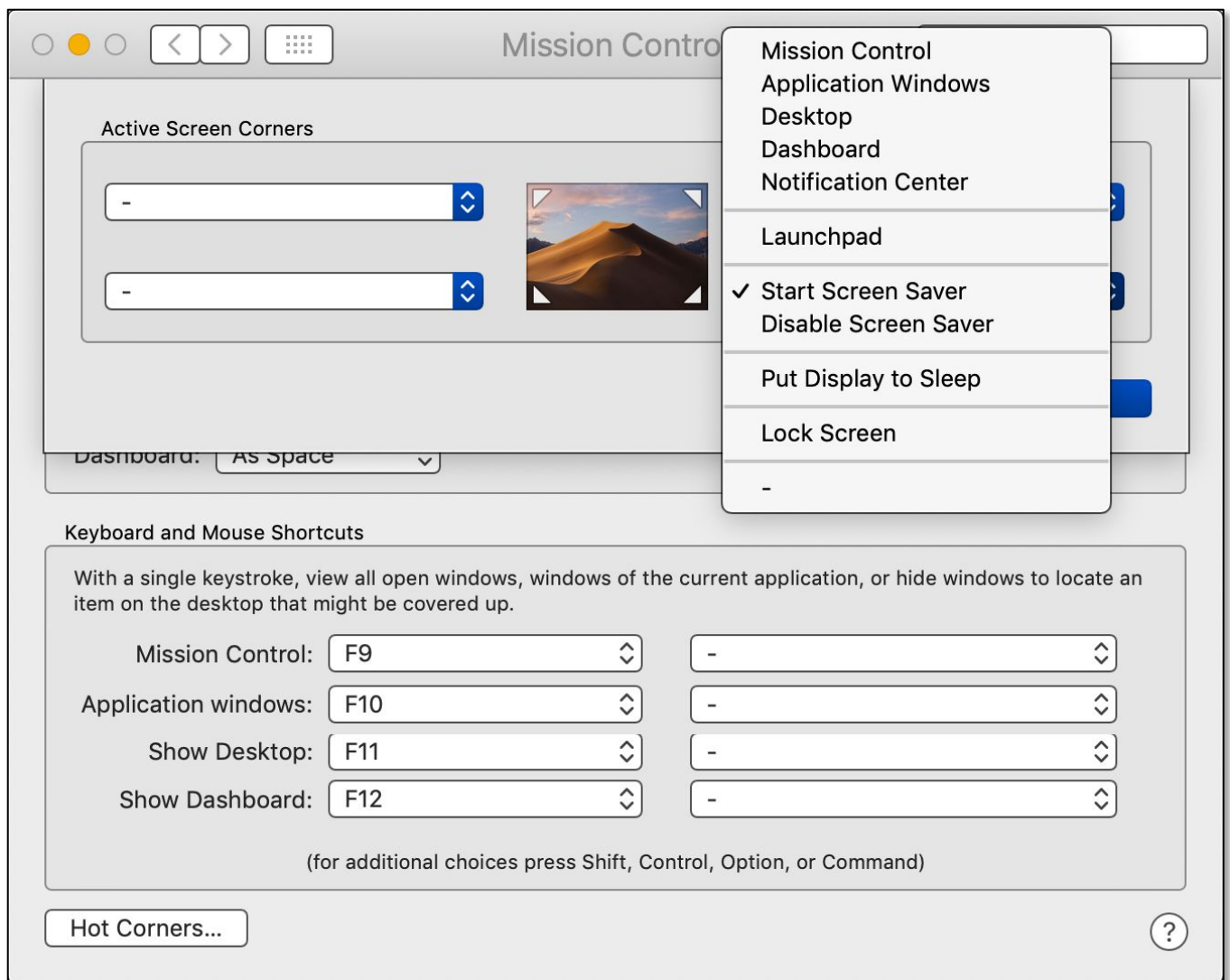


### Mission Control Preference Pane – Hot Corners

Click the **Hot Corners button** to bring up a dialog that displays a pop-up menu for each of the four corners of your screen. Then choose one of the menu item actions.

When you move your pointer to that corner, the selected action will take place. The **hyphen** at the bottom of the list, which is the default, means that nothing will happen. (See the image on the next page.)

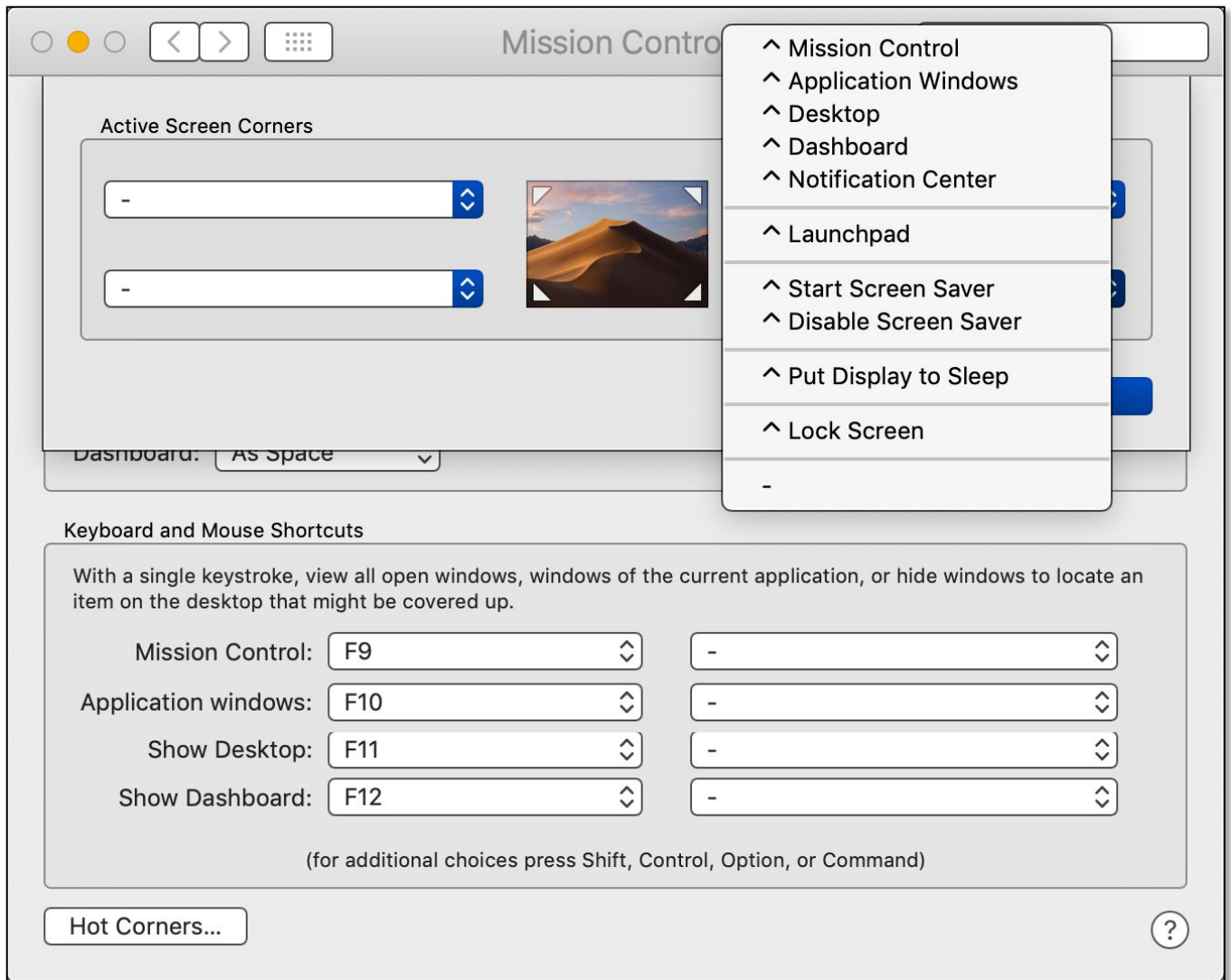
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### Hot Corners Dialog – Start Screen Saver

Add Modifier Key(s). You can also modify a keyboard shortcut with the **Shift**, **Control**, **Option** or **Command** keys to create different shortcuts. (See the image on the next page for an example using the **Control** modifier key.)

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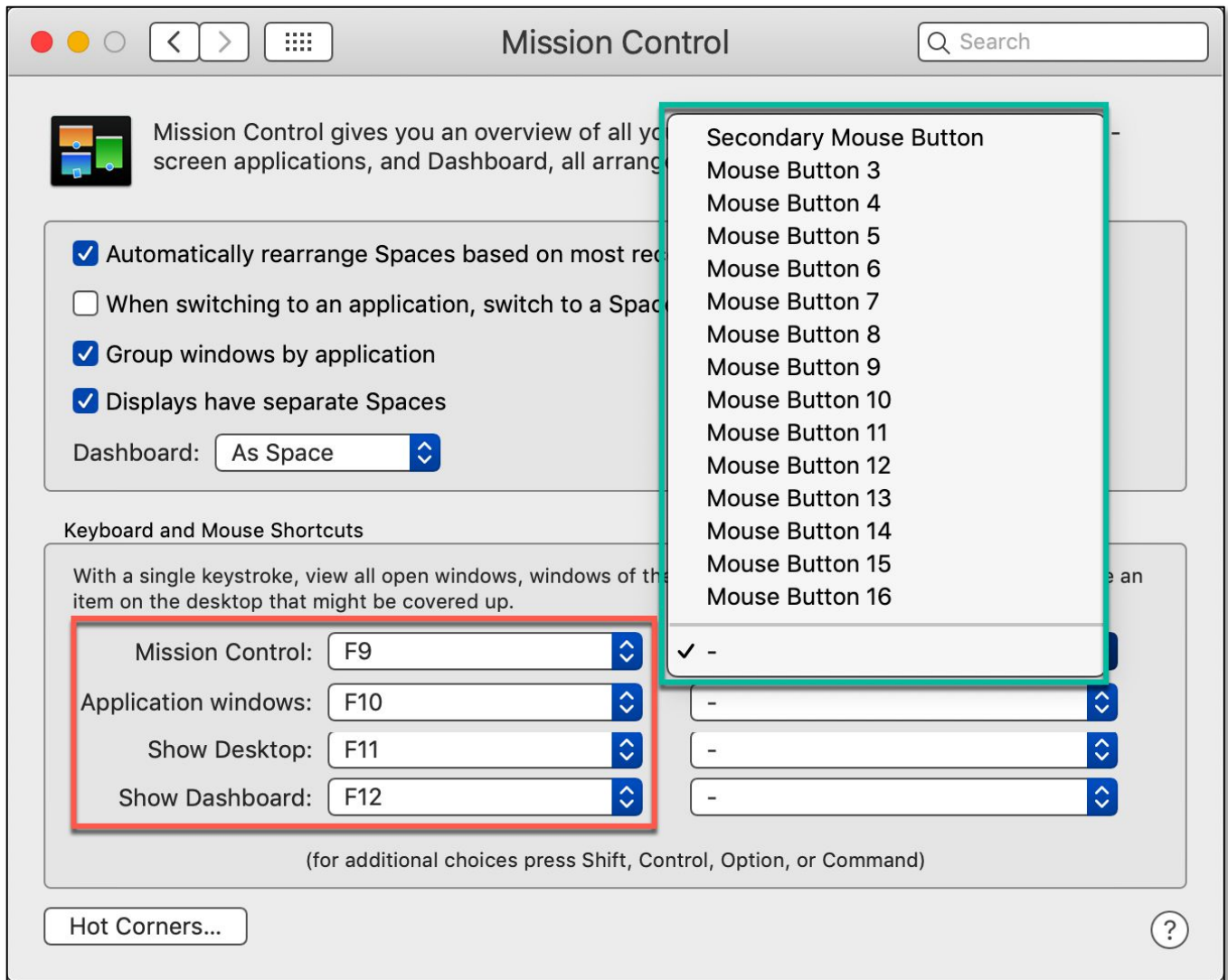
### Hot Corners Dialog (Control Modifier Key)

Mission Control – Keyboard and Mouse Shortcuts. In the [Mission Control](#) preference pane, you'll notice at the bottom a section labeled [Keyboard and Mouse Shortcuts](#).

- Here you can assign a keyboard shortcut, such as an F-key, to trigger one of four actions ([Mission Control](#), [Application Windows](#), [Show Desktop](#), and [Show Dashboard](#)).
- In addition, you can also assign one of the buttons on your mouse (if your mouse has them) to an action.
- You can also modify a keyboard shortcut with the [Shift](#), [Control](#), [Option](#) or [Command](#) keys to create different shortcuts.

(See the image on the next page.)

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### Keyboard and Mouse Shortcuts

#### Available Hot Corners Actions

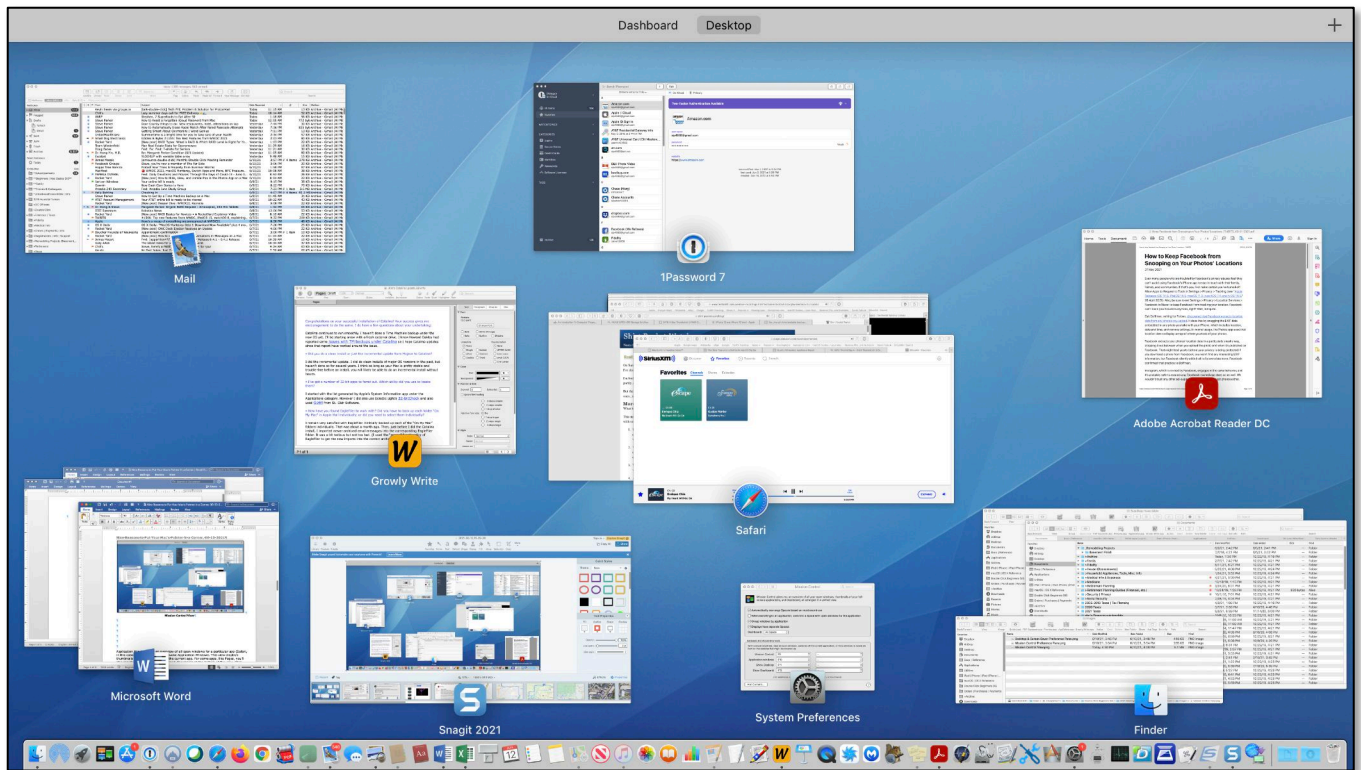
Here's a brief discussion of each of the available Hot Corners actions:

**1. Mission Control.** This will present a view of all the open windows on your Mac. However, if an app is hidden, its windows won't be displayed.

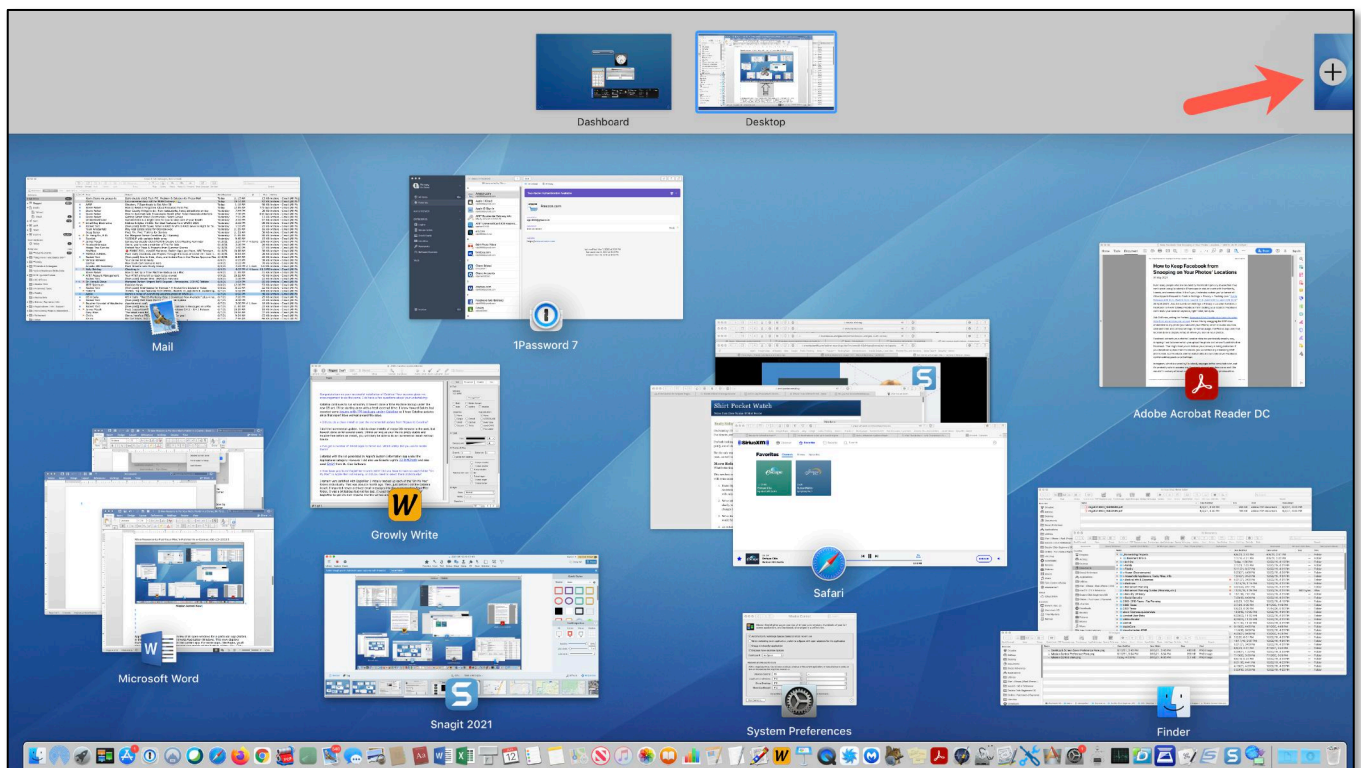
- Once in **Mission Control**, you can switch to any window by clicking it.
- Exit Mission Control by clicking on the Desktop or by moving your cursor to the Hot Corner again.
- Show a Preview a window by hovering over it and pressing the space bar.
- If you like to use **Spaces**—a view that contains only windows from the apps assigned to that space—these can also set up in Mission Control.
  - Click the plus sign in the top-left corner. Then drag windows up into the new space.
  - Switch to a space by clicking it in the top bar.

(See two Mission Control view images on the next page.)

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**Mission Control View**

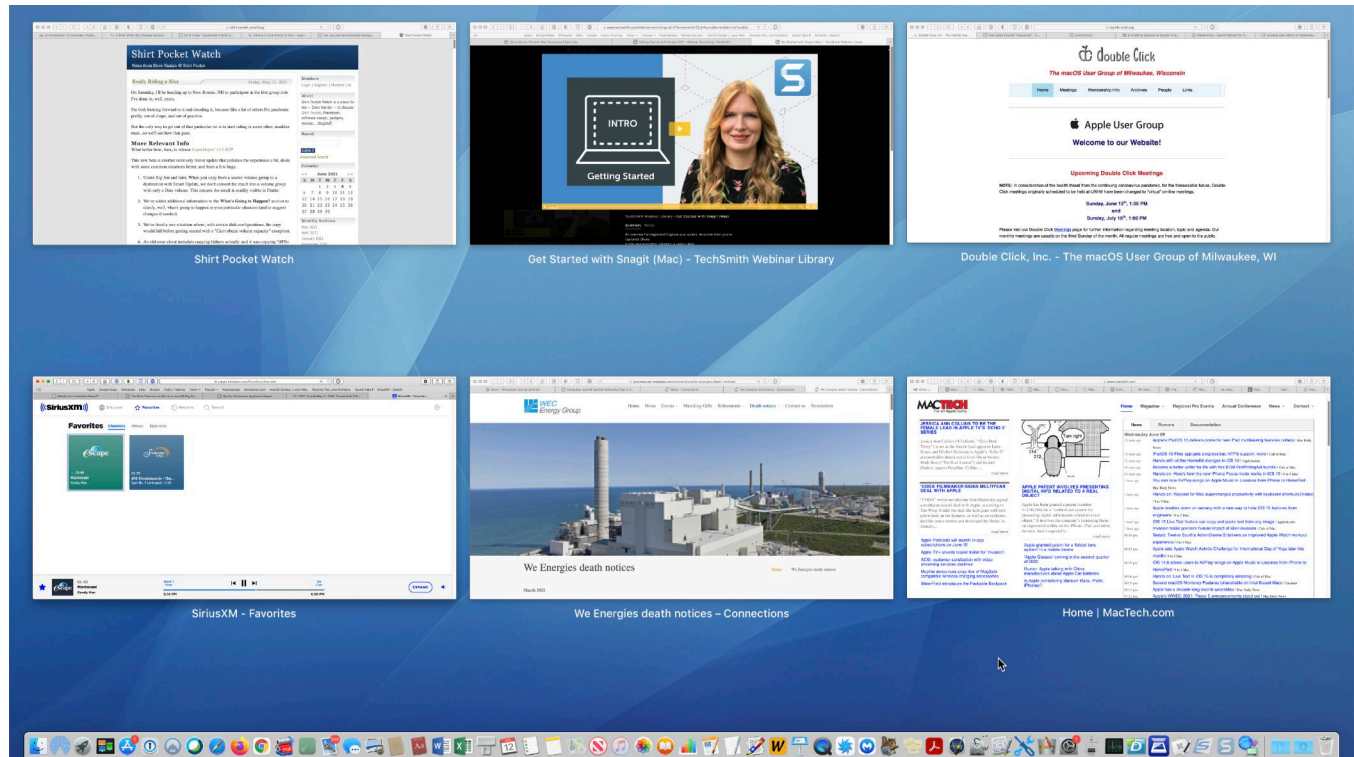


**Mission Control View (Spaces)**

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**2. Application Windows.** Select a view of all open windows for a particular app (Safari, in this example), by using a hot corner to display Application Windows.

- Once in **Application Windows**, switch to any window by clicking it.
- Exit Application Windows by clicking on the Desktop or by moving your cursor to the Hot Corner again.

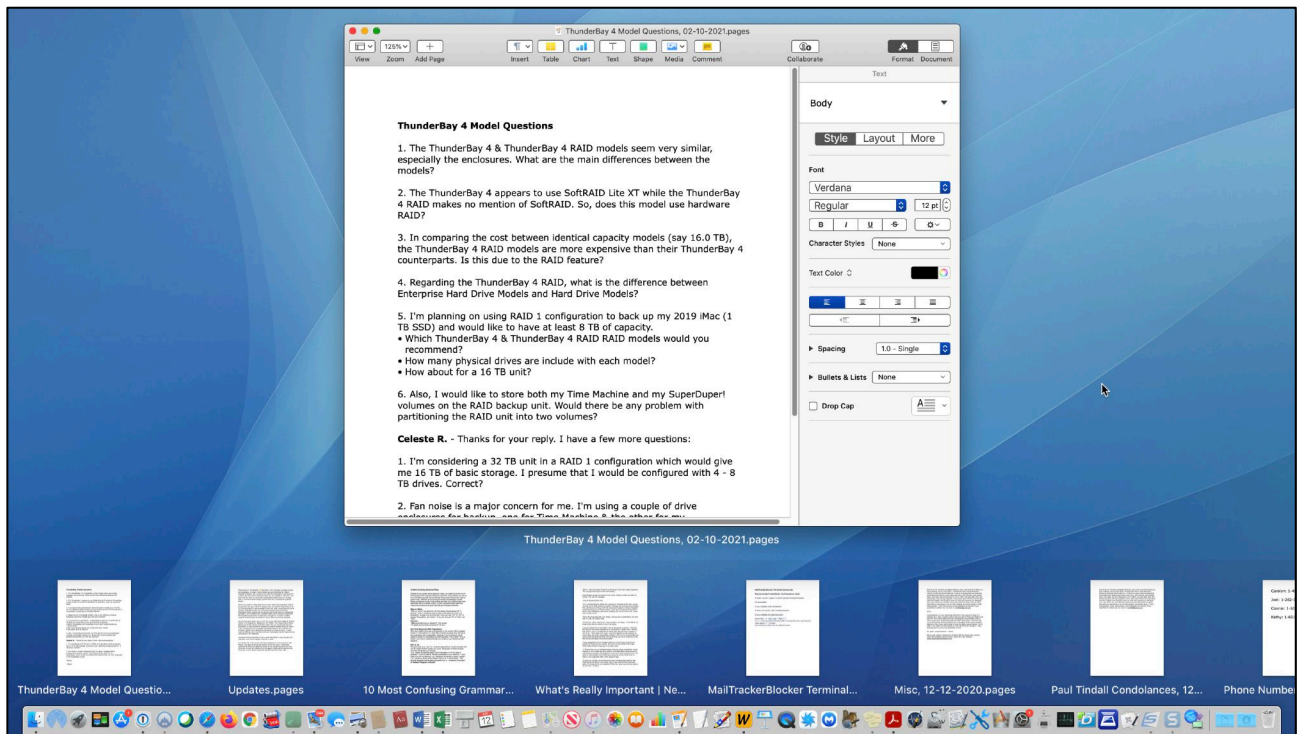


### Application Windows View (Safari)

- For some apps, like Pages, you'll also see thumbnails of recently opened documents at the bottom of the view.
- Click any thumbnail to switch to it.

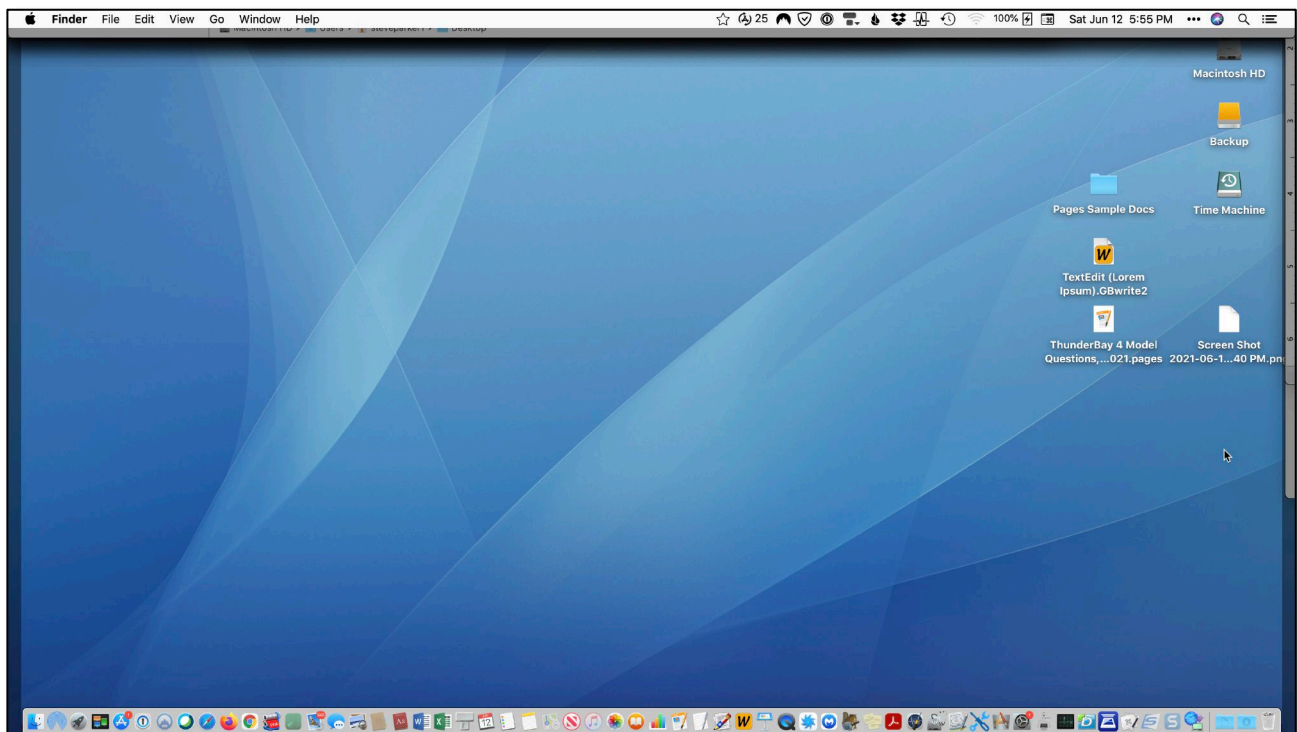
(See the Application Windows View for the Pages app image on the next page.)

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### Application Windows View (Pages)

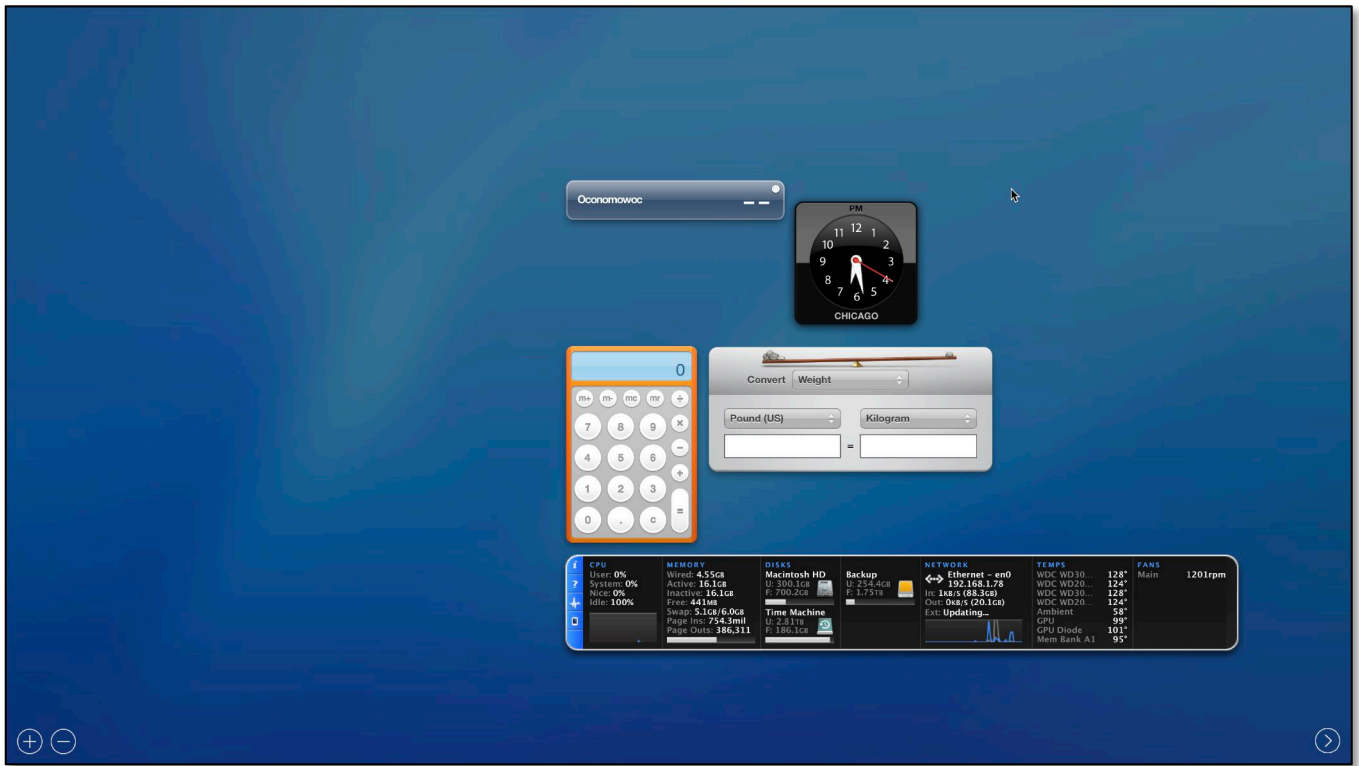
- 3. Desktop.** Do you like storing documents on your Desktop (say, for a project that you're working on). There's a Hot Corner option for that—the **Desktop** view.
- This view moves all open windows aside, displaying only the icons on the Desktop.
  - The windows return when you switch to an app or scroll back to that same hot corner.



### Desktop View

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**4. Dashboard.** If you're still running macOS Mojave (like me) or earlier, you can access its widgets by using a Hot Corner. However, beginning with macOS Catalina, Dashboard was eliminated. (Actually, Dashboard was disabled by default four versions earlier in Yosemite in 2014, but it could still be turned on.)



### Dashboard View

**5. Notification Center.** Beginning with macOS Big Sur, the Notification Center can be easily opened by clicking on the Date and Time listing in the menu bar. (In earlier versions of macOS, click the Notification Center icon in the upper-right corner of the menu bar.)

Because you have to move the mouse pointer to the menu bar anyway, there probably isn't much value in using a Hot Corner for the Notification Center.

**6. Start Screen Saver.** There are many uses for a Screen Saver:

- It can be set to display an image to prevent screen burn in, although that doesn't seem to be as much of a concern as it used to be.
- If privacy is a concern, it also hides the contents of your screen if you're working on something sensitive from anyone who might walk by when you're not there.
- The **Start Screen Saver** Hot Corner shows the screen saver immediately.
- It overrides the setting for how long the Mac must sit idle before the screen saver turns on ([Desktop & Screen Saver preference pane > Screen Saver tab > Screen Saver Options](#)).
- Note: You may have to enter your password to turn off the screen saver, depending on your setting for "Require password after sleep or screen saver begins" in the [Security & Privacy preference pane > General tab](#).

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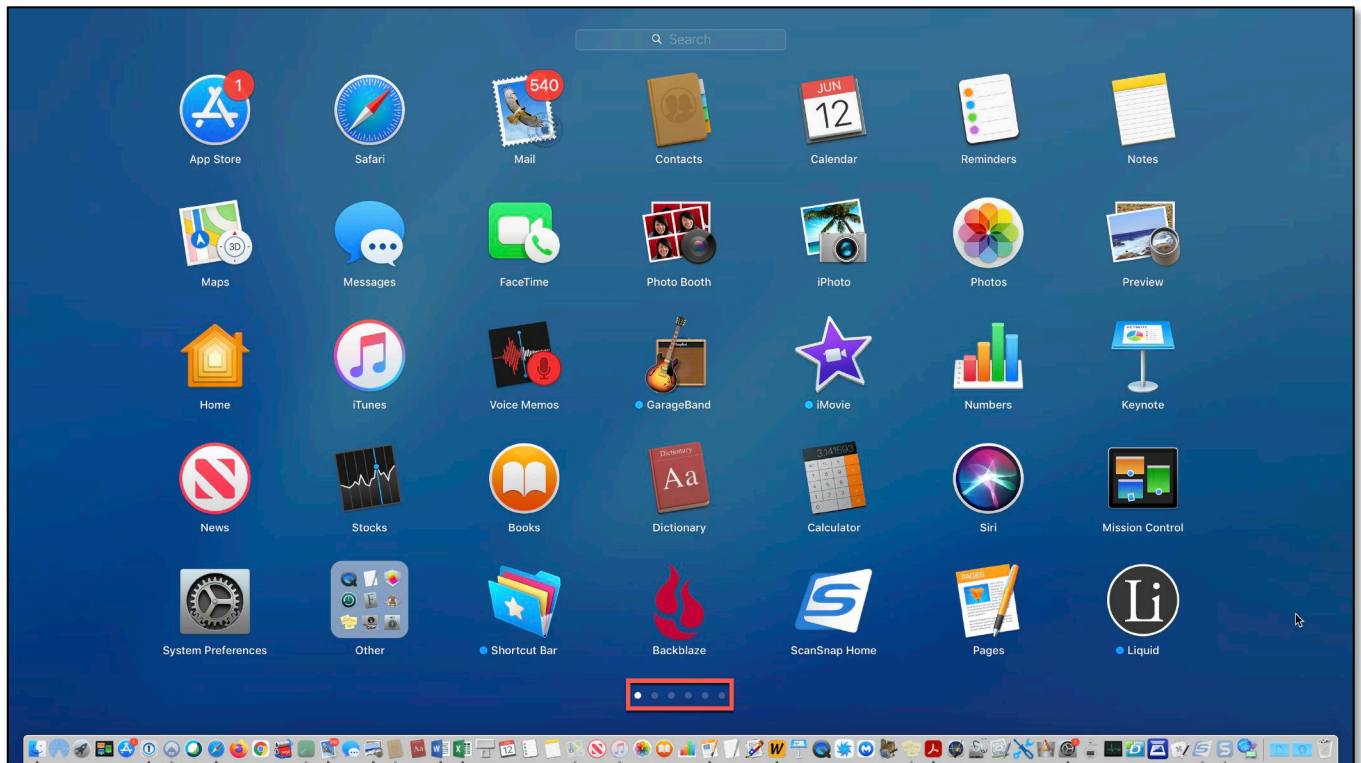
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**7. Disable Screen Saver.** If you usually have your screen saver set to turn on automatically after a very short time (say, just a minute or two), it might come on and interrupt what you're working on. For example, maybe while you paused for a while to consider something while you're writing.

To disable the screen saver temporarily, use a **Disable Screen Saver** hot corner.

**8. Launchpad.** If you like to use the **Launchpad** to open apps on your Mac, you can set a Hot Corner to open it. Then:

- Just click an app to launch it.
- To see more apps, scroll horizontally with a trackpad by swiping with two fingers. If you're using an Apple Magic Mouse, swipe with one finger on the mouse surface.
- You can also click the buttons at the bottom of the screen.
- Drag the apps around to put them in the order that works best for you.



**Launchpad**

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**9. Put Display to Sleep.** If you're concerned about energy usage, using a Hot Corner to [Put Display to Sleep](#) is available.

- Put your pointer in the associated hot corner, and your screen goes to sleep immediately. This option also consumes less power than a screen saver.
- It also overrides the "Turn display off after" slider in the Energy Saver preference pane.
- Similar to the screen saver, you may have to enter your password to wake the display when you come back.

**10. Lock Screen.** The Hot Corner option for Lock Screen will immediately display the Mac's login screen.

- Since the login screen is displayed, this prevents anyone from seeing what's on your Mac.
- As usual, your password must be entered again to use your Mac.

## Summary

If you have lots of open windows and icons spread around, it can be a challenge to maneuver among them. It might take a lot of clicking around or use keyboard shortcuts to get to what you want to work with.

The [Hot Corners](#) option of macOS might be of help. With a flick of your mouse you can access a variety of views and features to app windows and files.

With Hot Corners you can do the following:

**Mission Control** - Presents a view of all the [open windows](#) on your Mac and the ability to access [Spaces](#) if you use them.

**Application Windows** - Select a view of all [open windows](#) for a [particular app](#) and then switch to any of its windows.

**Desktop** - Get quick access to everything on your [Desktop](#).

**Dashboard** - If you're running macOS Mojave or an earlier version of macOS, you can access the various widgets placed there. (The Dashboard was eliminated when macOS Catalina was released.)

**Notification Center** - Although it's available as a Hot Corner, since your mouse already needs to be in the menu bar, there's probably not much value in using this option. Still, it's available if you want it.

**Start Screen Saver** - This Hot Corner option shows the [Screen Saver](#) immediately and also overrides the setting for how long the Mac must sit idle before the screen saver turns on.

**Disable Screen Saver** - Allows you to override your [Screen Saver](#) setting, which can be handy if it's set to a short start time, and you want to work uninterrupted.

**Launchpad** - Like to use the [Launchpad](#) to open apps? You can bring it up using a Hot Corner.

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**Put Display to Sleep** – This Hot Corner setting puts your Mac to [sleep](#) immediately.

**Lock Screen** – Immediately displays the Mac's [login screen](#).

### Next Presentation

For the next presentation, we'll explore another Mac Basics topic.

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](mailto:slp4668@gmail.com).

*–Steve Parker*

Credit: "Nine Reasons to Put Your Mac's Pointer in a Corner"

Email Article: Small Dog Electronics, Kibbles & Bytes #1150, 05-07-2021